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East Sacramento News

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JULY 11, 2025

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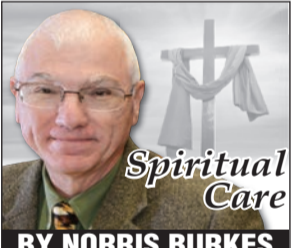
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EVENTUALLY, A TITLE WILL COME



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CHAPLAIN OFFERS ... DATING ADVICE?



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Stay Afloat to Escape the Heat

Use Kayaks, Rafts to Get on the Water this Summer



Rafting on the American River is a classic summer tradition. American River Raft Rentals at 11257 S. Bridge St. has offered self-guided floats since the 1970s. Photo courtesy of American River Raft Rentals

By Idaly Valencia

EAST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - While the summer heat in the Sacramento area is hard to beat, the region has several recreational areas to cool off by the water.

Kayaking, canoeing and rafting with friends and family are popular ways to enjoy the outdoors.

Here are nearby destinations where East Sacramento residents can rent or bring their own gear for a safe and memorable paddle adventure.

Nimbus Rentals

Nimbus Rentals offers fully equipped two-seat kayaks that don't require a roof rack. Located at 3651 Redding Ave., Sacramento, the

business serves couples, families and travelers seeking a convenient outing at their preferred waterway.

Rentals include two life jackets (adult, youth or child), two paddles, a 20-pound dry bag, foam mount blocks, roof straps with quick loops and a transport wheel. Loading assistance is available at pickup.

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Scams Target Customers of PG&E

PG&E Communications News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Utility scams have continued at an alarming rate this year, with Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) customers reporting more than \$190,000 in losses to scammers. PG&E is helping customers recognize the signs of a scam and avoid falling victim.

A typical sign of a scam targeting a utility customer includes a caller claiming to be from PG&E and threatening disconnection if immediate payment is not made via a pre-paid debit card, digital payment mobile application or other methods of money transfer.

As a reminder, PG&E will never send a single notification to a customer within one hour of a service interruption and will never ask customers to make payments with a pre-paid debit card, gift card, any form of cryptocurrency or instant mobile payment applications, such as Zelle® or Venmo.

"Scammers seek to create a sense of panic, threatening disconnection of utility services if immediate payment is not made. If a phone call, visit to your home or email doesn't feel right, don't fall for it. Hang up, shut the door and do not respond to the email," said PG&E Cybersecurity Risk Manager Amy Lucido. "Remember, PG&E will never ask for your financial information over the phone or via email, nor will we request payment via pre-paid debit cards or other methods of money transfer, including mobile applications."

So far this year, PG&E has received more than 10,000 reports of scams targeting residential and business customers with customers reporting losses of more than \$190,000. The average scam victim lost more than \$900 and more than 200 customers have reported falling victim. This number is likely just the tip of the iceberg however, as many scams go unreported.

Scams reported to PG&E by county so far this year: Butte 62; El Dorado eight; Glenn three; Nevada 18; Placer 75; Sacramento 270; San Joaquin 130; Shasta 32; Sutter 40; Tehama six; and Yuba 43.

Business customers are also not immune from

Midtown Farmers Market is Hot Spot for July Fun



Along with nearly 300 vendors offering a wide range of products each Saturday, the Midtown Farmers Market offers entertaining activations and entertaining music. Photo courtesy of Midtown Farmers Market

T-Rock Communications News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - A dynamic destination for fresh foods and artisan-made goods perfect for summer gatherings large and small, the Midtown Farmers Market also offers a variety of lively activations in July, including a qualifying round of an

oyster-shucking competition, aerial circus performances and activities, entertaining live and DJ music, and much more. Newly expanded and voted as the No. 1 farmers market in California, the Midtown Farmers Market is proudly sponsored by Sutter Health and presented by SMUD. The open-air market first debuted in 2013 and is available on

Saturdays year-round – rain or shine – with spring/summer hours in effect from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

To make the sprawling six-city market as easy as possible to navigate, destinations are identified by themed offerings such as Artisan Alley, Boutique Boulevard, Market Square, Merchant Market,

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SUN Bucks Returns for Summer 2025

Scams Target Customers of PG&E

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Summer break is a season of sunshine and fun but for many Sacramento County families, it also brings a food access challenge.

That's why California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is bringing back SUN Bucks, also called Summer-EBT, this summer. Eligible families receive \$120 per eligible child to help fill the meal gap when schools are closed.

Children who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals through a school meal application or an Alternative Income Form, CalFresh, CalWORKs or Medi-Cal, are automatically enrolled. You don't need to do anything to sign up.

SUN Bucks provides \$40 per month for food in June, July and August (\$120 total).

Children will automatically get SUN Bucks if they are 6 to 18 years old and get CalFresh, CalWORKs or Medi-Cal (below 185% Federal Poverty Level).

Anyone from babies to 22 years old, attending schools that are part of National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Programs and are approved for free or

reduced-price meals, will also automatically receive SUN Bucks.

Check with your child's school to make sure your free or reduced-price meal application or Alternative Income Form is on file.

Children who are attending Head Start, experiencing homelessness, living in foster care or part of a migrant family are also automatically eligible.

If your family is eligible, a SUN Bucks S-EBT card will be mailed to your home. You do not need to fill out an application. You will get one new SUN Bucks card for each eligible child. You can use SUN Bucks just like a debit card to buy food such as fruits, vegetables, meat, whole grains and dairy at grocery stores, farmers' markets and other places that accept CalFresh EBT benefits.

The state is issuing SUN Bucks cards by mail in stages by last name. If your child has not received a SUN Bucks card in the mail or you have questions about how to obtain a card, visit the California Department of Social Services SUN Bucks website at cdss.ca.gov/sun-bucks or call 1-800-560-0976. ★

Continued from Page 1

scam attempts. In fact, PG&E has received 250 reports of scams targeting small and medium-sized businesses this year and these attempts frequently occur during busy business hours when scammers hope to catch unsuspecting victims while they are distracted or stressed.

Scammers can be convincing and often target those who are most vulnerable, including senior citizens and low-income communities. They also aim their scams at small business owners during busy customer service hours.

However, with the right information, customers can learn to detect and report these predatory scams by visiting www.pge.com/scams or by calling

1-833-500-SCAM.

Scammers are able to create authentic-looking 800 numbers which appear on your phone display. The numbers don't lead back to PG&E if called back, however, so if you have doubts, hang up and either log into your account at pge.com to confirm your bill details or call PG&E at 1-833-500-SCAM. If customers feel that they are in physical danger, they should call 911.

Signing up for an online account at pge.com is another safeguard. Not only can customers log in to check their balance and payment history, they can sign up for recurring payments, paperless billing and helpful alerts. Customers can also call PG&E Customer Service at 800-743-5000 to confirm

their bill details and current amount due.

Customers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud or who feel threatened during contact with these scammers should contact local law enforcement. The Federal Trade Commission's website is also a good source of information about how to protect personal information. For more information about scams, visit pge.com/scams and/or <https://consumer.ftc.gov/scams/>.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company is a combined natural gas and electric utility serving more than 16-million people across 70,000 square miles in Northern and Central California.

For more information, visit pge.com and pge.com/news. ★



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\$2.99/lb

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\$2.99/lb

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Pork Baby Back Ribs
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WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS

Boneless & Skinless Chicken Thigh Meat
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Advertised items good at KP International Market - Rancho Cordova location ONLY. We reserve the right to LIMIT QUANTITIES. Not responsible for TYPOGRAPHICAL OR PICTORIAL ERRORS. All advertised items are SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. Sorry NO RAINCHECKS. PRICES EFFECTIVE JULY 09 - JULY 15, 2025.

