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Arden Arcade News

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MAY 9, 2025

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Conrad Drops Plan to Acquire Additional Sunrise Mall Acreage



Sunrise Montessori plans to occupy a vacant building adjacent to the former Sears to provide daycare, preschool, kindergarten and child development classes for students ages 2 to 12, according to Citrus Heights city documents.

Story and photo by Thomas J. Sullivan

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Sacramento real estate investor Ethan Conrad, CEO of Ethan Conrad Properties, has dropped his plans to buy an additional 50 acres of the Sunrise Mall.

His decision followed a four-and-a-half-hour Citrus Heights City Council meeting on April 23 in which the council voted unanimously against his proposed “Sunrise Tomorrow Evolution” plan to revitalize the property.

The 50 acres which Conrad had planned to buy from the Namdar

Realty Group, owners of Sunrise Mall, included the actual mall building, enclosed store spaces and two recently-closed former Macy’s stores.

“I can almost guarantee we’re going to have a vacant property there that belongs to Namdar that doesn’t care like I do. I do care, I live here and I want to make things successful,” Conrad told the council.

Meghan Huber, the city’s Economic Development and Community Engagement director said, “The Namdar Realty Group has not provided any update or submitted proposals regarding potential development projects within the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan area since

the closure of Macy’s.”

During his presentation, Conrad said, “It is certainly unfortunate that the current (Citrus Heights Sunrise Tomorrow) Specific Plan, although it may look attractive, is not designed to provide the needed components for it to be a successful project. In particular, with the current specific plan showing all the buildings are demolished and the new buildings are built, it is not only wasteful, it’s cost prohibitive and it’s simply not needed in order for the project to be attractive as well as successful.”

Conrad continues to redevelop the 25 acres he already owns at the
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**Levee
Upgrades
Threaten
Heritage
Oaks**

**SacSchool
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**By Adam Abolfazli,
Rio Americano
High School
SacSchoolBeat**

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Sacramento environmental groups are raising concerns about flood management construction on the American River slated to reach the Rio Americano High School area next year.

The controversial ongoing work, part of the Sacramento Levee Upgrades project run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has come under scrutiny since beginning last year, as the erosion prevention measures have required the removal of trees and plants along the river.

Up to 600 trees, including 100-year-old heritage oaks, will be bulldozed, according to the American River Trees group.

However, the Army Corps has said the work is necessary to prevent potential catastrophic flooding. The work is designed to update the Army Corps’ standards from planning for a 50-year flood event to a 200-year event.

The American River Parkway is “one of the most at-risk areas for flooding in the United States,” the Army Corps says on its website. (The Army Corps declined several requests for an interview and instead referred SacSchoolBeat to the general construction webpage.)

In a web statement the USACE said: “Several levee sections along the American River were identified as being susceptible to significant erosion from the higher, longer releases from Folsom Dam. The proposed bank protection work will armor the riverbank to reduce and prevent erosion which, if left unaddressed, could result in levee failure.”

Project planners have admitted that the work will bring some disruption to local plants and wildlife.

Coming to the Rio Americano Area

The work near the school, part of the “Rio Americano West and East Mitigation Sites,” was slated to start in July but has been delayed until early 2026. Some vegetation clearing may begin late this year.

The two sites are just behind Rio Americano
Continued on Page 5

Zoo Relocation Canceled Due to Financial Concerns

**By Sean P. Thomas
MPG Staff**

ELK GROVE, CA (MPG) - A highly anticipated plan to relocate the Sacramento Zoo to Elk Grove has been shelved, prompting disappointment among city leaders and residents who had hoped the \$300 million project would bring economic and cultural benefits to Elk Grove.

The Sacramento Zoological Society announced last week it would not move forward with the relocation, citing concerns over the financial viability of the project. The decision ends a multi-year partnership with the City of Elk Grove, which had already invested approximately \$4.5 million into land acquisition and planning for the project, according to city officials.

“It was disappointing. There’s no other way to say it,” Councilmember Rod



Rendering courtesy of city of Elk Grove/Sacramento Zoological Society

Brewer said. “We enthusiastically supported the project and had been working to excite the public on bringing the zoo to Elk Grove. Even with some of the rumors and financial uncertainty, I didn’t expect this outcome.”

The proposed relocation

was intended to address major challenges faced by the Sacramento Zoo at its current 14-acre site in William Land Park. The Elk Grove plan included a phased buildout on a 65-acre portion of a 100-acre parcel the city had purchased specifically for

the project on Kammerer Road.

Phase one alone would have spanned 28 acres, about twice the size of the existing zoo, and featured large, open habitats including a savannah exhibit with multiple species such as

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From Kabul to Sacramento: A Friendship Reunited



Sixth graders Yalda and Tarawat first met years ago in Afghanistan. When their paths separated, they did not expect to meet again, especially not in a classroom in Sacramento. Photo courtesy of San Juan Unified School District

San Juan Unified School District News Release

ARDEN ARCADE, CA (MPG) - After leaving Afghanistan, sixth grader Yalda started over in the United States at Thomas Edison Language Institute. Everything felt different, but to her surprise, someone from her past was sitting just a few desks away: her childhood friend from first and second grade, Tarawat.

Tarawat, also a sixth-grade student at Thomas Edison, was just as surprised. “I didn’t recognize her at first,” said Tarawat. “She looked so different.”

“She was shocked to see me too,” Yalda said. “She asked, ‘How did you end up here?’ I couldn’t believe seeing my best friend here.”

They first met years ago in Afghanistan. They sat next to each other in class, helped one another with schoolwork, and shared a diary filled with drawings, stories and memories.

When their paths separated, they did not expect to meet again, especially not in a classroom in Sacramento.

“She used to say, ‘One day we’ll see each other again,’” said Tarawat.

Sixth-grade teacher Tonya Zimmerman remembers how the class reacted to the reunion.

“When Yalda came, Tarawat happened to be out that day. The next day, the kids were saying, ‘They know each other!’ It was such a sweet moment. They were so happy.”

Both girls say seeing each other again has helped them adjust to school in the U.S.

“Coming to a new country, everything feels new; the language, the city, even the people,” said Yalda. “But having a friend with you makes it easier.”

Zimmerman said that a sense of connection makes a big difference. “I can’t imagine starting in a new place without knowing the language,” she shared. “Having that support and creating a classroom where every student feels they belong is so important.”

Now, the two friends say they are dreaming big. “We’re planning to keep studying together and one day become doctors,” said Tarawat.

Their story is a reminder that even when the world feels big, moments like this can make it feel small again.

Watch the video of their story, called “From Kabul to Sacramento: A friendship reunited at Thomas Edison Language Institute,” through the San Juan Unified School District’s YouTube channel. ★

Capital Stage Apprentice Applications Accepted



Capital Stage Apprentice Company participants will experience everything from casting, rehearsals and directing to technical production, design and marketing. Photo courtesy of Capital Stage

Capital Stage News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Capital Stage, Sacramento’s innovative and professional non-profit theatre company, is accepting applications for its 2025/26 Apprentice Company. This program offers aspiring theatre artists a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the professional theatre world while learning from industry experts.

