



**Calling All Rowers:  
Join the Local Adult  
Rowing Team**

PAGE 2

**BizX Event Returns  
May 7 for Small  
Business Week**

PAGE 6



# AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

VOLUME 20 • ISSUE 8

Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

APRIL 25, 2025

**SEE  
INSIDE**

**LICENSE  
TO KILL**



PAGE 10

**AMERICAN LEGION  
BBQ & BOOTS  
DINNER AND DANCE**



PAGE 3

**LEADING AS A  
RESIDENT: LOCAL  
BOARDS AND  
COMMISSIONS**



PAGE 4



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## Why Simply Recycle?



The Lyapchucks received \$12 for their trip to the recycling center.

**Story and photos  
by Judy Andrews**

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - Are you recycling your bottles and cans for cash? After a recent visit to a new state-of-the-art recycling facility in Fair Oaks, this author had a quick lesson in how recycling can put money in your pocket and back into your community.

According to CalRecycle, 1,339 recycling centers in the state repurchase empty California Redemption Value (CRV) beverage containers. Deposit amounts for these recyclables range from 5 to 25 cents,

depending on the container's type, size and weight. With some exceptions, acceptable materials include glass, plastic and aluminum.

CalRecycle sets the rates and guidelines for what can be recycled.

Over time, these redeemable deposits can add up to a substantial return rate and help clean up the environment, reducing unnecessary waste in our landfills.

Simply Recycle, located at 4802 San Juan Ave., uses advanced automation technology to eliminate the need to pre-sort, crush, and weigh California Redemption Value (CRV) eligible recyclables. Customers

receive deposit vouchers within minutes of dropping off their material, which they can redeem for cash on the spot.

Thanks to a CalRecycle grant, owner/operator Ivan Pislar and his wife, Jacie Leavitt, opened Simply Recycle in November 2024.

The Fair Oaks facility is the only one of its kind in California powered by TOMRA technology. TOMRA is a leader in the recycling industry and is committed to developing long-term sustainability solutions.

The couple also owns Ivan's Recycling, a conventional and  
*Continued on page 6*

## Residents Challenge American River Erosion Control Work

**Commentary by  
American River Trees**

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in cooperation with the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, is proposing to remove more than 600 trees and acres of riparian vegetation along the Wild and Scenic American River. This includes potentially dozens of heritage oak trees, some older than the country itself, as part of an erosion control effort.

Driving over the H Street bridge in the past few years, one can see how the landscape has changed. The same fate is in store for large stretches of the north side of the American River Parkway from Howe Avenue to Watt Avenue, and on the south side from east Watt Avenue to Larchmont Community Park.

The American River Parkway was established in 1959. It is the only state and federally designated Wild and Scenic River flowing through an urban area. Often referred to as "the jewel" of the Sacramento region, it attracts more than 8 million visits a year and generates over \$365 million for our local economy.

American River Trees (ART) is a grassroots, volunteer advocacy group working to preserve the American River Parkway trees and its wildlife habitat corridor. American River Trees asks the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to "pause, engage the community and develop alternative designs" for a better, more focused, appropriate method of preventing erosion on this beautiful stretch of natural paradise. This is in keeping with the American River Management Plan and the Lower American River Conservancy program to protect and restore the natural resources of this river.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will issue its final environmental report, including responses to public comments, this spring. Vegetation clearing could begin as early as fall. The reports and related information are available on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers website at [spk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Sacramento-Levee-Upgrades/](http://spk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Sacramento-Levee-Upgrades/).

American River Trees encourages all interested parties to contact  
*Continued on page 3*

## Big Day of Giving Returns

**Sacramento  
Region Community  
Foundation  
News Release**

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - On Thursday, May 1, hundreds of nonprofits across the capital region will unite once again for the highly anticipated Big Day of Giving, an annual movement intended to strengthen the local nonprofit sector brought to you by the Sacramento Region Community Foundation.

Since 2013, Big Day of Giving has raised more than \$100 million, driving transformative change across the region. What makes this truly transformative is the broad participation. More than half of donations are \$50 or less, proving that small contributions, combined, create a powerful collective impact.

This year, more than 850 nonprofits serving Sacramento, Yolo, El Dorado and Placer counties are participating. Each nonprofit organization has

a profile at [bigdayofgiving.org](http://bigdayofgiving.org), where donors can easily explore organizations by cause area, location, demographics served, leadership makeup and more.

This year, Big Day of Giving will offer expanded payment options. Donors can now contribute directly through the website using PayPal, Apple Pay, Google Pay, Venmo and other secure, mobile-friendly platforms, making it easier than ever for community members and organizations to support the causes that matter most to them.

"Big Day of Giving is a powerful reminder of the profound impact generosity can have when we unite as a community," said foundation Chief Executive Office Kerry Wood. "It's more than just making a donation; it's about standing together for the causes that move us and empowering the nonprofits that strengthen our region. When we all show up, we fuel the change we want to see and help our region thrive."

As part of Big Day of Giving, the Sacramento Region Community Foundation will highlight nonprofits participating in its Cultivate program, a year-round initiative dedicated to strengthening Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)-led and -serving organizations. Through Cultivate, these nonprofits gain access to funding, mentorship and leadership training, ensuring their long-term sustainability and growth.

Nearly 85% of Cultivate participants manage operational budgets under \$500,000, underscoring the program's focus on small, grassroots organizations. This program highlights the foundation's ongoing commitment to equity and its role in fortifying the capital region's nonprofit sector, both through Big Day of Giving and throughout the year.

On May 1, donations made through the Big Day of Giving website are eligible for bonus

funds, thanks to a pool of \$100,000 in prizes from Western Health Advantage and match funds secured by participating nonprofits. Additionally, gifts made using Golden 1 Credit Union debit or credit cards will be matched proportionally by Golden 1 Credit Union from a \$100,000 matching pool.

Big Day of Giving is made possible through the generous support of lead sponsor Western Health Advantage. In addition to hosting the giving day, the Foundation provides ongoing resources and services that help donors create lasting philanthropic impact across the region.

Learn more or find out how to give early at [www.bigdayofgiving.org](http://www.bigdayofgiving.org).

As the center of philanthropy in the region, the Sacramento Region Community Foundation leads, serves and inspires enduring philanthropy for a just and vibrant Sacramento region. Learn more at [www.sacregef.org](http://www.sacregef.org). ★



# Calling All Rowers: Join the Local Adult Rowing Team

By Idaly Valencia

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Did you row on a crew “way back when” in high school or college? Do you still enjoy rowing but do not know how to get back into it? A local rowing team is seeking new members to join them on the waterways and to build community.

Lake Natoma Rowing Association’s Capital Crew Masters Program is an inclusive, multi-level competitive and recreational adult rowing team offering coached sessions.

Joining the program gives members affiliate access to rowing equipment appropriate for a variety of fitness levels. A skill assessment and swim test will be required on water rowing.

The program is calling out to those who used to row competitively in high school or college and would like to get back into the sport, according to Susan Hooten, a Capital Crew Masters Program rower and board member.

Rowers of all experience levels are welcome to join as well.

“Our members range from ages 27 to 80 years old and chose their level of commitment, from casual to international level. The practice schedule is nothing like your college days,” said Hooten.

Those interested in participating can select sessions to attend based on experience and comfort level. The team has separate groups that range in difficulty, offering different options for people to pick their preferred pace.

Experienced rowers can train and compete for local and international events. The upcoming competition that the team is currently training for is the Masters Regional Championship in June.

On Sundays, the program hosts a leisure rowing session for members who “just want to socialize and have fun.”

Hooten emphasized that those who rowed before are



Capital Crew Master's Program member Marco Palilla takes a selfie with fellow rowers. Photo courtesy of Capital Crew Masters Program



The rowing Capital Crew Master's Program members are treated to seeing a rainbow during this session. Photo courtesy of Capital Crew Masters Program



Here are participants from the Crew Master's Program February 2024 Learn to Row event. Photo courtesy of Capital Crew Masters Program



Capital Crew Masters adult rowing team, for ages 27 and above, is a multi-level competitive and recreational adult rowing team offering coached sessions. Photo courtesy of Capital Crew Masters Program

encouraged to come back to row.

The adult rowing team consists of men and women members (ages 27 and up) who row together from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, and from 7:15 to 9:15 a.m. Saturdays. Members meet at the Sacramento State Aquatic Center, 1901 Hazel Ave, Gold River, located by Lake Natoma. View the full 2025 master's schedule at [sacstateaquaticcenter.com/capital-masters](http://sacstateaquaticcenter.com/capital-masters).

Capital Crew Masters Program members come from across the Sacramento region to row on Lake Natoma. The adult rowing team includes residents from nearby communities such as Gold River, Carmichael, Rancho Cordova, Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks, and Orangevale. Others travel from East and South Sacramento, Folsom, Woodland, El Dorado Hills and Placerville.

Curious about joining the team? Contact coach Jackie Synder, the Capital Crew Masters Program president, at 719-330-1783. For more information, visit [lakenatoma-rowing.org](http://lakenatoma-rowing.org).