Stay Afloat to Escape the Heat

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Kayaks can be picked up between 7 and 9 a.m. and returned by 6 p.m. The daily rental fee is \$80, with a discounted \$60 rate for first-time renters. Pickup is near Tahoe Park; the exact address is provided upon booking. To book a rental, visit nimbusrentals.com, text 916-477-7311 or email rental@nimbusrentals.com.

Lake Natoma

Known for its calm waters, Lake Natoma in Sacramento County is ideal for flatwater kayaking. Limited motorized boat use makes for a chill and easygoing day on the water.

Lake Natoma Paddle Rentals at 9600 Greenback Lane offers four watercraft options: paddleboards and single kayaks for \$20 per hour, tandem kayaks (two-person) for \$30 and canoes for \$30. Rentals are available daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. through Oct. 13. Two-hour beginner kayak lessons and lake tours are available for \$79, included

with gear.

For bookings or more information, visit lakenatoma-paddlerentals.com.

The Sacramento State Aquatic Center, also located at Lake Natoma, 1901 Hazel Ave., offers rentals and classes in activities such as sailing, rowing, paddling, windsurfing, wakeboarding and jet skiing. Spaces are also available to rent and host events.

California State University, Sacramento alumni and affiliates receive discounts. For currently-enrolled students, cost for rentals is almost half price upon showing photo identification. For more details, visit sacstateaquaticcenter.com or call 916-278-2842.

American River Raft Rentals

Rafting on the American River is a classic summer tradition. American River Raft Rentals in Gold River has offered self-guided floats since the 1970s. There are two launch sites: Sunrise at 11257 S. Bridge

St. and Sailor Bar at 4253 Illinois Ave., both with shuttle service back to the starting point.

The Sunrise launch site is open daily through Oct. 31. Sailor Bar, a newer two-mile float option, is open weekends (Saturday and Sunday) through Labor Day. Rafts range from four-person (\$99) to 12-person (\$280). Rentals are from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., depending on river conditions. To learn more, visit raftrentals.com or call 888-338-RAFT.

Cosumnes River Preserve

For paddlers with their own gear, the Cosumnes River Preserve offers a free-flowing, flat water ideal from spring through fall. It's a scenic spot for nature lovers to explore local wildlife and wetlands.

Tide information and navigation tips are available at cosumnes.org/paddle-the-river. Guided paddle tours are available and led by experienced instructors. Paddlers must



California State University, Sacramento alumni and affiliates receive discounts at the Sacramento State Aquatic Center. For currently-enrolled students, cost for rentals is almost half price upon showing photo identification. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Aquatic Center

bring their own equipment. The preserve is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 13501 Franklin Blvd., Galt. For more information, call 916-684-2816.

Sacramento Barge Canal Access

The Barge Canal Access in West Sacramento is a local favorite for kayaking, canoeing, fishing and boating. Located at 2100 Jefferson Blvd., near South River Road, the site includes parking, a hand-carry boat ramp, picnic areas, a walking trail and interpretive panels.

The ramp provides access to the Sacramento River and the Sacramento Deep Water Channel for

hand-carried watercraft. Visitors must bring their own gear. Seasonal hours through Nov. 1 are 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. every day.

Lodi Lake

The boathouse at Lodi Lake is a go-to paddling destination for Sacramento and Central Valley residents alike.

Rentals include basic and premium single kayaks (\$22 to \$35), tandem kayaks (\$44), paddleboards (\$22) and pedal boats. Rentals are available hourly, with lower rates for additional hours.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on

weekends, with rentals ending one hour before closing.

Lessons in kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding are \$92 per person. A free Community Paddle is at noon Thursdays for those with their own kayaks; rentals for the event are \$45 (plus tax) or \$20 (plus tax) for children 10 and under.

Lodi Lake Boathouse is at 1101 W. Turner Road, Lodi. For more information, visit lodiboathouse.com or call 209-471-5988.

Wherever you choose to paddle this summer, stay hydrated, wear a life vest and have fun exploring the region's scenic waterways! ★

Midtown Farmers Market is Hot Spot for July Fun

Continued from Page 1

Producers Plaza, Savory Street, the Street Food Sacramento block and now the Culinary Corridor presented by American Property Management.

In addition to nearly 300 vendors offering a wide range of products each Saturday, the Midtown Farmers Market offers entertaining activations and entertaining music sponsored by Priority

Parking as outlined below and taking place in Market Square located at 20th & K Streets (unless specified otherwise).

Saturday, July 12 Midtown Second Saturday

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Free STEM children's activities presented by SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity (MOSAC) plus live chalk

art by Omero Rangel.

10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Entertaining music by DJ Ron Florente at Market Square and DJ Nadz on Street Food Sacramento block.

Saturday, July 19

9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – A spectators delight as Shuckoff Sac presents a qualifying round of oyster shucking where 12 participants compete in a shell-ebriation of speed,

skill and seafood swagger in the Market's Culinary Corridor for the chance to advance to the main event on Aug. 10.

10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Entertaining live music performed by singer/songwriter Alex Russell.

Saturday, July 26

10 a.m. to 12 p.m. – Flip2 It Sports will offer an Aerial Circus for families to enjoy performances and a circus art activation happening every 30 minutes and in partnership with Keaton's Child Cancer

Alliance, a local nonprofit that supports children with cancer and their families by providing emotional, educational and financial support while increasing awareness and funding research toward a cure.

10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Entertaining live music from the '90s by Toast and Jam, a Northern California band that performs in acoustic format.

Owned and managed by the Midtown Association, the Midtown Farmers Market continues to grow

and evolve to reflect the thriving and eclectic tastes of the surrounding neighborhood.

In addition to offering numerous public transportation options, Midtown Sacramento is walkable and bike/scooter/car-share friendly with plenty of parking available in nearby garages plus various lots throughout Midtown.

More about the Midtown Farmers Market plus a regularly updated market map are at midtownfarmersmarketsac.com. ★



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Entertainment Zones Allow Street Drinking

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

The Sacramento City Council in June approved an ordinance establishing designated entertainment zones, a move that will support local business, support economic development and create a festive event atmosphere.

The ordinance was developed by the City's Office of Nighttime Economy in partnership with the Entertainment Services Division. It authorizes the creation of three initial entertainment zones in Sacramento:

20th Street

Entertainment Zone: 20th and K streets

Ali Youssefi Square Entertainment Zone: Ali Youssefi Square and adjacent area including K Street between 7th and 8th streets

Convention Center Entertainment Zone: Area surrounding the SAFE Credit Union Convention and Performing Arts Center

"This can help bring what we want to see," said Mayor Kevin McCarty. "More activity in the Central City and more economic development in a targeted zone."

Entertainment zones are areas where the

consumption of alcoholic beverages is allowed on public streets, sidewalks or other public rights-of-way during special events. Under Senate Bill 969, which took effect in 2024, local jurisdictions may create such zones by ordinance. When active, they allow patrons to purchase to-go alcoholic beverages from licensed bars, restaurants, breweries and wineries and consume them in common public areas.

"The goal is to enhance the experience for those attending special events in Sacramento and increase revenue for businesses," said Tina Lee-Vogt, the



The Ali Youssefi Square Entertainment Zone includes the square and adjacent area including K Street between 7th and 8th streets. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

city's nighttime economy manager.

Each zone will operate under a management plan to ensure public safety and neighborhood compatibility. An approved Special Event permit will be required for any activation. When a zone is active, its boundaries will be clearly marked – for example, with signage or sidewalk decals – to help guide

participants and maintain compliance.

