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Adding an Official
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Pocket News

VOL 34 • ISSUE 8 *Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years* APRIL 25, 2025

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INSIDE**

**CITY CREWS WRAP
UP RAIN PATROLS**



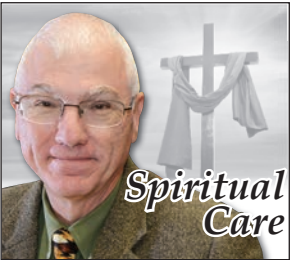
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**NEW GM COMES
WITH RESPECT**



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**LEARN TO SHARE
THE ROAD ON
LIFE'S HIGHWAY**



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Free Bike Safety Event at Farmers Market



GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market events coordinator Susan Riddell said, "We've had the California Highway Patrol at our market before, but this is the first time we've ever hosted their rodeo."

**Story and photo
by Stephen B. Clazie**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Kids in kindergarten through fifth grade are invited to learn safe riding skills on their bicycles and scooters at a bike rodeo on Sunday, April 27 hosted by the California Highway Patrol Sacramento office and the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market (GHP).

The event is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Elks Lodge 6's parking lot at 6446 Riverside Blvd.

The CHP will conduct a five-station bike rodeo focused on teaching safe riding skills, including proper stopping at stop signs and lights, rider balance, turning and maintaining a safe speed.

GHP's event coordinator, Susan Riddell, said, "We've had the California

Highway Patrol at our market before, and kids got to sit in a patrol car, but this is the first time we've ever hosted their rodeo. We are really happy to host this very worthwhile community event."

Elk 6 President Rob Moore said, "In California, pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities account for 20 percent of all traffic-related deaths within CHP jurisdiction." As a parent

of two small children, he is proud that the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market is sponsoring this important activity for children from seven local schools.

Riddell emphasized, "Bike rodeos are a great way for kids and their parents to learn about biking safety through hands-on practice." Kids are encouraged to bring their bikes and develop skills that

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Big Day of Giving Telethon to Stream Live



Confetti rains down to celebrate Sacramento's annual Big Day of Giving. Photos courtesy of ACC Senior Services

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - ACC Senior Services, a local 501(c)3 non-profit, is proud to take part in Sacramento's annual Big Day of Giving with a vibrant four-hour live stream telethon on May 1. The telethon will be all about celebrating community, culture and compassion for older adults.

ACC Senior Services has set a goal of raising \$400,000 to help support and expand their award-winning senior services. Like many nonprofits, ACC is still navigating the lingering effects of the COVID crisis and ongoing economic challenges and needs the public's help.

The telethon, which will stream live on YouTube and Facebook from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., will showcase an array of local talent and engaging segments including musical performances by local favorites such as the Pocket Pickers and Maeley Tom, heartfelt storytelling from the ACC community, fitness and wellness spotlights from ACC instructors and a special cooking demonstration by Chef Toki Sawada of the beloved local Japanese restaurant, Binchoyaki.

Alongside the entertainment, the telethon will spotlight ACC's vital resources and educational programs that support Sacramento's growing senior population. Viewers will hear directly from staff, volunteers and community members about the impact ACC has made on our community over the past 50 years, and how

Continued on Page 4

Two Sides of a Coin Curiosity Feeds the Art of Mike and Laurie Blanchard

By J.G. Wirt

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Mike and Laurie Blanchard have grown older and wiser, yet they still think like art kids looking to put on a show.

Their current projects are both in print: hers a healthy-lifestyle magazine and his a vintage skateboarding photo retrospective.

Married 30 years, the Blanchards also take side roads into digital publishing, painting, photography, music, tarot reading, gardening, home improvement, travel, rat rods and old motorcycles. For them, the more interests, the better. And they are blessed to have each other as in-house muses and constructive critics.

During a two-hour visit at their Rosemont home, the couple shared with the newspaper how they indulge their individual and collective interests.