Community members who have never rowed but want to learn can contact the Sacramento State Aquatic Center about rowing classes at 916-278-2842. ★

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REG. \$1.99  
**99¢** /ea  
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Chicken Leg Quarters PERNAS y Muslo de Pollo **99¢** /lb

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**WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS**

Chicken Leg Quarters PERNAS y Muslo de Pollo **99¢** /lb

New Zealand Lamb Stew Meat - Bone In Hueso de Australia Cordero Australiano **\$4.39** /lb

Beef London Broil Top Round Roast Pulpa Para Hornear/Roast sin Hueso **\$4.99** /lb

**FROZEN & FISH DEPT**

Dried Cod Fish 500 g  
 REG. \$16.99/EA  
**\$12.99** /ea

**EUROPEAN DELI**

Horn off the Bone Columbus Beef Pastrami **\$6.19** /ea

Olives Stuffed w/ Sour Cheese Stuffed w/ Feta **\$7.09** /ea

REG. \$19.99/EA  
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# American Legion BBQ & Boots Dinner and Dance

# Dash for Dwelling

## 5K Fun Run and Walk



American Legion Post 383 is hosting a dinner and dance featuring music by the Stone River Revival Band and catered by Texas Roadhouse (sirloin steak or barbecue chicken with sides) on May 3. From left are American Legion 2nd Vice Commander Chris McGlasson; American Legion Auxiliary President Suzanne Winters; American Legion Auxiliary member Sheila LaPolla and American Legion Auxiliary Chaplain Denise Verbeck. Photo courtesy of American Legion Post 383

### American Legion Post 383 News Release

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - American Legion Post 383 is hosting a dinner and dance open to the public on May 3.

The event features music by the Stone River Revival Band and is catered by Texas Roadhouse (sirloin steak or barbecue chicken with sides).

The location is the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall at 8990 Kruitof Way in Fair Oaks (off Hazel Avenue). The no-host saloon portion of the event starts at 5 p.m., dinner is at 6 p.m. and music starts at 7 p.m. May 3.

There will be drawings for prizes throughout the evening. Donations are \$40 per person and there is a limited number of tickets. Donations are to support area veterans and community programs.

It's time to get your country on (no spurs on boots) and have a finger-licking good time, according to American



The location for the BBQ & Boots Dinner and Dance is the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall at 8990 Kruitof Way in Fair Oaks (off Hazel). The no-host saloon portion of the event starts at 5 p.m., dinner is at 6 p.m. and music starts at 7 p.m. From left are American Legion member J.R. Voss; American Legion Auxiliary member Joan Voss; and party revelers Cassie Wolter and Randy Wolter. Photo courtesy of American Legion Post 383

Legion and American Legion Auxiliary members. For BBQ & Boots Dinner and Dance tickets, visit the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall or for reservations, call American Legion 383 Commander Don Lemmon at 916-825-2977 and leave a message.

The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic, nonprofit, veterans'

organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. Veterans and Active-Duty service members in the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible to join the American Legion. Post 383 General Membership meetings are at 7 p.m. the, fourth Tuesday of each month, except December. Riders attend each Post 383 general membership meeting, and then have their own meeting afterward. ★

### Rotary Club of Citrus Heights News Release

**CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG)** - The Rotary Club of Citrus Heights is pleased to support Habitat for Humanity Greater Sacramento, as they develop 26 new homes over the next three years on Sayonara Drive. These homes will be on Sayonara Drive in Citrus Heights near the intersection of Sunrise Boulevard and Greenback Lane.

On May 10 at 8 a.m. there will be a "Dash for Dwellings - Almost 5K Fun Run and Walk" on walking path in Tempo Park and Mitchell Village Park. Starting near the Tempo Park tennis courts on Fair Oaks Blvd, this is an "Out and Back" run

that stays off the streets avoiding traffic control.

The funds raised will go to support Habitat for Humanity in Citrus Heights.

The price is \$35 (plus fees). Everyone is welcome and participants will get a T-shirt.

For more information, visit [www.chrotary.com](http://www.chrotary.com). Registration is on [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com). Enter "dash for dwellings" in the search field.

To learn more about the project, join us for our Lunch Meeting on May 14 at R-Vida Cantina, 7040 Sunrise Blvd, Citrus Heights. Our speaker will be Kimberly Coley, Chief Advancement & Marketing Officer, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento. ★



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# Residents Challenge American River Erosion Control Work

Continued from page 1 their elected representatives and let them know how you feel about this project. More information and sample letters are online at [Americanrivertrees.org](http://Americanrivertrees.org).

We also invite all to our May 4 riverside protest, Walk for Wildlife, to save the natural plants and animals affected by this construction. For more information, visit [Americanrivertrees.org](http://Americanrivertrees.org). ★



American River Tress members ask that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to use different methods to prevent erosion at the American River Parkway. Photo courtesy of American River Trees

Rotary Club of Citrus Heights Presents...

## DASH FOR DWELLINGS

### ALMOST 5K CHARITY FUN RUN & WALK

**MAY 10, 2025**  
**8:00 AM | Tempo Park**

## Run, Walk or Cheer!

**13125 Fair Oaks Blvd. | Citrus Heights**

**Everyone Welcome!**  
**Wheelchair accessible,**  
**Strollers and Dogs**

Proceeds Benefit  
Habitat for Humanity  
Sayonara Drive Project

Scan to register!

Vendors Water Station Goodie Bag!

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SACRAMENTO SYMPHONIC WINDS

## Spring Serenades

Dr. Matthew Morse, Music & Artistic Director  
Featuring clarinet soloist Sandra McPherson  
Performing  
Concertino for Clarinet op. 26, Carl Maria von Weber

Also featuring music from Star Trek: the Motion Picture,  
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National Emblem March

**Sunday, May 4, 2025 | 2:30pm**

Tickets at the door:  
\$15 general admission, \$10 students  
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Capistrano Concert Hall  
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[sacwinds.org](http://sacwinds.org) | Facebook | Instagram

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## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Informing, Empowering and Engaging Readers with Their Community

### Leading as a Resident: Local Boards and Commissions

is by attending a public meeting. Most local legislative bodies, including boards and commissions, are open to the public under California's Ralph M. Brown Act. Agendas must be posted in advance and include public comment. Many meetings are also livestreamed or archived online.

Ideas and concerns can be shared directly with commission members or during public comment, even if not on the agenda. Speakers are often referred to the appropriate department for follow-up or might have their item agendized for future discussion.

Those passionate about a board's work can get directly involved. Sacramento County lists more than 80 appointed boards and commissions with vacancies and application details available online.

Serving on a public board or commission not only gives residents a voice but also builds leadership experience, strengthens community ties and fosters a deeper understanding of how local government works.

"We want people to feel welcomed, not overwhelmed," said Matt Hedges, chief of staff to Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez. "To get passionate people involved with what they care about most."

Hedges encourages interested residents to call the office of the commission or agency they're interested in.

"We try to make it easy. Our staff can discuss your interests and help match you with the right opportunity," said Hedges.

**The School Connection**  
Local school districts also offer advisory roles. San Juan Unified District, for example, has five standing committees open to parents and community members: facilities, bond oversight, curriculum and instruction, special education, and the Local Control

and Accountability Plan (LCAP) advisory committee.

Committee members serve two-year terms and provide input on district resource allocation and priorities, reviewing proposals before they reach the Board of Education. Applicants are appointed by their area board member and can apply online. These meetings are also public, with dates, agendas and vacancies posted on the district website.

Sometimes, the district reaches out to the community when forming committees for specific needs, such as curriculum adoption or input on a new policy draft.

**Participation Is the Key**  
You don't need to run for office to shape your community's future. You just need to participate. Serving on a board or commission shows how one person can make a difference by listening, showing up and bringing a local voice to the conversation.

"There's almost an infinite amount of volunteer capacity in a community," said Hedges. "The problem isn't a lack of people; it's a lack of awareness."

The seats are there. The meetings are open. All that's left is for someone like you to take the next step and bring your skills and perspective or perhaps simply sharing an idea in a commission or board you are passionate about. Look and find the commission connection for you.

Boards, Commissions and Committees for:  
Sacramento County: [sccob.sacounty.gov/Pages/BoardsandCommissions.aspx](http://sccob.sacounty.gov/Pages/BoardsandCommissions.aspx)  
San Juan Unified School District: [sanjuan.edu/connect/committees](http://sanjuan.edu/connect/committees).

*Patsy McGavock is a volunteer community advocate and freelance media writer working to inform, empower and engage readers with their community. Connect with her at [PatsyMcGavock.JustServe@gmail.com](mailto:PatsyMcGavock.JustServe@gmail.com) ★*

## Recycling, Wine Tasting, Volunteering, and More



Judy Andrews

**By Judy Andrews, Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce**

Featured in this issue of American River Messenger is an article about a local recycling business that is the only one of its kind in the state. Fair Oaks Chamber member Ivan Pislar and his wife, Jacie Leavitt, opened Simply Recycle at 4802 San Juan Ave. in November 2024. The facility uses automated technology that sorts and weighs your redeemable bottles and cans. Having never visited a recycling center, I was in awe the first time I stepped through the door. It made me wonder why more people don't recycle. I observed families, couples and individuals walking into the

facility with bags and boxes of recyclables and walking out with cash. We are lucky to have Simply Recycle in our backyard. On the heels of Earth Day, I encourage you to check them out.