The city has worked closely with business associations to identify initial zones and will continue stakeholder engagement as implementation progresses. Staff will provide updates and may seek council approval for additional zones throughout the city.

With the new ordinance, Sacramento joins cities

like San Francisco, Santa Monica and Long Beach that have approved entertainment zones.

Several others, including San Jose and Santa Clara, are exploring similar efforts.

For more information on Sacramento's entertainment zones, contact the Office of Nighttime Economy at nighttime@cityofsacramento.org. ★

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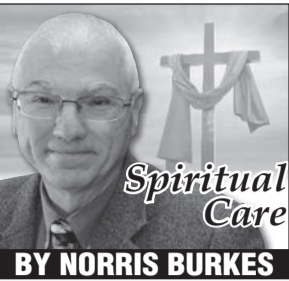
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Chaplain Offers ... Dating Advice?



BY NORRIS BURKES

opening line to avoid confusion: "Hello, this is Sara at Chispa Project, the non-profit in Honduras!"

"Hi, I'm trying to access my account and..."

"Ooh, so sorry!" Sara says in perfect Spanish, "You've reached Chispa Project, the non-profit in Honduras."

"I really need to get on your site ASAP..." insists the caller.

"Sorry, we're not related to the Chispa dating app. Wrong number."

They beg her, "Can't you connect me to the right person?"

Listening to Sara patiently explain – again and again – that she's not tech support for a dating app reminds me of how often Jesus had to clarify his mission for those who misunderstood him. People sought a political savior or miracle worker, but Jesus kept emphasizing a different purpose.

Despite all the parables, analogies, metaphors, and symbols Jesus used, he was clear and repetitive about one thing in particular—love—the chispa that lights everything else.

When he said to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind," and to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39), he pointed to the fire that kindles true connection, purpose, and transformation.

Like a single chispa that can ignite a flame, love sets everything in motion—whether it's changing a life through a children's book, finding a life partner, or growing closer to God by following Jesus' example.

To be clear, this columnist does not endorse the dating app in question. I'm already locked into a lifetime subscription with my wife, Becky.

It's not the fleeting spark

of romance I'm looking for, but a different kind of spark: one that ignites compassion, healing, and humility. These days, I find myself affirming the love that kindles true connection, purpose, and transformation – like Jesus taught.

How can we all become more fluent in the amor that demonstrates empathy? An amor that humbles us across differences?

In Greek, this type of amor is described as agape—a love that is unconditional, selfless, sacrificial. It's the choice to love regardless of circumstances or feelings.

In English, it might seem that Chispa, the app, and Chispa Project, the non-profit, offer the same thing—a spark of love. Make no mistake, both are important and necessary, but they are different.

Chispa, the app, offers a chance at romantic love. Chispa Project, the non-profit, encourages the agape love for our neighbors.

I keep telling Sara that she should charge a minimum donation for each of the crisscrossed Chispa calls she gets, but she always mutters something about honesty and goofy dad ideas.

But now the choice is yours—what will you do to spark agape in whatever Chispa you end up calling? What chispa will you ignite in your community?

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

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

ABOUT TOWN

Genealogy Learning Event July 16

The Genealogical Association of Sacramento will hold a special summer event on Wednesday, July 16 at Belle Cooledge library, 5600 S. Land Park Drive, Sacramento. We will hold a learning event with several stations to learn about various genealogy sites to explore for your genealogy expansion.

The doors open at 11:30 a.m. Bring a friend; bring two friends. It is free; there will be prizes and light refreshments. Questions? Call Melanie, 916-383-1221.

Area Museum Experiences

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

California Museum – Experience four decades of powerful activist printmaking in "Mission Gráfica: Reflecting a Community in Print," a striking exhibition that showcases the rich legacy of Mission Gráfica, a renowned community print center in San Francisco. Featuring 42 vibrant screenprints from influential artists such as Carmen Lomas

Garza, Rupert Garcia, and Favianna Rodriguez, the exhibit explores themes of cultural celebration, political resistance, and social justice—from gentrification and gender equality to international solidarity. Through Sept. 14.

Details at californiamuseum.org.

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

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

Details at calautomuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum– The Chinese Railroad Workers' Experience offers visitors a view of the Chinese workers who built the western portion of the nation's first Transcontinental Railroad. Marginalized by history, the Chinese workers were more than a nameless group of laborers.

Details at californiarailroad.museum.

Laser Light Shows at SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity

The UC Davis Multiverse Theater at MOSAC offers an immersive music experience, paired with spectacular full-dome lasers, for the best way to listen to your favorite artists outside of a live performance.

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



The Milwaukee Bucks won their first NBA title in 1971, and it took 50 years for the Bucks to win a title again. A fellow by the name of Giannis Antetokounmpo helped them accomplish this task, but players of his caliber are in short supply.

The Sacramento Kings have been in Sacramento for 40 years without reaching the finals or winning a championship. But make no mistake, fans in Kingstown still believe an NBA title will eventually come to Sacramento.

Sadly, during the offseason, fans are hearing far too much about mid-level exceptions, aprons first and second, collective bargaining and salary caps. Frankly, the NBA has one of the most complicated systems regarding player compensation, and it takes someone with an advanced degree in economics to comprehend it.

What we know, is that in the aftermath of seeing mega popular DeAaron Fox trot his talents to the San Antonio Spurs midway through the 2025/2026 season, the Kings have navigated the point guard position much like a rudderless ship.

Freshman GM Scott Perry, tasked with replacing De' Aaron Fox, last week signed journeyman Dennis Schröder, a former #1 draft choice by the Atlanta Hawks in 2013. Schroder was chosen #17 overall and for the past 12 seasons has seen playing time with Oklahoma City Thunder, Los Angeles Lakers, Boston Celtics, Houston Rockets, Toronto Raptors, Brooklyn Nets, Golden State Warriors and finally the Detroit Pistons.

Originally from Germany, where he played professionally and for the German national team in the Olympics, one could say Schroder has seen America from coast to coast.

Dennis Schroder's career stats are not gaudy, but 13.9 points per game being as traveled as he's been, shows he can contribute when needed. Five assists per game and 3 rebounds aren't eye popping, but it's important to remember why the Kings went out to get him.

Sacramento has a plethora of scoring power in the starting lineup and coming off the bench. What has been lacking since the departure of Fox, is a capable distributor of the basketball.

At 2.2 turnovers per game Schroder has a better control average than DeAaron Fox, so at least in one regard the Kings have made

an upgrade.

Not many players would clammer to be the replacement for a point guard as popular as Fox, but Sacramento fans are a generous crowd, and I expect to see fans give Dennis Schroder an ample opportunity to display his talents.

Do I think Schroder can be a capable replacement? Absolutely! He won't score 24 points per game or go coast to coast with the type of speed that DeAaron does, but neither does anyone else.

Scott Perry was given a thankless job, and if Schroder can come in and give the Kings 14 points per game, and take care of the basketball, there's a good chance that the playoffs of two seasons ago won't be the exception to the rule.

Coming off the bench is last year's first round draft choice Devin Carter, and Sacramento has a rookie guard in Nique Clifford that is going to need playing time, so don't expect to see Schroder get much more than 20-25 minutes per game.

Perry is likely to have more moves coming, so keep your eyes on summer league Kings fans, and don't forget that Sacramento also drafted a 7-footer in Maxime Raynaud. It will be interesting to see how coach Christie uses his new big man.

Sadly, popular Jonas Valanciunas won't be suiting up for the Kings this season, as he was traded last week to the Denver Nuggets for Dario Saric. Saric will be a role player, and spell Sabonis off the bench. At 6' 10" and 225 lbs. this 31-year-old will undoubtedly see playing time.