The Apprentice Program at Capital Stage is designed to bridge the gap between academic theatre and the professional world, offering practical training and exposure to all aspects of theatre production and administration.

Apprentices will be fully immersed in the production process, taking part in everything from casting,

rehearsals and directing to technical production, design and marketing. Opportunities also include assisting with dramaturgy, stage management, props and costume building, public relations, and more. Apprentices will also participate in the production of the annual Apprentice Showcase, a public presentation that highlights the skills and creativity developed throughout the program.

The program runs for a minimum of six months, with a 12-month commitment preferred. Apprentices will receive a weekly stipend of \$250 to \$350, although housing is not provided. The schedule is flexible, accommodating apprentices’ availability, and will include a mix of daytimes, nights and weekends. While Capital Stage cannot guarantee a

job offer after the apprenticeship completion, this experience provides a strong foundation for those pursuing a career in theatre.

Capital Stage is seeking passionate, self-motivated candidates who are eager to learn and contribute to the company’s diverse productions. Ideal applicants should be dedicated, able to work in a fast-paced environment and have the ability to collaborate with a wide range of personalities.

The deadline to apply is May 31.

Interested candidates should submit their application materials to Logan Germano Heller, education manager, at lheller@capstage.org. Interviews will be scheduled for select applicants. For more information, visit capstage.org or email Logan Germano Heller. ★

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Arden Arcade Pillar Remembered

Story and photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Much appreciated, much missed, Arden Arcade pillar Jane Hagedorn was recently honored with a new bench and oak tree in Arden Park.

Hagedorn lived nearby and played a huge part in tree-planting programs.

A passionate force for literacy, she was a Friends of Arden-Dimick Library stalwart. Hagedorn was also a pioneer in air quality advocacy and helped found the Sacramento Cleaner Air Partnership and the Tree Foundation.

As the first woman appointed to the Sacramento County Planning Commission, the mother of two (and grandmother of five) was once included among the Sacramento Bee’s “Most Influential Women in Sacramento County.”

To family and friends, the civic pillar was just “Grandma Jane.”

Hagedorn’s death at age 79 in 2023 triggered much local mourning. Her community fundraised for the memorial park bench and a group of 40 applauded its unveiling. Hagedorn’s longtime advocacy colleague, SMUD director Gregg Fishman, lamented rain and wind during the ceremony.

“Jane’s having the last laugh today because of the weather,” Fishman said. “She lived a life of service to her

community and family. I learned from Jane the importance of clean air and neighborhood ambience. So many local kids benefited from her love of literacy.”

Sacramento Tree Foundation former leader Ray Trethaway recalled Hagedorn as a universally gracious VIP.

“She didn’t consider herself above any chore,” Trethaway said. “Even at a big event, she’d bend down to pick up trash that didn’t belong.”

The activist’s skill at recruitment impressed Sacramento City Councilmember Roger Dickinson.

“Jane had an ability to stimulate leadership to achieve what she felt was important,” Dickinson said “As an activist, she was no lone ranger. When she met somebody, she thought might be impactful, she made an effort to get that person connected.”

Daughter, Jennifer Mikacich, has raised her own family near Hagedorn’s Arden Park neighborhood.

“Mom enjoyed walking around these streets every day,” Mikacich said. “My brother and I love that her friends will be able to come to the park she loved, share her bench and think of what our mother did for us all.”

Hagedorn was survived by her husband, James, who died early this year. Her memorial bench is located at the Arden Park entrance, 1000 La Sierra Drive, Sacramento. ★



Jane Hagedorn’s family helps to plant an oak near their matriarch’s memorial bench. Relatives are, from left, daughter-in-law Anissa Hagedorn, son James Hagedorn, grandson Jared Mikacich, daughter Jennifer Hagedorn Mikacich, son-in-law Jared Mikacich and granddaughter Kevan Mikacich.

Plant More Trees, Reduce Energy Costs, U.S. Bill Says

Office of Rep. Doris Matsui News Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On Arbor Day, April 25, Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA) and Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) reintroduced the TREES Act, a bill that will help homeowners lower energy costs, increase tree canopy in underserved communities and help mitigate the effects of climate change through residential tree planting.

The TREES Act would create a cost-share grant program at the Department of Energy to provide \$50 million in funding to plant a minimum of 300,000 trees annually in residential neighborhoods through 2028. The program seeks to prioritize low wealth communities as well as areas with low tree canopy and heat islands.

“Urban forests are critical to addressing climate change and air pollution,” said Rep. Matsui.

“Sacramento is the City

of Trees, and through the proactive efforts of local organizations and partners we are working hard to build out a more equitable urban tree canopy across our city. The benefits at the local level are clear: we can lower energy costs, reduce temperatures on our streets, improve air quality, reduce stormwater runoff and beautify our neighborhoods, all leading to healthier and more climate resilient communities. The TREES Act incentivizes successful programs like

ours and scales them to the national level. By creating a competitive federal tree-planting grant program, we can empower communities to improve access to green space and clean air, reduce consumer costs, and help fight climate change,” said Matsui.

“We support the TREES Act and all it does to benefit communities across the country,” said SMUD Chief Executive Officer and General Manager Paul Lau.

“Today we celebrate

our trees and our continued partnership with the Sacramento Tree Foundation which has planted more than 630,000 trees in our local neighborhoods. This urban canopy helps to cool our cities and homes and clean our air through carbon sequestration. The value they add is immeasurable. The TREES Act will continue to foster our ability to create cleaner, healthier and more sustainable communities for everyone. Thank you for this continued effort,”

said Lau.

“The TREES Act will allow our children to grow up in tree lined communities with healthy air and healthy neighborhoods.”

“This bill isn’t just about planting trees, it’s about improving lives,” said Joel Pannell, American Forests vice president of Urban Forests Policy. people together. “We thank Representative Matsui, Representative Fitzpatrick and Representative Cleaver for introducing this critical and timely legislation.” ★



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California Leaders Introduce ‘Safe Homes Act’ for Wildfire, Insurance Solutions

Office of Assemblymember Lisa Calderon News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On April 30, state and community leaders supported a bold new initiative to confront California’s worsening wildfire and insurance crises: the California Safe Homes Act (Assembly Bill 888). Driven by years of extensive community outreach and unprecedented stakeholder engagement, the act represents a

transformative step toward wildfire resilience and insurance affordability. The California Safe Homes Act passed the Assembly Insurance Committee on a 16 to 0 vote. “Investing in mitigation is crucial to overcoming this insurance crisis. We are not powerless in this fight. We need to equip consumers with the resources to undertake necessary work,” stated Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, the sponsor of the California Safe Homes

Act. “We have traveled across every region of the state, listened to thousands of Californians, collaborated with local communities and firefighters, and consulted with insurance leaders from other states and countries. One thing is clear: wildfire safety works, and we must scale it like never before.” “Investing in proven safety measures to make California safer from wildfires is essential to protecting lives, homes, and access to insurance,” said Assemblymember