Their collaboration began when each played in Sacramento-area bands in the 1990s. Their acts supported each other in local gigs and road shows. Later, she added a

Continued on Page 2



Laurie and Mike Blanchard, with an image from younger days, pose for a photo in their Rosemont home. Photo by J.G. Wirt



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Two Sides of a Coin

Continued from Page 1
June Carter-meets-Grace Slick kind of harmony to his Americana quintet, Mike Blanchard & The Californios.

Visual art also came later to Laurie Blanchard, just prior to the pandemic. She said that her husband's ease at creating sketches or watercolors eventually led her to take paint to canvas. "He was always artistic and I wasn't," she said. "Watching him create, I was always, 'What a beautiful creative outlet' but I didn't think I could do it. And I had this huge block on visual art and I had to work through that in order to get to the point where I could even try."

"Once I could get past that self-judgment, I began to recognize that I had my own unique way, and he definitely supported that and encouraged that," Laurie Blanchard said. "Generally, he stays in his lane unless I ask his opinion."

"Her interests are different than mine and her inner psychology is different than mine, so what she's going to paint is a lot different than what I do," Mike Blanchard said.

He has studied and practiced photography, painting and general design since junior college in Santa Barbara; he also earned a journalism degree from California State University, Sacramento.

Mike Blanchard was a photographer for Thrasher magazine and covered the 1980s skateboard scene with a keen eye and a fast lens. His earlier band, the alt-country/punk Tattooed Love Dogs, started in the 1980s, is in the Sacramento



Mike and Laurie Blanchard are blessed to have each other as constructive critics. Photo courtesy of Laurie Blanchard



Mike Blanchard painted a series of images of vintage spark plugs. Photo courtesy of Mike Blanchard

Area Music Awards (SAMMIES) Hall of Fame.

Later, while the couple were bringing up three sons, Mike Blanchard's day job was as the hands-on manager of a repair shop. It fed his passion for vintage import cars and unusual two-wheeled vehicles. Today, his love for vintage film cameras feeds his day job as the e-commerce manager for a camera shop.

Laurie Blanchard worked in sales and marketing during the family-raising days. Previously, she was a Nashville songwriter and musician, both solo and in a group called Her Six Daughters.

Her eventual dive into visual art landed in a distinctive mode of finger-painting. Commissions for original art to decorate clients' homes keep Laurie Blanchard busy at a Midtown Sacramento studio and she does tarot readings for individuals

and at area events. Recently, she added other spiritual studies and credits to her role as a seeker and teacher.

The Blanchards keep it together by exploring apart. She has gone overseas on charity missions and often treks out of the area for spiritual retreats and workshops.

He has been known to take working tours to the East Coast, ride a vintage motorcycle to Monterey or pilot his hot rod solo to the Bonneville Salt Flats.

All this is to say that the Blanchards are not your joined-at-the-hip artsy couple. They both say that their approach to art couldn't have happened with another partner. And they also say others should tune into their own partners' creative and spiritual sides.

During the newspaper visit, Laurie Blanchard was more meditative and cerebral while Mike Blanchard

was more declarative, although he also noted that turning an idea into art requires creative immersion.

They agree that art comes from curiosity. And they advocate turning off the TV to open channels to creativity. Other modern screens and social influences also detract from the creative potential, they say.

"When you spend time creating, you're unplugging from the machine," Laurie Blanchard said of the marketing and political message streams. "There is something almost subversive in creating art."

In their unfussy yet put-together great room are some of their recent paintings. Hers include florals, aspens and faces. His latest are still-life renderings of vintage spark plugs. Laurie Blanchard said the florals and trees have large appeal to women. But Laurie Blanchard said her own muse goes wild for



Mood and color meld in one of Laurie Blanchard's custom-painted aspen pieces. Photo by J.G. Wirt

her face portraits, which she paints for herself.

