



**Keep Fourth
of July Fireworks
Safe and Legal**

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**HAPPY
4th of July**



AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

JUNE 27, 2025

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INSIDE**

**SAMPLES TEST
POSITIVE FOR
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Concerts, Adventure and Community



The not-so-serious 1.2-mile Summer Fun Run obstacle course is packed with playful challenges like slime zones, hay bales, inflatable slides and a human car wash. Photo courtesy of Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District

By Alena Hamilton

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - As the sun shines brightly over Fair Oaks, the community comes alive with a vibrant array of events and activities that bring residents of all ages together.

The Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District has crafted a summer schedule that's packed with something for everyone, from music lovers to adventure seekers and from families with young children to seniors looking for social connections.

Whether you're a long-time resident or just visiting, Fair Oaks offers a warm and welcoming atmosphere this summer



The family-friendly and inclusive gathering at Concerts in the Park will present music classifications such as rock, country, pop, reggae and more. Photo courtesy of Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District

that's perfect for making memories with friends and family.

Concerts in the Park Returns

Kick off the summer with Concerts in the Park,

returning to Fair Oaks on July 10. The free events run from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. every Thursday through Aug. 28.

Each week offers a new category of music,

providing listeners with an entertaining opportunity to explore different bands and musical sounds. The family-friendly and inclusive gathering will present music classifications such as rock, country, pop, reggae and more.

Due to ongoing construction, the Concerts in the Park series location is currently tentative. Until construction is complete, all concerts will be held at Fair Oaks Park, 11549 Fair Oaks Blvd. To monitor construction and concert locations, visit www.forpd.org/261/Concerts-in-the-Park.

Summer Fun Run
Get ready to get messy
Continued on page 3

25-Year Plan for Sacramento Region Growth

**Sacramento Area
Council of Governments
News Release**

SACRAMENTO REGION (MPG)

- The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) announced that the draft 2025 Blueprint and Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the region's long-range transportation and land use plan, has been released for public review and comment.

The drafts are now available for public review and comments will be taken until Aug. 8. View the Draft 2025 Blueprint and Environmental Impact Report at sacog.org under the "Planning" tab.

By the year 2050, it is expected the region will add 580,000 new residents, 278,000 new homes and 263,000 new jobs, while investing more than \$40 billion in multi-modal transportation improvements.

The 2025 Blueprint lays out a plan for how the region's six counties and 22 cities will work together to create a vibrant, inclusive and resilient region that meets the needs of current and future residents while preserving the environment for future generations.

"We have to work together to build a region that works for both our existing and future residents," said Darren Suen, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments Board of Directors chair and a City of Elk Grove councilmember. "The 2025 Blueprint is our playbook for how cities and counties will collaborate and ultimately helps setup the region for success to attract more grants and investments."

Community members are invited to review the draft plan and provide their feedback by Aug. 8. To view the draft plan and Environmental Impact Report, visit Sacramento Area Council of Governments' website at www.sacog.org/planning/blueprint.

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments is where local government leaders in the Sacramento region advance three strategic goals of equity, economy and environment. In partnership with its 28 member cities and counties, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments addresses complex challenges that are too big for any one jurisdiction to solve on its own. As the sole public agency representing every regional jurisdiction, Sacramento Area Council of Governments fosters collaboration and progress for an equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future. ★

Orangevale History Museum Turns Two

By Alena Hamilton

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - The Orangevale History Project (OHP) invites the community to a grand celebration marking two years since the Orangevale History Museum opened its doors to the public.

The anniversary party will run from noon to 3 p.m. July 12 and the entire community is welcome to join in the festivities at the Orangevale History Museum, 6920 Hazel Ave.

The special event promises to be fun and educational, featuring food, games, giveaways, live music and more. Guests will also be eyewitnesses to the museum's latest exhibit, marking its fourth unveiling since it opened.

Every six months, a new feature display is launched in the largest room of the museum, keeping the content fresh and engaging for repeat visitors.

Admission to the anniversary party is free for



From left are Marilyn Edwards, Kay Barnes and Chris Hicks, passionate volunteers for the Orangevale History Museum. Photo courtesy of Orangevale History Project

all ages, making it an ideal event for families, residents and visitors. Additionally, the museum is open to the public without charge from noon to 4 p.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The Orangevale History Museum is solely managed

by the Orangevale History Project, the official historical society of the Orangevale community. The dedicated group of volunteers meets at 6:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of every month. Their team is always open to new volunteers as the museum and its

archive continue to grow.

"The Orangevale History Project means ensuring that we can provide free local history for everyone," said Kay Barnes, an Orangevale History Project volunteer. "It's so much fun seeing people's reactions and what

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Keep Fourth of July Fireworks Safe and Legal

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)

- With Independence Day coming up, it's always a good idea to know the risks of fireworks, only use legal fireworks and stay safe when using them. If you see or suspect illegal firework usage, reporting it is encouraged. When it comes to fireworks, we want to keep it safe and keep it legal.

The use or sale of illegal fireworks will result in fines. In 2022, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors adopted a social host ordinance that levies fines, starting at \$1,000, against property owners who either use or allow the use of illegal fireworks on their property, in addition to fines for use in places such as the American River Parkway, schools and parks.

“Host” means a person who knowingly permits or allows fireworks to be lit, exploded or sold on private property owned or controlled by the person.

If the illegal fireworks are being set off from your property, you are responsible for the fines. Penalties for violations are \$1,000 for the first violation, \$2,500 for the second violation within one year of the first violation, \$5,000 for each additional violation within



It's always a good idea to know the risks of fireworks, only use legal fireworks and stay safe when using them. Image by Barbara A Lane from Pixabay

one year of the first violation and \$10,000 for each violation that occurs at schools, parks and within the American River Parkway.

Calls for service throughout the county increase dramatically on July 4 and emergency response resources are stretched extremely thin.

During the Fourth of July holiday weekend, use 9-1-1 for emergencies only, such as an active fire, injury or immediate threat to persons or property. Each

jurisdiction has provided an alternative method to report illegal fireworks sales and usage.

The unsafe use of fireworks can cause severe burns, amputations, blinding and even death. Damaging fires might occur when children use fireworks unsupervised by adults. Parents are responsible for any property damage or injuries caused by all fireworks.

All legal fireworks in California are called Safe and Sane Fireworks and must bear the State Fire

Marshal's seal. Safe and Sane Fireworks can only be sold from noon June 28 through 9 p.m. July 4. Safe and Sane Fireworks can only be used between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. from June 28 to July 4. Any firework that goes up in the air or explodes is illegal and dangerous.

To maintain safety, always have a non-combustible bucket of water to dispose of fireworks and leave fireworks in the water overnight before disposing. Always have an

available hose connected to water in case of fire and do not use fireworks near dry grass or other flammable materials. Do not use fireworks under a canopy, covered balcony, covered patio or under a tree or bushes.

Report illegal fireworks sale and usage in unincorporated Sacramento County to 916-874-5115 or reportfireworks@sacounty.gov.

Report illegal fireworks sale and usage in the City of Sacramento to 916-808-FIRE (3473) or the Sacramento Fire Department app.

Report illegal fireworks sale and usage in Rancho Cordova to 916-362-5115 or the Rancho Cordova Connect App.

Report illegal fireworks sale and usage in Citrus Heights to 916-727-5500 or seeclickfix.com.

Report illegal fireworks sale and usage in Elk Grove to 916-714-5115 or fireworks@elk-grovepd.org.

Report illegal fireworks sale and usage in Galt to 209-366-7000.

Aren't sure who or how to report? Call 3-1-1 to be connected to the right place.

Together, we can ensure that Independence Day celebrations are fun, safe and do not cause undue injury or fire in our communities. ★

Mosquito Samples Test Positive for West Nile Virus

Sacramento Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District announced on June 18 that the first signs of West Nile virus (WNV) activity have been detected in Yolo County as one mosquito sample collected from Davis has tested positive for the disease.

This finding comes a week after a mosquito sample also tested positive in Sacramento County.

“As the weather gets warmer, WNV activity will steadily increase,” said Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District Manager Gary Goodman. “This is a cause for concern, especially as summer is around the corner and we are approaching the hottest months of the year when activity typically intensifies. We urge residents to continue taking proper precautions to protect themselves from mosquitoes.”

The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District’s “D’s” of Mosquito Prevention practices include

draining standing water that might produce mosquitoes and avoiding being outdoors dawn and dusk. Also dress appropriately by wearing long sleeves and pants when outside and defend yourself by using an effective insect repellent and following label directions. Another practice is to make sure that door and window screens are in good working condition.

Call district personnel at 1-800-429-1022 or visit www.FIGHTtheBITE.net to address mosquito problems.

In response to the recent findings, the district will continue to monitor West Nile

virus activity through widespread mosquito trapping and testing. In addition, to quickly reduce mosquito populations and protect public health, ground treatments will also be conducted in areas where virus-positive mosquitoes have been detected.

For current information about district activities, visit www.FIGHTtheBITE.net. Residents can also subscribe to mailing lists to receive email notifications for upcoming mosquito treatments by zip code. To sign up, go to Spray Notifications on the website. ★



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Orangevale History Museum Turns Two Years Old

Concerts, Adventure and Community



The Orangevale History Museum will celebrate its two-year anniversary with free food, games, music, a new exhibit and more. Photo courtesy of Orangevale History Project

Continued from page 1 they have to say about our artifacts."

All the historical photos, old school desks, vintage books and more are donations from Orangevale community members.

The museum displays a photographic collection of homes from the early days of the town's past, historical figures that helped shape Orangevale's existence and previous students of the city's first school.