Lisa Calderon, author of the California Safe Homes Act. “Assembly Bill 888 is a step in the right direction to assist California residents and create more resilient communities throughout our state.” The California Safe Homes Act is designed to make homes safer from wildfires while increasing access to insurance. The act will fund critical mitigation efforts, including fire-safe roofing, defensible space within the first five feet of a home, also known as “zone zero,”

and community-level wildfire protection strategies. These are some of the most impactful and costly measures, and homeowners have consistently told the Department of Insurance they want to do this work but simply cannot afford it. California Safe Homes puts money back in people’s hands to pay for these essential projects. The initiative builds on Safer from Wildfires, developed by the Department of Insurance, which lays out ten proven, achievable wildfire safety actions. It is the first plan of its kind in the nation, created proactively to reduce wildfire risk before disaster strikes. Leaders from across sectors are supporting the bill, including nonprofits like United Policyholders and community officials. “Creating defensible space and hardening our homes against wildfire is a shared responsibility, but for many homeowners, the cost is simply too high,” said Tanya Harlow, fire safe coordinator, El Dorado County Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience. “California Safe Homes will provide much-needed support to help make our communities more resilient to wildfire.” The Act will be heard next in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. ★

Levee Upgrades Threaten Heritage Oaks

Continued from Page 1
High near Morris Way and Jacob Lane. The project, part of Contract 3B, will see several acres of revegetation and habitat replacement to account for wildlife disruptions from flood management work farther west, which has been taking place along the levee for the last few years.

Erosion protection and flood management infrastructure has already been installed behind Campus Commons, the H Street bridge and near Howe Avenue. Contract 3B will expand that work between Howe and Watt Avenue. In addition to the Rio Americano mitigation sites. At the Rio Americano sites, the valley elderberry longhorn beetle and western yellow-billed cuckoo will be most affected. Riparian vegetation will be replanted following the work so as to restore the habitat, the Army Corps says on its project website. The Rio Americano work is primarily meant to offset the negative environmental impacts of construction toward Sac State by creating new riparian habitat.

Project Controversy

The American River Trees group helped convince the Army Corps to extend the Environmental Impact Report for Contract 3B and delay construction.

Pete Spaulding, the lead coordinator for American River Trees, said the organization recognizes the need for erosion control but would like to see a less-invasive approach used. “It has been delayed a year, but we still have seen no evidence of any design changes or changes to the construction techniques to reduce the amount of trees that are being removed,” Spaulding said. American River Trees has filed complaints with the Sacramento Board of Supervisors, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board. After generating 900 public comments regarding Contract 3B (the work near Rio Americano), the Army Corps agreed to push back the construction timeline. “When I saw what the Army Corps was doing, it literally breaks your heart,” Spaulding said. “It almost makes you want to cry. If there’s work that needs to be done, do it the right way. This is not the right way.” The Army Corps will replace 30 types of plants and trees with just six, Spaulding said. Rio Americano students have been taking a stand against the continuation of the project by working with the Save the American River Association.

Seniors Katherine Hickey and Charlotte Ponder started a school-specific chapter last year and have collected 500 of the 1,000 signatures SARA’s petition to reconsider the construction has received. “We’re trying to get the Army Corps of Engineers to reform this project for it to be less invasive and less harmful to all of the trees and the ecosystem,” Hickey said. According to SARA and American River Trees, the levee and river behind Rio Americano follows a relatively straight path, so the area is at little risk for erosion. “They’re doing this all in the name of erosion control, but it seems counterintuitive that they’re cutting down trees (given) how important trees are for the biological system of erosion control,” Hickey said. “We’re trying to push them to do more research. Their root systems are so vital to protecting the river.” The Army Corps is “more used to concrete and steel,” she added.

River Access Impacts

Another controversial part of the construction work is that Contract 3B will shut down levee and bike trail access between Howe Avenue and Estates Drive for up to two years. The area around Rio Americano would be used as an access point for trucks to

travel to the construction sites between Howe and Watt, especially the Estates Drive levee entrance. Traffic near American River Drive would also increase from both construction vehicles and cyclists rerouted from the trail. The parallel trail on the south side of the river will be closed, too. Many students and teachers use the levee to bike or walk to school, so a full closure would be a major disruption to their commute. “I take the levee to get to school every day,” said senior Marin Abood, who bikes to school. “It’s safer. It’s more efficient. It’s faster.” Sierra Oaks and Del Dayo elementary schools are also located near the river. “Schools and the district do not typically have a formal role in the construction planning process for projects that occur outside of school property,” San Juan Unified spokesperson Raj Rai said. However, the district will make efforts to notify families of traffic impacts. The river parkway generates roughly \$365 million annually for the economy and attracts eight million visitors, according to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. “The river, as everybody says, is the jewel of Sacramento,” Spaulding said. “It really is unique to a major metropolitan area like this. It’s an incredible source of wildlife and recreation.” ★



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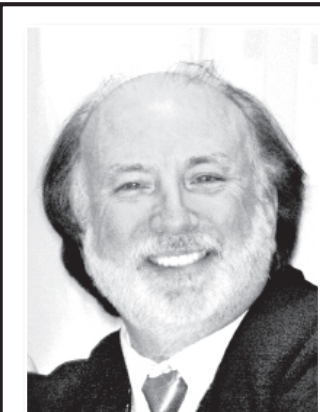
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Outstanding Citizen Awards Ceremony Honors 13 Citizens

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County District Attorney Thien Ho presented the Outstanding Citizen Award to 13 victims and witnesses who have shown uncommon courage by participating in the criminal justice process under extraordinarily challenging circumstances.

The awards were given out April 25 at the Board of Supervisors' Chambers on H Street in Sacramento.

A Beacon of Hope Award was also presented to an individual or organization showing compassion and dedication, thus enhancing victim advocacy and public safety.

Citizens Harrell Fischer, John Stubbe and Damaria were recognized and awarded for their assistance in the People versus Mandiko Kwadzo case (case number 20FE011791).

On July 27, 2020, West Sacramento Police officers responded to a report of shots fired inside a residence. Moments later, a witness reported seeing the victim, Carliena Clayton, and the defendant having an argument on the driveway of that residence. The victim was then seen getting into a car with her four small children and the defendant getting into the passenger seat as she pulled out of the driveway. When officers arrived on scene, they found evidence of a shooting inside the residence.

That night, Harrell Fischer was at Cliff's Marina in Sacramento County when he heard a gunshot followed by a car crashing into the Sacramento River. He called a friend, John Stubbe, and the two went to the crash scene to help. They found the victim's car partially submerged in the river, with the defendant standing nearby, not doing anything to help. When they looked into the car, they found the victim unresponsive in the driver's seat and her four children in the backseat. The oldest child, Damaria, 6, had already unbuckled all their seatbelts but the youngest child, 2, was still in her car seat. Fischer and Stubbe got the children out of the car to safety. Responding California Highway Patrol officers found the victim did not have a pulse, with severe bleeding from her head. At that time, officers believed it was a car accident until Damaria told officers that the defendant shot his mother. It was later determined that the victim suffered two gunshot wounds to her head. Damaria, Harrell Fischer and John Stubbe all testified at trial and were instrumental in obtaining guilty verdicts in this case.