"Those are the easiest," Laurie Blanchard said, "when I'm just doing it for me. I'm in flow state. I'm just doing. And sometimes, it goes horribly awry and goes in the dumpster. But sometimes, there's a breakthrough and you find some new thing."

Mike Blanchard has shown and sold his art and photography at local shows and to individual clients. He described doing extensive research into vintage Vespa motor scooters to paint a piece for a collector of Vespas and art.

"What the client got was something that is individual, meaningful to them in the commission," he said.

The Blanchards' one-time print magazine, Rust, profiled other artists, motor-heads, tattooists and models. After going out of print, it later became a digital showcase for features by Mike Blanchard and others on niche interests ranging from weird bicycles to vintage motorcycles, to craftspeople, racing legends and rarely seen cars.

Both Blanchards have extensive collaborative and promotional networks due

to their decades in the local culture, and they use social media and word of mouth to sell their work.

"She has a better clientele than I have," Mike Blanchard joked. "She sells way more paintings than I do."

Laurie Blanchard replied to her husband, "You have so many projects going on. I just hustle a little bit more. It doesn't always work but I get it into cafes. I do a lot of florals and I try to keep it reasonably priced."

She also posts images of new paintings on social media and her website and hangs her work at shows.

Laurie Blanchard has completed a solo album, which the couple is planning to self-release and promote.

And her Spirited Soul quarterly has potential for community-building and digital reach, she said

But for now, show and tell is over. The Blanchards, elders of the Sacramento creative scene, are heading out to pick up the grandkids for the day.

Get the latest from Laurie Blanchard at SpiritedSoulMagazine.com. See Mike Blanchard's work at Rustmag.com. ★

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City Crews Wrap Up Rain Patrols

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Although City of Sacramento crews prepare all year long for the rainy season, that work intensifies when storms do arrive, typically from October to April.

Those efforts, known within the city as “rain patrol,” involve dozens of workers in the Department of Utilities’ stormwater and wastewater division.

Crews monitor weather conditions, water levels and infrastructure conditions, such as levees, ditches, creeks and canals, as well as respond to clogged storm drains, keeping pumps operating during power outages and other damage caused by storms.

As temperatures warm up and the threat of storms diminishes, staff are celebrating the end of rain patrol after a successfully managed season of rainfall.

“We had minimal impacts from storms this year and that success is due to the work and dedication of our staff,” said Charley Cunningham, manager of the stormwater and wastewater division. “They always deserve a big ‘thank you’ because these crews work hard in all kinds of hazardous conditions.”

During the 2024/25 rain patrol season, crews responded to nearly 1,500 work orders and service requests, which helped prevent flooding in Sacramento.

Although Sacramento is protected by



City of Sacramento crews, known as “rain patrol,” prepare all year long for the rainy season. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

levees, all rain that falls in the city must be pumped out.

Staff must operate and maintain all stormwater infrastructure, which is critical to keeping residents and businesses safe, according to Cunningham.

“It’s important to know that without the hard work of our staff, Sacramento would be much more prone to flooding,” he said.

With another rainy season behind them, city crews are shifting their focus to annual maintenance and preparation for next year’s storms.

“These efforts don’t just happen in the stormy months. During the dry season, we’re out there making sure all of our facilities are in good order so they work when rain does fall again.” Cunningham said. ★

Easter Bunny Arrived Early at Elks Lodge 6

Story and photos by Stephen B. Clazie

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

- Elks Lodge 6 celebrated Easter a week early. Exalted Ruler Rob Moore announced, “The special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast with Easter Bunny photos and an outdoor egg hunt was a great success.”

Said Glen Smith, who is in charge of the Elks Breakfast, “It was a beautiful day for an egg hunt.” “The egg hunt was open to the public, and breakfast participation was not necessary.”

The special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast featured a ham carving station, cinnamon rolls and an egg casserole. Smith gave a big shout-out to “the Elk volunteers for their countless hours of preparation and cooking to make this community outreach a success.”