A timeline of Orangevale's history lines the walls of the museum's largest room, covering dates including the town's founding and when the Folsom Dam was built. There are carefully-preserved pieces of life throughout the building



Specially-preserved household artifacts and antique treasures are displayed throughout the museum. Photo courtesy of Orangevale History Project

such as old kitchenware, high school spirit wear, yearbooks, a phone from the 1920s and much more.

Join the Orangevale History Project as its members celebrate two years of preserving and sharing the town's history on July 12. Discover what the new

exhibit has to offer and how you can contribute to maintaining Orangevale's rich history.

For more information about the museum, its members and upcoming events, visit www.orangevalehistoryproject.com or call 916-800-4711. ★

Continued from page 1

as the Fair Oaks Summer Fun Run splashes into Phoenix Park from 10 a.m. to noon. July 26.

The not-so-serious 1.2-mile obstacle course is packed with playful challenges such as slime zones, hay bales, inflatable slides and a human car wash. Fan favorite obstacles such as Zany Zoo Alley and the Legendary Lagoon are returning as well, bringing color, chaos and cheer to every turn. All racers will receive a surprise sweet treat upon completion of the run.

This one-of-a-kind run celebrates family fun, fitness and letting loose. Registration is required for all participants and is priced at \$25 until the day of the event, when tickets will be \$30. Register in advance at <https://forpd.org/537/Fair-Oaks-Summer-Fun-Run>.

Park-Wide Key Hunt
Join the adventure! The city-wide scavenger hunt is scheduled for July 21 to July 24. Hundreds of keys will be hidden across various Fair Oaks parks, each one a potential winner. Keys for the scavenger hunt must be found and tested by 7 p.m. July 24.

In locations such as benches, walking paths and signs, keys will unexpectedly materialize and without a set schedule.

Find a key? Bring it to Fair Oaks Park between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. July 24 to



The family-friendly and inclusive gathering at Concerts in the Park will present music classifications such as rock, country, pop, reggae and more. Photo courtesy of Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District

see if it unlocks a prize. No more than 10 keys per person or family can be tested. Prizes include goodies from River Fox Train, Laughs Unlimited and several local museums.

The Wonderful Outdoor World (W.O.W.) Bus

The perfect opportunity for kids to play and socialize is returning to Fair Oaks this summer at no cost. With help from enthusiastic recreational leaders, the Wonderful Outdoor World Bus is back, bringing free games, art and outdoor fun to local parks.

The Wonderful Outdoor World Bus's first stop takes place at 10 a.m. June 24 at Miller Park, 8480 Sunset Ave. It will make its

second stop at 10 a.m. July 15 at Gum Ranch Park, 5600 Tuckeroo Way. The final stop on its tour takes place at 10 a.m. Aug. 5 at Fair Oaks Park, 11549 Fair Oaks Blvd.

Events might be canceled during rain, if temperatures exceed 100 degrees or on Save the Air Days.

From concerts and colorful runs to magical park visits and outdoor play, summer in Fair Oaks is all about coming together. Whether you're grooving to live music, racing through foam or searching for hidden keys, these events invite everyone to join the fun.

For the full schedule and additional Fair Oaks events, visit www.forpd.org. ★

Movers Manage Life-Changing Events

Story and photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - A career change for two certified nurse assistants birthed a company that specializes in helping seniors downsize or move to assisted-living communities.

With compassion learned from senior health care, Michelle and her husband, Jacob, Giorgi started House to Home Moving 16 years ago. Now expanded to include five big trucks and 25 employees, the Orangevale-based company has relocated more than 500 seniors.

"Of course, we'll move anyone to anywhere," Michelle Giorgi said. "But when we first started out, few agencies were helping seniors in what can be life-changing transitions. We set out to make them less stressful. We offer a complete plan for moving. Parting with memories you've had for a lifetime involves great emotional turmoil. We help with decisions. We're a caring agency and we train our staff to be kind and



Holding a pair of scissors, Jacob Giorgi celebrates his Orangevale company's 16th year by joining the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce.

supportive. I'm also a Realtor, so if someone needs to sell a home to finance care, we're able to tie everything together."

As parents of a teenager, the couple

understands the need to involve family in many decisions:

"In the process of a senior move, we keep multiple family members updated,"

Michelle Giorgi said. "We're a support system for everyone involved. We've also moved people who have no family in the world. That's a bigger challenge. Without family support, people feel more uncertain. There's always a transition period after a move. I'll call and check on how a client's getting on. It's part of caring for them as human beings."

In 2019, her husband won the Fair Oaks Honorary Mayoralty with a campaign that shared almost \$15,000 between the Adopt an Elder Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce.

"Caring for seniors is important to my family," Jacob Giorgi said. "We always want to be a resource they can trust."

After moving jobs, House to Home often gets referrals from elder communities.

"That's the best testimonial in the world," Michelle Giorgi said. "It tells us our staff is implementing the care we've taught them."

Learn more about House to Home services online at www.housetohomemoving.com. ★

FAIR OAKS CONCERTS IN THE PARK

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<p>07 TOM RIGNEY AND FLAMBEAU Zydeco AUGUST</p>	<p>14 STEREO TYPE Pop/Dance & Community Connections Night AUGUST</p>	<p>21 ROOTY TOOT TOOT Local Band & Grand Opening Hometown Pride & Community Picnic AUGUST</p>	<p>28 SHAUNA & HIRED GUNS Country AUGUST</p>

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* Concerts will be held in Fair Oaks Park until Village Construction is complete. Stay tuned for updates. Dates, location, and bands subject to change.

[@FOConcerts](https://forpd.org/concerts)

Public Safety Comes First in County's Budget

By Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez

On June 4, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved a balanced \$8.9 billion budget for the upcoming fiscal year. As your County Supervisor, I made it my top priority to ensure this budget protects what matters most: your safety.

In early drafts of the budget, I saw proposals that deeply concerned me. They included cuts to the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) and Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) units, as well as reductions that would have limited the District Attorney's ability to prosecute misdemeanor crimes. These are not abstract programs. They are essential boots-on-the-ground efforts that directly impact our neighborhoods. Cutting them would have sent the wrong message to our community and to those who threaten its safety.

I was the first member of the Board to speak out against these proposed cuts. From the beginning, I made it clear that I could not and would not support a budget that undermined public safety. I worked closely with my colleagues and county staff to reverse those proposals and I'm proud to say we succeeded. The final budget fully restores funding for the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team and Problem-Oriented Policing teams and preserves the District Attorney's ability to prosecute misdemeanors.

These may seem like small line items in a large budget but they reflect a broader principle. We cannot have safe parks, safe businesses or safe communities if we are constantly chipping away at the resources that keep them that way. That's why I've said from day one that I will not support any budget that defunds our Sheriff or our District Attorney. This year's budget reflects that commitment.

At the same time, we've made responsible investments in the core services people rely on every day without raising taxes. We are fixing roads that have gone neglected for far too long, expanding access to mental health and substance use treatment and continuing to make overdue improvements to our correctional facilities. These amendments allow us to meet court-ordered mandates and ensure safety inside and outside our jails. These are not flashy projects. They are the nuts and bolts of good government, and they make a real difference in people's lives.

To me, budgeting is about priorities and my priorities haven't changed. When I ran for office, I promised to bring common sense and accountability to county government. That means making sure public safety is never an afterthought. It means asking tough questions, listening to residents and standing up when something doesn't look right.

I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish in this budget, but I'm not done fighting for our community. There will always be competing pressures and difficult decisions in county government, but one thing you can count on is that I will always stand on the side of public safety. Because your family's safety is not negotiable, and your local government should treat it that way.

If you'd like to share your thoughts or concerns with me, you can always reach my office at 916-874-5491 or email me at SupervisorRodriguez@sac-county.gov.

Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez represents the 4th District, which includes all or part of the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, Rio Linda, Elverta, Gold River, Rancho Murietta, North Highlands, Carmichael, Foothill Farms and Fair Oaks. ★

Pilot Program Offers Healing for Veterans

Stars and Stripes Dog Rescue News Release

ORANGEVALE AREA, CA (MPG) - A unique opportunity is coming to the Orangevale community in August, offering local veterans and their dogs an opportunity to heal together.

Stars and Stripes Dog Rescue, a non-profit organization based in Orangevale, is proud to launch the Healing Through Battle Buddies program, a four-week pilot program that is free and designed specifically for veterans and their canine companions.

The organization is currently seeking five veterans and their dogs to participate in this inaugural experience.

The Healing Through Battle Buddies goal is to build trust, reduce anxiety and create meaningful bonds between veterans and their dogs through structured training, wellness activities and peer support. Each weekly session will combine dog training, therapeutic exercises and community

connection in a supportive and uplifting environment.

"This program recognizes the powerful bond between veterans and their dogs," said Susan Aimes, founder of Stars and Stripes Dog Rescue. "We want to support that connection, while giving both the human and the animal tools to thrive. It's about mutual healing, empowerment and hope."

The pilot program will take place on Sunday mornings at an Orangevale Park, offering a peaceful outdoor setting that encourages connection and growth. Participants must live in Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks or Orangevale and must attend all four sessions.

Interested veterans can apply now to reserve a spot. Space is limited to five participants for this pilot round.

Veterans who could benefit from this program are encouraged to contact Stars and Stripes Dog Rescue by phone at 916-847-9986 or email at starsandstripesrescue@gmail.com. ★

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- Chicken Leg Quarters **99¢/lb**
- Pork Neck Bones **\$1.99/lb**
- Pork Cushion Meat-Bnls **\$2.99/lb**
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WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS

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Pup Pool Days Benefit SPCA

By Seth Henderson

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - A pet boarding facility is sponsoring and hosting four Splashy Hour open-swim sessions for dogs to “get a break from the Sacramento heat” that doubles as a Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) fundraiser.