The defendant was convicted of first-degree murder with a firearm allegation and felon in possession of a firearm. He was sentenced to 53 years to life in prison.

Citizen Gigi Barrios was recognized for her help in the People versus Dominick Roberson case (case number 22FE019182). On Nov. 18, 2022, Gigi Barrios was working at the Medical Safe Haven. A pregnant patient named Precious came into the clinic for an appointment. Gigi knew Precious well and immediately recognized something was wrong.

Precious avoided eye contact; she was vague and hesitant when Barrios asked her questions and seemed distressed when she received text messages. Precious said that her baby's father was the cause for her agitation. Barrios finally got Precious to reveal that her unborn child's father was in the clinic parking lot and was threatening to kill her. He had a gun and he had been trafficking Precious since she met him months earlier.

Barrios jumped into action, making sure that clinic staff called 911 and personally reached out to Sacramento Police Department human trafficking detectives that Barrios knew from her collaborative work throughout the county. Sacramento officers and detectives quickly arrived to the clinic, detained the defendant and found a gun in his car. Precious was terrified of her trafficker, but with



From left, Harrell Fischer, Damaria (middle) and John Stubbe received Outstanding Citizen Awards by Sacramento County District Attorney Thien Ho for their courage demonstrated in the People versus Mandiko Kwadzo case from 2020. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County District Attorney's Office



Sacramento County District Attorney Thien Ho presented to the River City Waterway Alliance a Beacon of Hope Award for their continuous efforts keeping the river waterways clean. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County District Attorney's Office



Joseph Bayless, Brandon Gross, Devonte Rainey, Michael Armendariz, Brian Saldivar and Jose Garcia all received Outstanding Citizen Awards for their help in the People versus Kryn Spear case from 2022. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Barrios by her side, was able to explain that the defendant groomed her, portraying himself as a boyfriend before taking her to the "blade" to engage in prostitution. He made Precious give him all the money she made.

He regularly beat and threatened Precious, he threatened her family and controlled her life. Precious gave detectives access to her phone, where they found messages that corroborated what Precious told them. The defendant was arrested that day and Sacramento police detectives ensured that Precious got to a safe house, where she stayed through the birth of her child and through the trial.

The defendant was convicted of a variety of human trafficking charges and sentenced to 71 years to life in prison.

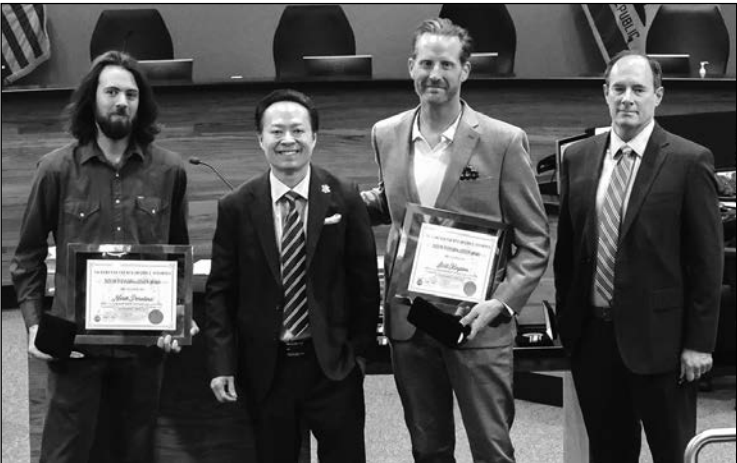
Residents North Peredina and Scott Kingston were recognized for their support in the People versus Tycho Roney case (case number 24FE003928). North Peredina is the general manager of Paco's Bike Shop in Midtown Sacramento. The bike shop was burglarized with a loss of more than \$28,000 in high-end bikes and \$13,000 in property damage. Peredina reviewed their interior surveillance cameras and saw the defendant drop into the business from a breached roof skylight. The profile of the defendant's face was momentarily caught on the surveillance video.

After reporting the crime, Peredina set out to find the stolen bikes. When he saw a man with one of the bikes, Peredina immediately reported it to the Sacramento Police Department. Detectives responded to the area and spotted a similar-looking bike outside a tent. After confirming it was one of the stolen bikes, they found the defendant inside the tent along with the clothes from the burglary, a loaded 9-millimeter semi-automatic handgun and methamphetamine. Peredina positively identified the defendant as the person in the surveillance video and with the stolen bike.

Scott Kingston is in commercial real estate. Kingston rallied attention to this case, including writing passionate pleas to city leadership for the need to



Sacramento County District Attorney Thien Ho presented Gigi Barrios with an Outstanding Citizen Award on April 15 for her assistance in the People versus Dominick Roberson case from 2022. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County District Attorney's Office



North Peredina and Scott Kingston were both recognized with an Outstanding Citizen Award for their help in the People versus Tycho Roney case. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County District Attorney's Office



From left, victim advocates Lisa Corral and Colette Brown are with Sacramento County District Attorney Thien Ho who recognized them both with a Beacon of Hope Award for their contributions in the Domestic Violence Unit. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

address retail crime and public safety in the city. As a business leader, Kingston encouraged city leaders to address these issues or businesses would leave. Peredina's proactive response to the burglary and Kingston's challenging of the conditions that were leading to

rampant crime helped lead to the arrest and conviction of the defendant. In a broader sense, their actions helped restore faith in public safety and the criminal justice system for a business community plagued with repeat thefts.

The defendant was convicted

and sentenced to six years in prison.

Citizens Joseph Bayless, Brandon Gross, Devonte Rainey, Michael Armendariz, Brian Saldivar and Jose Garcia were awarded for their help in the People versus Kryn Spear case (case number 22FE008691).

On May 26, 2022, Veronica Vargas was driving through the intersection of Power Inn Road and Elsie Avenue with her 4-year-old daughter, Samantha, in the back seat. At that same time and intersection, the defendant ran a red light at 89 miles per hour and broadsided them with his dually truck. The collision's force flipped the victim's car onto its roof.

Brian Casado was the first person who stopped at the scene after the crash occurred. He rushed over to the victim's vehicle and saw and heard the little girl in the back seat. He tried to help other bystanders get the victims out of their car. Joseph Bayless and Brandon Gross also stopped at the scene and tried to help Veronica and Samantha. The three men stayed with Samantha, reassuring her she would be OK until the first responders arrived.

After the crash, the defendant got out of his truck and began walking away from the crash scene. Devonte Rainey stopped at the scene to help the victims and followed the defendant as he recorded and took pictures of him. Michael Armendariz saw the crash scene and came across Rainey, who told him that the driver who caused the crash was trying to get away. Armendariz stopped his car and went hands-on with the defendant to detain him.