Smith also emphasized, “The pairing with the farmer’s market and Vic Cima created an enjoyable morning and afternoon.”

A farmer’s market was also held that day, as the GreenHaven-Pocket Farmers Market has moved from Saturday to Sunday. ★



Bob Luttrell brought his family to the special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast with the Easter Bunny and an egg hunt. Pictured are Bob’s son-in-law, Dustin Finch; Bob, his wife Kathy; and daughter Shelby, overlooking the large collection of eggs gathered by Holland and Sofia Finch.



David Moore, wearing his colorful Easter hat, is all ready for the special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast.

Free Bike Safety Event at Farmers Market

Continued from Page 1
will help them become safer, more confident bicyclists and avoid common accidents.

Station 1: Helmet Check

No child should participate in the program without a properly fitted helmet.

Station 2: Bike Fit

This station helps adjust the bike to fit each child correctly.

Station 3: Wheel Shop

Children will learn how to make simple

adjustments and repairs to their bikes or scooters.

Station 4: Following Rules

At this station, children learn how traffic works. They learn about yielding, passing, predicting traffic flow and the traffic laws that relate to cyclists. Children also learn the hand signals they should use to alert drivers to their actions, and the importance of riding with traffic.

Station 5: Ride Right

At this station, children learn how to balance, start

and stop, ride straight, ride slowly, scan and signal. Each child will practice these skills on the mini-road.

The California Highway Patrol’s John Ortega will be in charge of the rodeo, and he wants to remind everyone to bring their helmets and bikes.

He also said, “It is often hard for drivers to see bicyclists and skaters.”

One of the most common reasons drivers give after colliding with a cyclist is, “I didn’t see them.” ★

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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 nonprofit organizations serving Sacramento, Yolo, El Dorado and Placer counties are participating. Each nonprofit organization has a profile at 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 nonprofit organizations. 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 Sacramento Region Community 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.

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 sacregcf.org. ★



Big Day of Giving Telethon to Stream Live

Continued from Page 1 your donations can help expand that mission.

It is a great opportunity to learn more about the array of services ACC offers the community.

“We’re excited to celebrate this day of generosity with music, food, and meaningful stories,” said Scott Okamoto, ACC Senior Services Marketing and Fund Development Director.

“It’s not just about giving; it’s about coming together to uplift and support our elders.”

Adding to the festivities, ACC is hosting a food and bake sale, featuring an assortment of homemade and local treats.

Pre-sales are open now at www.accsv.org/



Delicious homemade local foods will be available for sale to support the Big Day of Giving on May 1.

bdog2025. Donations to the nonprofit can be made online anytime at accsv.org/bdog2025.

On May 1, the Big Day of Giving, donations can be made through the website bigdayofgiving.org/

accseniorservices.

Donations can also be dropped off in person at ACC Senior Services, 7334 Park City Drive, Sacramento.

Whether you give early or join the movement on



The ACC Senior Services Big Day of Giving telethon on May 1 will feature musical performances by local talent. Photos courtesy of ACC Senior Services

May 1, every contribution helps ACC continue to empower seniors to live independently, stay active, and feel connected in a supportive environment.

Join ACC in making this Big Day of Giving one to remember. ★



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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. ★

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). ★




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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 coho 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. ★

Spring Football Sets Record Attendance



The Sacramento State football team completed its offseason practice with the annual Spring Game at Hornet Stadium on April 12. Photo by Sacrament 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 offseason 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 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’s 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 incompletion 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 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 Tagaloa, 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 at 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 Alejandre from the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians will be available at the team’s retail locations. A limited-edition scarf developed by Alejandre will be given to the first 2,000 fans in attendance. ★

SacRT Cameras Identify Bike-Lane Violations

**City of Sacramento
News Release**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento and Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) are partnering to launch automated bike lane enforcement, making Sacramento the first city in California – and in the United States – to enforce bike lanes using technology installed

on transit buses. This initiative expands upon SacRT’s automated bus stop enforcement program, which currently equips 100 SacRT buses with camera systems to identify and report vehicles illegally parked along bus stops. Now, that same technology will also target illegal parking in bike lanes, a move by the City of Sacramento to protect

vulnerable road users and improve roadway safety citywide.

