



Lodge Hosts
Hawaiian Luau
Fundraiser

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Pocket News

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All Kisses at the Doggie Fashion Show



There was a three-way tie for third place in the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market's Doggie Fashion Show. The tie was between three Bichon Frises, ages 12, 10 and 6, owned by Becky Buckman, who is an Elk Lodge 6 member. Tiki was dressed in a striped outfit, Cricket wore a pink Hawaiian dress and Jasper was decked out in a blue Hawaiian shirt.

Story and photos
by Stephen B. Clazie

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market is known for being a dog-friendly place and residents bring their dogs on Sunday mornings to buy treats for their best friends from Raquel's Pet Treat Shop.

GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market general manager Vic Cima and Doggie Fashion Show July 13

event chair Susie Riddell agreed that their frequent visitors should "let your pups strut their stuff."

Riddell has two beautiful Bernese Mountain dogs, Kaia, the "big mamma" at 120 pounds and Lilo at 96 pounds, who were in their angel wing costumes as the Doggie Fashion Show's official hostesses and in charge of selecting the prizes.

Children who arrived early to the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market Doggie Fashion Show were excited

to give these friendly hostesses a doggie treat.

Lyla took first place in a Mexican-inspired outfit. The Cavapoo is owned by Merrit Narh, 9. Narh's mother, Freda Narh, is a farmers market vendor and her business, Mateko's Portico, sells handmade African-woven baskets.

Second place went to Ellie, who wore a Kirkland sweater. Owned by Hannah Schnaidt, Ellie is a

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Top Tacos Compete in Bracket-Style Tournament



Battle of the Taco
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Calling all taco lovers! Sac Taco Fest is back and it's bigger, bolder and tastier than ever. This year's festival debuts "Battle of the Taco," a bracket-style tournament where the public can nominate their favorite local taquerías for a shot at glory. Nominated vendors will battle it out online and in public vote, with the winner crowned at the festival on Sept. 20.

The official tournament bracket has been released and Round 1 is wrapping up. To vote, visit sactacofest.com. Voting closes at 11:50 p.m. Monday, July 28.

"We're excited to give vendors a platform to compete, connect with new audiences and share the flavors that define our community," said Vice Mayor Karina Talamantes. "Sac Taco Fest is a powerful celebration of our culture and entrepreneurial spirit."

"This festival is so much more than just another food event," said Councilmember Eric Guerra. "It's about honoring our community's taco makers and creating a space where culture, competition and celebration come together."

Throughout the voting period, there will be pop-ups at Taco Plaza, 2620 Northgate Blvd., all building up to the big day when the Battle of the Taco tournament concludes Saturday, Sept. 20 at the annual Sac Taco Fest. The all-day, gated street festival on Del Paso Boulevard will transform the area into a vibrant celebration of food, culture and community, featuring top vendors, craft beer and spirits, live bands, DJs and fun for the whole family. Sac Taco Fest's mission is to celebrate and support the small businesses and neighborhoods that give our city its unbeatable taco culture.

"This festival is exactly the kind of

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Freeport Bar & Grill Mixes Tradition, Family, Flavor

By Idaly Valencia

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Located along the Sacramento River, Freeport Bar & Grill keeps American cuisine and tradition alive with quality service, classic dishes and a homey atmosphere.

Owned and operated by Nicole Finley's parents since 1996, the family-run restaurant is a staple in the Freeport area. Finley and her brothers are next in line to take over the business, continuing its legacy as a "Gateway to the Delta" and a favorite for locals.

"We really just try to keep it 'back to the basics,'" said Finley. "We have signature dishes that have always been on the menu...we add stuff but we try to keep it with that homey feel where all the meals come with a soup or a salad that you don't have



Pictured is Freeport Bar & Grill's Nicole Finley, whose parents have owned and operated the restaurant since 1996. Photo by Seth Henderson

to pay extra for."

The restaurant has seen renovations over the years, including a covered, pet-friendly patio for year-round outdoor dining and events.