Brian Saldivar and Jose Garcia also saw the crash scene and helped Armendariz detain the defendant until California Highway Patrol arrived. The defendant had a blood alcohol content of 0.251% and was on probation for a prior Driving Under the Influence conviction at the time of this crash.

The defendant was convicted of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and a number of additional felonies driving under the influence-related charges, hit-and-run causing death and or permanent injury and a great bodily injury allegation. He was sentenced to 13 years and eight months in prison.

Beacon of Hope Award Recipients

Victim advocate Lisa Corral works tirelessly in the Domestic Violence Unit, where she has helped thousands of domestic violence victims and supports the unit attorneys. The Domestic Violence Unit is unlike any other unit in that the victim advocate is involved immediately at the beginning of the case, at filing and sometimes when a case is not filed. The Domestic Violence Unit is also a unique assignment because not all victims want our help and can be resistant to us. Corral is patient and works through these challenges, with the mission to keep the victims of domestic violence safe.

The River City Waterway Alliance is made up of a volunteer team of 30 to 40 experienced waterway stewards who work tirelessly to keep the river waterways clean and safe for people and endangered salmon species. The alliance reported volunteers pulled 2.8 million pounds of trash or 1,400 tons of trash, to date.

It's not just litter and trash. They recover large hazardous waste items, including propane tanks, household appliances, electronics, clothes and other personal items. Unhoused encampments all along the river levees are the primary source of the items found in the waterways. The amount and type of waste being tossed into our waters are a significant environmental and wildlife hazard. Alliance volunteers are continually cleaning these waters even as more garbage, junk and hazardous items are thrown right back into those same waters. It is a never-ending struggle for them; however, they remain devoted to keeping the waters and the environment clean and safe for people and wildlife. ★

Life-Saving Device Installed at Parks



Arden Arcade Rotarians and friends provide an external defibrillator at Howe Park.

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Thanks to three Rotary clubs, 18 automated external defibrillator (AED) units have recently been installed at public facilities in Sacramento, Carmichael, Elk Grove and Marysville.

The devices can revive heart function in case of cardiac arrest. In compliance with state legislation, similar units must be provided for all youth sport locations in California by 2027. Proven effective in saving lives, an automated external defibrillator costs between \$900 and \$4,000.

One such device was installed last week near Howe Park’s tennis courts. The donor, Arden Arcade Rotarians, gathered to view demonstrations of its use by a representative of an organization dedicated to preventing cardiac deaths in young people.

“Every minute that passes without oxygen being pumped to the brain diminishes a patient’s chance of recovery,” said Project Adam coordinator Rebecca McCormac.

“Surveys show one in 300 American children has a heart condition. These often go undiagnosed and can pose risks, especially during athletic activity. That’s why it’s important to have automated external defibrillators where young people gather.”

Designed to be employed without medical training, automated external defibrillators apply electric shock stimulation to the heart after cardiac arrest.

“When available for bystanders to use, these AEDs save lives,” said McCormac. “Days after training in the use of the defibrillator and CPR, Davis High School staff revived a teacher who’d collapsed. They managed to get his heart beating before an ambulance reached the school.”

Assisted by the Rotary Club of Arden Arcade, Fulton-El Camino and Mission Oaks Park districts have mounted defibrillators at park sports facilities.

Fundraising by Arden Arcade, Elk Grove and Marysville Rotary clubs provided a \$42,000 grant for the project.

The volunteers hope to



Arden-Arcade Rotarians Matt Ross and club President Christine Jensen learn live-saving techniques at Howe Park. Project Adam coordinator Rebecca McCormac (right) demonstrates defibrillator use.



An external defibrillator is installed at Fulton-El Camino Park District’s Howe Park. Ribbon cutters are Matt Ross (left), Emily Ballus, Lydia Wytrzes, Christine Jensen, Project Adam coordinator Rebecca McCormac, Rolundia Mitchell and Richard Goore.

continue unit donations in 2026.

“We’re glad to do this for children and the

community,” said Arden Arcade Rotary Club President Christine Jensen. “As Rotarians, service

above self is central to everything we do.”

Learn about Project Adam programs and the

use of automated external defibrillators at health.ucdavis.edu/children/services/project-adam. ★

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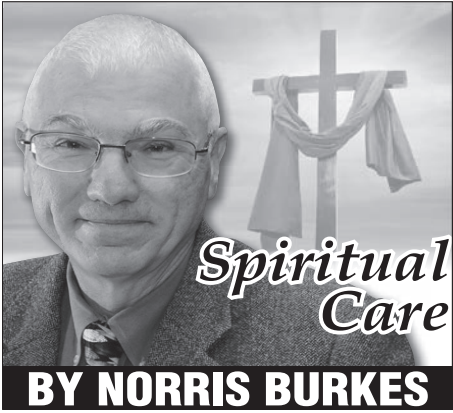
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Flying on a Wing and a Prayer



BY NORRIS BURKES

Amidst the Cinco de Mayo celebrations last Monday, I couldn’t avoid thinking of May 6, 2009, the day I returned from deployment in Iraq on a chartered World Airways DC-10.

After spending four months serving the wounded at the Air Force Field Hospital in Balad Iraq, my only thoughts on final approach into Baltimore/Washington International Airport, were of home.

Our landing attempt was anything but welcoming as our plane bounced like a porpoise on the waves. Security cameras recorded a large puff of smoke from our wheels. Eyewitnesses would later tell FAA investigators that they thought the plane was going to flip.

A second bounce delivered at an estimated 3.2 Gs and plastic ceiling molding fell on us as oxygen generators swung like piñatas. Several seat backs snapped backward while passengers along the left windows watched the yellow centerline, and I watched our wing drift over the grass.

We sailed back into the air as the cockpit voice recorder captured pilot Craig Gatch asserting: “8535 heavy declaring an emergency go-around.”

When we regained some altitude, my fellow passengers spoke in muffled voices. No one wanted to be the first to cry, but clearly no one wanted to die without protest. Some were praying or holding hands or just staring at their feet.

I rested my forehead on my seatback to pray, even as I wondered if I heard a judgmental voice in it all. My shortcomings felt as though they were being weighed on the scale of a spiritual assayer. Was there a deity somewhere with a one-piece eyeglass assessing my life with a doubtful squint?

Had I been a good husband and dad? Or had I been too absent, physically and spiritually? Was it OK to feel scared? Or should I gather my wits and start a rousing chorus of

“Amazing Grace?”

I kept praying, spending the next few minutes asking God, “What about all these passengers?” A soldier was about to meet his new son for the first time. An airman was trying to make a marriage work again. They all wanted another chance. Would they get that chance?

In a center aisle seat, catty-corner from me, a young officer was wiping her tears. I stretched across the aisle to offer my hand as a reminder she wasn’t alone. I wanted to hold it until we landed, but the awkwardly angled reach caused me to break loose and rejoin her hand with the chaplain assistant sitting beside her.

As we reapproached the airport, the flight attendants told us to grab our ankles and lower our heads. Then the pilot added his instruction to “brace for impact!” But instead of impact, we landed as calmly as if we were sailing across a mountain lake.