Players like Isaac Jones and Devin Carter are still trying to open eyes, so this year's summer league will be an opportunity to showcase their talents and allow Doug Christie to see their growth over the season.

NBA pundits have praised the Kings' draft this year, and I concur with their accolades. There's real optimism as this team is deep in talent. It remains to be seen how that talent will come together, and whether the Kings can take the young talent they have to the next level.

Stay tuned Kings fans, because this roster isn't cast in stone just yet!

All the best!

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

Social Security Matters

Can I Switch to a Taxi Driver Job Without Hurting my Social Security?



By Russell Gloor,
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I opted to draw my Social Security retirement benefit early and work part time. The company I work for has decided to pull me from field work due to my age and health. Although they are great keeping me at 20 hours per week running for parts and doing office work, I'm not sure how much longer it will last. I'm thinking of taking a taxi driving job to keep my income enough to live on. The way it would work, I would lease the cab for some amount of dollars per day, set my own hours to work and collect anywhere from \$1.40 to \$4.00 per mile, depending on what type of fare. My question is: how does Social Security look at that type of employment? Would I be held to the 15 - 45 hours a month standard? I could never come close to making the \$1,200 to \$1,300 a month I need by working so little. Any advice is greatly appreciated. **Signed: Seeking Advice**

Dear Seeking: If you go ahead with your plan to lease a taxicab instead of continuing your current employment, you would, in effect, be considered "self-employed" and would submit your income tax return to the IRS accordingly. Social Security would get your earnings information as reported to

the IRS, and it would be your net earnings from self-employment (after deducting all your business expenses) that is reported to SSA by IRS. There is, however, a special rule which would apply to you in your first calendar year of self-employment while collecting early Social Security benefits.

Since, in your first year, some of your earnings would be as a part-time employee paying SS FICA payroll taxes, Social Security would first look at your earnings as an employee to see if you exceeded the annual earnings limit (\$23,400 for 2025). Then, upon starting your self-employment, Social Security would look at the hours you spent performing "substantial gainful activity" (e.g., driving your taxi) each month and, if you spent more than 45 hours per month in that capacity, you would not be considered "retired," and thus, not eligible for Social Security in any month you exceeded that amount of hours. If you earned less than the annual limit in total (both as an employee and while self-employed), you would get benefits for all months of the year. But if you earn more than the annual limit, you will get no benefits for any month you exceeded 45 hours as a self-employed person. Again, this only applies during the first calendar year of self-employment - in the following year only your net earnings from self-employment would count toward the annual earnings limit.

In effect, SSA would use the hours-worked standard to see if you are truly retired or actually working. If the latter, they would withhold

SS monthly benefits for any month you exceed 45 hours working while self-employed (up to and including December of your first calendar year of self-employment), and only if your total income (as an employee and while self-employed) exceeds the annual limit.

So, if your goal is to net \$1,200 - \$1,300 per month as a self-employed taxi driver, that would be well within the limits of the annual earnings test (\$23,400 for 2025 but changes yearly). But there may, or may not, be a reduction in your Social Security benefits during your first year of self-employment, depending on when you start as self-employed. Note that SSA will ask about your work plans when you apply, and if you expect to stay under the annual limit (working part time in both capacities), you should get full SS benefits. Just be careful to stay under the annual earnings limit for those collecting early Social Security benefits. FYI, earnings from before your SS benefits started don't count toward the earning limit.

Note, too, that your monthly Social Security benefit will be actuarially reduced according to how far in advance of your full retirement age you claim SS. Whenever SS benefits are claimed prior to one's full retirement age, those benefits are permanently reduced.

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



Blow up Washington, D.C.'s Brutalist Buildings, and the Sooner, the Better

There's a reason God created dynamite. The brutalist federal buildings that have blighted Washington, D.C., for decades deserve the same fate as Carthage after the Third Punic War, and the nation's capital is finally beginning to move on from these concrete monstrosities.

The Department of Housing and Urban and Development just announced that it is leaving its god-awful headquarters in Washington for a less hideous space in Northern Virginia. HUD Secretary Scott Turner has described the structure as "the ugliest building in D.C.," which is a dubious claim only because there are so many other buildings in Washington that compete for that distinction. He's not the first HUD secretary to hate the building. Jack Kemp called it "10 floors of basement."

Meanwhile, the FBI is also departing its HQ, designated by the U.K. building materials retailer Buildworld as the ugliest building in the United States and the second ugliest in the world.

The moves are in keeping with the spirit of President Trump's executive order stipulating that federal buildings should "respect regional, traditional and classical architectural heritage in order to uplift and beautify public spaces and ennoble the United States and our system of self-government."

That EO should be considered common sense, but has several trigger words for defenders of the architectural status quo, including "traditional," "classical" and, perhaps foremost of all, "beautify." In response, the American Institute of Architects expressed its "strong concerns that mandating architecture styles stifles innovation and harms local communities."

According to The Nation magazine, Trump's initiative is part of an agenda to "make historical architecture on the whole inextricable from Eurocentric white supremacy." In short, it's an unforgivable offense to want a government building to look nice.

Brutalism, with its blocky, minimalist structures made of poured concrete, was a creation of a post-war Europe that wanted to embrace the fresh and new and to economize on rebuilding. Although the name "brutalism" perfectly captures the aesthetic effect, it actually comes from the French for "raw concrete," "beton brut."

To be sure, concrete is extremely important to modern life, but no one has ever said, "Oh, it's so elegant and uplifting." The brutalist buildings in Washington were largely built between the late 1960s and mid-1970s, an era of grievous architectural mistakes, including cookie-cutter multiple-purpose baseball stadiums and modernist Catholic churches. The buildings never had a heyday, but were hated when they were erected and are still hated now.

The seedbed of the trend was a Kennedy administration commission that advocated contemporary

designs and said -- laughably, in retrospect -- that federal architecture should "reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability of the American national government."

Instead, the brutalist buildings speak of a lumbering bureaucracy with no regard for the sensibilities or priorities of ordinary people. They are about what you'd expect if a DMV were headquartered in a maximum-security prison or in a massive pillbox.

The buildings could easily be used as stage sets for docudramas about East Germany. They are a tribute to soulless monumentality and a gut punch to the human spirit. If they don't eventually get a well-deserved appointment with a wrecking ball, they should be donated to North Korea.

The original justifications of brutalism no longer apply. The buildings aren't new anymore, and aren't cheap. They haven't aged well in any sense, not aesthetically or functionally. The FBI building is literally falling apart, and the expense of maintaining the HUD building has become ruinous.

Defenders of the brutalist buildings say that they are now part of our heritage and should be preserved as such. That's not fair, though, to the people who have to work in them, or who walk or drive by them every day. They are a net subtraction to the D.C. landscape and to human happiness. If one of them has to be kept for historical reasons, it should be made into a Smithsonian museum devoted to idiotic fads that were indulged for much too long.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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California Lawmakers Finally Achieve 'Holy Grail' Reform



By Dan Walters,
CALMatters.org

Jerry Brown once described reform of the California Environmental Quality Act as "the lord's work" but he, like other recent governors, was not willing to invest enough political capital to change it.

Simply put, significantly altering CEQA, which then-Gov. Ronald Reagan signed more than a half-century ago, would require confronting two powerful interest groups: environmental organizations and labor unions, which have weaponized the law to achieve their goals.

Brown made one stab at compelling the Legislature to alter CEQA in 2016, but otherwise left it to his successor, Gavin Newsom.