Despite updates to the restaurant's appearance, staple recipes remain unchanged. Customer

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Lodge Hosts Hawaiian Luau Fundraiser

Story and photo
by Stephen B. Clazie

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - This summer, Sacramento’s Elks Lodge No. 6 is inviting the community to say “aloha” for a cause.

On Saturday, Aug. 9, the Elks Lodge will transform into a tropical retreat as it hosts the Hawaiian ‘Ohana Luau Dinner, a festive fundraiser dedicated to helping children with disabilities. The event runs from 6 to 10 p.m. Aug. 9 at the Elks Lodge, 6446 Riverside Blvd., and includes a night of island-inspired cuisine, music and a deep sense of community.

Raffle proceeds will go to The Purple Pig, the signature charity of the California-Hawaii Elks Association Major Project, Inc., which has raised more than \$140.5 million since 1950 to provide free in-home therapy services to children in need. To benefit the Purple Pig charity, 90 percent of raffle proceeds will go to the Purple Pig Charity, with the remaining 10 percent supporting the ongoing efforts of Lodge No. 6.

But this is more than a fundraiser; it’s a cultural celebration grounded in the Hawaiian concept of ‘Ohana, which means “family” but represents something even greater.

“‘Ohana is more than just family by blood; it’s about community, responsibility and caring for one another,” said co-hosts Susie Riddell and Yvonne York, both longtime Elks members. “It reflects the values of the Elks and our mission to serve not just our own but everyone in need.”



The Ohana Dance Group will perform at Elk 6’s Hawaiian Luau on Aug. 9.

Guests can expect a full Hawaiian luau experience with traditional island dishes, live entertainment and the kind of heartfelt hospitality the Elks are known for. With a ticket price of \$45, attendees will enjoy a night filled with food, fun and purpose, all in support of life-changing care for children.

The luau symbolism runs deep. In Hawaiian culture, the word “ohana” originates from the taro plant, which is a staple of diet and tradition. The word “oha” refers to the shoots that grow from the taro root and “ana” implies regeneration and continuity. This botanical metaphor reflects the belief that families and communities must nurture one another to thrive across generations.

That idea resonates deeply with Elks members, who have served Sacramento for more than 147 years, and who see their role as caretakers not only of tradition but of the future.

“Just like ‘ohana, our lodge believes in standing together to support our most vulnerable, especially children,” said Riddell.

The event also marks a collaboration between the Sacramento Elks and their counterparts in Hawaii,

with support from the Elks Grand Lodge in Chicago, reinforcing a broader commitment to unity and service nationwide.

In a message to the Sacramento community, Elks 6’s ER Rob Moore said, “So don your brightest aloha wear and come celebrate a night where every plate served and every dance shared helps uplift a child in need.”

Riddell and York encourage everyone to join them in celebrating Ohana.

Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased at the Elks Lodge, 6446 Riverside Blvd., Sacramento or by calling the office at 916-422-6666.

About The Purple Pig

The California-Hawaii Elks Association Major Project, Inc., affectionately known as The Purple Pig, funds free physical, occupational and speech therapy services for children with disabilities.

Since its inception in 1950, the California-Hawaii Elks Association Major Project, Inc. has been a beacon of hope for thousands of families across California and Hawaii, delivering compassionate care where it’s needed most: at home. ★

All Kisses at the Doggie Fashion Show



Merrit Narh holds her dog, Lyla, who won first place.

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Yorkiepool who loves to play with her squeaky hedgehog toy.

Longtime Elk Lodge 6 member Don Puliz and retired Judge Rudolph “Barry” Loncke were returning judges. Riddell was the third judge.

The judges had a three-way tie for third place. The tie was among three Bichon Frises, aged 12, 10 and 6; owned by Becky Buckman, also an Elk Lodge 6 member. Tiki wore a striped outfit, Cricket wore a pink Hawaiian dress and Jasper was decked out in a blue Hawaiian shirt. ★



Ellie, who wore a Kirkland sweater, won second place in GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market’s Doggie Fashion Show. Ellie is owned by Hannah Schnaidt.