Slowly we looked up from our crash/prayer position and started clapping like we had never expected another tomorrow.

Before we deplaned down portable stairways, five people were removed for medical care, including the first officer with a broken back. Behind us, debris littered an unusable runway.

Few of us could make much sense of the incident. Many would say to me things like, “Chaplain, we expected to die in Iraq, but never in Baltimore.”

FAA investigators declared the plane a total loss because the main spar was broken, (the structural member that supports the wings.)

This meant our pilot literally risked losing our wings during his 10-minute go-around. But I suppose that’s what airmen mean when they describe a harrowing flight as “flying on a wing and a prayer.”

Even today, my airplane remains at the airport where its continentally stippled for parts. For those curious, I posted links to the security footage and the accident report on my website

This column is excerpted from my book “Hero’s Highway.”

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. ★

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Zoo Relocation Canceled Due to Financial Concerns

Continued from Page 1
giraffes, ostriches, antelopes and a full pride of lions.

“The current zoo only has one rhinoceros. The new zoo would have had as many as six, all in a shared environment,” Brewer said. “This was going to be an entirely different level of experience.”

The new facility also would have expanded conservation efforts and created more immersive visitor experiences. It was expected to draw as many as 1 million in annual visitors and \$249 million in economic impact in its first five years of operation, according to Elk Grove officials.

In a news release, Mayor Bobbie Singh-Allen called the decision to shutter the zoo move “disappointing.”

“This is a deeply disappointing outcome for all of us who believed in the vision for the zoo and what it could have meant for our community and the region,” Singh-Allen said.



An illustration of what the proposed Elk Grove zoo could have been. Photo courtesy of City of Elk Grove

Despite Elk Grove fulfilling its obligations under the cost-sharing agreement and drawing up preliminary designs, the zoo ultimately chose to recommit to its Sacramento location.

Officials from the Sacramento Zoological Society cited slow fundraising progress and financial instability as primary factors in pulling out of the deal.

The Zoological Society had raised \$17.5 million in pledges, only \$1.9 million of which was actual cash on hand. The Zoological Society was supposed to raise \$50 million in actual

cash donations before the shovels went into the ground in 2027.

The \$1.9 million in cash that had been received by the city will be returned to the Zoological Society, which will return it to the donors.

“When both of those things didn’t mesh, I definitely understand why they walked away,” Brewer said.

City leaders made clear that the decision was not theirs and emphasized their readiness to continue the partnership if the situation changed.

“They decided to pull back. We didn’t say,

‘Don’t ever come back,’” Councilmember Darren Suen said. “If they wanted to talk about it again, or if someone else wanted to re-engage, we wouldn’t turn them away.”

Though disappointed, both Brewer and Suen remained optimistic. The land acquired for the project remains untouched and its value has increased, Brewer said, and it could yield returns if the land is sold or repurposed.

Both viewed the zoo’s departure as a potential opportunity to pursue other developments or revisit the zoo project in the future if leadership changes. Zoo Director Jason Jacobs, a key figure in the partnership, left the post in October. Interim CEO Robert Churchill has been in the seat since.

“We weren’t just taking a calculated risk on a civic amenity. We were trying to sustain something iconic for the region,” Suen said. “Sometimes things don’t work out, but the plans are

still there. If the climate changes, we can dust them off.”

Many Elk Grove residents had looked forward to the zoo as a positive addition to the community. The city’s desire for more regional attractions made the zoo plan particularly appealing.

Outside of Safeway at the corner of Laguna and Franklin Boulevard, several residents voiced disappointment with the project’s demise.

“It’s disappointing; I would have liked it to move here,” said Elk Grove resident Aaron Wells.

Bruce Wallace, another resident, echoed the sentiment: “It would have been a lot of jobs for Elk Grove; it’s a shame it fell apart.”

Others were more measured in their reaction.

“I know a lot of people were looking forward to it moving here, but yeah, it’s not the worst thing that it’s not,” said Mark Cramer, also of Elk Grove. “The

cost was always a problem for me, and I’ve talked to a few people that were unsure of the traffic it might add.”

Still, city officials stressed that they’ve learned from the experience and will remain focused on bringing a similar project to Elk Grove.

“We weren’t trying to swing for the fences or grab the spotlight,” Suen said. “We analyzed the zoo opportunity like we do every other project, with our residents in mind. That will always be our focus.”

While the zoo won’t be coming to Elk Grove, councilmembers highlighted ongoing efforts to develop other projects and amenities in the city.

“The desire to bring attractions and amenities that families and individuals can enjoy hasn’t changed,” Brewer said. “We’re going to keep our options open. We’re not in a hurry, and we’re certainly not desperate.” ★

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ABOUT TOWN

Concerts in the Park

Concerts In The Park will feature over 35 local and national bands at Cesar Chavez Plaza. The free shows start at 6 p.m. Upcoming headliners are:

- May 9 – Discrete
- May 16 – Khloe Rose
- May 23 – XZIBIT
- May 30 – Phantogram
- June 6 – Dexter and the Moonrocks
- June 13 – The Expendables
- June 20 – Winona Fighter
- June 27 – Jackie Greene

Area Museum Experiences

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

California Museum – Honor, Recognition & Respect: 48-Star Flag Gifting Ceremony, 11 a.m.-Noon, Saturday, May 17. The event will commemorate the donation of a 48-star flag and pay tribute to the resilience, struggle, hardships, and heartache suffered by survivors of the Japanese American incarceration camps.

This historic flag, signed by survivors of the incarceration camps and Nisei veterans, has traveled across the country as part of an effort to preserve and share their stories. The ceremony will celebrate the donation of this meaningful artifact to the California Museum’s Uprooted: An American Story exhibit and pay tribute to those who endured injustice yet persevered in shaping

American history.

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.

Details at calautmuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum– The Chinese Railroad Workers’ Experience offers visitors a view of the Chinese workers who built the western portion of the nation’s first Transcontinental Railroad. Marginalized

by history, the Chinese workers were more than a nameless group of laborers.

Details at californiarailroad.museum.

For more on Sacramento area museum offerings, visit sacmuseums.org.

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. ★

Conrad Drops Plan to Acquire Additional Sunrise Mall Acreage

Continued from Page 1

southern end of the mall, a piece that includes the closed Sears store building and several acres of parking.

Construction of an electrical vehicle charging station has begun and Sunrise Montessori is planning to occupy an existing vacant building, located adjacent to the former Sears building. The center will provide daycare, preschool, kindergarten and child development classes for students ages 2 to 12, according to city documents.

The Citrus Heights City Council chambers were filled to standing room only as members deliberated the future of Sunrise Mall. Discussion continued past 10:30 p.m. April 23 as Conrad rebutted feedback from council and offered to request only The Home Depot and In N Out Burger as a compromise.

The Home Depot was proposed to be located on the southeast corner of the mall and an In-N-Out Burger along Sunrise Boulevard, near the mall’s southwest corner. Those specific uses are not allowed under the city’s Sunrise Tomorrow plan as it is currently adopted, according to Community Development director Casey Kempenaar.