For six years, Newsom echoed the attitudes of his predecessors, critical of CEQA's misuse to block housing and other much-needed projects, or compel developers to hire unionized labor or jump through other hoops, but unwilling to confront it head-on.

Instead, he and the Legislature nibbled at the edges of the law and gave specific projects, such as sports arenas, exemptions.

Finally, however, the social and economic costs of leaving CEQA intact became too high. The state's critical shortage of housing continued despite innumerable policy

declarations aimed at spurring investment. It became downright embarrassing that a politically dominant Democratic Party pledged to socioeconomic equity was unable to deliver on promises to make housing more abundant and affordable.

California starred in a New York Times video that chastised blue states for failing to live up to their stated principles and in a recent book, "Abundance," about the nation's chronic inability to deliver much-needed projects due to regulatory overkill, such as CEQA.

This year, with Newsom nearing the end of his governorship and appearing to cast his eyes toward a presidential campaign, the governor decided to confront the CEQA issue squarely. He endorsed two bills that would impose limits on the law's reach and, in the end, threatening to block the entire state budget if they weren't placed on his desk.

On Monday (June 30), the last day of the fiscal year, the Legislature passed Assembly Bill 130 and Senate Bill 131 with last-minute changes to dampen opposition from construction unions. Newsom quickly signed them.

"We needed to go bold and big on this holy grail reform," Newsom said at a hastily staged signing ceremony.

Essentially, the legislation exempts virtually all infill housing projects from CEQA's provisions, making it more difficult for opponents of high-density housing projects, known as NIMBYs, to block approval.

Such projects, particularly those aimed at low- and moderate-income families, have been the most difficult to gain approval, due largely to opposition in upscale communities

dominated by single-family homeowners.

"When you are building housing in an existing community, that is environmentally beneficial, it is climate friendly, that is not something that should be subjected to potentially endless CEQA challenges and lawsuits," Sen. Scott Wiener, a San Francisco Democrat who authored SB 131, told senators before they passed the measure.

Wiener and Assemblywoman Buffy Wicks, an Oakland Democrat who carried AB 130, have been the Capitol's two most aggressive advocates of pro-housing legislation.

The remaining question, of course, is whether the two new laws, which go into effect immediately, will have a discernible impact on the state's housing shortage. CEQA is just one factor of many determining whether proposed projects proceed or die. Those who oppose high-density housing in their neighborhoods will not just roll over.

Ironically, as the Legislature was passing the two new laws on Monday, The Atlantic was publishing a lengthy article entitled "The Whole Country Is Starting to Look Like California," that describes how red tape and local opposition are adversely affecting housing development in red states such as Texas and Florida, which had been viewed as developer paradises.

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. ★

Audit Poses Revisions to City Motel Program

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento auditor in June presented to the City Council a performance audit of the City of Sacramento's Motel Program, a non-congregate emergency shelter initiative serving families experiencing homelessness.

The audit, part of the auditor's 2024/25 Work Plan, identified operational and oversight challenges while also noting areas where participants reported positive experiences.

"Our audit focused on how well the City Motel Program is meeting its responsibilities to the participants, including the overall effectiveness of



assisting participants' move to permanent housing," said City Auditor Farishta Ahrary.

According to the audit, 32% of participants who exited the program since its inception in 2020 have moved into permanent housing, a rate that "exceeds the performance of comparable shelter programs."

While many participants expressed satisfaction with the program, the audit identified limited issues

with room conditions, inconsistent delivery of services and challenges in evaluating the program's overall effectiveness due to gaps in data.

Key Audit Findings

The audit identified six key findings:

Finding 1: Over the duration of the City Motel Program, 32 percent of exited participants have secured permanent housing.

Finding 2: Participants reported satisfaction with the City Motel Program; however, reported issues with room conditions and inconsistent service delivery indicate operational challenges that may impact overall program effectiveness.

Finding 3: Inaccurate and incomplete data entry

undermines the reliability of key data fields that qualify program performance. Limitations in the Homeless Management Information System impede the city's ability to assess participation and assistance levels.

Finding 4: The City Motel Program's design as an emergency shelter limits the city's ability to comprehensively address the full range of participant needs, contributing to extended stays and reduced turnover of motel rooms.

Finding 5: Opportunities exist to more intensely use case management to prepare participants for housing, connect them to needed services and increase the number of participants served.

Finding 6: While the

city has effectively taken steps to review invoices and minimize unauthorized payments, opportunities remain to strengthen processes to ensure invoices include sufficient information to support the accuracy and appropriateness of payments.

Department Response

The Department of Community Response, which manages the program, agreed with all 15 recommendations outlined in the report. The department stated in the report that many of the improvements are either underway or already implemented, including:

Launching a new monthly Shelter Performance Report in March 2025.

Working with Sacramento Steps Forward to add new data fields to the Homeless Management Information System for tracking housing readiness and financial support.

Requiring service providers to upload housing plans and lease documentation to improve accountability.

DCR also emphasized the complexity of addressing homelessness and noted that many improvements are limited by systemwide resource constraints, particularly in the availability of affordable and permanent supportive housing.

The report and response are available through the Office of the City Auditor at cityofsacramento.gov/auditor ★

Sacramento Awards \$950,000 in Arts Grants to 72 Nonprofits

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento, in partnership with Sacramento County, has awarded \$950,000 in grants to 72 local nonprofit organizations through the 2025-2027 Cultural Arts Awards program.

The grants provide general operating support to organizations that enrich Sacramento communities by expanding access to arts and cultural experiences

across the region.

Administered by the city's Office of Arts and Culture, the program is supported through a combination of funding sources, including the city's Measure U sales tax revenue, city General Fund matching dollars, and Sacramento County's Transient Occupancy Tax.

The grant application window opened in October 2024, with awardees confirmed in June 2025.

The 72 grant recipients reflect the

diversity of Sacramento's creative landscape, representing established cultural institutions and emerging arts organizations alike.

Awardees include organizations such as 916 Ink, a youth literary arts nonprofit; Casa de Brazilian Folkloric Arts of Sacramento, a cultural and activism group; and the Sacramento Region Performing Arts Alliance, which brings orchestral and operatic performances to the region.

A diverse panel of nonprofit arts and

culture professionals and community representatives reviewed the applications.

Organizations were selected based on their commitment to diversity and equity, cultural relevance, community impact and sound financial stewardship.

In the previous grant cycle (2022-2024), the city and county provided over \$933,000 annually in awards to 66 grantees, resulting in a total distribution of more than \$2.7 million over the three-year period.

More information about Sacramento's Cultural Arts Awards is available on the city's website, cityofsacramento.gov. ★

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Two Graduate Nursing Programs Earn Accreditation

University of California, Davis Health News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The first week of June marked the start of a new educational journey for students in two recently-accredited graduate programs at the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at University of California, Davis (UC Davis).

They are members of the Class of 2025 for the University of California Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Certificate Program and the Class of 2028 Doctor of Nursing Practice - Family Nurse Practitioner (DNP-FNP) Degree Program.

Both programs earned full accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Board of Commissioners following a site visit and formal review in fall 2024. In addition, the California Board of Registered Nursing approved the School of Nursing's programs, affirming they meet state-specific licensing and practice requirements.

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation is a trusted mark of quality for graduate nursing programs. It confirms the program meets national standards, qualifies students for financial-aid and licensure, and enhances its reputation with employers and peers. It also reflects a commitment to continuous improvement and excellence in nursing education.

"This accreditation reflects what we value most, an environment where faculty and staff are deeply



Primary care is delivered by family nurse practitioners for all areas of California. Photo courtesy of University of California, Davis Health

invested in student success, where academic excellence is the standard and where every graduate is empowered to be a change agent in health care," said School of Nursing Dean Stephen Cavanagh. "It's not just about meeting benchmarks. It's about transforming lives and advancing the future of how and where care is delivered to meet the needs of California and beyond."