Between July and August, the Animal Den Pet Resort and Spa, located at 4060 Power Inn Road, Sacramento, features an in-ground “doggy” pool and attached play yards, allowing dogs to run around as much as they want.

Two 90-minute swimming sessions will be held on July 16 with the first starting at 5:15 p.m. and the second starting at 7 p.m. Only dogs are allowed in the pool.

Two sessions on Aug. 13 mirror the July 16 schedule with the first starting at 5:15 p.m. and the second starting at 7 p.m.

Each dog must be accompanied by at least one person. Ticket prices are \$35 per dog and admission for owners is free. Each of the four sessions has a limit of 30 dogs and 60 people.

All proceeds will benefit the animals at the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Dog owners must show proof of current vaccines ((Rabies, DHPP and Bordetella) for their dog ahead of time to info@animaldenpetresort.com with “Splashy Hour” in the subject line.

According to the



Multiple dogs trot into the shallow water of the Animal Den Pet Resort and Spa’s in-ground pool during a previous Splashy Hour event in partnership with the Sacramento SPCA. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Animal Den Pet Resort and Spa, this event is best suited for dogs who are well socialized and comfortable playing in large groups. Animal Den employees reserve the right to observe all dog interactions and make necessary decisions to keep all dogs and humans safe.

Adult beverages will be available for purchase.

A community sponsor of the event is Pet Evolution, a locally-owned franchise in Folsom, located at 25065 Blue Ravine Road, Suite 110. Pet Evolution provides an array of grooming and dietary services for pets, promoting health and wellness.

Featured vendors at the Splashy Hour include Howling Apparel; Photogra-V; Rocky and Stella’s Treats; and Xochi’s Pawfections.

Howling Apparel sells printed dog-tie bandanas and stickers, according to its Etsy shop page. The company’s Instagram profile said its production is considered “small batch” and it’s based



A black dog is soaking wet and sticking its tongue out during a previous Splashy Hour event at the Animal Den Pet Resort and Spa, giving the event an ear up. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

in California.

Photogra-V, a photography company run by Victor Martinez and his wife, Deanna, assists adoption agencies around Sacramento and the Bay Area, according to its Instagram profile. They also take professional photographs of dogs and their owners, according to Photogra-V’s website. Booking contact information can be found at photogra-v.com.

Rocky and Stella’s Treats is a Latina owned all-natural dog and cat

treat company that advertises “no sugar, no dyes, minimal ingredients” on its Instagram profile. On its website, products range from ostrich and chicken heads to plush toys and pinatas. Other products include T-shirts, cakes and breath mints for dogs.

Xochi’s Pawfections features many themed bandanas and plush toys on its website, including pastries, tacos and a “Pawchata Toy,” playing on the popular Latin American drink, horchata. Xochi’s also gives back to a local animal shelter, according to its website.

The Animal Den Pet Resort and Spa offers memberships that give access to its pool and playground, with new members signing up at Splashy Hour to receive their first month of membership for free, according to its event flier. Membership access is Thursday and Friday nights, and Saturdays and Sundays.

More information about the Splashy Hour can be found at sspc.org/splashy-hour. ★

87 Animals Receive New Homes



Quincy, 8 months old, is one of 87 animals adopted from the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals during California Adopt-a-Pet Day on June 7. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Sacramento SPCA News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) joined more than 150 organizations in California to help find loving homes for pets during the second annual Adopt-A-Pet Day on June 7.

Thanks to CalAnimals, San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, all pet adoptions were sponsored during this one-day event.

Eighty-seven animals were adopted from the Sacramento Society for

the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals on Adopt-A-Pet Day: 26 dogs, 56 cats and five small animals.

Three of the SPCA’s adventure-loving dogs, Amigo, Suri and Dolce, who were previously featured in Sacramento SPCA postings, were also adopted.

And last week, Cosmo, who was transferred to the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in January in response to the Los Angeles fires, was adopted following a foster furlough adventure shared on social media.

If you are still looking for a pet to join your family, view the SPCA’s adoptable animals at sspc.org/adoptable. ★

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



I have long known that Sacramento Kings fans are true basketball fans, so the NBA finals were a real treat for everyone that loves the game.

Two small-market teams vying for the title of the best in basketball, with defense as the defining factor of the series. It was a clinic on team defense, and Sacramento fans had the privilege of witnessing exactly how it's done

This series could have gone either way, and if Tyrese Haliburton hadn't gone down in the first quarter of game seven, perhaps it's Indianapolis celebrating Monday morning. We'll never know, and for true Kings fans, seeing Tyrese go down with what experts' suspect is an Achilles injury was a sobering moment.

If the injury is a torn Achilles, Haliburton will likely miss all next season and greatly hamper any chances the Pacers have of reaching the finals.

Now that the finals are over and the Oklahoma City Thunder were crowned NBA champions for the 2024/2025 season, one area where Indianapolis truly dominated was their bench. With a record-breaking 249 points in the series, led by TJ McConnell and Obi Toppin, the bench kept them in the fight, playing a key role in pushing the finals to its limit.

Both teams share players that are long and have huge wingspans.

Chet Holmgren proved why he was the No. 1 draft pick for the Thunder two seasons ago, setting an NBA record with five blocks in Game 7. He added 18 points, and his energy gave OKC what they needed as they capitalized on a Pacers team that found themselves short-handed in the first quarter of Game 7.

TJ McConnell's 68 points, 28 assists, 19 rebounds and 14 steals, set a finals record for a bench player, but even this remarkable effort was no match for the defense of the Oklahoma City Thunder.

What can Scott Perry and his Sacramento Kings take from watching this series?

Value the talent you have and access it accurately. If the Kings have a shortcoming, it's their inability to access talent.

Sacramento Kings fans are optimistic that with a leadership change, new GM will change that and begin the process with a notable find in the

upcoming NBA draft.

Is there a player at pick No. 42 that can make any impact with the Kings next season? Can Scott Perry and his staff find a diamond in the rough?

Unless a trade is made to move the Kings into the first round, that is what the new leadership team has to do.

Trades are beginning to occur, and 7-footer Kevin Durant is on the move. The same Kevin Durant that was drafted No. 2 overall by the Seattle SuperSonics that became none other than the Oklahoma City Thunder.

The traveled Kevin Durant will settle in Houston, Texas, where he'll reunite with former teammate Steven Adams to help the Rockets rebuild. In return, the trade sent Dillon Brooks, Jalen Green, and five second-round draft picks to the Phoenix Suns. Who ultimately wins this trade remains to be seen.

Draft choices matter, and the Sacramento Kings not only let fan-favorite Davion Mitchell go to the Toronto Raptors last season for a player who never saw a minute of regular-season action, they also threw in a second-round draft pick.

These are the moves that must stop if the Kings franchise is going to become a playoff contender.

Do Kings fans want to accomplish what OKC just did, and hoist the Larry Obrien trophy for the first time in franchise history? Of course, but I assure you fans will settle for playoff tickets every year as a place to start.

Mr. Perry, all eyes are on you! What exactly do you have in your bag of tricks that doesn't include trading Domantas Sabonis? Add to that list Keon Ellis, Isaac Jones, Devin Carter and Keegan Murray.

Teams are chomping at the bit to bite into our young talent that haven't had the opportunity to show what their true potential is.

Moves are imminent, and while some fans will never be happy with the players that are traded, but patience and true appreciation for the young talent we have is needed.

Stay tuned Kings fans, because just as the sun will rise tomorrow, a trade is in the offing.

All the best!

Your thoughts are always welcome at vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com. ★

Social Security Matters What about Non-Career Veterans and their VA Healthcare?



By Russell Gloor,
AMAC Certified Social
Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: In your answer to the retired U.S. Navy veteran about why he is forced to enroll in Medicare, you focused on military TriCare's requirement for the member to enroll in Medicare. But you said nothing about regular VA health care. If a non-career veteran is eligible for VA health care, couldn't that be used in place of Medicare? **Signed: Veteran Advocate**

Dear Veteran Advocate: Thank you for your feedback. FYI, I have previously explained numerous times that veterans who rely on the VA for 100% of their healthcare can, indeed, disenroll from Medicare Part B (thus saving the monthly Part B premium). I don't personally recommend it because of my personal experience, but it certainly is possible to do so. Personally, I use the VA for some of my healthcare needs - usually an annual checkup and optometry services - at my local VA clinic which is only a mile away from where I live. But for any

extensive treatment needs (medical tests, etc.) I must travel about 40 miles to the nearest VA hospital facility. For contrast, I have numerous private healthcare services, specialists, and hospitals very near where I live, but to use them under the VA I must get VA preapproval and use only certain VA-approved providers, which is inconvenient for me. Personally, I prefer the freedom to go to any healthcare service provider I choose, without restriction, at any time I need to. So, I use my VA coverage when it is convenient for me but rely also on non-VA, Medicare-approved specialists who I can choose to use (or not) at will. For me, it's a matter of convenience and the freedom to use whichever healthcare provider I want. That said, I fully understand that some veterans rely exclusively on the VA for their healthcare needs, and I have explained to many who have written to me that they have that option. I have also published several public articles about this as well. Here is one such article:

<https://socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-why-should-a-veteran-pay-for-medicare/>

So, please rest assured that we regularly advise our veterans about their healthcare options under Medicare, including the ability to decline Medicare Part B coverage if they have full VA healthcare

coverage. FYI, free Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) is mandatory to collect Social Security after age 65, but Medicare Part B coverage is always optional because there is a premium associated with Part B. A veteran can decline Medicare Part B coverage and save that monthly premium, but they would need to contact Social Security to do so. Social Security will want to interview the veteran to ensure they are aware of the potential financial consequences of not having Medicare Part B. And they may need to file form CMS-1763 (Request for Termination) But a non-career veteran can opt out of Medicare Part B if they get all of their healthcare services through the Veterans Administration.