In upcoming news, A Taste of Fair Oaks is just around the corner. Have you purchased your tickets? This event is happening Friday, May 16, from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at North Ridge Country Club. Your ticket includes varied samples of savory food and desserts from local area restaurants, award-winning wines from regional wineries, exceptional brews from local breweries, a selection of non-alcoholic beverages, and a souvenir glass and plate. Other activities at the event include a silent auction, gift card grab, wine wall and a putting contest. Chamber members can enjoy a discount on tickets. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [fairoakschamber.com/taste-of-fair-oaks](http://fairoakschamber.com/taste-of-fair-oaks).

The Big Day of Service 2025 is Saturday, May 17. Volunteers can choose

from nearly 70 community impact projects across Orangevale, Fair Oaks and Citrus Heights, ranging from neighborhood beautification to making flower arrangements for seniors. There is a project for everyone and most accept volunteer families. No special skills are required to participate. Check out all the projects and sign up for one by May 1 to receive an event day T-shirt at [bigdayofservice.us](http://bigdayofservice.us). This event is brought to you by the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation. To learn more, visit [ovfocf.org](http://ovfocf.org).

Be on the lookout for a summer full of endless fun, as the Fair Oaks Chamber prepares to announce the 2025 Honorary Mayor candidates in May. The chamber promises many fun opportunities to support the candidates and donate to their causes.

For more information about the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce and to view all upcoming events, please visit [fairoakschamber.com](http://fairoakschamber.com). ★  
**See you in Fair Oaks!**



### Extra Extra ... Exciting News

Have I got news for you! I've always talked with you on POPPTALK on FM-104.5 & AM-950 KAH1, and that will continue. But wait til you hear my NEW news. Over the many years that I have done Radio and Television, I have interviewed a ton of celebrities and personalities...the famous and sometimes the infamous too. Luckily I held on to those interviews over these many years way back to...let's say a long loooong time. Now there is a way to hear those voices once again. Some are still with us, and some have passed on. Kenneth Segura Knoll has been a longtime friend, and we have done many projects together from commercials to documentaries and more. He came up with a great idea. It's called **PoppStarTalk** to bring those voices back to life. And so, I have partnered with Ken and Turquoise Trail Releasing forming Popp Talk Media. We launched **PoppStarTalk** April 2. Now you can join me and my producer Ken on your favorite way to listen to podcasts. From Apple to just about any way you listen to your favorite podcast, we will be with you every week. You can check out all the venues. Just google **PoppStarTalk** and you can get all the info on how to hear us, and all the shows will be archived too. Don't want you to miss any of the celebrities and personalities I had the pleasure of knowing from days gone by.

Some of those voices have been si-

lenced, some are still with us. When Ken came up with the idea I listened to a few of those voices from my past Radio and TV work, and even some wild and crazy interviews. I loved how they shared their innermost secrets with me. These interviews are not the typical PR stuff. They go to the heart and soul of these folks. Here's a tiny sample of the interviews you'll hear. Tippi Hedren from the movie "The Birds", Impressionist Rich Little, Shirley Jones from "The Partridge Family" and "Music Man," Gossip Columnist Rona Barrett, Marian Ross from TV's "Happy Days" and Melissa Gilbert from "Little House on the Prairie, Art Linkletter, Carol Channing, even Nancy Reagan and Roslyn Carter. And that's just a fraction of the wonderful times I had getting to know them, even becoming friends with them. Now I want to share their hopes and dreams, their sorrows and heartaches, and their joys too. I will also contact them to update their lives if they are still with us.

It brings back great memories, and I am even surprised at how those interviews could fit right into what is going on today. I hope you will join Ken and me for a walk back in entertainment time with celebs that will bring back wonderful memories of yesteryear. Again, just google **PoppStarTalk** and I look forward to our getting together for some wonderful times gone by...today! ★

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# Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



There are the times in the life of an NBA city, when sadness becomes an almost overwhelming reality. For some it is a different emotion because as fans we come in all shapes and sizes. But for those of you that are simply angry, let me say to you that life is too short, and if anything, this franchise needs your positive energy more than your anger.

The person responsible for giving away Davion Mitchell and then trading away the heart of the franchise in DeAaron Fox, has been given his walking papers, and many would say rightfully so.

Yes, the Sacramento Kings have a new general manager, and his name is Scott Perry. Unlike his two predecessors, Perry comes to the Kings with a resume of experience.

Sacramento is not new to Scott Perry, as he spent a short stint as the Kings vice president of basketball operations in 2017. After only three months in the head office, Perry was hired by the New York Knicks as their general manager.

Make no mistake about it, the position of GM with any NBA club is a chess piece of invaluable proportion. Fortunately, Scott Perry comes with not only experience in his role, but NBA respect as well. This bodes well for a franchise in desperate need of a captain that can navigate a ship.

Fans immediately wonder what Perry's first moves will look like, and will Doug Christie remain as the head coach of the Kings moving into the 2025/2026 season? Many believe the answer is yes, as Vivek Radadive apparently holds Christie in high esteem.

Whether it's choosing the coach or draft choices, the Kings owner has shown a penchant for being centrally involved in all moves involving this team. He has been criticized for being too involved and has even been given credit for the decision to draft Marvin Bagley over Luka Doncic in the 2018 draft.

At the end of the day, virtually every owner has the final decision as it relates to all moves, but the most successful organizations know the value of the basketball minds they hire, and those people need to know they have a level of autonomy when it comes to decision making. In short, let

people do the job they've been hired to do, and respect their ability to do it.

Every NBA team has a culture, and as a new general manager walks in the door, that culture is about to change.

What fans want and hope for, is a culture that not only fosters comradery and cogent decision making, but an environment that says loudly, "we know what we're doing and we're good at it."

Poor decision making has robbed the Kings of a first-round draft choice in the upcoming draft, so before Scott Perry sits down at his new desk, he will have to decide if he needs to reconcile a pathway that includes a move that can secure a first-round draft pick. Easier said than done, and there will need to be a player in this draft that makes a move like this necessary.

NBA insiders say this draft is a better than average class, so this is not a good time to be sitting on the sideline.

After making the playoffs just two seasons ago, the Kings finished 40-42 this season, and many might say that it was overachieving considering the upheaval that was the 2024/2025 season.

Without question, the team and the fans are looking for a steady hand that can create not just confidence, but genuine excitement as the 2025/2026 season begins.

I believe this is possible, and I want to give this new GM my utmost support as he steps in at a difficult time and knows without a doubt, he has a big job to do.

Very soon Sacramento Kings fans will discover if players like Keegan Murray and even newcomer Zach Lavine have a future in a Kings uniform.

Attempting to reassemble a team in mid-season while making dramatic changes to the lineup proved too much the Sactown ballers, and this offseason will be one of the most critical in many years.

Take a deep breath Kings fans but don't lose hope. More changes are undoubtedly in the offing, and shortly you will see if the experience that Scott Perry brings to this team will pay the dividends fans are praying for.

All the best!

Your thoughts are always welcome at [vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com](mailto:vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com). ★

## Social Security Matters

### When Should My Wife Claim Social Security?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** My wife was born in July 1959, and her recent SS benefit estimate is \$3,337 at her full retirement age, or \$4,397 at age 70. She is presently employed full-time and intends to continue working until she is aged 70. She is wondering when the most financially advantageous time would be to draw her SS retirement. **Signed: Planning Ahead**

**Dear Planning Ahead:** Obviously, the best time for your wife to get the highest possible monthly Social Security benefit would be age 70. Provided your wife's life expectancy is at least average (about age 87 for a woman her current age), she will likely receive the most in cumulative lifetime Social Security benefits by waiting until age 70 to claim.

For clarity, if your wife were to choose to claim before her full retirement age (FRA), her monthly amount would be less and she would be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test (AET), which limits how much she can earn before her FRA. If the AET is exceeded, SS will take away \$1 for every \$2 her earnings are over the limit (they take away by

withholding future benefits until the penalty is satisfied). The AET (\$23,400 for 2025 but changes yearly) is in effect until your wife reaches her full retirement age of 66 years and 10 months, after which she can earn as much as she likes without penalty. Since she plans to work full time until age 70, your wife should likely not claim Social Security before her FRA. As mentioned, claiming at age 70 is probably a more prudent financial option.

Since your wife expects to continue working, she should also know that her estimated benefit will likely increase assuming her more recent earnings are among the highest over her lifetime. Social Security will review current year earnings annually to see if her current earnings warrant a benefit increase (SS benefits are always based on the highest 35 years of work earnings, and that includes earnings even after SS benefit are started). Also, the estimates provided by SS do not include Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) which typically occur annually. FYI, the average annual COLA increase over the past two decades has been about 2.5%.

Based on her estimated FRA benefit, it is also evident that your wife will not get additional benefits as your spouse. For that to occur, your benefit at your FRA would need to be more than twice your wife's FRA amount, which it likely is not. Thus, your wife should make her claiming decision based

only on her own benefit opportunity, considering her personal financial needs and her life expectancy.