Primary care is delivered by Family Nurse Practitioners for all areas of California.

Launched in 2022, The Doctor of Nursing Practice - Family Nurse Practitioner program marked the first Doctor of Nursing Practice program at University of California, Davis. Faculty developed the curriculum from the ground up, weaving into every facet the elements of leadership, innovative clinical practice and health equity. The

result: a new curriculum that actively develops meaningful solutions to provider shortages in rural and urban areas.

The hybrid program combines distance-based education with four on-campus immersions across three years. The inaugural cohort graduated June 12, prepared to implement evidence-based innovations and develop expertise in their clinical practice.

Doctor of Nursing Practice program director Charleen Singh suggested that faculty have learned as much from the first students as those soon-to-be graduates have learned through their coursework.

"As a result, we've created not only a program that we are extremely proud of but one that is a rewarding journey that starts with exploring the Central Valley and ends with the DNP symposium to celebrate their

projects with colleagues, family and friends," said Singh. "I often asked myself if I am leading the team in the right direction to fulfill the mission of the school and meet the vision of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. As the inaugural cohort graduates, I believe we did."

Inaugural graduate Samiksha Dhakal credits the program with transforming her perspective as a nurse and expanding how she sees her future impact.

"This program has been a truly transformative experience, really life-changing," said Dhakal. "This program helped to equip me with the advanced leadership skills, critical thinking abilities and expertise to apply these evidence-based solutions in clinical practice."

Mental care access has expanded through the Nursing Practitioner certification.

While residents in many areas of the state lack access to primary care services, more than half of Californians living with mental illness do not receive the psychiatric care they need. To answer the call, nursing schools at University of California, Davis; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, Irvine; and University of California, San Francisco launched the multicampus, hybrid mental-health certificate program to prepare nurse practitioners across California as psychiatric mental-health specialists.

The one-year program, which welcomed its first class in 2021, grew out of a course of study developed by University of California, San Francisco. University of California, Davis became the administrative home of the program in 2023 with a focus on expanding the

impact on people in desperate need of mental health services and identifying ways to expand the curriculum and placement opportunities.

"This accreditation marks more than a milestone," said Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program director Lynda Creighton-Wong. "It reflects our intentional decision to lead an established program and reimagine its potential. We saw an urgent need in our communities and made it our mission to reach those too often left behind. Accreditation affirms that we're on the right path in building a program rooted in equity, innovation and real-world impact."

More than 120 students from across the state have graduated from the program, including 30 from the first cohort program since University of California, Davis assumed its operations.

Among those graduates is Roxanne Abella. She credits the faculty, preceptors and curriculum with not only preparing her to become a psychiatric mental health provider but a leader in health care.

"Coming from an underserved background and having worked as a nurse practitioner in resource-limited communities, many aspects of this framework initially felt intuitive," said Abella. "However, the program expanded my approach, not just as a clinician but as someone committed to equity, collaboration and lasting impact."

Accreditation for both programs lasts for five years. The next on-site evaluation will take place in fall 2029. ★

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Disposable E-Cigarettes More Toxic Than Traditional Cigarettes

By Kat Kerlin from the University of California, Davis News and Media Relations

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - They might look like travel shampoo bottles and smell like bubblegum, but after a few hundred puffs, some disposable, electronic cigarettes and vape pods release higher amounts of toxic metals than older e-cigarettes and traditional cigarettes, according to a study from the University of California, Davis.

For example, one of the disposable e-cigarettes studied released more lead during a day's use than nearly 20 packs of traditional cigarettes.

The study, published on June 25 in the ACS Central Science journal noted that although most disposable e-cigarettes are illegal in the United States, they remain widely available.

Most consumers of disposable e-cigarettes are teens or young adults, who are also highly susceptible to lead exposure. Inhaling certain metals can increase a person's risk of cancer, respiratory disease and nerve damage.

"Our study highlights the hidden risk of these new and popular disposable electronic cigarettes with hazardous levels of neurotoxic lead and carcinogenic nickel and antimony, which stresses the need for urgency in enforcement," said senior author Brett Poulin, an assistant professor in the University of California, Davis Department of Environmental Toxicology. "These risks are not just worse than other e-cigarettes but worse in some cases than traditional cigarettes."

First author Mark Salazar, a Ph.D. candidate in Poulin's lab, first saw a disposable vape pod when



Mark Salazar, left, and Brett Poulin are in the lab with disposable vape pods. Photo courtesy of Kat Kerlin, University of California, Davis

he was visiting a friend. The pods are self-contained cartridges that hold a battery, e-liquid and heating coil. Salazar was curious: what exactly was his friend smoking? Salazar brought the pod back to the lab at University of California, Davis and tested its vapor for metal concentrations.

"When I first saw the lead concentrations, they were so high I thought our instrument was broken," Salazar said. "That sparked us into looking further into these disposables."

The scientists analyzed the metal and metalloids inside seven types of disposable devices from three of the most popular brands. Using an instrument to activate disposable



Shown is the inside of a vape pod, a type of e-cigarette, at University of California, Davis. Photo courtesy of Kat Kerlin, University of California, Davis

e-cigarettes and heat the internal liquid, they created between 500 and 1,500 puffs for each device.

They said that some devices emitted surprisingly high

concentrations of elements in the vapor, including antimony and lead. Levels of chromium, nickel and antimony increased as the number of puffs increased. Most of the disposable e-cigarettes tested released markedly higher amounts of metals and metalloids into vapors than earlier, refillable vapes.

The scientists then took apart the devices to trace the metals' sources.

"We found that these disposable devices have toxins already present in the e-liquid or they're leaching quite extensively from their components into e-liquids and ultimately transferred to the smoke," Salazar said.

Leaded bronze alloy components

in some devices leached nickel and lead to the e-liquid. Nickel was also released from heating coils and antimony was present in unused e-liquids at high levels, both of which increase the risk of cancer.

The researchers also assessed the health risk for daily users. Vapors from three of the devices had nickel levels and two devices had antimony levels that exceeded cancer risk limits. Vapors from four of the devices had nickel and lead emissions that surpassed health-risk thresholds for illnesses besides cancer, such as neurological damage and respiratory diseases.

While the researchers tested only three of the nearly 100 disposable e-cigarette brands on the market, they say that this initial work prompts concern, given the popularity of disposable e-cigarettes, especially among adolescents.

The market is also outpacing science. Few studies of the relatively new devices are available, leaving consumers and regulators largely uninformed. The work underscores the need to enforce regulations around illegal e-cigarettes while continuing research to reveal the extent of the problem and its public health implications.

The study's co-authors include Lalima Saini, Tran Nguyen, Kent Pinkerton, Amy Madi and Austin Cole from the University of California, Davis.

The research was supported with funding from the University of California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences T32 training program, and the University of California Agricultural Experiment Station. ★

Sutter, Sacramento Recertified with Top Cardiovascular Honor

It's one of two Comprehensive Cardiac Centers in Northern California

Sutter Health News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento this month received the top cardiovascular honor from The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association. The medical center received its recertification as a Comprehensive Cardiac Center, which represents its commitment to upholding the highest standards of cardiac care quality and safety.

Sutter Medical Center is one of two hospitals in Northern California and 24 in the nation to have received the certification.