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Politicians Agree on School Money But Poor Test Scores Need Attention



By Dan Walters,
CALMatters.org

Historically, the annual process of writing a state budget has often stumbled over how much money California should spend on its public school system and its nearly 6 million students. However, as Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders negotiate a final budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year, dealing with a multi-billion-dollar deficit, they have only small disagreements on school finance.

Both Newsom's latest budget and the Legislature's alternative draft would peg state spending on schools at \$80.5 billion, including transitional kindergarten, a new education subcategory.

That's \$4.5 billion less than the current budget allocates, but with anticipated increases in education's share of local property taxes, total spending would remain roughly even.

With schools off the table, politically, Newsom and legislators are wrangling over more contentious issues, particularly the reductions in medical and social services for poor, elderly and disabled Californians that Newsom seeks to close the budget gap.

The comity on school spending, however, shuns a debate that California's politicians should be having — what to do about the system's chronically subpar academic achievement.

This week the Public Policy Institute of California issued a timely reminder that there's been little progress — and some regression — in such basic skills as reading and mathematics, with wide gaps among students tied to family income, ethnicity and other socioeconomic factors.

In an analysis of state academic tests that were administered last year, PPIC researchers reported that fewer than half of all students “met or exceeded state standards in English Language Arts, while about a third (36%) did so in math.”

The analysis also found that “proficiency rates were highest among Asian students: just above 70% in English and nearly two-thirds in math. White students' rates were lower, with 60% meeting the standard in English and 50% in math. Proficiency rates were lower on average for Black and Latino students — 24% and 37% in English, respectively, and 18% and 30% in math.”

Also girls fared much better than boys in English. And proficiency in basic skills among low-income students is scarcely half that of those from moderate- or high-income families.

To cap it off, PPIC notes that California students' rates of proficiency in federal tests continue to lag behind those of other states.

None of these findings is unexpected. California students have been lagging behind the state's expectations and national norms for many years, even as spending on the school system has continued to climb to well over \$20,000 a year per pupil from state aid, local property taxes and federal subventions.

One would think that California's stubbornly

mediocre — at best — education outcomes would sit atop the political agenda, given their negative effects on students and the state as a whole.

However, the Capitol's discussions of education usually start and end with how much money schools should receive, when it's obvious that school finances, while important, are just one factor in outcomes.

There are some signs of progress on those other factors, such as a recent agreement to encourage local school systems to use phonics in teaching elementary students how to read, the most important of all academic skills.

While the state is stopping short of mandating phonics, as many education experts advise, it's a step forward that more or less declares a winner in the very long debate over methodology that's been dubbed “reading wars.”

However, there's also been some regression. As PPIC notes in its study, the state Board of Education, which tends to reflect the education establishment's priorities, has adopted new definitions of academic test proficiency that could obscure embarrassingly low results. For instance, if a student scores below grade level, their performance will be labeled “Developing” or “Minimum.”

“Understanding student scores could be growing more difficult,” PPIC says. That's not a good thing.

Dan Walters is one of the most decorated and widely syndicated columnists in California history, authoring a column four times a week that offers his view and analysis of the state's political, economic, social and demographic trends. ★



The New Massive Resistance

On Sept. 30, 1962, the University of Mississippi experienced a “mostly peaceful” demonstration. As with all such protests, it was peaceful until it wasn't -- it became a riot, and a particularly heinous and destructive one.

The mob attacked federal officers, including border patrol agents, with rocks and Molotov cocktails. They burned cars. They smashed streetlights. They ransacked buildings. They drove vehicles at the officers. And they did it all to try to prevent the federal government from enforcing the law.

This, discerning readers will realize, was the notorious Battle of Oxford, when students at Ole Miss and outside agitators exploded in fury to prevent the enrollment of James Meredith, an African-American, who was under the protection of federal agents.

President John F. Kennedy had federalized the Mississippi National Guard days before the disturbance, and sent in the Army when things got out of hand. Eventually, he drew on 31,000 troops, a necessary exercise of overwhelming force.

Now, once again, mobs are in the streets in opposition to federal power and federal law. We are probably at the beginning stages of another titanic struggle over whether the writ of

federal law will run in jurisdictions opposed to it, and over the morality of those underlying laws.

To use a term borrowed from segregationists in Virginia in the 1950s, the opponents of ICE are engaged in a campaign of “massive resistance.”

Virginia Democrat Harry Byrd and his allies came up with an across-the-board strategy to undermine Brown v. Board of Education. “If we can organize the Southern states for massive resistance to this order,” Byrd said, “I think that in time the rest of the country will realize that racial integration is not going to be accepted in the South.”

Similarly, Democratic officeholders and activists hope to make ICE raids so politically toxic and so painful to implement that the federal government stands down and accepts the status quo of routine lawlessness.

The opposition is relying on a version of another doctrine of the Southern resisters: nullification. This is the idea that states can invalidate federal laws that they deem an offense against our constitutional order.

This notion has a long, undistinguished history in this country as a precursor to the Civil War and, later, as a tool to attempt to preserve segregation. Although it is most associated with the South, other parts of the country have tried to resort to it as well.

Now progressive cities and states are joining the list. They have no equivalent of John C. Calhoun, the brilliant, if catastrophically wrong, South Carolina statesman who de-

veloped a sophisticated defense of the concept. Instead, they want de facto nullification, or nullification as a practical matter rather than a theory.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass has been quite clear about this. “We need to stop the raids,” she insists. “The only thing it does is contribute to chaos.” Her attitude would take Los Angeles well beyond its status as a sanctuary city, which involves not affirmatively cooperating with the feds, and make it something else -- effectively a no-go zone for immigration officers and a jurisdiction that affirmatively resists them.

Of course, the anti-ICE resistance would reject any association with the massive resistance of yore, arguing that its cause is just, in contrast to the segregationist South. But violent opposition to law enforcement officers acting within their lawful powers is deeply wrong, whatever the underlying cause (and the mass illegal immigration imposes significant costs on our society).

If enforcing our laws is offensive to progressives, they should seek to change the statutes in question and pass a large-scale amnesty, rather than relying on a rioter's veto to dictate what ICE agents can do and where they can go.

Violent mobs have no legitimate part to play in our democratic republic, not in Oxford, Mississippi, in 1962, not in Los Angeles, California, or anywhere else inspired by its sordid example in 2025.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Initial Funding for Implementing Proposition 36 Recognized

Office of Senator Roger Niello
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - A bipartisan group of state legislators, public safety officials and victim advocates gathered at the State Capitol on June 18 to recognize the initial investment in implementing the will of the voters while emphasizing the need for funding a comprehensive approach to probation and supervision reversing ongoing cuts to probation which will ensure the measure's long-term success.

Specifically, attending the June 18 press conference included State Senator Catherine Blakespear, (D-Encinitas); State Senator Roger Niello (R-Fair Oaks); Sutter County Sheriff Brandon Barnes, California State Sheriffs' Association President; Sacramento County Sheriff Jim Cooper; Monterey County District Attorney Jeannine M. Pacioni, California District Attorneys Association First Vice President; San Diego County Sheriff Kelly Martinez; San Joaquin County Probation Chief Steve Jackson, Chief Probation Officers of California President; Tulare County Probation Chief Kelly Vernon; El Dorado County Probation Chief Brian Richart; Solano County Probation Chief Dean Farrah; Lake County Probation Chief Wendy Mondfrans; Yuba County Probation Chief Matt Ricardy; Napa County Probation Chief Amanda Gibbs and Anna Berry with Crime Victims United-California.

"Proposition 36 passed with overwhelming voter support and now it's time to provide the resources needed to implement it," Blakespear said. "This initial investment is a strong first step



Senator Roger Niello speaks at the California State Capitol Building in Sacramento to recognize funding for Proposition 36 on June 18. Photo courtesy of the Office of Senator Roger Niello

in a tough budget year, but we need to make sure there is ongoing funding for supervision, treatment and accountability."

Said Niello, "A budget is an expression of priorities and the current state budget does not acknowledge the will of the voters who overwhelmingly supported Proposition 36. The \$110 million designated to fund Proposition 36 is wholly inadequate to achieve the goals of a treatment-focused approach that will lead to improving lives and self-sufficiency."

The proposed budget includes an initial, one-time funding of \$110 million toward Proposition 36. While this investment marks progress, public safety officials and law enforcement say

it falls short. The initial plan misses the mark relative to the measure's core component, ensuring accountability to complete court-mandated treatment. By failing to fully and properly fund law enforcement accountability efforts, the Legislature and governor are unable to meet the will of California voters and threatening the success of Proposition 36.

"We cannot implement Prop 36 effectively if we ignore the reality of what's happening on the ground," Barnes said. "County sheriffs and probation departments are essential partners in making sure treatment is delivered and enforced. But right now, we've been left out of the equation. We need real

resources to deliver real results."

Public safety officials emphasized that the budget must not only restore cuts to county probation departments but increase those funds as they are responsible for supervising court-ordered treatment and ensuring compliance. Without those frontline supports, there is no accountability. In the Legislature's budget, there are \$25 million in ongoing supervision cuts and \$20 million in ongoing pre-trial cuts in the governor's proposed budget.

"Probation ensures people stay on track with their treatment plans and court orders and holds them accountable when they don't," Jackson said. "This budget significantly cuts

probation funding at the exact moment we're being asked to do more. That means less people will follow through with rehabilitation and that threatens public safety."