FYI, your wife's "breakeven age" – the age at which she will have collected the same amount of SS money by claiming at age 70 vs. claiming at her full retirement age (FRA), is about 82 years of age. Thus, assuming her life expectancy is more than 82, it would be prudent to wait until age 70 to claim Social Security.

In the end, the "best" time to claim Social Security depends on a few factors – most notably, life expectancy, and financial need. If the SS money isn't urgently needed now, and your wife's life expectancy is at least "average," then it appears from what you've shared that her best choice would be to wait until age 70 to claim Social Security. If life circumstances change over the years, your wife can take comfort knowing that she can also claim her Social Security at any time before age 70 and she will get benefits right up to the month she claims. Note that by waiting until after her FRA to claim, she will earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) of .667% more benefit for each month of delay (about 8% more for each year of delay).

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA).* ★

## Salmon Fishing Shutdown Marks a Grim Milestone

By Charlton H. Bonham

This week, a public federal process determined there will be no commercial salmon fishing off California's coast for the third year in a row. It's a grim milestone for our state.

While we will see some recreational ocean fishing, we're at the low-water mark. With so few fish available, we know this won't be enough to meet the demand of our state. That's hard news in hard times.

Thirty years ago, the idea we would be implementing, yet alone discussing, these restrictions would have been unthinkable. Back then, millions of salmon swam through the rivers of California every year. It was a bountiful, thriving species.

But last year, the number of adult salmon in the Sacramento Index, a critical measure of the Sacramento River salmon population and an indicator of the overall health of California's salmon, shrank to roughly 100,000 fish. It's a tiny fraction of salmon's former might.

The reasons for the decline are numerous and complicated. Decades of severe drought, climate disruption, water management challenges and habitat loss threaten the future of salmon in California. The loss of salmon would wound California deeply.

Salmon are the basis of a multibillion-dollar fishing economy that creates jobs across the state. They support thriving forests, rivers and floodplains and serve as one of the most popular seafood choices across the country. Salmon provide vital subsistence to numerous California tribes. Recreational salmon fishing trips form the basis of family legend and lore.

For the salmon lovers among us, these are dark times. But I see glimmers of hope.

Two weeks ago, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife revealed the progress on California's "Salmon Strategy for a Hotter, Drier Future." It was an update on the strategy Gov. Gavin Newsom released last year, which outlined dozens of key action items the state must take to better support healthy salmon populations.

In the last year alone, state fish and wildlife and its partner agencies have made critical headway on nearly 70% of the action items set by Governor Gavin Newsom. Another 26% are already done.

California finished removing the

outdated and obsolete Klamath River dams, allowing for a free-flowing river and access to cold-water habitats blocked for more than a century.

California's initiative to fast-track approvals for salmon restoration projects led to the streamlining of more than 60 important projects to support salmon populations over the past year.

Fish and wildlife has also worked with the State Water Resources Control Board to develop flow recommendations in drought-prone watersheds like the Scott and Shasta rivers and Mill and Deer creeks. This ensures salmon populations have enough cold water to survive during dry periods.

Investments to expand and modernize the state's fish hatcheries, ensuring California is supporting the production of a resilient salmon population, have increased fall run production from state-operated hatcheries in the Central Valley by over 9.7 million fish.

The state's salmon strategy was designed for long-term salmon support. But we're already seeing early benefits, some that even surprised fish and wildlife officials. Ten days after the final Klamath dam came down, state scientists spotted salmon swimming north of the dam sites into Oregon.

Experts originally estimated that would take 10 years.

Data shows that, while salmon numbers from 2024 are down, California saw the highest number of jacks (2-year-old fish) returning to the Central Valley since 2019. Jacks are an important predictor of the number of adult salmon that will return to spawn the following year.

In Lagunitas Creek, there's been a 60% increase in spawning of endangered Coho salmon. In Mendocino County, adult salmon returns have almost quadrupled their 15-year average.

To be clear, these wins are just the beginning. The road to reviving California salmon will be long. But these successes give me hope and the drive to keep fighting for salmon.

*This commentary appeared on CalMatters.org on April 18, written by Charlton H. Bonham, director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.* ★

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# Why Simply Recycle?

Continued from page 1  
profitable facility they opened in 2018 at 8002 Zenith Drive in Citrus Heights. Leavitt manages the administrative side of both businesses.

An entrepreneur at heart, Pislar got into the recycling business with the encouragement of a friend who owned several recycling centers. After a few years of operating Ivan's Recycling alone, Pislar grew concerned about his ability to continue handling the physical demands of the job. Additionally, he and Leavitt needed to modify the business's outdated manual accounting system.

"We knew something had to change," said Pislar, especially since most customers showed up with a mixed bag of goods that needed to be sorted and crushed. "I finally had to stop helping customers after my back went out."

The couple began to explore new technology solutions to modernize their business while continuing to provide outstanding service to their loyal customers. Ivan's Recycling 5-star reviews caught the attention of TOMRA officials, leading to a business partnership and the grant to establish Simply Recycle in Fair Oaks. It took Pislar and Leavitt a year to get Simply



Simply Recycle is powered by TOMRA technology. Shown here is the automated sorting and weighing machine.

Recycle up and running.

Although their two recycling centers operate differently (one is automated and the other is not), Pislar maintains that the new facility was never meant to replace the first one.

"I still love Ivan's because it brings us steady volume and generates revenue for Citrus Heights

recyclers. Without the volume, you can't pay the bills."

Pislar sells his material in large bales to two local processing companies: Ming's Recycling Corp. and Recycling Planet. He assures all customers that 100% of the acceptable material they drop off will be recycled through the processing companies.



Ivan Pislar and Jacie Leavitt own Simply Recycle in Fair Oaks and Ivan's Recycling in Citrus Heights.

California residents don't always know where their recyclable material ends up after being discarded in their bins at home.

What do customers say? Many prefer the convenience of Simply Recycle.

"Most people are shocked the first time they walk in the door because it doesn't look or feel like their old recycling center," stated Pislar. "The best part is that no one has to do any sorting. Customers can kick back and let the machines do the work. The

kids love watching the machinery and help unload bags into bins."

Pislar hopes that Simply Recycle will inspire more residents to recycle.

"When you stop and consider all the bottles and cans that end up in the landfill, it's like throwing money down the drain. Every bottle counts," said Pislar.

For more information about Simply Recycle, visit [simply-recycle.com](http://simply-recycle.com). For general information about recycling, visit [calrecycle.ca.gov](http://calrecycle.ca.gov). ★

## BizX Event Returns May 7 for Small Business Week

### Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Entrepreneurs, small business owners and industry professionals are invited to join BizX 2025 from 3 to 6 p.m. on May 7, where local business leaders will share their inspiring path from startup to success.

Hosted annually as part of Capital Region Small Business Week (CRSBW), BizX is the premier business resource and networking event, hosted by Sacramento County's Office of Economic Development and City of Sacramento's Office of Innovation and Economic Development.

This year's theme, "Dream Big, Start Small," highlights the journeys of entrepreneurs who turned their ideas into thriving enterprises.

"BizX is a celebration of the entrepreneurial spirit that fuels Sacramento County's economy," said Crystal Bethke, Sacramento County Director of Economic Development. "As part of Capital Region Small Business Week, this event is more than a networking opportunity, it's a chance



This year's theme, "Dream Big, Start Small," highlights the journeys of entrepreneurs who turned their ideas into thriving enterprises. Photo by Christina Morillo <https://www.pexels.com>

to gain real insight, connect with fellow business owners and access valuable small business resources."

Keynote speaker Ginger Elizabeth Hahn, a luxury chocolatier, will share how she built her renowned brand through passion, perseverance and dedication.

Following the keynote, a dynamic panel of local business leaders will offer their firsthand insights.

Panelists include Ernesto Delgado, restaurateur and owner of Tequila Museo Mayahuel, La Cosecha Sacramento, Octopus Baja Sacramento and Mesa Mercado Carmichael; Susan O'Brien, owner of The Kitchen Table and Dante Williams, roaster and owner of The Black Coffee Roastery.

In addition to the speaker lineup, attendees can explore

a variety of small business resource booths, connect with service providers and meet peers from across the Capital Region. Light refreshments will be served.

The first 100 registrants will receive free parking validation and a complimentary box of Ginger Elizabeth truffles.

The event will be held at 200 Aggie Square, Second Floor, 4480 Second Ave. in Sacramento. Tickets are \$10 per person. To register for the event and learn more information about BizX 2025, visit [cityofsacramento.gov/city-manager/oied/business/innovation-and-entrepreneurship/bizx-event](http://cityofsacramento.gov/city-manager/oied/business/innovation-and-entrepreneurship/bizx-event).

For a full lineup of activities and events, visit the official Capital Region Small Business Week website at [capitalregion-smallbusinessweek.org/](http://capitalregion-smallbusinessweek.org/). ★



Roger Niello

## Roger's Review

By State Senator Roger Niello

Hi everyone, I'm Senator Roger Niello, your guide to the twists and turns of California's legislative landscape. I am honored to represent Senate District 6, which includes portions of Sacramento and Placer Counties.