Councilmembers and community speakers generally agreed that Conrad’s revised proposal clashed with key elements of the city’s original vision for the site: a walkable, mixed-use community focused on housing, entertainment and a pedestrian-friendly design.

Many community members, including residents who live near the mall, multiple former City Council members, the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce executive director, and representatives from the Sacramento County Board of Education and Sacramento Area Council of Governments, encouraged the council to “keep the faith” and adhere to the original specific plan’s vision.

“We are not interested in amending the specific plan at this time,” Mayor Jayna Karpinski-Costa said before adjourning the council meeting.

Representatives from The Home Depot and In-N-Out spoke in support of Conrad’s proposal, emphasizing their interest in being part of the project but offered few specifics.

“Market demand dictates redevelopment,” said Conrad. “Home Depot is the catalyst. Most other tenants won’t commit without them.”

Sunrise Tomorrow, a city-driven plan which was adopted in 2011, would redevelop Sunrise Mall into a property with a mix of uses, including a central “main street” retail area, more housing, a hotel, coworking space and open space.

In creating the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan, Kempenaar said, the community strongly supported the inclusion of a central gathering space, a mix of retail, dining and entertainment options, diverse employment opportunities, housing and green space. The plan also included flexible office space options.

Sunrise Mall is located at the high-traffic intersection of Sunrise Boulevard and Greenback Lane.

The proposal submitted by Conrad Properties, as presented, does not align with that vision, Kempenaar said.

Several council members emphasized the city’s past collaboration with Conrad, including approval of the Sunrise Montessori preschool and an electric vehicle charging station.

Mayor Karpinski-Costa praised the specific plan and encouraged Conrad to review it thoroughly. Karpinski-Costa, along with other councilmembers, noted her support for the proposed businesses but suggested they be located elsewhere.

Conrad said he had no problem with the plan but he didn’t believe a developer would emerge to carry it out before the mall degraded further.

Conrad was further advised by members of the Citrus Heights Council to take in the comments and feedback received from the community at the meeting before moving forward with a formal application at a later date.

“For you, this is another property in your portfolio,” Councilmember Porsche Middleton said to Conrad during the meeting. “This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us.”

In an email statement sent by the city to the newspaper, Mayor Karpinski-Costa said the council and the community continue to stand behind Sunrise Tomorrow. “We truly believe this plan represents

the best path forward for future generations in Citrus Heights,” Karpinski-Costa said.

“As we move ahead, we welcome property owners who share in this vision and are ready to help bring it to life. We encourage any future amendment requests to stay true to the goals and spirit of the plan.”

City officials say they are committed to continue working with all mall property owners on reinvestment that brings Sunrise Mall toward the plan vision.

Toward the meeting’s conclusions, council members told Conrad they were unlikely to support the amendment and that he should look at implementing the existing plan instead, either by himself or with a partner.

“This not working with us is the problem,” said Councilmember Tim Schaefer. “We are the visionaries here.”

Huber said that the city “remains committed to working with all property owners to encourage reinvestment that aligns with the adopted vision for a vibrant, mixed-use destination at the Sunrise Mall site. There has been consistent communication from the city with the Namdar Group focused on site security, property maintenance and resolving code-enforcement matters. Both the council and community members clearly reaffirmed their commitment to the adopted vision of the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan, a walkable, mixed-use regional destination.” ★

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'Golf with Us' to Offer Youth Affordable Rounds

**Bank of America
News Release**

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Bank of America recently announced the launch of Golf with Us, a new initiative designed to grow the next generation of golfers.

Golf with Us offers youth, ages 6 to 18, a free one-year membership to Youth on Course, courtesy of Bank of America. Enrollment in the program is open until May 24 and includes access to thousands of courses in 97 markets for \$5 or less per round. The courses are in the Youth on Course network.

“When kids get involved in sports, they learn first-hand about achieving their goals and develop lifelong skills that help them thrive,” said David Tyrie, president of marketing, digital and specialized consumer client solutions. “By working with Youth on Course to help make golf more accessible, we’re helping grow the sport while also making a positive impact in our communities.”

Through Golf with Us, Bank of America will also bring unique instructional opportunities to youth in select markets throughout the spring, summer and fall by hosting a series of free clinics featuring professional golfers, athletes and celebrities with a



Youth on Course and Bank of America recently announced a multi-year, strategic partnership to expand golf access across the country for young players who are challenged to find an affordable place to play. Photo courtesy of Bank of America

passion for golf.

Program membership also includes a registered handicap index in the United States Golf Association’s Golf Handicap Information Network (GHIN) system, continued development as well as learning opportunities. Interested families can enroll in Youth on Course and learn more about the Golf with Us offer at BofA.com/GolfwithUs.

“Golf has the power to shape young lives in incredible ways - not just through the sport itself, but through the friendships, confidence and opportunities it

creates,” said Youth on Course Chief Executive Officer Adam Heieck. “Through this partnership with Bank of America, we’re making it possible for more kids across the country to step onto the course and discover what’s possible. This partnership is about more than just golf; it’s about opening doors and changing futures.”

Youth on Course and Bank of America recently announced a multi-year, strategic partnership to expand golf access across the country for young players who are challenged to find

an affordable place to play. As part of the agreement, Bank of America is helping fund widespread expansion of municipal course locations participating in the program. To date, more than 2,000 courses are Youth on Course partners nationwide.

The bank will promote Golf with Us through a series of commercials beginning during the Masters Tournament. Bank of America serves as Champion Partner of the Masters Tournament and has partnered with the Augusta National Women’s Amateur since 2019,

hosting annual golf clinics for youth in the Augusta, GA area. In 2025, Bank of America became the presenting partner of the More Than Golf Invitational for female amateur golfers in partnership with the ANNIKA Foundation founded by golfing legend Annika Sorenstam. In addition, Bank of America has partnered since 2002 with the Latin America Amateur Championship and Asia-Pacific Amateur Championships.

Beyond its growing golf partnership portfolio, Bank of America also partners with iconic brands in sports that share a vision for excellence and achievement to deepen client relationships, inspire and showcase teammates, create lasting economic impact in communities, and drive growth, globally and locally, through the power of sport. To learn more, visit about.bankofamerica.com/en/making-an-impact/sports.

Youth on Course, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Monterey, provides youth 18 and under access to life-changing opportunities through golf. Since its inception in 2006, Youth on Course members have played more than 4-million subsidized rounds of golf for \$5 or less at thousands of partner courses throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. ★

Agnew, Fox and Richardson-Pepper Named to Lacrosse All-Big 12 Conference Teams

**University of California,
Davis Athletics
News Release**

IRVING, TEXAS (MPG) - On April 30, the Big 12 released its lacrosse all-conference teams, with three Aggies making the cut.

Graduate student Alex Agnew and senior Ally Richardson-Pepper made their way onto the All-Big 12 Team while freshman Jane Fox was tabbed as a unanimous selection on the All-Newcomer Team.