Even the funding that has been allocated is narrowly directed to county behavioral health departments, leaving out key justice system partners who are critical to successful outcomes.

"Treatment without accountability isn't what Prop 36 says. We need to ensure law enforcement has resources it needs to best hold people accountable, which will improve public safety," Pacioni said. "Voters said yes to Prop 36 because they wanted a better path forward. That means the budget needs to support the full system: courts, probation, law enforcement and treatment. Not just one piece of it. Otherwise, it is set up to fail."

The Legislature's proposed state budget specifically ignores critical elements, including no support and a budget cut for county probation departments to handle the increased workload of supervising individuals and connecting them to treatment in the community while holding them accountable; no resources for frontline law enforcement to support interventions in the community; no funding to house arrestees in county jails and provide in-custody treatment; and no funding for key partners of treatment delivery such as county sheriff and probation departments who are critical for court-ordered supervision and successful outcomes while only offering modest funds to county behavioral health agencies.

For more information, call Lea Park-Kim, Office of Senator Roger Niello's communications director, at 916-651-4006. ★

SMUD and DESRI Announce 640 MWh Clean Energy Storage Project



Rancho Seco's energy infrastructure includes a 160-megawatt solar facility, showcasing the Sacramento Municipal Utility District's commitment to clean energy generation. The innovative site combines solar power with sustainable land management through sheep grazing. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Sacramento Municipal Utility District
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - DESRI and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) announced June 19 that they executed a long-term power purchase agreement for the Dry Creek Energy Storage project.

Dry Creek is a 160 megawatt/640 megawatt-hour battery energy storage system (BESS) located in Sacramento County.

"Our DESRI team is proud to bring this reliable, cost-effective clean energy storage project to the California energy system, an exciting new addition to our partnership with SMUD over many years," said DESRI Chief Development Officer Hy Martin. "This project will play a critical role in helping SMUD to maintain and enhance grid reliability, optimize performance of their renewable energy assets and contribute to their decarbonization goals."

SMUD and DESRI have worked on the project jointly over several years. Given the significant transmission infrastructure at the decommissioned Rancho Seco generating station, the battery-energy storage system is optimally located to leverage the existing infrastructure and limit costly upgrades on the system.

The energy storage system will be charged using renewable energy

and other clean sources available on SMUD's grid, supporting the integration of sustainable power and enhancing grid reliability.

"This battery storage project represents another significant milestone in SMUD's Zero Carbon Plan as we work toward carbon-free electricity by 2030," said SMUD Chief Zero Carbon Officer Lora Anguay. "By enhancing our existing renewable infrastructure at Rancho Seco with battery technology, we're building a more flexible and reliable grid while enabling a more efficient integration of renewable energy."

DESRI and its affiliates develop, acquire, own and operate long-term contracted renewable energy assets in the U.S. DESRI's portfolio of contracted, operating and in-construction renewable energy projects currently includes 70 solar and wind projects representing more than nine gigawatts of aggregate capacity.

As the nation's sixth-largest, community-owned, not-for-profit electric service provider, SMUD has provided low-cost, reliable electricity to Sacramento County for more than 75 years. In 2023, SMUD's power supply was, on average, 78 percent carbon free and SMUD has a goal to reach zero carbon in its electricity production by 2030.

For more information on SMUD's Zero Carbon Plan and its customer programs, visit smud.org. ★

Civil Case for Pesticide Violations Resolved

MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County District Attorney Thien Ho, and several other District Attorney's Offices in California, resolved a civil case against Pure Maintenance Holdings LLC, Pure Products LLC, Michael Adams and Brandon Michael Adams for pesticide violations and unfair business practices.

Michael Adams is the founder and chief operating officer of Pure Maintenance and was a manager of Pure Products. His son, Brandon Michael Adams, is the chief executive officer of Pure Maintenance. Pure Maintenance licenses the use of its "Dry Fog" machines and sold pesticides, including InstaPure and EverPure, to its licensees for use in the machines.

Both Adams appeared in advertising for Pure Maintenance and Pure Products. The defendants made statements about their products that were false and illegal. They claimed that their products were approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, when in fact they were not.

The statements included that InstaPure was EPA-approved to kill all bacteria and fogging with InstaPure during COVID-19 was promoted. They also falsely claimed EverPure was verified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for

effectiveness in sterilization.

Both the father and the son advertised Dry Fog as safe, green, natural and non-toxic when the pesticides sold and used in Dry Fog required "WARNING" or "DANGER" on the label because they are toxic. Both Adams also sold unregistered and registered pesticides without having the required pesticide broker license or paying the required tax.

The stipulated judgment requires the defendants pay \$425,000 in penalties and costs, of which \$100,000 will go to Sacramento County. It also requires them to hire a compliance manager and put into place practices and protocols to ensure all advertising claims and instructions are consistent with the labelling required for the pesticides used, recommended or sold for its services.

"Law-abiding businesses that follow health and safety regulations should not be undercut by those that violate the law. Consumers deserve accurate information to make informed and responsible choices that protect their families and communities," Ho said.

The other District Attorney's Offices participating in the civil case are Fresno County, Los Angeles County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, San Diego County, San Joaquin County, Santa Barbara County and Ventura County. ★

Libraries Provide Free Summer Lunches

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Public Library will provide free lunch to children 18 and under while school is out through the Lunch at the Library project, beginning on June 17.

Meals will be distributed at 13 library locations from noon to 1 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays until Aug. 8. Food is provided without question for free to children from 0 to 18 years old. No paperwork or identification is required.

Meal sites are available at 13 library locations: Arcade, Carmichael, Del Paso Heights, Elk Grove, Fair Oaks, North Highlands (Antelope), North Sacramento (Hagginwood), Rancho Cordova, Rio Linda, South Natomas, Southgate, Sylvan

Oaks and Valley Hi (North Laguna).

According to the Sacramento Public Library website, libraries provide free meals over the summer because families don't always have consistent access to free meals since school is not in session. The Lunch at the Library project aims to assist with that need and help fuel children's learning. Libraries also offer convenient neighborhood locations to eat a meal as well as pick up reading materials, games, DVDs and more.

Lunch at the Library is a project of the California State Library in partnership with the California Library Association and supported with funds from the state of California.

For more information, visit saclibrary.org/lunch. ★

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CLUES

- ACROSS
- Composer Joplin's first name
 - Stomach pain-causing acronym
 - Boxing practice
 - Horatio ___ of "Ragged Dick" fame
 - Not cooked
 - This and desist
 - *Torso, pl.
 - Wrath
 - *DNA half
 - *Body part, not Elvis
 - *Part of blood, not type of TV
 - *Lung filler
 - Same as on top
 - Seth MacFarlane's bear
 - Helps
 - Genus, pl.
 - Paper unit
 - Comme ci, comme ça
 - Burdened
 - Egg on
 - *Pumps blood, not tires
 - Type of nuclear missile, acr.
 - River in West Africa
 - Fraternity recruitment season
 - Purse to go with evening gown
 - "Annie Hall" star
 - Urban myth, e.g.
 - Kenan Thompson's TV show, acr.
 - Target of a joke
 - Cemetery jar
 - *Fingers, not numbers
 - *Muscle, not skeletal or cardiac
 - Enticed (2 words)
 - ___ Baba
 - Scary movie consequence
 - ___ came a spider...
 - Old towel, e.g.
 - Nail salon file
 - *Gallbladder contents
 - ___ of Sam
 - Poet ___ Alighieri
- DOWN
- Fri follower
 - Hoofbeat sound
 - Princess Fiona, by night
 - Unit of magnetic flux density
 - Ken Jennings' forte
 - *Part of an eye, not a flower
 - "Cheers," e.g.
 - Moved under the rug
 - Witnesses
 - *Part of a hand, not a tree
 - Continent
 - Tyrannosaurus follower
 - "___ of Love" by The Dixie Cups
 - Like one from Dublin
 - Lincoln lumber
 - Battery's partner
 - *Torso, not part of a tree
 - Fear-inspiring
 - Cannabis, in South Africa
 - Not talker?
 - Umberto Eco's "The ___ of the Rose"
 - Marks on a manuscript
 - Old episode
 - *Part of an ear, not blacksmith's block
 - Swimming competition
 - Guesstimate phrase (2 words)
 - Monotonous hum
 - Dressing a priest, e.g.
 - Bolt's partner
 - Washed away
 - Nicholas I and Alexander III
 - Marilyn Monroe's original name
 - Cold cuts shop
 - Graven image
 - Departed
 - Manual communication gesture
 - Thirteen-year-old, e.g.
 - Wagner or Powers in a TV classic
 - Chemist's office
 - Burmese neighbor
 - Yellow #5, e.g.

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Mercy General Hospital Celebrates 100 Years of Babies

Dignity Health News Release

SACRAMENTO AREA, CA (MPG) - As part of a year-long effort to celebrate Dignity Health Mercy General Hospital's 100th year of providing compassionate, high-quality health care to the Greater Sacramento community, the hospital held a birthday celebration June 11 for the community and staff to celebrate generations of families born at the hospital.

Held in the Mercy Healing Garden, the celebration brought together hospital leaders, multi-generational families and longtime staff. The group celebrated the connection they have with the hospital and reflected on the legacy of Mercy General's Family Birth Center. Since opening its doors in 1925, the hospital has welcomed tens of thousands of babies, becoming a trusted part of life's most meaningful beginnings for Sacramento families.

"This event was a powerful reminder of the deep connections our hospital has built over the last century," said Steven Foster, president and chief executive officer of Mercy General Hospital. "It was an honor to stand alongside community members whose lives began here and celebrate the generations who have continued to turn to us for care."