Why This Program is Essential

When vehicles park illegally in bike lanes, cyclists are forced into traffic, putting them at greater risk of serious injury or worse. By keeping bike lanes clear, this program enhances safety and predictability

for everyone on the road — whether they are walking, biking, driving or riding transit.

How This Program Works

One hundred SacRT buses are equipped with front-facing cameras powered by machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) from Hayden AI. These cameras detect and

record instances of illegal parking in Sacramento bus stops and bike lanes. When a violation occurs, the system captures a short video and a photo of the vehicle’s license plate, and the exact time and location of the incident.

This information is then sent to the City of Sacramento for review and violation processing.

As of Monday, April 14, drivers illegally parked in Sacramento bike lanes will

receive warning notices in the mail. Violations with an accompanying fine will be issued starting Friday, June 13.

This program is made possible by Assembly Bill 361, which authorizes California cities to use forward-facing cameras for enforcing parking violations in bike lanes and transit zones: a vital legislative step toward making streets safer for everyone.

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Senate Debates Adding an Official State Snake

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - According to the official news release from State Sen. Roger Niello’s office, the Governmental Organization Committee passed Senate Bill 765 on April 8. The bill establishes the giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*) as the official state snake.

Currently, California does not have an official state snake.

According to the California State Library website, California does have a plethora of other official state symbols. For example, the state bird is the California quail, the state fabric is denim, and the state fish is the golden trout.

Many obscure symbols make the State Library list, like folk dance, fossil,



Senate Bill 765, introduced by State Sen. Roger Niello, would establish the giant garter snake as the official state snake of California. Photo by Brian Hansen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

lichen and mushroom, but no snake currently makes that list.

Senate Bill 756 proposes to correct the oversight.

The official news release from Senator Niello’s office states:

The giant garter snake

was listed as threatened in California in 1971 and federally recognized as threatened in 1993. Its population has declined by more than 90% in the past century. Since then, there have been conservatory efforts in support of the

snake in the wetlands and rice fields.

“Found in wetlands across the state, the giant garter snake is an essential part of our natural heritage and helps keep the balance in the environment,” said Senator Roger Niello, the

author of Senate Bill 765. “I am proud to be part of the effort to make the giant garter snake the official snake and raise awareness about its important role in our state’s environment and agriculture.”

Michael Starkey, the Founder and Executive Director of Save The Snakes, said, “Designating the giant garter snake as California’s official State Snake is more than a symbolic gesture; it’s a crucial step in raising awareness about this vulnerable species and its vital role in our state’s ecosystems.”

He continued, “This designation will amplify conservation efforts, fostering public education and ensuring the protection of this unique and ecologically significant reptile for generations to come. It’s a chance to highlight the

importance of wetlands and the delicate balance of nature within California.”

California Rice Commission President and CEO Tim Johnson expressed the commission’s support, “With 95% of California’s wetlands now gone, rice fields and the canals that feed them have become valuable habitat for the giant garter snake. Our farmers are working with researchers and water districts to understand how our fields can provide even more habitat to this iconic species.”

Senate Bill 765 now moves on to the Senate Floor.

Elected in 2022, Senator Niello represents California Senate District 6, which covers portions of Placer and Sacramento counties. ★

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ABOUT TOWN

Cinco de Mayo Party May 3 at Elks 6

Mariachi music, salsa dancers, and dining and dancing are on the menu for Elks Lodge No. 6’s Cinco de Mayo celebration from 5 to 11 p.m. Saturday, May 3 at the lodge, 6446 Riverside Blvd.