"This certification by The Joint Commission and American Heart Association recognizes the dedication and excellence of the cardiovascular staff at Sutter Medical Center," said Dr. David Roberts, section chief of interventional cardiology for Sutter Health's heart and vascular service line. "It is a team sport that requires the doctors, nurses and the entire ancillary staff to function at the very top of their game. I cannot be more proud of this team."

In 2023, Sutter Medical Center became one of only 16 heart programs in the nation and the second in the western United States to earn the certification, the other being Stanford Hospital, Sutter Medical Center's partner for its pediatric heart surgery program.

The recertification earned this month demonstrates Sutter's excellence in heart and vascular care, where cardiologists and care teams "deliver superior quality of care across the cardiac continuum" and provide "world-class, patient-centric service," as outlined by The Joint Commission.

"We pursued becoming a Comprehensive Cardiac Center because we saw an



Sutter heart surgeon Dr. Michael Ingram, left, and Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento medical director of cardiovascular services Dr. David Roberts work in the hospital's specialized hybrid surgical suite. Courtesy photo

opportunity, not just to close the gaps that existed but to push ourselves toward true excellence," said Thomas Rhodes, Sutter's Greater Sacramento Division heart and vascular service line executive who championed the certification. "This is one of the most rigorous surveys in healthcare and our cardiovascular team at Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento went well above and beyond, and our patients are the real beneficiaries of that dedication. It's the intent of our leadership team to carry this standard of excellence to sister hospitals across the Sutter Health system." Sutter Medical Center has the most comprehensive cardiac care program in the greater Sacramento region and the only heart transplant program in Northern California outside the Bay Area.

Among its lifesaving services are an adult congenital heart disease program and clinic, which is one of two Northern California

programs accredited by the national Adult Congenital Heart Association, and pediatric heart and vascular services, including heart surgery.

Another lifesaving service is a structural heart disease program with the next generation of devices, including transcatheter aortic valve replacement, also known as TAVR, mitral and tricuspid valve repair, and transcatheter mitral, tricuspid and pulmonary valve replacement. In addition, the program offers innovations for percutaneous atrial septal closure, as well as the Watchman™ device.

Also offered are lifesaving electrophysiology and atrial fibrillation services, including the first regional case with the Affera device for simultaneous mapping and innovative pulse-field ablation for treatment of atrial fibrillation.

Other Sutter lifesaving services are

transplants and cardiac assist devices, including a left ventricular assist device (LVAD), and the Impella heart pump; renal denervation treatment of resistant hypertension; and access to heart and vascular research and clinical trials, testing the latest treatments, devices and surgical approaches.

With a rich history as a pioneer of heart and vascular services that began in 1957, Sutter Medical Center's milestones include successful open-heart surgery, pediatric open-heart surgery, heart transplant, interventional vascular program and pediatric heart catheterization.

"The list of pioneering 'firsts' at Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento and Sutter Health as a system is a true testament to the hard work and commitment to clinical excellence that each of our heart and vascular specialists leads with," said Dr. Steven Hao, Sutter cardiologist and chief medical officer of Sutter's service lines. "Sutter Medical Center is a crucial 'hub' of quality and innovation within our heart and vascular service line, and this recertification represents our commitment to provide patients with the highest-quality care and experience throughout Northern California. We want the best for our patients, and our medical staff works tirelessly to ensure the heart and vascular care they receive means they can live their fullest, longest lives." Mick Doughty, a Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento patient who received a heart transplant in the 1990s, was told he would gain another 10 years of life with the new heart. Now, more than 30 years after the transplant, Doughty aims to beat the current 40-year record and be admitted into Guinness World Records.

For a complete list of the premier heart and vascular services that Sutter offers, visit <https://www.sutterhealth.org/services/heart-and-vascular>. ★

Staying Healthy and Safe Driving in a Heatwave

DiscoverCars.com News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Drivers need to ensure they take precautions this summer, because extreme temperatures have been predicted by the National Weather Service across the U.S. from June to August.

Driving in hot weather means taking some extra steps to make sure your trip is safe and comfortable. DiscoverCars.com, a car rental comparison company, has put together the following tips on

driving during a heatwave to keep you and your car cool during the hottest time of the year.

One of the most important steps to take while driving in a heatwave is to drink plenty of water, as dehydration might impact your ability to drive safely. Before you head out, make sure that your car is stocked up with plenty of water bottles for yourself and all passengers.

Driving in very hot temperatures for an extended amount of time could lead to feeling drowsy. It's also important to take breaks

during longer journeys to rest and allow your car to cool down. Consider planning your rest stops in advance so you know exactly where you'll be stopping off at.

Additionally, in very hot temperatures, your tires could overinflate due to the air expanding inside them. This can wear your tires down, so it's important to monitor the pressure during a heatwave to keep your car safe. Make sure that your tires are inflated properly before and after long trips.

If you know you'll be driving

during a heatwave, you should check your car's cooling systems to make sure everything is working properly. If your coolant level is low, consider filling it up to prevent your engine from overheating.

Placing sunshades in your car windows is an extra step you can take to help keep your car cool during high temperatures. Sunshades block out harsh sunlight, which can heat up your car during the day. This is especially important if you are traveling with anyone who is more vulnerable to

extreme heat, such as children or individuals over age 65.

Sunshades can be placed in the backseat windows for passengers sitting in the back and they can be used in all windows after you park. You can also try parking in shaded areas where you can help keep your car as cool as possible.

"You should also make sure your car is prepared for the hot weather," Buraks said. "Ensure your air conditioning and cooling systems are in good working order, as you'll be reliant on these once the hot weather takes over." ★

Sac State's Slater Named Student-Athlete of the Year

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Football's Jackson Slater has been named California State University, Sacramento's Male Student-Athlete of the Year.

Slater is a Football Championship Subdivision Consensus All-American following the 2024 season after being recognized by the Associated Press, Stats Perform and the American Football Coaches Association.

Selected by the Tennessee Titans in the fifth round (167th overall) of the 2025 NFL Draft, Slater did not allow a sack during the season, started 44 games during his career and helped the Hornets to a pair of Big Sky titles and three National Collegiate Athletic Association Football Championship Subdivision Playoff appearances.

Slater competed at the Senior Bowl where he garnered national attention for his play against the country's top players. He later attended the NFL Combine and produced some of the top athletic rankings among offensive linemen.

Other nominees included Luke Dugger (golf), named all-Big West Conference, competed in all 11 tournaments and led the team with an average of 71.64 strokes per round, which ranks



Sacramento State's Jackson Slater did not allow a sack during the 2024 season, started 44 games during his career and helped the Hornets to a pair of Big Sky titles and three National Collegiate Athletic Association Football Championship Subdivision Playoff appearances. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Athletics

third in school single-season history. Dugger had a relative scoring average of +0.21 strokes per round and had 19 rounds of par or better, which ranks second in school single-season history. He set the school single-season record with 10 rounds in the 60s, shot 66 in the opening round of the Palouse Collegiate and Ram Masters for his season low. Dugger's 54-hole total of 66-71-67-204 at the Ram Masters is the third lowest in school history.

Evan Gibbons (baseball) was named the Western Athletic

Conference Pitcher of the Year, was the first Hornet to win the honor, a first team all-Western Athletic Conference selection for the first time in his career. He led the Western Athletic Conference in victories at the end of the regular season with a 10-2 overall record, ranking ninth in the nation. Gibbons had the most wins by a Hornet pitcher since Austin Root finished 11-3 in 2018. Gibbons struck out 63 batters in 88.0 innings and ranks tied for seventh on the Hornet career wins list with 21.