Kevin Duggan, president and chief executive officer of Mercy Foundation, Sister Katherine Doyle and other special guests



Attendees enjoyed a variety of activities including a historical photo display, interactive photo booth and a commemorative cake cutting. Photo courtesy of Mercy General Hospital

joined Foster in offering remarks at the event. Attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, including a historical photo display, interactive photo booth and a commemorative cake cutting. The hospital also unveiled a new mural by renowned artist Amanda Lynn, paying tribute to Mercy General's century-long legacy of compassion and healing.

The event's highlight was an announcement that the hospital's Family Birth Center will be named the Sister Kathleen Horgan, RSM (Religious Sisters of Mercy), Family Birth Center at Mercy General Hospital. Long-time friends and supporters of Sister Kathleen collectively donated \$500,000 to Mercy



Held in the Mercy Healing Garden, the celebration brought together hospital leaders, multi-generational families and longtime staff. Photo courtesy of Mercy General Hospital

Foundation to complete a refresh of the Family Birth Center to ensure the hospital continues its mission of providing exceptional, compassionate care to mothers, newborns and their families.

Originally from County Cork, Ireland, Sister Kathleen came to Sacramento as a young novitiate and began her ministry in education before serving as director of Mission Services at Mercy



The Mercy General Hospital unveiled a new mural by renowned artist Amanda Lynn, paying tribute to Mercy General's century-long legacy of compassion and healing. Photo courtesy of Mercy General Hospital

General Hospital from 1992 to 2006. Her decades of dedicated service and unwavering commitment to the Mercy mission continue to inspire and uplift the community.

The Sister Kathleen Horgan, RSM, Family Birth Center at Mercy General Hospital will stand as a lasting tribute to her legacy of compassion, leadership and faith.

"This generous gift is a reflection of the impact Sister Kathleen has had on Mercy General and the community as a whole," Duggan said. "Support like this enables us to invest in the future of our region's children, ensuring compassionate, high-quality care for all families."

Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy General Hospital has grown into a modern center of excellence while remaining deeply rooted in its mission of service and community partnership. ★

Sacramento-Area New Home Sales Bounce Back



A total of 254 new homes were sold in Sacramento County new home communities during the month. Image by Paul Brennan from Pixabay

By North State Building Industry Association News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - New home sales in the Sacramento region dropped off sharply in early May as area buyers continued to pull back due to heightened economic uncertainties but they rebounded in the second half of May, the North State Building Industry Association (BIA) reported June 10.

A total of 455 new homes in the region were sold by Building Industry Association members during May, which was up 10% from April but down 32% from May 2024, which was the highest-selling May since 2005. In fact, May 2025 sales were just slightly below the average for the month dating back to 1997.

North State Building Industry Association President and CEO Tim Murphy said that buyers here and nationally are continuing to react to the swings in economic news.

"Early in the month, prospective buyers were still adjusting to the administration's tariff policies and other initiatives but by the end of the month, the number of people visiting new home communities rebounded to the highest level since January and sales increased as well," said Murphy. "While

mortgage interest rates remain close to 7% and the number of existing homes on the market is slowly increasing, it's clear that the demand for new homes in our region remains strong."

A total of 254 new homes were sold in Sacramento County new home communities during May, as expected, given that the majority of developments are located there.

Another 141 homes were sold in Placer County, with the remainder of sales in the Yuba-Sutter region, El Dorado County and Yolo County.

"As people continue to adjust to current economic trends, we continue to believe that new home sales in our region will remain solid," said Murphy.

Roseville again saw the most sales of any submarket last month with 87, followed by Rancho Cordova with 71, Elk Grove with 63, Sacramento with 61 and Natomas with 29. Rounding out the Top 10 markets were Lincoln (21), Rocklin (17), El Dorado Hills and Folsom with 16 each, and Plumas Lake with 14.

Building Industry Association statistics include sales by members in Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. ★

Board of Supervisors Appoints Chief Probation Officer



Jamal Rowe is the new chief probation officer appointed by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on June 10. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

Sacramento County Board of Supervisors News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted to appoint Jamal Rowe as the new chief probation officer on June 10.

Rowe's appointment follows an extensive and competitive recruitment process coordinated by the Sacramento Superior Court. The hiring committee was comprised of Sacramento Superior Court judges and the deputy county executive for public safety and justice, Eric Jones.

Following panel interviews, Rowe was identified as the most qualified candidate for the chief probation officer role. His selection was unanimously approved by the Superior Court Executive Committee and subsequently by all Sacramento Superior Court judges.

"The unanimous support

for Mr. Rowe's appointment by our judicial officers reflects the confidence we have in his leadership, public service experience, and commitment to public safety," said Sacramento Superior Court Assistant Presiding Judge Lawrence G. Brown. "We are confident he will lead the probation department with integrity and vision."

Rowe brings to the post more than 25 years of experience in public safety, including more than two decades with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. He most recently served as acting deputy director of the Division of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO), where he provided statewide leadership in operations, policy direction, and executive communications. His career began in Sacramento County, where he served four years as a probation assistant at Juvenile Hall, bringing his professional journey full circle with this new role.

"We welcome Jamal Rowe back to Sacramento County," Jones said. "His extensive background in community corrections, leadership in statewide parole operations, and demonstrated commitment to public safety and rehabilitation make him an outstanding choice to lead our probation department."

Rowe has been recognized for his achievements

throughout his career, including being named Division of Adult Parole Operation's Professional of the Year in 2022 and serving as a member of the California Sex Offender Management Board from 2018 to 2021. He has led the development of training and policy initiatives, including Division of Adult Parole Operation's first POST-certified parole academy and a customized principled policing training module. Rowe is also a subject matter expert in electronic monitoring and sex offender treatment and a graduate of the Los Angeles Police Department Leadership Program.

Rowe holds a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from California State University, Sacramento, and is a senior fellow with the American Leadership Forum.

"I am honored to return to Sacramento County and serve in this vital role," Rowe said. "I look forward to working alongside dedicated probation professionals to support our communities, enhance public safety, and expand opportunities for successful reentry and rehabilitation."

His appointment follows the retirement of former Chief Probation Officer Marlon Yarber in December 2024 and the interim leadership of Assistant Chief Probation Officer Julie Wherry. ★

Proposed Initiative would Increase Graduation Ethnic Studies Requirements

California Secretary of State News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., announced that the proponent of a new initiative was cleared to begin collecting petition signatures on May 30.

The Attorney General prepares the legal title and summary that is required to appear on initiative petitions. When the official language is complete, the Attorney General forwards it to the proponent and to the

Secretary of State, and the initiative can be circulated for signatures.

The Secretary of State then provides a calendar of deadlines to the proponent and to county elections officials.

The Attorney General's official title and summary for the measure is as follows: Increases ethnic studies requirements for graduation from the California state university. Initiative statute.

Under current law, undergraduate students at the California State University (CSU) must complete one three-unit ethnic studies course

to graduate.

This measure would change California State University's graduation requirements to require, beginning in the 2030-2031 academic year: undergraduate students to complete two ethnic studies courses (one three-unit lower division course and one three-unit upper division course); and graduate students to complete one three-unit ethnic studies course.

The measure prohibits the Legislature from reducing the number of required courses for graduation or altering the required

course curriculum.

An estimated summary by the Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local governments states "Increased state costs in the tens of millions of dollars annually during initial implementation of the measure, with the bulk of costs phasing out over time."

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1979 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 25-0003.

The proponent of the measure, Emeka Ogbatue, must

collect signatures of 546,651 registered voters (five percent of the total votes cast for governor in the November 2022 general election) for the measure to become eligible for the ballot.

The proponent has 180 days to circulate petitions for the measure, meaning the signatures must be submitted to county elections officials no later than Nov. 26, 2025.

The address for the proponent is 420 N McKinley St., Unit No. 111-307, Corona. The proponent can also be contacted at eogbatue@goldenvalues.org. ★

The Challenge of Democratic Policing

By Steve Smith of the Pacific Research Institute

News of the fairly small federal enforcement action spread quickly amongst opponents of immigration enforcement, and based on the flags and signs, a host of other political causes as well, resulting in days of riots, assaults on police officers, arson, and vandalism.

The situation is made more confusing in California because here, state and local law enforcement officials are barred from enforcing immigration laws or cooperating with immigration authorities by SB 54, the so-called "California Values Act".

Specifically, SB 54 prohibits California peace officers from participating in joint federal/state task forces that involve immigration enforcement. They may not arrest individuals for immigration law violations or hold inmates longer than their customary arrest and holding periods without a judicial order for the purposes of immigration enforcement. They must also ensure that schools, hospitals, or other public spaces remain open to all without consideration of the immigration status of anyone accessing those facilities. In all they do, they cannot ask the immigration status of an individual.

ICE actions thus create a strain on the social contract between some Californians and local and state law enforcement agencies who are viewed by many to be indistinguishable from their federal counterparts. Consequently, in Los Angeles, local officers are being attacked and property is being destroyed as protestors and criminal opportunists take advantage of the misconception of their role.

In addition, the tactical response to an emerging riot can be maddeningly slow.

Consider that the Los Angeles Police Department has just 8,900 police officers on staff to provide service to over 3.8 million residents, yet the number of officers actually on duty at any given time is a scant 315, or less than 1 officer per 12,000 residents.

Even with assistance from other local law enforcement agencies and the CHP, it is a challenge for the police to quickly marshal the resources to quell an organized and large civil disturbance. Along with tactical considerations, the law leaves state and local peace officers in Los Angeles in a legal gray area when devising their strategies to maintain peace and manage crowd control while at the same time not being seen to be assisting ICE agents.

Another challenge is the fact that immigration law is administrative and not criminal. Consequently, officers engaged in enforcing those laws may find themselves in difficult legal circumstances were an enforcement action to turn violent or even deadly.