Mariachi Nuevo Continental and Yemaya Dance Group will entertain, and Los Elegantes will provide the dance music. Tickets are \$40 per person. Call 916-422-6666 for tickets.

Area Museum Experiences

A sampling of must-see and must-do experiences and special activations offered by local museums include the following:

California Museum – Our War Too: Women in Service is a groundbreaking special exhibit honoring the nearly 350,000 American women who answered the call to serve their country during World War II.

Made up of unique and colorful artifacts from The National WWII Museum’s collection, the exhibit explores the efforts, struggles, and

accomplishments of these service-women, the impacts of which extend into the present day. Through May 4. Details at californiamuseum.org.

California Automobile Museum – Sixty Years of Mustang. A comprehensive history of the Mustang, from when it first hit the roads in 1965 to the current era of Mustangs.

Highlighting stories from prolific names in Mustang history like Saleen, Shelby and Iacocca. Interactive experiences and digital displays showcase the iconic Mustang image over the decades.

Elks Lodge 6 Calendar of Events

Elks Lodge 6 Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am; \$15 tax included.
Yoga, Monday 12 p.m., Wednesday 3:30 p.m. Lodge members free.
Martial Arts, Monday 5 p.m.
Pickleball, Monday, Wednesday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; Thursday, 4:30-7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 4-7 p.m.
Karaoke Nights, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7 p.m.
Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.net for weekly menu. ★

Residents Challenge American River Erosion Control Work



American River Tress members ask 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

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.

American River Trees encourages all interested parties to contact their elected representatives and let them know how you feel about this project.

Those interested can find more information and sample letters online at 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, please visit Americanrivertrees.org. ★



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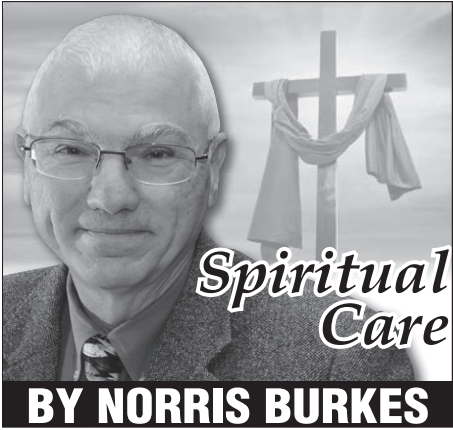
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Learn To Share the Road on Life’s Highway



Some years back, I was driving Interstate 99 south of Sacramento, Calif when a man began aggressively tailgating me.

Known as the most dangerous freeway in California, there is little room for traffic weavers like him. He was close enough that I could see his face redden in my rearview mirror. And of course, he could read the smirk on my face as I gloated over my strategic position ahead of him.

When traffic finally allowed me to move into the right lane, I displayed an upturned palm that invited His Excellency to proceed. But appeasement was too little, too late.

He initiated aggressive movements, dropping back and speeding past and changing lanes. I answered his vulgar hand signals with moronic smiles and have-a-nice-day waves until he flashed a doubled fist, suggesting a roadside fight.

With evasive maneuvers exhausted, I finally led our rage parade onto the highway’s shoulder hoping to sucker him into exiting his pickup. With him afoot, my plan was to floor my Hyundai to escape velocity.

I knew this was a bad plan when I noticed he was searching for something behind his seat.

Being a smart aleck to a dangerous stranger is wrong, but my problem really began with the assumption that most of us make when we become randomly targeted by rage.

I assumed this man’s anger really was about me.

You’ve probably made the same assumption. It happens when the guy flips you off on the road or the woman screams at you for taking her parking space.

While it’s natural for you to go into a

defensive mode claiming your righteous innocence, it’s best to remember that their rage isn’t really about you. In fact, it’s even a little self-centered to think it is about you.

The reality of these rages is that we are collateral damage for folks like these.