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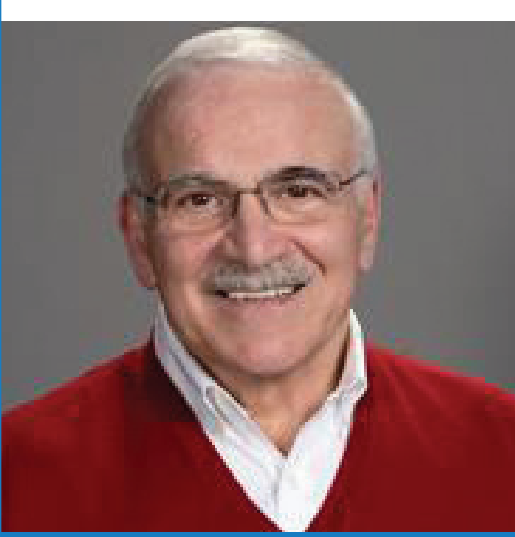


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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

Summer league has grown exponentially, and fans are tuned in today like never before. Sunday night saw our Sacramento Kings vying for their third summer league championship, as they faced off with the Charlotte Hornets in Las Vegas Nevada.

With identical 5-0 records the Kings got a dose of what their first and second round draft choices were capable of, so it remained to be seen how they would perform when the lights were brightest.

After an auspicious summer league audition, Nique Clifford struggled finding his shooting stroke, and had just 4 points entering the fourth quarter. The Kings would never give up on this game. After being down by 18 points, the young squad fought back to a single point deficit with less than 2 minutes remaining.

A pass from Isaac Jones to Clifford well beyond the arc, and Nique did not disappoint draining a deep three. Clifford followed up with an acrobatic jump shot in the corner for another three, and the Kings looked like winners.

Charlotte would not go quietly as sharp-shooter Kon Knueppel pulled up for a back breaking three. Moving the ball quickly into the frontcourt Isaac Jones sized up his first 3-point shot of the night and when Isaac converted the three the Kings were knocking on the door once again.

Kings fans can be proud of how the team fought for a win that ultimately would escape them, as a much needed rebound careened off the foot of Isaac Jones, and the Kings would go on to lose 83-78.

Neither the loss of the game nor the championship is the real story. The Sacramento Kings got more than just a glimpse of what their first and second round draft choices are capable of.

Talented, for sure and yes, they are raw. Nique Clifford put together a string of games that stated loudly, I’ve arrived and ready to make a difference!

Although I don’t like using that word, Maxime Raynaud is more of a project. Raynaud, like every rookie, is going to need extended playing time, and time to play through his mistakes.

What the Kings really wanted to know, is can this 7’1” big man make an impact and play alongside Domantas Sabonis. I believe

he can, but confidence building is what will determine how quickly Maxime Raynaud will arrive.

Not to be left behind was the electric play of second year man Isaac Jones, who coming off a stellar 36-point performance, led all scores again with a 24-point performance. Jones made his lone 3-point attempt and added 11 big boards while chipping in with 2 assists.

Isaac Jones summer league performance came as no surprise to me. What’s sad is the lack of playing time he received in his rookie year. It’s my hope, as Isaac is receiving accolades from other coaches and pundits, that the staff pay close attention to what is possible.

Jones 6’9” frame and 7’3” wingspan make him a difficult guard for any team. He has a definite knack around the rim. He’s active, and if he finds himself in a rotation that gives him 20 minutes plus per game, look for both Isaac and the Kings to take a step forward.

There is much to shout about as the Kings close out their summer league schedule. The confident presence that Nique Clifford brought every night is one of many things to be happy about.

Nique lived up to his billing as he played hard at both ends of the court, and like Isaac Jones, Clifford will need to find his place on the team that gets him minutes every game.

Doug Christie has his work cut out for him with a crowded guard rotation, including second year man Devin Carter, who acquitted himself admirably and played dominantly. Devin needs to continue working on his shot, but the upside for Carter is huge. No need for the Kings to question their decision to draft a player that could only contribute half a season due to injury. Carter is winning fans with every game he plays. I look for Devin to be more than just a contributor in the upcoming season.

Yes, Kings fans, you got what you were hoping for, and without a doubt this summer league squad has got the city of Sacramento excited.