Agnew lands on an all-conference team for the second time in her career, previously earning All-Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) honors in the Aggies final season in the conference back in 2021. After missing all last season to an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury, Agnew has been an offensive force for the team, leading the Aggies in both assists (32) and points (58). She also ranks third on the team in goals with 26.

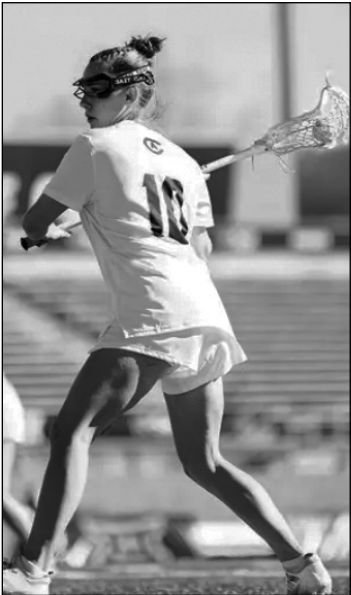
This year has also been a year of many personal milestones for Agnew, including playing alongside her sister, Tory, for the first time and topping the program’s all-time assist list in a matchup against



Alex Agnew lands on an all-conference team for the second time in her career, previously earning All-Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) honors in the Aggies final season in the conference back in 2021. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

Oregon on March 1. Currently, she sits at 125 career assists, 29 ahead of second place.

In a March 22 matchup against San Diego State, Agnew tied a career-high 10 points in a five-goal, five-assist showing against the Aztecs. For her efforts, she was



Jane Fox is joining the Aggies from Baltimore last fall, Fox lands on the Big 12 All-Newcomer Team as a unanimous selection after a 13-goal, five-assist freshman campaign. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

named the Big 12’s Attack Player of the Week for Week 7.

In the Big 12, Agnew also sits in the top ten of multiple offensive categories, including being ranked fourth in assists per game with 2.12 and sixth in points per game with 3.87.



Ally Richardson-Pepper is emerging as the Aggie’s lacrosse primary starter this season, Richardson-Pepper has been sturdy in net all year. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

Richardson-Pepper is emerging as the team’s primary starter this season, Richardson-Pepper has been sturdy in net all year, starting and playing every minute for the Aggies while ranking first in the Big 12 in saves per game with 11.20.

Throughout the season, Richardson-Pepper has etched herself into the program’s record book, putting up 20 saves against Colorado and 18 against Florida for the second and third most, respectively, all-time in a single game.

In addition to her goalkeeping responsibilities, Richardson-Pepper has been a key contributor to the defensive unit, picking up 14 ground balls and causing two turnovers throughout the season. These performances have led to a number of personal accolades for Richardson-Pepper, including being named the conference’s Goalkeeper of the Week following week nine and the Defensive Player of the Week in week 11.

Fox joined the Aggies from Baltimore last fall, Fox lands on the Big 12 All-Newcomer Team as a unanimous selection after a 13-goal, five-assist freshman campaign.

In the team’s season-opener against Cal Berkeley on Feb. 8, Fox had a strong debut for the Aggies, scoring the team’s first goal while putting together a three-goal, one-assist hat trick. Currently, Fox is tied for fifth on the team in both goals and total points. ★

Sac State Women’s Tennis Claims Second Straight Big Sky Tournament Crown

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

PHOENIX, ARIZONA (MPG) - For the second consecutive season and the 13th time in school history, the Sacramento State women’s tennis team claimed the Big Sky Conference Tournament championship, shutting out regular season champ and top-seeded Northern Arizona, 4-0, on the morning of April 26 at the Phoenix Tennis Center in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Hornets improved to 21-3 overall on the season, the most wins in a single season since the 2008 squad finished 21-7 overall and seized the league’s automatic berth into the NCAA Tournament with the victory while the 13th tournament championships are the most of any school in the conference. Sacramento State will be making its 15th all-time appearance in the NCAA Tournament field, which will be announced on April 28 at 2 p.m. pacific standard time (PT) on NCAA.com.

With the loss, the Lumberjacks fell to 15-4 overall.

Sophomore Reese Walker was named the tournament’s Most Valuable Player (MVP), following in the footsteps of former teammate Marya Gorbunova, who won the first tournament MVP honor following last year’s championship run.

Walker finished 2-0 in singles and won her doubles match by a 6-0 score alongside Palina Saulevich on April 26, defeated Annabel Davis of Idaho, 6-0, 6-3, in the April 25 semifinal victory and providing the championship-clinching point on April 26 with a 6-3, 6-4, victory over Northern Arizona University’s (NAU) Patrycja Niewiadomska.



For the second consecutive season and the 13th time in school history, the Sacramento State women’s tennis team claimed the Big Sky Conference Tournament championship. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Athletics

The Hornets, who fell to the Lumberjacks by a 5-2 score in Flagstaff, Arizona., back on April 5 in what turned out to be their only Big Sky loss of the year, opened the championship on a high note, taking the doubles point for a 1-0 lead.

Saulevich and Walker were the first off with their shut-out at No. 3, while the tandem of Maddy Ferreros and Irene Riva clinched the doubles point with a 6-4 win at No. 1.

Sacramento State then rolled to a trio of straight-set victories in singles with sophomore Lou Baudouin defeating Laura Duhl, 6-3, 6-2, at No. 3, followed by sophomore Elena Mercioiu’s 6-3, 6-1, victory over Leotina Stojanovic at No. 6.

That set the stage for Walker, who defeated

Niewiadomska to set off the celebration. It was Walker’s third match-clinching point of the season as the Hornets won their sixth-straight dual, five of those via a shutout.

With her win, Mercioiu won her team-best 17th match of the year, while Walker improved to 16-4 and Baudouin won for the 14th time this season.

**NCAA WOMEN’S TENNIS
BIG SKY TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP**
#75 Sacramento State 4, Northern Arizona 0
April 26 // Phoenix, Arizona (Phoenix Tennis Center)
DOUBLES

1. Maddy Ferreros / Irene Riva (SAC) def. Daryna Shoshyna / Elen Jantacova (NAU), 6-4
2. Lou Baudouin / Emilija Pranyte (SAC) vs. Laura Duhl / Patrycja Niewiadomska (NAU), 5-4 unfinished
3. Palina Saulevich / Reese Walker (SAC) def. Ruslana Kovalenko / Andrea Noguera (NAU), 6-0

Order of finish: 3, 1*

SINGLES

1. Maddy Ferreros (SAC) vs. Daryna Shoshyna (NAU), 2-6, 4-3 unfinished
2. Reese Walker (SAC) def. Patrycja Niewiadomska (NAU), 6-3, 6-4
3. Lou Baudouin (SAC) def. Laura Duhl (NAU), 6-3, 6-2
4. Emilija Pranyte (SAC) vs. Andrea Noguera (NAU), 2-6, 6-4, 1-0 unfinished
5. Irene Riva (SAC) vs. Elen Jantacova (NAU), 7-6, 2-3 unfinished
6. Elena Mercioiu (SAC) def. Leontina Stojanovic (NAU), 6-3, 6-1. ★