For instance, I occasionally receive a caustic e-mail, something Anne Lamott aptly calls, “Orwellian memos detailing my thought crimes.”

Most of the time I know that, like the freeway driver, their anger isn’t about me; they are fighting battles I’m not privileged to see.

Recently, I got an e-mail from such an angry reader. When I replied from a defensive mode, he escalated our discussion by calling me every synonym of idiot. Recalling the road-rage incident, my second reply took a reconciling approach.

The reader sent a confessional apology adding details of his wife’s terminal illness and children who weren’t talking to him. Just like the interstate guy, this reader’s rage wasn’t about me.

It never ceases to amaze me that when I remember to squelch my defensiveness and respond in a caring manner, I will often get a sincere response. My smug attitude toward the driver only stirred his rage, but my soft answer to the reader turned away his wrath and made a friend.

Short of a soft answer on the freeway, I sped back into traffic, spitting gravel on the man’s truck. After another 10 minutes of cat-and-mouse, I took the freeway exit labeled, “Galt Police Station.” Amazingly, the man followed me into town but finally broke off his chase when I entered the station’s driveway.

At the end of the day, the best answer to road rage on life’s highway may be contained in the sacred proverb that suggests, “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh answer stirs up anger.”

After all, we are all on a journey, so maybe it’s time to share the road.

Sign up to receive this weekly column in your email box at <https://thechaplain.net/newsletter/> or send me your email address to comment@thechaplain.net.

All of Norris’s books can be ordered on Amazon. Autographed copies can be obtained on his website www.thechaplain.net or by sending a check for \$20 for each book to 10566 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. ★

Concerts in the Park Returns in May

Downtown Sacramento Partnership News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On April 4, Downtown Sacramento Partnership announced the much-anticipated “Concerts in the Park” series lineup, bringing live music back to downtown Sacramento on Fridays at 6 p.m. starting May 2, 2025.

Booking major national touring artists, this string of concerts are a staple to the growing music scene in Sacramento.

Following the footsteps of other festivals and state fairs, this year “Concerts in the Park” is changing dates and times of the concert series. Beginning this season, gates will open at 6 p.m. and music will finish at 9:30 p.m.

While previous years have been 12 weeks of music, this year it will be nine, finishing the season at the end of June before the intense heat hits in July. The concert venue remains the same, Cesar Chavez Plaza.

“We’ve been very focused the last three years on adjusting ‘Concerts in the Park’ to be more reflective of Sacramento,” said Madelyn Bussola, Director of Communications and Outreach for Downtown Sacramento Partnership. “We started by adjusting the lineup to include more genres with their own specific nights, bringing in different partners and food and beverage options to make it more community-oriented. It’s only natural that as summers get warmer and downtown evolves that we also change the dates and times, not only to make it more comfortable, but also make it more safe. That’s always been our No. 1 priority.”

The one thing that the Partnership won’t change: the event will always be free. A purposeful choice in an increasingly expensive field.

“Concerts in the Park” has always been for the community, and in order for that to remain authentic, it has to be reflective of the changes happening within it,” said Michael Ault, Executive Director of Downtown Sacramento Partnership.

“Thirty-two years ago, these were a vehicle to



Downtown Sacramento’s “Concerts in the Park” is returning to César Chávez Plaza on May 2. Photos courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership



“Concerts in the Park” attendees enjoy the music and atmosphere.



The 2025 “Concerts in the Park” series will occur on Fridays, starting on May 2 and concluding on June 27.

keep office workers downtown for an hour or two longer after they clocked out at 5 p.m. Even with

return-to-office orders, we want downtown to be a destination of choice, not obligation, so it’s our

responsibility to provide an experience that people want to come to, in-office or not.”



The 2025 “Concerts in the Park” lineup was announced by Downtown Sacramento Partnership on April 4.