Scott Perry isn’t done just yet, so stay tuned Kings fans!

All the best!

Your thoughts are always welcome at vgarris@kingfansfan@gmail.com. ★

Social Security Matters

What is the Formula for Deciding When to Claim?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I am curious about the “formula” to decide when to take Social Security while still working. I am past the Full Retirement Age. How do you best address such? Should we schedule a call?

Signed: Wondering When

Dear Wondering: Well, you can always contact us by phone on 1.888.750.2622 to speak to one of our certified Social Security Advisors, or you can send your questions to us via email at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. You don’t need to pre-schedule a meeting, as we have multiple advisors answering the phone on most normal business days. If they all happen to be busy when you call, simply leave a voicemail and an Advisor will return your call promptly.

For starters, since you have reached your full retirement age, know that your work earnings will no longer negatively affect your Social Security benefits. You can earn as much as possible, and your monthly SS amount will be the same, based on your average lifetime monthly earnings (for your highest 35 years), and based on your age when you claim.

Since you have not yet claimed SS, you are already earning Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) which increase your monthly SS amount by .667% for each month you continue to delay. That’s 8% for each full year you delay past your full retirement age (FRA). You should not, however, wait longer than age 70 to claim because that is when you will get your maximum SS benefit amount. For you, that means that your age 70 amount will be 28% more than the amount you would have received at your FRA of 66 years and 6 months (in Oct. 2023), and about 15% more than if you were to claim now.

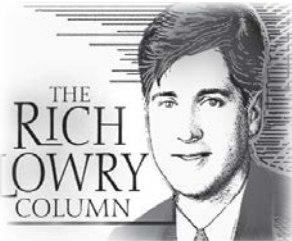
Note too, that if your more recent income is among the highest of your lifetime, Social Security will automatically increase your monthly SS retirement amount to account for that event. They will check your work earnings each year to see if you are entitled to a larger SS amount because of your recent earnings.

Since (according to your AMAC member record) you are married, you may also wish to consider whether your wife will get a spousal benefit from you when you claim. If your wife’s personal SS retirement amount at her FRA is less than the amount you were entitled to at your FRA, then she will get a spousal boost when you claim. With her spousal boost (if claimed at her FRA), her total SS benefit should be about 50% of your FRA benefit amount (not half of the higher amount you will get because you waited longer to claim).

But your wife cannot get a spousal boost until you are collecting your SS.

And here is something else to think about: received SS benefits will become part of your overall income taxed by the IRS when you submit your income tax return. If you file your income tax as “married/jointly” and your combined income from all sources is more than \$32,000 then some of your SS benefits will become taxable income. If your combined income is between \$32,001 and \$44,000, then half of the SS benefits you received during the tax year becomes part of your taxable income. Or, if your combined income from all sources exceeds \$44,000, then about 85% of your received SS benefits will become part of your income taxed by the IRS. Just something to keep in mind, especially since you are still working.

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It’s Time to Cut Off Public Broadcasting

In the past, whenever Republicans have tried to cut federal funding for public broadcasting, the 8-foot-2-inch-tall yellow bird has been trotted out as an exemplar of all that is good and necessary about public broadcasting, and the federal dollars have been preserved.

Perhaps our Jim Henson-created feathered friend will continue his undefeated streak, but a Trump-backed recessions bill represents the best chance to defund public broadcasting in decades, if not ever.

The bill, clawing back previously appropriated funding, has already passed the House and is now being considered in the Senate, where the filibuster doesn’t apply. The measure targets \$9.4 billion in federal spending, including funds for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The CPB gets about \$500 million a year from the federal government, and parcels it out to NPR, PBS and local public radio and TV stations.

NPR maintains that it only gets about 2% of its funding from the federal government, with more coming indirectly via member stations. PBS gets about 15% of its funding from the feds.

If NPR and PBS programming is as compelling and vital as its defenders say, it shouldn’t be a heavy

lift to get foundations, philanthropists and devoted listeners and viewers to fill any funding gap. The organization’s already given out a lot of tote bags during fundraising drives. Surely, they can give out some more.