Welcome to my new monthly column, Roger's Review. Here, I will shine a spotlight on policies that impact our lives and highlight the amazing news that's happening in our community.

Now, let's talk about the state budget. This year, the state budget is going to be difficult to balance, and legislators will have to make tough choices to avoid fiscal challenges like deficits in the future.

As the vice-chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, I sent a letter to the budget committee chair to address some of the priorities, and here are some of the issues I included in the letter to get California back on track. The full letter can be found on my website at [sen.ca.gov/niello](http://sen.ca.gov/niello).

The rising homelessness issue in our communities is a big concern. Well-funded mental health and substance abuse services will result in meaningful and positive outcome that leads some of the homeless population to self-sufficiency. With nearly 70% of voters in support, Proposition 36 is not just popular but also good policy. My fellow legislators and the governor must fully fund the needs of Proposition 36 and give law enforcement and local governments the resources to improve public safety in our communities.

Many of us know someone who was impacted or lost their home and much more in the tragic wildfires in Southern California earlier this year. California needs to invest more in fire prevention through vegetation and forest management. After decades of neglect, the state of California began to improve on fire

prevention in recent years, but even in the surplus years of 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023, most of the fire prevention funds were short-term in nature. My request seeks funding toward fire prevention efforts, including forest and vegetation management.

High school seniors who are preparing to attend college after graduation may be impacted by the governor's plan to cut from the University of California and California State University systems and nearly \$400 million from Middle Class Scholarships. The legislature must reject this plan and make sure our schools focus on supporting California students.

Our local business owners are being crushed by unemployment insurance debt left over from the pandemic shutdowns. Despite a \$98 billion surplus in 2022 to 2023, the state failed to retire its unemployment debt unlike 48 other states. Creating a payment plan to eliminate the debt over time would save interest costs and help Californians by enabling job creators to boost employment.

The governor's May revision announcement will happen in May, and I will be paying close attention to see if the administration's priorities reflect those of all Californians.

State Sen. Roger Niello represents District 6, which includes Antelope, Arden-Arcade, Carmichael, Citrus Heights, Clay, Fair Oaks, Folsom, Foothill Farms, Franklin, Galt, Gold River, Herald, Mather, Orangevale, Rancho Cordova, Rancho Murietta and Wilton in Sacramento County. The district also includes Auburn, Granite Bay, Lincoln, Loomis, Newcastle, Penryn, Rocklin, Roseville and Sheridan in Placer County. To reach the senator, call 916-772-0571 or email [senator.niello@senate.ca.gov](mailto:senator.niello@senate.ca.gov). ★

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# Spring Football Sets Record Attendance



The Sacramento State football team completed its off-season practice with the annual Spring Game at Hornet Stadium on April 12. Photo by Sacramento State University Athletics

## Sacramento State University News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)**- In front of a record-setting spring game crowd of more than 7,000 fans, the Sacramento State football team completed its off-season practice with the annual Spring Game at Hornet Stadium on April 12.

In a controlled setting, the offense accumulated over 500 yards and scored 10 touchdowns while the defense intercepted a pass and forced five tackles-for-loss, including three sacks.

“Sacramento is a football town and we’re going to continue to make sure we have a great fan experience to bring fans here and give them a great product on the field to be proud of,” Sacramento State head coach Brennan Marion said. “I just told the players that it’s really about their work and commitment to the program that’s got excitement going and the buzz and the energy. None of this

happens without the players’ hard work and what they’ve done. I’m just very grateful to everybody in Sacramento who showed up and supported us.”

The scrimmage began with the offense starting at their own 25-yard line. After allowing the offense to convert a third-and-2 for a first down, the defense responded with a third-down sack from Xavier Williams to end the drive.

The next series saw Cardell Williams lead the offense on an 11-play drive which was capped by a 1-yard rush of his own for the game’s first touchdown. The two big plays in that series were an 18-yard rush from Michael Johnson and an 11-yard scamper from Williams. The defense again had a response as Jayland McGlothen sacks Williams on the final play of the first quarter.

The second quarter placed the ball at the defense’s 40-yard line, but the defense struck first when Koa Akui intercepted Carson

Conklin along the sideline for the only turnover of the game. Williams started his next series with a 40-yard toss to tight end Logan Tanner deep across the middle of the field for a touchdown.

After halftime, the offense was hard to slow down. Rodney Hammond caught a 27-yard touchdown pass from Conklin on the opening drive and Damian Henderson II found the end zone on a 4-yard rush on the second offensive series.

The defense then produced back-to-back stops with an incompleting on third-and-10 and later a sack by Hunter Boeddeker on third-and-5.

Santino Chavez made his debut on the following series and completed all five of his pass attempts for a total of 40 yards. Chavez capped the series with a 4-yard fade to Tommy Poe for a score.

With ball starting at the defense’s 25-yard line, Jamar Curtis tallied rushes of four, eight and 13 yards to score an offensive touchdown. The defense then got a stop

and saw the offense miss a 41-yard field goal attempt to keep the team off the board. Conklin responded with a 23-yard run of his own and the drive was sealed with a 2-yard plunge from Hammond.

The offense continued to pile on points as Williams had a 24-yard completion to Ajon Bryant to set up a 1-yard quarterback sneak for a score. Conklin added a 4-yard touchdown pass to Sammy Norris and Hammond had a 1-yard plunge for his second score.

The quarterback trio of Conklin, Williams and Chavez completed 22-of-37 passes with four touchdowns and an interception. The completions were spread between 14 players with Onterio Smith, Jr., leading the way with four receptions for 42 yards. Ten players had carries with Williams rushing for 99 yards and two scores and Curtis compiling 50 yards.

“I was proud of all three (quarterbacks) to just put it together today and go out there and give us a chance to go down

the field and score,” Marion said. “Today was just our base generic offense. I always say that’s what you’re going to know, when the game’s on the line, that’s what you’re going to depend on, and I was proud of how the guys operated it.”

Defensively, Brodie Tagalao, Xavier Williams and McGlothen each had sacks while Jalen Williams, Diego Davis and DeSean Watts combined for two tackle-for-losses.

“The guys flew around and made big plays,” Marion said. “The first team defense shut out the one offense in the beginning and really got after it and I was proud of how they competed and how physical they were. We’ve got to continue to shore some things in the back end, but I like the way that the front seven is playing right now.”

Sacramento State will start its season on Aug. 30 at South Dakota State. The team’s first home game will come on Sept. 13 against Mercyhurst. ★

# Beavers Sweep Singles and Doubles

## American River College News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - American River College’s Gavin Sonntag won the singles, and Tarang Sharma/Arjun Sivakumar won the doubles, at the Big 8 Individual Championships played on April 3-5.

The tournament, hosted by American River College, is an individual event comprised of six singles players and three doubles teams from each team in the Big 8 Conference. Sonntag won in singles for the second consecutive year, becoming only the second player in school history to win the event twice.

Sonntag defeated Beaver teammates in the semifinal and final. In the semifinal he beat Sharma 6-3, 6-2 and in the championship match he beat Sivakumar 6-1, 7-6 (3) in a very high



Above left: American River College’s Gavin Sonntag won the singles event, at the 2025 Big 8 Individual Championships. Above right: Tarang Sharma (left) and Arjun Sivakumar won the doubles event at the Big 8 Individual Championships hosted by American River College on April 3-5. Photos by American River College Athletics

quality and tightly contested second set.

In the doubles, Sharma/Sivakumar dominated the draw, losing a total of seven games in the four matches on their way to the title. In the championship match, they beat last year’s conference champions, Enrique Silveira/Sonntag.

Silveira was battling through an ankle injury and was not at full strength for the tournament. Other

highlights from the tournament included Declan Moley beating Folsom Lake No. 2 Caleb Ion in three sets to reach the quarterfinal, Landon Arendt reaching the quarterfinal in singles, and Arendt/Moley advancing to the doubles semifinal.

All six Beaver singles players and all three doubles teams qualified for the individual championships at Ojai which are set to begin on April 24. ★

# Aggies Lead Academic All-Conference Awards



Twenty-three members of the University of California Davis women’s swimming and diving team were named in the Academic All-Conference list for the winter quarter by the Big West Conference. Photo by University of California Davis

## University of California Davis News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - On a list released on April 14th by the Big West Conference, 23 members of the University of California (UC) Davis women’s swimming and diving team were named in the Academic All-Conference list for the winter quarter.

In the discipline, 84 total athletes earned this nod across the entire conference. The Aggies lead the numbers by far, the only team to break into the twenties out of the rest of the conference competitors.

The Big West recognizes individuals academically per season, fall, winter, and spring, for all conference-sponsored sports. The Fall Academic All-Conference

Team was announced in January, and the Winter Academic All-Conference Team honors student-athletes from men’s basketball, women’s basketball, and women’s swimming and diving. The aquatic athletes also headlined the UC Davis numbers, making up most of the 31 individuals whom earned this award from the school.

In order to qualify for the Academic All-Conference honor, a student-athlete must carry a minimum 3.00 cumulative institutional grade point average, must have completed one full academic year at the member institution prior to the season for which the award is being received, and must have competed in at least 50 percent of the institution’s contests in the student-athlete’s respective sport. ★

# Native American Heritage Scholarship Announced

## By Grace Ogata-Beutler, Sacramento Republic Football Club

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Ahead of the club’s annual Native American Heritage Night on May 17, Sacramento Republic Football Club (Republic FC) and Wilton Rancheria announced a new scholarship initiative that will support the educational aspirations of a local student.