Miles Grant (track and field) became the school's first Division I All-American in the men's high jump. He tied for first place at the National Collegiate Athletic Association West First Round after clearing a career-best 7-01.50. That height is tied for third in school history, trailing only marks from 1979 and 1980, repeated as the Big Sky Outdoor Champion, cleared at least 6-11 in five outdoor meets. Grant won the Big Sky indoor title for the second consecutive season and opened the year by setting his indoor personal

record with 7-02.50 to rank second in school history.

Henry Lamchinniah (tennis) was unanimously selected first team all-Big Sky Conference (singles) in his first season with the Hornets after transferring from Southern Mississippi. He played at No. 1 in the Hornets' singles lineup all year, owned a 14-5 dual singles record (6-2 in the Big Sky) and won eight of his final 10 matches. Lamchinniah had a six-match singles winning streak from March 5-20 and nine of his 14 singles wins came in straight sets. Fourteen victories were second most among all No. 1 players in the Big Sky.

Donovan Sessoms (soccer), a first team all-Big West Conference selection, was only the sixth Hornet to earn first team honors in the Big West in program history and the first since 2022. As two-time Big West Offensive Player of the Week, Sessoms finished the year with 10 goals (seven in conference play) and 20 points overall, tying him for ninth on the school's single-season goals list and 10th on the single-season points chart. Sessoms had the most goals by a Hornet since 2010 and the most points by a Hornet since 2009. Five of Sessoms' 10 goals were game winners and he was drafted by the expansion San Diego FC in the third round of the 2024 MLS SuperDraft. ★

TY Johnson Signs with Lakers



University of California, Davis men's basketball alumnus TY Johnson is in the Los Angeles Lakers' summer league. Johnson was previously named to the Lou Henson Award Mid-Season Watch List recognizing the nation's top mid-major players. Photo courtesy of University of California, Davis Athletics

University of California, Davis Athletics News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - University of California, Davis men's basketball alumnus TY Johnson has signed a summer league contract with the Los Angeles Lakers, following the 2025 NBA Draft.

Johnson, the Big West Conference's most dynamic two-way player this season, earned All-Big West First Team honors after finishing as the nation's sixth-leading scorer at 21.1 points per game. He topped the conference scoring charts while averaging 3.0 assists and 4.1 rebounds per contest.

Secondly, Johnson ranked second in the Big West and 18th nationally with 2.3 steals per game. He set the University of California, Davis Division I single-season record with 72 steals and recorded three or more steals in 12 games, including a six-steal performance against Cal Poly. Johnson finished his career ranked second in the program's history for steals.

Johnson became University of California, Davis' all-time leader in career free throws made (470). Johnson's 178 free throws made this season rank 15th in the National Collegiate Athletic Association and he set a program single-game record with 18 made free throws.

He scored double figures in 30 of 32 games, exploding for 20 or more points 21

times, including five 30-point performances. Johnson's 35-point games against Washington and University of California, Santa Barbara were tied for the fourth most by an Aggie since 2005.

Johnson finished his senior season tied for third on University of California, Davis' all-time scoring list with 1,694 points, one of just 26 Aggies to reach 1,000 career points. Johnson led the Aggies in scoring 26 times and in assists 15 times. He was the only Big West player to rank in the Top Five in both scoring and steals.

Johnson earned Oscar Robertson National Player of the Week honors on Nov. 12 after opening the season with consecutive 30-point games and was a two-time Big West Player of the Week.

He was named to the Lou Henson Award Mid-Season Watch List recognizing the nation's top mid-major players.

Johnson's senior season efficiency placed him in rare company nationally; he was the first qualified player since Vanderbilt's Scotty Pippen Jr. in 2021-22 to rank in the 99th percentile in points per 40 minutes while also ranking in the 95th percentile or higher in steals per 40 minutes.

Johnson and the Lakers were set to begin summer league play on July 5, after press time, at the California Classic, hosted by the Golden State Warriors at the Chase Center in San Francisco. ★

High Quality Development at Republic FC Academy



In Las Vegas on June 16, the Sacramento Republic FC Academy's U13 team wins the international Copa Rayados tournament without conceding a goal. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Republic FC Academy

By Seth Henderson

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Republic FC Academy's U13 team won the international Copa Rayados tournament in Las Vegas on June 16 without conceding a goal, ranking first in the Northwest Division for quality of play, rated at 86.2.

Quality of play is a recently-developed ranking metric for Major League Soccer NEXT age groups U13 and U14 as of April 2, according to a Major League Soccer news release. The program was piloted for the first time in contrast to a traditional win-draw-loss standing. The quality of play metrics is calculated using artificial intelligence, run by the platform Taka, providing coaches and players with hyper-focused data.

Sacramento Republic FC Academy Director Eder

Quintanilla said that the U13 team is a special group, taking home the championship silverware in 2024 and now this year. The U13 team recruited more defensive players, Quintanilla said, which helps reduce the chances of getting scored on and the new quality of play metrics are a great new tool for development.

"Everybody is still learning what they consider quality of play and which metrics you can measure but I think it's a pretty good initiative, looking at how we can pay attention more to how we're playing, how we're developing our players," Quintanilla said. "More than just winning."

Coaches are still asking the league questions to clarify what constitutes as a good or high-quality play and comparing metrics but he said its difficulty in the style of play will be better for player development in the long run,

Quintanilla said.

According to Taka's website at taka.io, its platform uses raw game footage and analyzes the game play by identifying jersey numbers and corresponding value to their actions depicted in the footage. Highlight reels and statistics are automatically populated for coaches and players to analyze their performance, applying the results to their next practice or match.

"The 'win or lose' is like a tool for development," Quintanilla said. "We obviously use the competition to get better because you need to evaluate yourself, you need to evaluate your opponents, you need to come up with the strategies to win the game, to score goals, to create census but that's only a tool."

Quintanilla said the wins might help attract some recruits but their process is to scout the best players in all

age groups every year.

"We're trying to bring the most talented players in the area and that's not going to change, winning or losing," Quintanilla said.

Competition is sparked not only within the league but also within the academy teams, Quintanilla said, determining team leaders, minutes and starters.

Major League Soccer NEXT Technical Director Luis Robles said in a news release that individual development is prioritized over competition for the younger age groups.

After the winning season, Quintanilla said, many get-togethers take place in the off-season, discussing new ideas and improvements to make the team better.

"We celebrate but we quickly put our head down again and work for next season," Quintanilla said. ★

A's Jacob Wilson Elected Starter

Athletics News Release

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Jacob Wilson from the Athletics has been elected by the fans as starting shortstop for the American League in the 2025 All-Star Game at Atlanta on July 15.

Wilson ranks second in the Major Leagues with 108 hits and a .339 batting average, and his 26 strikeouts are the fewest in the American League and third fewest in the majors among qualifiers.

He received 52% of the vote in

Phase two of fan voting, beating out Royals shortstop Bobby Witt, Jr.

Wilson is the first rookie shortstop to be elected by the fans and will become the second rookie shortstop to start an All-Star Game, along with the Orioles Ron Hansen, who started both All-Star Games in 1960. He will be the first Athletic to start an All-Star Game since Josh Donaldson at third base in 2014 and the first shortstop since Bert Campaneris made three straight starts from 1973 to 1975.

Wilson is the early favorite for American League Rookie of the Year

as he leads all Major League rookies in batting, on-base percentage (.380), slugging percentage (.473), OPS (.853), runs (42), hits and RBI (40). He is on pace to break Socks Seybold's Athletics record for batting average by a rookie (.334 in 1901) and Hall of Famer Al Simmons' record for most hits by a rookie (183 in 1924).

The 23-year-old Wilson will be the first A's rookie to start an All-Star Game and will be the youngest A's starter in the All-Star Game since Vida Blue in 1971. ★