Decades ago, with the rise of cable TV and a proliferation of sources of news and entertainment, it seemed absurd for the government to have to prop up a few select media sources. How much more ridiculous it is now, in the age of YouTube, social media, satellite radio, Substack, streaming services and podcast platforms.

Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Public Broadcasting Act, creating the CPB in 1967, and like many other Great Society programs, public broadcasting is an anachronism that won’t go away. Big Bird himself is approaching the age when he’ll soon begin to be eligible for senior-citizen discounts.

Supporters of public broadcasting extol the virtues of “All Things Considered,” the “PBS NewsHour” and “Frontline,” and yes (political bias aside), journalists do some good work for these programs. They also (again, political bias aside) do some good work at The New York Times and CBS News, yet neither of these outlets depend on federal tax dollars.

Oh, defenders also ask, How can we possibly do without the wonder of educational programming like “Sesame Street” and “Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood”? “Sesame Street” is, indeed, an American institution. Even if PBS collapsed tomorrow, the show would certainly go on. For about a decade now, new epi-

sodes have been featured on HBO or Netflix, demonstrating how a venerable 50-year-old project can adapt to the times.

It’s simply not true, by the way, that we depend on PBS for good shows for kids. There’s been educational programming developed by Nickelodeon (“Blue’s Clues & You!”), Scholastic Entertainment (“The Magic School Bus”) and Netflix (“Ask the StoryBots” and “Ada Twist, Scientist”). And somehow, such iconic children’s programming as “Dora the Explorer,” “Peppa Pig” and “Bluey” were created without the involvement of PBS.

Then there’s the argument that a cut-off of federal funding will be devastating to local public radio stations in rural communities. It’s true that small stations could go out of business, but as anyone who has been paying attention has noticed, we live in an era of great media churn. Private media entities are going out of business -- and being created -- all the time. The government shouldn’t extend its favor to a few select outlets. Especially when these outlets are so blatantly and pervasively biased. NPR and PBS provide left-of-center content for left-of-center audiences under the guise of objectivity. As many legacy media organizations have long demonstrated, there is a business model there, but it’s not one that deserves or needs taxpayer support.

Big Bird should, finally, make his own way in the world.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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New California Budget Ignores Day of Reckoning



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

When Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders were drafting a more-or-less final 2025-26 state budget last month, they were closing what they described as a \$12 billion deficit, a number that the state’s media repeatedly cited.

It was the wrong number; it minimizes the state’s chronic gap between income and outgo, as the state’s official budget summary released this week confirms.

The budget projects that the state will receive \$208.6 billion in general fund revenues during the fiscal year that began on July 1, but it will spend \$228.4 billion, a gap just shy of \$20 billion.

The \$12 billion figure stems from counting a \$7.1 billion diversion from one of the state’s reserve accounts as revenue — an assumption that violates common sense as well as any legitimate accounting scenario.

The more accurate figure of \$20 billion is important because it squares with projections by Newsom’s Department of Finance and the Legislative Analyst’s Office that California has what’s called a “structural deficit” in the range of

\$10 billion to \$20 billion a year.

In other words financing all of the programs and services now in state law will indefinitely cost that much more each year than the state is likely to receive in revenues.

The budget closes about a third of the \$20 billion gap with an aforementioned \$7.1 billion shift from the emergency reserve — money that’s supposed to be used to cushion the impact of an economic downturn or calamities such as the wildfires that devastated Los Angeles, earthquakes or destructive storms.

The deficit isn’t a genuine emergency because it resulted from irresponsible political decisions, particularly Newsom’s declaration in 2022 that the state had a \$97.5 billion budget surplus and thus could afford a sharp increase in spending.

The surplus was a mirage, based on assumptions of a \$40 billion annual increase in revenues that never happened. Last year, the Department of Finance acknowledged that revenues over four years would fall short of expectations by \$165 billion.

However, much of the phantom money was already spent, thereby creating the structural deficit that Newsom and the Legislature basically ignored in putting together the current budget.