The club is expanding the Republic Rising Scholars series with a new \$1,000 scholarship for a regional student of Native American descent. The application process for the 2025 Indigenous Future Leaders scholarship is open at SacRepublicFC.com/Scholarship and all entries must be completed by May 2.

“Creating opportunity and access to education is one of the most important steps we can

take in supporting our youth. Lack of access to funding should never be the barrier that stops them from becoming the leaders, creators and changemakers they want to be,” said Jesus Tarango, Chairman of Wilton Rancheria. “Our youth are our future, and they should feel empowered to dream big and pursue any path they choose. We’re honored to partner with Republic FC to help close the gaps and support their education goals.”

“We are proud to join Wilton Rancheria to launch a new scholarship in our annual series,” said Republic FC President and General Manager Todd Dunivant. “Empowering Indigenous students through education is not just an investment in individual aspirations, but it is also a commitment to honoring the heritage of those who have inhabited the Sacramento area for centuries, creating a more equitable future

for our region, and building a stronger community for generations to come.”

California is home to 109 federally recognized tribes, the most in the contiguous United States, and has the largest Native American population in the nation, accounting for over 12 percent of the total Native American population.

With over 26,000 American Indian K-12 students, California also has one of the largest American Indian student populations in the country. However, Native students face significant educational disparities, their college-going rate is about half that of their peers in other racial or ethnic groups, and only 42% graduate from college within six years, compared to 64% of all students, according to the Post-Secondary National Policy Institute.

Native American K-12 students also significantly trail their

peers in nearly every educational indicator. Nationally, American Indian and Alaska Native students experience a poverty rate 10 percent higher than the U.S. average, demonstrating the need for support through policy change, scholarships and more.

To be eligible for the Indigenous Future Leaders scholarship, applicants must be of Native American descent and a resident of the six-county Sacramento region. They must also be enrolled in an eligible high school or in a minimum of six units at a California Community College and intend to enroll in a four-year college or university, or a California Community College (minimum 12 units).

Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 2. A special committee of Republic FC representatives and Native American leaders including Chairman Jesus Tarango and Chief Operating Officer Chris

Franklin will select the grant winner.

In addition to the \$1,000 grant, the scholarship recipient will get the VIP treatment and a special halftime recognition at Republic FC’s Native American Heritage Night match on Saturday, May 17. During the match, the club and Wilton Rancheria will showcase the different cultural traditions and heritage of the Indigenous People who have been the original stewards of the region for centuries.

Fans will have the opportunity to shop in the pop-up makers market showcasing local, indigenous businesses. A new merch collection featuring the artwork of former Chairman Andrew Alejandro from the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians will be available at the team’s retail locations. A limited-edition scarf developed by Alejandro will be given to the first 2,000 fans in attendance. ★



# John F. Kennedy Assassination Files Revealed 'A State Within a State'



Harold Pease Ph. D.

By Harold Pease Ph. D.,  
LibertyUnderFire.org

The vast importance of the John F. Kennedy (JFK) Assassination Files, hidden from the public for 62 years through multiple congressional hearings over the years, just released by President Donald Trump under enormous opposition to its release, was not who killed John F. Kennedy, but that the entity who did still exists.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has always been the prime suspect. I was a boy of 16 and heard this at the time. This notion that it was more than just Oswald was quickly smothered by the then Deep State media who preferred and promoted the lone-wolf narrative, but it never felt right nor was it ever fully accepted by most Americans. The Federal Bureau of Investigation "suddenly uncovered" 2,000 John F. Kennedy related files, these reveal the Central Intelligence Agency as a "state within a state" and most responsible for the assassination.

These files prove the existence

of the Deep State in 1963 powerful enough by then, over years of development and secrecy, to kill the president of the United States and keep that fact from being revealed until all responsible for the death were unpunished and safely dead. There is no organization that is more Deep State than the Central Intelligence Agency.

This is the importance of the John F. Kennedy Assassination Files. Second to this in importance is, since it was never fully revealed, removed and punished then, it is still in place 62 years later in our day. These files show it is not unreasonable to believe that they also want Donald Trump dead as he too, like Kennedy, seeks to reveal them.

Every president from both political parties had access to these files and chose not to have them declassified. Two presidents in particular knew the intimate details up close and personal. Lyndon Baines Johnson, who benefited most by Kennedy's death by replacing him as president, and Jerald Ford who was a member of the Johnson appointed Warren Commission to hide our own governments involvement in the assassination of our own.

LibertyUnderFire has published much on the assassination over the many years and as new things came out. Mostly the new documents reveal what those who have followed this story already knew but it is good for the new generation.

Yes, the documents first tried to blame the assassination on Cuba and the Soviets. We, among others debunked this story. There were three reasons Kennedy was assassinated:

He opposed the CIA's Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.

He wanted America's withdrawal from the Vietnam War

He opposed the Federal Reserve's Central Bank currency control authorizing the printing of silver certificates in defiance of it (Why the Deep State Assassination of John F. Kennedy? LibertyUnderFire.com, Dec 6, 2023).

Opposition to these three issues could not be tolerated. Kennedy could not be controlled by them so they could not wait another year for a new election to remove him.

The "new" files confirm that Lee Harvey Oswald was in fact a Central Intelligence Agency asset, "recruited by the CIA in JAPAN while he was in the service at the Naval Air Facility Atsugi in the late 1950's." The Naval Air Facility Atsugi (NAFA) was "a known CIA hub for covert operations, including U2 spy plane missions from 1957 to 1958" as per a suppressed document from his commander at the base at the time.

Documents show that "as late as 1996 this story was almost broke by 'a credible UPI reporter' and had to be covered up 30 years after the assassination."

The "CIA was deeply concerned about the story getting traction." They rightly realized it could be viewed "as a smoking gun." They allowed just enough information out "to appear transparent while withholding the most damning evidence that Oswald was recruited, trained, and groomed by the CIA during his time in Japan."

We soon learned of Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in

1959, his return to the U.S. in 1962, and his eventual role in the assassination in 1963. This was common knowledge soon after the assassination.

President Kennedy was warned of the presence of a "state within a state" or the Deep State as we call it today. Presidential adviser Arthur Schlesinger, in a 15-page Memo to John F. Kennedy called for Kennedy to break up the CIA in 1961.

"Schlesinger called the CIA a rogue 'state within a state'... his memo told the president 'The contemporary CIA possesses many of the characteristics of 'a state within a state' adding 'there is no doctrine governing our conduct of clandestine operations.'"

Schlesinger noted that, "A number of governments still in power know that they have been targets of CIA attempts at overthrow, not a state of mind calculated to stimulate friendly feelings" toward the US. He also wrote, "CIA operations have not been held effectively subordinate to US foreign policy," He told the president, "In practice the State Department had become a 'rubber stamp' for CIA clandestine operations."

A month after John F. Kennedy's assassination, former President Harry Truman, "echoed Schlesinger's fears outlined in the 1961 Memo. There is something about the way the CIA has been functioning that is casting a shadow over our historic position."

Truman wrote, that "he set up the CIA to streamline information gathering... but between his presidency, and John F. Kennedy's, Truman witnessed a change in the CIA." He wrote of this, "For some time, I have been

disturbed by the way the CIA has been diverted from its original assignment. It has become operational and at times a policy-making arm of the government. I never had any thought that when I set up the CIA that it would be injected into peacetime cloak and dagger operation." Truman "called for the termination of the CIA operation duties, and the restoration of the agency to its original assignment as the intelligence arm of the president" (X22 Report, Ep. 3599b, 03/19/2025, 11:59).

Instead of destroying the Central Intelligence Agency as Kennedy intended the Central Intelligence Agency destroyed him, and worse, came to control the organization Kennedy created, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) responsible for administering civilian foreign aid and development Assistance throughout the world.

The "rogue state within a state" came to fund shadow governments and regime change in the world, even in Ukraine in 2014 and the United States in 2020 and thus far got away with it. Most importantly the "rogue state within a state" was never identified, removed or punished and thus is still very much alive today fighting Trump.

*Dr. Harold Pease is an expert on the United States Constitution and a syndicated columnist. He has dedicated his career to studying the writings of the Founding Fathers and applying that knowledge to current events. He taught history and political science from this perspective for over 30 years. Read his weekly columns at LibertyUnderFire.org Column #813.* ★

## How Transfer Taxes Steal Your Home Equity



Jon Coupal

By Jon Coupal,  
Howard Jarvis  
Taxpayers Association

As a homeowner, you dutifully pay your property taxes every year, no matter how painful. Notwithstanding Proposition 13's tax limitations, California is not a low property tax state. According to the Tax Foundation, we rank 18th out of 50 states in per capita property tax collections.

But it could be worse. Much worse. Without Prop. 13, most homeowners would see their property taxed at least double or, in some cases, by a factor of five or six. (For those curious about how much they would pay without Prop. 13, try out Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association's calculator at GuessingGame.org.)