History has shown that the slow police ramp up during the three major LA riots (the 1965 Watts riots; the 1992 Rodney King riots and, most recently, the 2020 George Floyd riots) allowed a considerable amount of crime to take place

before California's governors utilized the California National Guard to assist in ending the riots and restoring order – a process known as "calling up."

For that purpose and more, all US states and territories maintain a national guard, which in times of civil emergency can be called upon to assist local authorities. In some circumstances, the President of the United States can assume control of a state or territorial guard, such as when a state's governor refuses to enforce federal law as famously happened in Alabama when President Kennedy nationalized the Alabama Guard based on Gov. George Wallace's refusal to comply with the Civil Rights Act. Going back to 1954, President Eisenhower ordered elements of the 101st Airborne Division to protect the "Little Rock Nine" at Central High School in Arkansas.

This weekend (June 7 weekend), President Trump did the same when he ordered 2,000 California National Guard members to Los Angeles over the objections of Gov. Gavin Newsom, who said: "The federal government is taking over the California National Guard and deploying 2,000 soldiers in Los Angeles — not because there is a shortage of law enforcement, but because they want a spectacle." On June 9, an additional 700 active duty Marines were sent to Los Angeles.

There appears to be ample evidence that, in the past, presidential authority to enforce federal law extends to ordering the US military and national guard to aid in carrying out law enforcement actions and the securing of facilities. California Attorney General Rob Bonta has filed a lawsuit challenging that authority alleging, among other things, the federalization deprives California of the guard in the event of an emergency and infringes on Newsom's rights as Commander-in-Chief of the state guard.

Despite Gov. Newsom's assurances that all was under control, there are a shortage of peace officers in Los Angeles and, for that matter, the rest of California. Los Angeles Police Chief Jim McDonnell reported after the first day of rioting that, "We are overwhelmed".

It should be no surprise as the LA Times reported in January 2025 that LAPD was down hundreds of officers with little hope of returning to full staffing for several years. This situation is echoed by a recent peace officer staffing report by PORAC noting that statewide, law enforcement numbers are at a 30-year low.

There may be soon a day of reckoning in the Supreme Court not just over the extent of presidential authority vis a vis the use of troops to enforce laws but also over the constitutionality of state laws limiting cooperation with federal law enforcement authorities.

The question in Los Angeles today is that given these challenges, will the thin blue line hold?

Steve Smith is a senior fellow in urban studies at the Pacific Research Institute, focusing on California's growing crime challenges. ★

Small Business Owners Describe Slightly-Improved Conditions



Small business owners expecting better business conditions and sales. Image by Ketut-Subiyanto pexels

National Federation of Independent Business News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Small business owners expecting better business conditions and sales boosted the National Federation of Independent Business's latest Small Business Optimism Index numbers, released on June 10, to 98.8, slightly above the 51-year average of 98.

The latest index also gave labor shortages and labor quality and inflation a break from their occasional rankings as the most important problems, replacing them with taxes. The last time taxes were ranked as the most important problem was in December 2020.

"California was already the highest taxed state in the nation, so the findings in the latest Optimism Index are not so much a surprise as they are a reminder of our crying need for better policies," said John Kabatek, state director for the National Federation of Independent Business in California. "One such better policy would have been to pay off our \$20 billion debt to the federal government over our unemployment insurance loans when Uncle Sam was ladling out gobs of cash a few years ago. Too late now, which means small business owners are on the hook for the increased costs associated with the unemployment insurance taxes, which only businesses pay, for many more years to come. And to think some lawmakers still want to award striking workers who already have jobs with unemployment benefits. More than most examples, this shows the mentality of the policymakers in charge of making decisions for California."

The National Federation of Independent Business's Index is the gold standard measurement of America's small business economy. Used by the Federal Reserve, congressional leaders, administration officials

and state legislatures across the nation, it's regarded as the bellwether on the health and welfare of the Main Street.

The Optimism Index, aka Small Business Economic Trends report, is a national snapshot of National Federation of Independent Business-member, small-business owners not broken down by state. The typical National Federation of Independent Business member employs between one and nine people and reports gross sales of about \$500,000 a year.

"Although optimism recovered slightly in May, uncertainty is still high among small business owners," National Federation of Independent Business Chief Economist Bill Dunkelberg said. "While the economy will continue to stumble along until the major sources of uncertainty are resolved, owners reported more positive expectations on business conditions and sales growth."

Highlights from the June 10 Optimism Index included a net one percent, seasonally adjusted, of owners who viewed current inventory stocks as "too low" in May, up seven points from April and the highest reading since August 2022. This was the largest monthly increase in the survey's history.

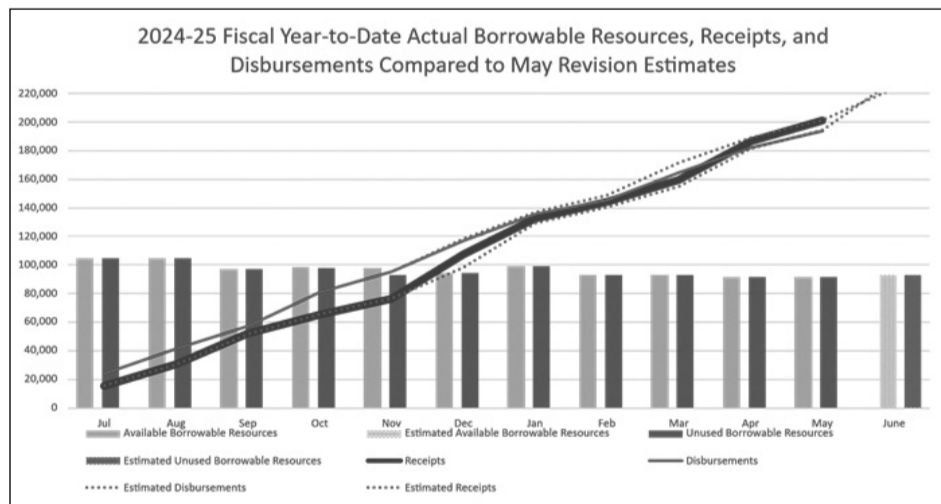
The net percentage of owners expecting better business conditions rose 10 points from April to a net 25%, seasonally adjusted.

The net percentage of owners expecting higher real sales volumes rose 11 points from April to a net 10%, seasonally adjusted. This component contributed the most to the Optimism Index's improvement.

The percentage of small business owners reporting labor quality as the single most important problem for business fell three points from April to 16%.

Keep up with the latest California small-business news at www.nfib.com, on X at [NFIB_CA](https://twitter.com/NFIB_CA) and on Facebook at [NFIB.CA](https://www.facebook.com/NFIB.CA). ★

State Controller Issues May Cash Update



The State of California started the fiscal year with a \$14.7-billion General Fund cash balance and ended May with a \$21.7-billion balance, according to the California State Controller's Office. Image courtesy of the California State Controller's Office

California State Controller's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California State Controller Malia M. Cohen released her monthly cash report covering the state's General Fund revenues, disbursements and actual cash balance for the fiscal year through May 31.

As noted in the controller's monthly statement of General Fund cash receipts and disbursements, receipts for the fiscal year through May were higher than estimates contained in the 2025-26 May Revision by \$640.1 million or 0.3 percent. Fiscal year-to-date expenditures were \$3.3 billion, or 1.7 percent, lower than the governor's budget estimates. The state started the fiscal year with a \$14.7-billion General Fund cash balance and ended May with a \$21.7-billion balance.

"Even with rising economic uncertainty at home and abroad, the state's strong cash position and its ability to pay its bills on time and in full continue with revenues and spending meeting expectations," Cohen said. "With the Legislature currently finalizing its spending plan for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, I encourage continued fiscal restraint coupled

with maintaining reserves in the event the state faces increased volatility in its revenues or spending."

For the fiscal year through May, personal income tax receipts were \$374.4 million above May revision projections or 0.3 percent. Corporation tax collections were \$225.3 million or 0.8 percent above estimates. Retail sales and use tax receipts were \$255.3 million below recent projections or 0.8 percent.

The controller continues to note that while April 15 is the traditional annual personal income tax payment deadline, the Franchise Tax Board extended the current deadline for Los Angeles County individuals and businesses in response to the fires that began on Jan. 7. These individuals and businesses have until Oct. 15 to file and pay taxes.

As of May 31, the state had \$91.5 billion in unused borrowable resources. These resources are from internal funds outside of the General Fund that are borrowable under state law and that the State Controller's Office uses to manage daily and monthly cash deficits when revenue collections are lower than expenditures. Internal borrowing from special funds is short-term and is repaid so that borrowing does not affect the operations of the special funds. ★

Kiley Developing Legislation Against Rioters



Kevin Kiley

Congressman Kevin Kiley News Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG) - As the anti-Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) riots continue to be violent and dangerous in Los Angeles, Rep. Kevin Kiley (R-CA) is developing legislation that would make Non-Governmental

Organizations involved in organizing unlawful riots ineligible for federal funding or tax-exempt status, along with legislation to increase penalties for disrupting federal immigration and law enforcement operations and assaulting federal officers.

Right now, the penalty for a simple assault on an officer is one year in prison and there is no specific financial penalty.

"The violence we have witnessed in Los Angeles is a threat to the safety of our communities and federal officers, and it undermines democracy by obstructing the policies of a duly elected president from being implemented," Kiley said. "We need better tools to deter

and punish this lawless and anti-democratic behavior."

In the wake of the L.A. riots, it has come to light that the nonprofit known as Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles received \$34 million in state funding.

The group, which has previously campaigned to abolish ICE, played a pivotal role in enabling the riots by broadcasting the precise location of ICE operations in real time.