The \$12 billion gap left after the reserve fund shift was mostly papered over with on- and off-budget loans from special funds, shifting some spending into future years and using

accounting gimmicks, such as shifting some current year spending, the June 2026 state payroll for instance, into the next fiscal year.

One could liken the state budget to a family that takes out loans on its credit cards to finance a lavish lifestyle, or a city that provides pension benefits it cannot afford.

Sooner or later, the debts pile so high that they can no longer be ignored and the day of reckoning arrives. That’s one reason why more than 30,000 Californians file for bankruptcy each year and why several California cities have gone bankrupt in recent years.

States cannot file for bankruptcy, no matter how distorted their finances. If they could, California would not qualify because of its almost unlimited ability to borrow money from special funds.

However, there will be a day of judgment if California’s spending continues to outpace its revenues, particularly if the state’s economy continues its sluggish performance.

Newsom and legislators implicitly assume that at some point revenues will increase enough to cover their spending and pay off their debts — just as a debt-ridden family buys lottery tickets in hopes of avoiding bankruptcy.

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. ★

Move to the Rhythm

Local Summer Concerts and Performances

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Pocket residents are no strangers to supporting and enjoying the local music scene. There is still plenty of nearby concerts and musical events happening throughout the remaining of summer that folks in the neighborhood can plan to attend.

Here are some affordable and free upcoming shows to mark on your calendar.

Music in the Park

The beloved Music in the Park series continues July 27 and Aug. 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. at William Curtis Park, 3349 W. Curtis Drive.

Hosted by the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association, the summer concerts feature free live music under shady oaks with a picnic-style setting, gourmet food trucks and a family-friendly environment.

Grab a blanket or lawn chair, savor delicious bites from local vendors and enjoy the soundtrack of the season in the heart of Curtis Park.

On July 27, A Little Project will perform a blend of jazz fusion, funk and blues. Enjoy a soulful blend of smooth grooves and heartfelt melodies. A Little Project banded together in Summer 2024, and together the band plays tight grooves that audience members can dance to ensure a good time is had.

According to Bazooka, an Americana-inspired band, takes the stage Aug. 24 with a mix of folk,



Hosted by the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association, Music in the Park at William Curtis Park features free live music under shady oaks with a picnic-style setting, gourmet food trucks and a family-friendly environment. Photo courtesy of Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association

rock and country. Each event includes a children’s opener and intermission performance from Mr. Cooper.

For more information about the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association, visit sierra2.org.

Jazz in July

City Councilmember Rick Jennings hosts free Jazz in July concerts at local parks. Shows take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Fridays. It is recommended that attendees bring lawn chairs and pack a picnic dinner.

Catch the last concert in the concert series that will be held on July 25. It will feature American guitarist Kerrie McCoy performing at Belle Cooledge Park, 5600 S Land Park Drive.

Harlow’s and The Starlet Room

Located at 2708 J St., Harlow’s is a staple live music venue in Midtown that consistently features popular and local

talents. The Starlet Room at Harlow’s is located above the main venue that also hosts concerts and allows concertgoers to have a more up-close experience with their favorite local bands.

Vinnie Guidera & The Dead Birds, an indie rock trio, will celebrate the release of their new record “Afterimage” with a show at The Starlet Room on July 25. They’ll be joined by The Kelps and Clevers. The all-ages show begins at 8 p.m. and doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18.

For ages 21 and up, Quique Neira, known as the Voice of Reggae Made in Chile, will perform July 25 at Harlow’s. Tickets are \$26 each.

Metalcore Night takes place July 26 at The Starlet Room with tickets that cost \$20. The 9 p.m. show features a mix of legendary and emerging metal/hard-core music.

Folk band Shinyribs brings a blend of Texas blues, New Orleans

R&B-funk and Memphis soul to Harlow’s stage on July 27. Tickets are \$26 and is an all-ages show.

On July 29, all-ages punk concert will feature The Taxpayers, Walter Mitty and His Makeshift Orchestra, Dog Party and Foot Ox, starting at 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets cost \$32.