Prop. 13 works by limiting the property tax rate to one percent and then limiting the increases in "taxable value" to two percent per year. It is the latter provision that allows homeowners in California to build up equity in their homes, year after year, without being forced to sell because of an annual tax bill based on current market value.

But there is another type of property tax that lies in wait for homeowners when they sell their property, transfer taxes. Technically, transfer taxes are not property taxes in the traditional sense because they are not imposed

as an incident of property ownership.

Rather, they are imposed on the sale or other transfer of real property.

When Howard Jarvis wrote Prop. 13, he knew that, if he just limited the ad valorem (based on value) property tax, governments would circumvent that limitation by quickly imposing other local taxes. That's why Prop. 13 expressly prohibited taxes on the sale of property. Here's the language: "Cities, Counties and special districts, by a two-thirds vote of the qualified electors of such district, may impose special taxes on such district, except ad valorem taxes on real property or a transaction tax or sales tax on the sale of real property within such City, County or special district." (emphasis added).

To any normal, fair-minded person, this constitutional language is crystal clear in prohibiting transfer taxes. But the judiciary in California is neither normal nor fair-minded. Over a strong dissent, the California Supreme Court defined "special taxes" as only those taxes that were for a "special purpose." This created a massive loophole and severely in a way that limited the reach of Prop. 13.

At the time of Proposition 13's passage in 1978, state law permitted the collection of a "documentary stamp tax" on transferring of interests in real property. The tax, still imposed in many jurisdictions, is relatively modest, with the standard rate being \$1.10 per \$1,000 of value.

But now many cities are imposing real estate transfer taxes in excess of \$45 per \$1,000 of value based on the Home Rule doctrine that grants charter cities more taxing authority. Moreover, under Home Rule, cities can impose higher rates for more valuable property rather than the flat rate of \$1.10 per \$1,000.

Even worse, because of the infamous Upland decision, local governments operating behind the front of "citizen groups" can propose "special taxes" by initiative, evading the requirement of a two-thirds vote of the electorate to pass. And while the courts originally said transfer tax revenue must go into a municipality's general fund, special taxes under Upland can be exclusively directed to whatever the local government or special interest group, wants.

The worst abuse of Upland occurred in Los Angeles. Pursuant, to Measure United to House Los Angeles (ULA) which became effective in 2023, high-value properties are now subject to very high transfer taxes. Although the ballot measure was sold to the voters as a "mansion tax," it applies to all properties, both commercial and residential, worth more than \$5 million, including apartments.

As expected, the United to House Los Angeles tax is generating a lot less revenue for homeless programs than the proponents thought. Instead, it has thrown the real estate market in one of America's largest cities into chaos. It has gotten so bad that even Mayor Karen Bass said she thinks the whole issue of Measure United to House Los Angeles should be revisited.

For ordinary homeowners, be aware that transfer taxes are only increasing, both in terms of the amount of the tax and the purposes for which they are being collected. There are very powerful progressive interests which intend to impose transfer taxes at a level to completely "recover" all the taxes that were not owed by homeowners because of Prop. 13.

And that's how they plan to steal the equity in your home.

*Jon Coupal is president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.* ★

## Kiley, Tenney Introduce the High-Quality Charter Schools Act



Kevin Kiley

Office of Representative  
Kevin Kiley  
News Release

**WASHINGTON, CA (MPG)** - On April 11, Representative Kevin Kiley (R-California) joined Representatives Claudia Tenney (R-New York), Nicole Malliotakis (R-New York) and Burgess Owens (R-Utah), in introducing the High-Quality Charter Schools Act to expand school choice by creating a new tax credit for charitable contributions to nonprofit charter school organizations.

The demand for high-quality charter schools continues to outpace supply, in part due to the high start-up costs of opening a new school, which can be up to \$20 million. This legislation would establish a 75% federal tax credit for qualified charitable contributions made to nonprofit charter school organizations with a proven record of success, incentivizing donations to support the development of more high-quality charter schools.

To receive contributions, each eligible organization must establish a separate qualified account to use eligible funds exclusively for charter school expansion within five years of

receipt, and must also conduct annual independent, certified financial and compliance audits.

"Charter schools have a proven track record of success, working to ensure every student, regardless of zip code, is given the opportunity to succeed. The High-Quality Charter Schools Act provides a tax credit for charitable donations that will develop and expand the number of charter schools to provide even more students access to affordable school choice options. In fact, this legislation could lead to nearly tripling the number of children who have the option of attending a charter school. Parents know what is best for their children, and by providing parents with options, we can improve educational outcomes across our country," said Representative Tenney.

"As a former high school teacher, I understand the important role education plays in our children's future and the importance of charter school options. The High-Quality Charter Schools Act is a critical measure to expand educational opportunity, uphold rigorous accountability, and foster innovation within our public school system. By supporting this legislation, we are investing in a future where all students can access a high-quality education," said Representative Kiley.

"School choice is the civil rights issue of our time, and our nation's future will be determined by whether we win the fight to ensure that every child, no matter their zip code, has access to high-quality

education. The High-Quality Charter Schools Act will help us reach that bright future, with up to \$5 billion a year in tax-credit-driven investment that could help open more than 15,000 new charter schools and unlock life-changing opportunities for millions of students across the country," said Representative Owens.

"Charter schools across the country, especially here in New York, are facing demand that far exceeds their capacity. I'm proud to join Representative Tenney in introducing this legislation to ensure students and families have greater access to the school of their choice, while also ensuring taxpayers see a strong return on investment in public education," said Representative Malliotakis.

"This legislation complements the Education Choice for Children Act, which will provide tax credits for contributions for tuition vouchers and which I strongly support," said Eva Moskowitz, founder and chief executive officer of Success Academy Charter Schools. "Together, these policies will demonstrate universal school choice as a national priority. Americans overwhelmingly support high-quality school choice but many elected officials have been intimidated by those who seek to preserve the broken status quo. I commend Representatives Tenney, Malliotakis Owens and Kiley for standing up to the special interests and putting America's parents first. This is what real leadership looks like." ★



# License to Kill

By Robert Lewis,  
CalMatters.org

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (MPG)

Ivan Dimov was convicted of reckless driving in 2013, after fleeing police in Washington state while his passenger allegedly dumped heroin out the window. Before that, he got six driving under the influence (DUI) convictions in California over a six-year period. None of that would keep him off the road.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles reissued him a driver's license in 2017. The next year, on Christmas Eve, he drove drunk again, running stop signs and a traffic light in midtown Sacramento, going more than 80 miles per hour, court records show. He T-boned another car, killing a 28-year-old man who was going home to feed the cat before heading to his mom's for the holiday.

Kostas Linardos had 17 tickets, including for speeding, reckless driving and street racing, and had been in four collisions. Then, in November 2022, he gunned his Ram 2500 truck as he entered a Placer County highway and slammed into the back of a disabled sedan, killing a toddler, court records show. He's now facing felony manslaughter charges.

In December of last year, while that case was open, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) renewed his driver's license.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles routinely allows drivers like these, with horrifying histories of dangerous driving, including driving under the influence, crashes and numerous tickets, to continue to operate on our roadways, a CalMatters investigation has found. Too often they go on to kill. Many keep driving even after they kill. Some go on to kill again.

With state lawmakers grappling with how to address the death toll on our roads, CalMatters wanted to understand how California handles dangerous drivers. We first asked the district attorneys for all 58 counties to provide us with a list of their vehicular manslaughter cases from 2019 through early last year. Every county but Santa Cruz provided the information.

Because California has no centralized court system and records aren't online, we then traveled to courthouses up and down the state to read through tens of thousands of pages of files. Once we had defendants' names and other information, we were able to get Department of Motor Vehicles driver reports for more than 2,600 of the defendants, providing details on their recent collisions, citations and license status.

The court records and driving histories reveal a state so concerned with people having access to motor vehicles for work and life that it allows deadly drivers to share our roads, despite the cost. Officials may call driving a privilege, but they treat it as a right, often failing to take drivers' licenses even after they kill someone on the road.

We found nearly 40% of the drivers charged with vehicular manslaughter since 2019 have a valid license.

That includes a driver with two separate convictions for vehicular manslaughter, for crashes that killed a 16-year-old girl in 2009 and a 25-year-old woman in 2020. In July of last year, the Department of Motor Vehicles issued him a driver's license.

The agency gave licenses to nearly 150 people less than a year after they allegedly killed someone on the road, CalMatters found. And many drivers accused of causing roadway deaths don't appear to have stopped driving recklessly. Records show that nearly 400 got a ticket or were in another crash, or both, after their deadly collisions.

"It is somewhat shocking to see how much you can get away with and still be a licensed driver in the state of California," Placer County District Attorney Morgan Gire said. "I don't think anyone fully understands what you need to do behind the wheel to lose your driving privilege."

Almost as interesting as the information in the drivers' Department of Motor Vehicles records is what's not there.

Hundreds of drivers' Department of Motor Vehicles records



Jerrod Tejada holds a framed photo of his daughter Cassi Tejada, at his home in Visalia on March 6. Photo by Larry Valenzuela, CalMatters

simply don't list convictions for manslaughter or another crime related to a fatal crash, we found. The apparent error means some drivers who should have their driving privileges suspended instead show up in Department of Motor Vehicles records as having a valid license.