The dynamic and high-energy 32nd annual “Concerts in the Park” line-up contains local and national artists including XZIBIT (hip-hop), Phantogram (indie rock), Winona Fighter (emo), Jackie Greene (Americana) and Discrete (EDM), along with popular DJs including DJ Oasis, EDDY, and Joseph ONE.

A detailed lineup along with more information about “Concerts in the Park” is available at

downtownsac.org/downtown-sac-experiences/concerts-in-the-park.

A production of Downtown Sacramento Partnership, “Concerts in the Park” is proudly sponsored by Dignity Health, Donaghy Sales, Jack Daniels, Bonney Electrical, Heating & Air, Republic Services, Audacy, Citizen Hotel, Xfinity & Comcast Business, and Visit Sacramento.

César Chávez Plaza is at 910 I St. in Sacramento. ★

SacRT Launches Tap2Ride Contactless Fare Payment Option

Sacramento Regional Transit District News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) is introducing a new, easier way for riders to pay their fares. On April 1, SacRT launched Tap2Ride, a contactless fare payment system on all buses and SacRT GO paratransit service vehicles.

With Tap2Ride, riders can use their contactless debit or credit cards or mobile wallets to quickly and securely pay their fare when boarding. This eliminates the need for cash or paper tickets, making transit more convenient than ever before. Cash, along with all other current forms of valid fare, will continue to be accepted.

“SacRT is committed to making transit easier and more accessible for everyone,” said Henry Li, SacRT General Manager/CEO.

“Tap2Ride is a major step forward in modernizing our fare payment system, giving riders the speed and convenience they expect while improving efficiency across our network.”

Since April 1, riders can tap their contactless Visa or Mastercard credit/debit card or mobile wallet (smartphone or watch) on Tap2Ride devices installed on all SacRT vehicles.

Phase 1 of the Tap2Ride program offers riders the benefits of daily fare capping and 90-minute free transfers between bus routes similar to Connect Card. Riders simply tap their contactless payment option to the device upon boarding the bus and the Tap2Ride system will select the best fare (single ride or daily pass) based on their travel for the day. Riders can also continue to use contactless payment at light rail station vending machines. During this phase, fare transfer benefits

between bus and light rail will not be available when using Tap2Ride.

In late 2025, SacRT will launch Phase 2 of Tap2Ride, allowing riders to transfer seamlessly between buses and light rail using the same contactless payment method, with transfer benefits applied automatically.

“Cal-ITP is proud to partner with SacRT in making transit fare payments more convenient and accessible,” said Gillian Gillett, Chief of Caltrans’ Data and Digital Services Division and Program Manager of California Integrated Mobility. “This system enhances mobility by offering a secure, seamless way for riders to pay while ensuring those who qualify for discounts receive them automatically.”

Eligible riders can receive a 50% discount on basic fares through Tap2Ride. Discounts are

securely linked to a rider’s contactless payment card through the California Integrated Travel Project (Cal ITP) web tool, allowing for automatic fare reductions without the need for in-person verification. Riders can apply for their discount online at benefits.calitp.org.

“Digital ID is an important component of smarter and better-connected public services,” said State Chief Information Officer and Director of the California Department of Technology Liana Bailey Crimmins. “California’s Digital ID Framework is making it easier for riders to access the benefits they’re entitled to, no paperwork and no hassle, just a giant step toward a future where digital services make life easier for everyone.”

Tap2Ride offers a fast and easy way to pay for fares, riders simply tap their card or mobile wallet



This new Tap2Ride contactless fare payment device is now on all SacRT buses. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Regional Transit District

to board, eliminating the need for cash or paper tickets. The program also provides secure discount verification, allowing eligible riders to link their payment card to their discount through Cal-ITP. For added flexibility, riders

can continue to use the Connect Card or ZipPass app if they prefer. All of SacRT’s current payment methods are still available, and Tap2Ride serves as an additional option for fare payment. For more, visit sacrt.com/tap2ride. ★