Congressman Kevin Kiley represents California's Third Congressional District, which includes Placer, Sierra, Nevada, Plumas, Alpine, Mono and Inyo counties, and parts of Yuba, El Dorado and Sacramento counties. ★



WE SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDERS



Williams is Nation's Second Best Tight End

University of California,
Davis Athletics News Releases

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - University of California, Davis' returning senior tight end Winston Williams has been named the second-best returning tight end in the nation by HERO Sports as part of its 2025 Football Championship Series season preview.

Williams was a 2024 First Team All-Big Sky Conference honoree and he ended the season leading all Big Sky tight ends in touchdown receptions, finishing second in the nation for most receiving touchdowns by a tight end.

When the 2024 season came to an end, Williams had racked up career numbers finishing with 265 receiving yards on 34 receptions, snagging six touchdowns while averaging 19.0 yards per game.

Aggie senior Ian Simpson joined Williams on the list, coming in at No. 24, giving the Aggies a pair among the Top 25 returning tight ends in the nation.

In other football news, UC Davis football has been ranked among the best in the nation, this time No. 11 in the country as part of the 2025 HERO Sports FCS Preseason Top 25 Media Poll.

The Aggies are among five Big Sky teams represented in the poll, and the No. 11 ranking places UC Davis as the third highest team in the conference to earn a ranking. No. 2 Montana State, No. 7 Montana, No. 10 Idaho and No.



The Aggies finished 2024 No. 5 in the nation after going 11-3 and making a deep run into the NCAA FCS Playoffs, reaching the quarterfinals for only the second time in program history while going 7-1 in Big Sky play. Photos courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

12 Sacramento State all joined the Aggies inside the Top 25.

This season, the Aggies open 2025 in Montgomery, Alabama in a ranked match up against No. 12 Mercer on ESPN as part of the FCS Kickoff Classic and they will make key trips to Washington, No. 10 Idaho while hosting Causeway Classic rivals No. 12 Sacramento State on Nov. 22 to wrap up the regular season.

The game at Washington is set for the BIG 10 Network and the game at Montana State is scheduled to be picked up by a linear ESPN network and, along with the season opener on ESPN, the Aggies will play a program record three games on national television



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in the nation after going 11-3 and making a deep run into the NCAA

FCS Playoffs, reaching the quarterfinals for only the second time in program history while going 7-1 in Big Sky play.

Second-year head coach and 2024 Eddie Robinson Award finalist Tim Plough and the Aggies return a collection of starters, including All-American safety Rex Connors, 2024 Fred Mitchell Award finalist Hunter Ridley and All-Big Sky Conference honorees Williams, Eli Simonson and Ernesto Nava.

UC Davis also signed and secure a strong collection of incoming freshmen and transfers from other programs to fill out a strong and competitive roster.

Season tickets are on sale now, and fans can head here to secure their spot in Shredville for the 2025 season. Tickets start at \$100 for new alumni and \$140 for the general public.

Football group ticket discounts start at 10 or more tickets and provide a great opportunity for gatherings and parties to enjoy Aggie football.

Create an unforgettable experience with a group by reaching out to the Aggie Ticket Office to customize your day at 530-752-2471. Fans can head to ucdavisaggies.eventue.net/events/FBS to purchase their group ticket packages. The Aggie Ticket Office is located at 1 Shields Ave., UC Davis Health Stadium, Davis and is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. ★

ARC Swimmer Named State Athlete of the Year

Women's Tennis Recruits Among Mid-Major Top 25



Cayden Pitzer, a sophomore and a swimmer from American River College, was named Tri-Swimmer of the Meet and won Performance of the Meet awards at a recent state event held at Santa Rosa Junior College. Photo courtesy of American River College

Compiled from California Community College Athletic Association and American River College websites

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - American River College swimmer Cayden Pitzer was recently honored as the 2024-25 California Community College Sports Information Association (CCCSIA) State Male Athlete of the Year, solidifying his status as one of the top junior college athletes in the state.

Pitzer shares this prestigious recognition with Breanna Lutz of Palomar College, who earned the State Female Athlete of the Year award for her outstanding softball season.

The sports information association started the State Athletes of the Year honors in 2011-2012.

Pitzer's performance in the pool this year was nothing short of dominant, according to the American River College website. Pitzer shattered multiple school and meet records, consistently placing first in his individual events while also anchoring American River College's powerhouse relay teams. His versatility and power in the breaststroke and IM events made him the man to beat at the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCA) State Championships.

Pitzer not only brought personal accolades but was instrumental in leading American River to top finishes at each level of competition, according to the college website. His commitment to

excellence helped set a new standard for the Beavers' men's swim program, long considered one of the premier aquatic teams in the state.

Pitzer was named Tri-Swimmer of the Meet and won Performance of the Meet awards at the recent state event held at Santa Rosa Junior College.

The sophomore set a state meet record in the prelims for the 200-yard individual medley at 1:46.80 and later won the event gold at 1:47.63.

In the opening men's event, Pitzer helped the Beavers win the 200-yard freestyle relay. He then participated in a state record-setting swim as American River College won the 400-yard medley relay.

Pitzer opened day two with another state record as he joined teammates Josh Branson, David Tsypan and Gar Long to win gold in the 200-yard medley relay (1:28.86).

Pitzer then busted an 11-year record with a magnificent new state standard of 52.98 in the 100-yard breaststroke.

On the final day, Pitzer missed another state record by just .03 with his first-place triumph in the 200-yard breaststroke. Fittingly, Pitzer helped American River College close the meet with a win in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Pitzer recently earned a scholarship to continue his academic and swimming career at the University of Kentucky.

It is the fourth time that a swimmer has won the men's Athlete of the Year award. ★



Last season, the Sacramento State University women's tennis team claimed its second straight Big Sky Conference Tournament title and NCAA Tournament berth. The Hornets were included among the region's best teams, ending the spring ranked No. 5 in the Northwest Region, according to the Intercollegiate Tennis Associations final poll. Photo courtesy of California State University, Sacramento

California State University,
Sacramento Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California State University, Sacramento women's tennis team's 2025 recruiting class has been ranked No. 18 in the nation among all mid-major programs, according to Tennis Recruiting Network.

"We are very excited for our new Hornets to finally arrive to campus this fall," head coach Sophie Breault said. "We have another strong recruiting class that will help us further elevate the program to new heights."

It is the second time in the program's history that the Hornets have been ranked among the Top 25, both coming in the last three seasons after Sacramento State's class of Reese Walker, Irene Riva and Elena Mercioiu was the No. 16 mid-major class prior to the 2023-24 campaign. The Hornets were among those receiving votes in 2024.

Sacramento State University is the only Big Sky Conference school and one of only four West Coast programs, along with San Diego (No. 7), Cal Poly (No. 13) and University of California, San Diego (No. 23), to make this year's mid-major ranking, which includes all colleges in all divisions except for those in the four so-called "power" conferences in college football, including the ACC, Big 10, Big 12, and SEC, as well as the Ivy League. The rankings do not factor in incoming transfer student-athletes or those who competed at another university in 2024-25.

The Hornets' incoming class is made up

of three players who have international ties.

Lisann Brinkmann is one of the top juniors in Germany, ranking as high as No. 109 in the German women's division and ranked No. 21 in the Under-18 division at the time of her signing.

Mexico's Cami Maldonado Gutierrez is ranked as one of the country's top 10 juniors while Isabella Temenugov, who was born in the Czech Republic, was the No. 32-ranked junior in Southern California and ranked as high as No. 24 in the Czech Republic at the time of her commitment.

Sacramento State University wrapped up the 2025 spring with a 21-4 overall record and a 7-1 mark in Big Sky play, finishing second in the regular season standings before claiming its second-straight league tournament crown and National Collegiate Athletic Association Tournament berth. The Hornets gained an Intercollegiate Tennis Association national ranking for the first time since 2015, reaching as high as No. 49 in the nation, while finishing the year ranked No. 5 in the Northwest Region and tied for the second-highest regional ranking since 2008 behind only the 2010 squad which reached No. 4 in the midseason rankings.

Memphis leads the 2025 top mid-major recruiting classes, followed by Rice, Furman, Louisiana Tech, University of Massachusetts, Florida Gulf Coast, San Diego, Stetson, Florida Atlantic and Air Force rounding out the Top Ten, with Navy, Fordham, Cal Poly and others including Sacramento State University, MIT, and Seton Hall completing the Top 25. ★

Blake Willey Claims Championship Silverware

Sacramento Republic FC
News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - On opening night, homegrown player Blake Willey became the second youngest player to start for Republic FC in a season opener.

Now, he's added another milestone to his breakout year.

On the week of June 11, the 18-year-old lifted the championship trophy in the Union of European Football Associations Friendship Cup.

Willey appeared in every match, including two starts, and added an assist to help the U.S. U18 Men's National Team go 4-0 against some of the top national squads in the world.

This was Blake's most senior national team call up to date. He has been on U.S. Soccer's radar since he was young, earning multiple Talent I.D. invitations, two stints with the U16s, and a training camp appearance with the U17s.

He first joined Republic FC as a part of its youth academy in 2017 and played at every age

level before becoming the seventh homegrown player to sign a pro contract with the club ahead of the 2024 season. In 2022, he was named the U15 Team MVP after leading his team to become the only non-Major League Soccer club to reach the MLS NEXT Cup semifinals.

Now in his second pro season, Willey has emerged as one

of the United Soccer League's brightest young stars. Prior to his national team selection, Willey appeared in every game across all competitions. In league play, Willey is among the team leaders across several stats categories, including seven chances created, nine tackles won and an 84% passing accuracy. ★