The cases we reviewed cut across demographics and geography. Defendants include farmworkers and a farm owner. They include off-duty police officers and people with lengthy rap sheets, drivers who killed in a fit of rage and others whose recklessness took the lives of those they loved most, high school sweethearts, siblings and children.

The tragedies span this vast state. From twisty two-lane mountain roads near the Oregon border to the dusty scrubland touching Mexico. From the crowded streets of San Francisco to the highways of the Inland Empire. From Gold Country to Timber Country, to Silicon Valley, to the almond capital of the world. So much death. More people than are killed by guns.

Dangerous drivers are able to stay on the roads for many reasons. The state system that targets motorists who rack up tickets is designed to catch clusters of reckless behavior, not long-term patterns. And while there are laws requiring the Department of Motor Vehicles to suspend a driver's license for certain crimes, like driving under the influence, there is no such requirement for many vehicular manslaughter convictions.

It's often up to the Department of Motor Vehicles whether to act. Routinely, it doesn't.

The Department of Motor Vehicles declined to make its director, Steve Gordon, who has been in charge since Governor Gavin Newsom appointed him in 2019, available for an interview to discuss our findings.

Chris Orrock, a Department of Motor Vehicles spokesperson, said the agency follows the law when issuing licenses. "We use our authority as mandated and as necessary," he said.

Even when the Department of Motor Vehicles does take away motorists' driving privileges, state officials, law enforcement and the courts are often unable or unwilling to keep them off the road. We found cases where drivers racked up numerous tickets while driving on a suspended license and faced little more than fines before eventually causing a fatal crash, even though authorities could have sent them to jail.

Taking away someone's driving privilege is no small decision. It can consign a family to poverty, affecting job prospects, childcare and medical decisions.

Still, the stakes couldn't be higher. More than 20,000 people died on the roads of California from 2019 to early 2024.

Kowana Strong thinks part of the problem is that lawmakers and regulators are too quick to treat fatal crashes as an unfortunate fact of life, as opposed to something they can address.

Her son Melvin Strong the Third, who went by his middle name, Kwaun, was finishing college and planning to start a master's program in kinesiology. He was killed by Dimov, the driver with six prior driving under the influence convictions.

Kwaun was a bright and innocent young man, she said, just starting



Cassi Tejada and Courtney Kendall. Photo courtesy of Butte County District Attorney

his life.

"It's just another accident as far as they're concerned," Kowana Strong said.

Young people think they're invincible. It's the old who know how unfair life is, Jerrod Tejada said.

His daughter Cassi Tejada was just 22. She was months from graduating from Chico State with a bachelor's degree in history and a plan to be a teacher. Outgoing and athletic, she wanted to travel, see the world and make her own life.

She had a girlfriend who was visiting. Courtney Kendall was 24 and a student at Louisiana State University.

On a Sunday afternoon in January 2022, a Volvo sports utility vehicle (SUV) topping speeds of 75 miles per hour ran a red light and smashed into their Jeep, court records show. The collision killed them both.

"The most difficult part, besides the incident, is every day that goes by you're always wondering what if. What would they be doing today?" Jerrod Tejada said. "Would they be married? Would they have developed into the career that they chose? Where would she be living?" Tanya Kendall lamented not being there to protect her daughter, hold her hand or say goodbye.

"Instead, I was left with the unbearable task of choosing what outfit she would be buried in. Buried, Your Honor. Not the gown she would wear to her graduation from Louisiana State University, the one she will never attend," the mother wrote in a letter to a Butte County judge. She added that she and her husband stood in their daughter's place, accepting her diploma.

Such pain was preventable.

The driver of the Volvo, Matthew Moen, had a blood alcohol level more than three times the legal limit, according to court filings. And it wasn't his first time drinking and driving. Moen was caught driving drunk in Oregon in 2016. He never completed the requirements of a diversion program and had an outstanding warrant at the time of the fatal crash, the Butte County district attorney's office said. In January 2020, he was convicted of driving under the influence in Nevada County for driving with a blood alcohol level more than twice the legal limit, given a couple of weeks in jail and put on probation for three years.

His license was valid at the time of the fatal 2022 crash, records show.

Across the country, states grapple with how to effectively spot and punish drivers who could be a danger on the road. Often they rely on a basic point system, with drivers

accruing points for various types of traffic violations and thresholds for when the state will take away a motorist's driving privileges. But like many, California has such high limits that drivers with a pattern of reckless behavior can avoid punishment.

The state suspends a driver's license for accumulating four points in a year, six points in two years or eight points in three years. What does it take to get that many points? Using a cellphone while driving is zero points. A speeding ticket is a point. Vehicular manslaughter is two points.

Between March 2017 and March 2022, Trevor Cook received two citations for running red lights, got two speeding tickets and was deemed responsible for two collisions, including one in which someone was injured, court records show. (A third red light ticket was dismissed.) At-fault collisions add a point to a driver's license, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles. But the incidents were spaced out enough that none resulted in a suspension.

So Cook had a valid license on April 14, 2022, just a month after his last speeding ticket, when he blew through a Yolo County stop sign at more than 100 miles per hour.

At that exact moment, Prajal Bista passed through the intersection on his way to work after dinner and a movie with his wife, according to details of the crash that prosecutors included in court filings. Bista was driving the speed limit and on track to make it to work 30 minutes early.

The force of the collision nearly split Bista's Honda Civic in half. Investigators determined Bista had been wearing his seat belt, but the crash tore it apart. They found his body 75 feet from the intersection.

On March 28, 2024, Cook pleaded no contest to felony vehicular manslaughter.

Just a month later, on April 30, the Department of Motor Vehicles issued Cook his current driver's license, agency records show. Less than two weeks after that, he got a ticket for disobeying a traffic signal.

Melinda Aiello, chief deputy district attorney in Yolo County, said her office didn't know anything about the new license or the red light ticket until contacted by CalMatters. What's more, the manslaughter conviction, like hundreds of others we found, isn't listed on Cook's driving record.

Cook's license was still listed as valid in California Department of Motor Vehicles records as of early 2025. But for now, he's off

the roadways. Last summer, Cook started serving time in state prison.

"It's stunning to me that eight months later, his license is still showing as valid and the conviction for killing someone while driving is not reflected in his driving record," Aiello said. "You killed somebody. I'd think there might be some license implications."

Orrock, the Department of Motor Vehicles spokesperson, said he couldn't speak directly to why so many convictions are missing. But, he said, "we acknowledge that the process and coordination between the judicial system and the Department of Motor Vehicles must continually evolve to address any gaps that have been identified. And we're looking into that."

Roughly 400 drivers accused of causing a fatal crash since 2019 received a ticket, got in another collision or did both after the date they allegedly killed someone on the road. (The reports don't show whether the drivers were found at fault, only that they were involved in an accident.) That's about 15% of the drivers for whom we could get Department of Motor Vehicles reports.

Drivers like William Beasley.

From 2011 to 2016, Beasley collected five speeding tickets and a citation for running a red light in Sacramento County, court records show. Then around 9 a.m. on a sunny Tuesday in October 2019, he killed a man.

William and Deborah Hester were crossing the street to go to a dentist appointment at a veterans facility when Beasley's silver pickup sped toward them. They thought they would make it across. But the truck didn't stop. At the last minute, William Hester shoved his wife out of the way. She heard the truck smash into her husband's body and screamed, according to court records.

Beasley still didn't stop. He fled the area and tried to hide his truck. Investigators used nearby cameras and license plate readers to track him down days later. Beasley admitted to being in a collision.

He later pleaded no contest in Sacramento to hit-and-run and misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter. A probation report in the case revealed Beasley was nearly blind in his left eye.

"Mr. Hester is with me every moment of my life," Beasley said in an interview. "I took away a father, a grandfather, a husband, and they consider me a murderer. That's not who I am."

"My accident with Mr. Hester was just that, an accident. Nothing more," he said, adding that he worked as a courier for years and sometimes got speeding tickets because he was rushing.

In May 2020, the Department of Motor Vehicles took away his driving privileges.

In November 2022, Beasley got his license back, "because I could and I needed to," he said, adding that people deserve second chances, particularly for accidents.

Almost immediately, less than three weeks after getting his license, he was in another collision, his Department of Motor Vehicles report shows. In early 2024, he got in yet another. His license was suspended when his car insurance was canceled, records show.

"It makes no sense to me that they would give him a license and give him the opportunity to hurt someone else," said Loriann Hester Page, William Hester's daughter.

Her father's death broke the family, she said. He drove a tank in the Army, played guitar in a band, and liked to ride horses.

"My dad was such a wonderful, kind man," she said. "He would always walk in a room and wanted to make everyone smile."

Beasley said he doesn't plan to drive again.

"I am 75 years old," he said. "I am blind in one eye. I have had a situation where a man was killed, he lost his life. I am not going to repeat that situation at all."

*This is the first piece in a series about how California lets dangerous drivers stay on the road. Sign up for our License to Kill newsletter to be notified when the next story comes out and to get more behind-the-scenes information from our reporting.* ★