The Elk Grove School of Rock will perform at 6 p.m. July 31 in The Starlet Room. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are only \$14. The same night, Harlow’s will present former American Idol contestant and folk/country artist Crystal Bowersox with Marcus Trummer. This performance will start at 7:30 p.m., doors open an hour before at 6:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$38 for regular admission. Preferred and booth seating tickets are \$50. All ages are welcome for both concerts.

For tickets and event details, visit harlows.com/ events.



Folk band Shinyribs brings a blend of Texas blues, New Orleans R&B-funk and Memphis soul to Harlow’s stage, located at 2708 J St., on July 27. Tickets are \$26 for this all-ages show. Photo courtesy of Harlow’s



The Toyota Concert Series at the California State Fair features nightly shows on the Sky River Casino Stage. Photo courtesy of California State Fair

Toyota Concert Series at the State Fair

The Toyota Concert Series at the California State Fair features nightly shows on the Sky River Casino Stage.

Concerts that are free with fair admission (\$18 a ticket for adults) or individual concert tickets can be purchased for \$45 each.

Seating is first come, first serve for the first 700 guests in the general admission area starting at 5 p.m. Premium packages are available for seating at the Casamigos Cabana. Shows start promptly at 8 p.m.

On July 25, platinum-certified rock band O.A.R. will be performing

their hits from the late 2000s which includes “Shattered” and “Love and Memories.”

For country music lovers, Brothers Osborne will take the stage on July 26 to perform their Grammy-winning songs. The country duo blends classic and progressive country sounds that continues to garner attention of listeners throughout the United States.

July 27 main performance will be En Vogue, featuring original member Maxine Jones. The iconic R&B group is known for hits such as “Hold On,” “My Lovin’ (You’re Never Gonna Get It)” and “Don’t Let Go (Love).”

Visit castatefair.com for tickets. ★

Girl Scouts Experience Civic Engagement at State Capitol

Girl Scouts Heart of Central California News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Girl Scouts Heart of Central California (GSHCC) was proud to welcome Girl Scouts from across the state for a two-day educational experience centered on civic engagement and advocacy.

This immersive event, which took place on June 19 and 20, was open to Girl Scouts in grades four through 12 and designed to inspire the next generation of changemakers by connecting them directly with government and public service.

Participants engaged in hands-on workshops, toured the historic State Capitol, met with legislators and took part in panel discussions, featuring elected officials and leaders in civic life. The experience empowers girls to explore how the government works, understand their role in a democracy and develop their voices as



Girl Scouts pose in the California State Senate during their two-day event on June 19 and 20. Photo courtesy of Girl Scouts Heart of Central California

advocates for the issues they care about.

“This event gives girls a rare opportunity to see government in action and to realize that they, too, can lead and make a difference in their communities,” said Adriana Pedroza,

associate director of girl experience at Girl Scouts Heart of Central California.

Girl Scouts Heart of Central California is dedicated to building girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.

Through various programs and initiatives, the organization empowers girls to take the lead in their lives and communities.

Headquartered in Sacramento, Girl Scouts Heart of Central California serves over 16,000 girl and adult

members across 18 counties, including Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Mariposa, Merced, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tuolumne, Yolo and Yuba. ★



Girl Scouts listen to a tour guide outside of the Governor’s Office at the State Capitol Building during their two-day event on June 19 and 20. Photo courtesy of Girl Scouts Heart of Central California



Girl Scouts listen attentively while inside the California State Senate during their two-day event on June 19 and 20. Photo courtesy of Girl Scouts Heart of Central California



Above right: The electronic sign in the California State Senate says, “The California State Senate Welcomes Girl Scouts.” Photo courtesy of Girl Scouts Heart of Central California

Right: Girl Scouts listen attentively while inside the California State Senate during their two-day event on June 19 and 20. Photo courtesy of Girl Scouts Heart of Central California

ABOUT TOWN

Banana Festival in August

The 14th Annual Sacramento Banana Festival, Aug. 16-17 at Land Park, is a multicultural event celebrating cultures in Asia, Africa, and the Americas that use the banana as a source of food, art, and culture. It will feature music, food and craft vendors, art exhibitions and activities and a kids zone. Details at bananafestivalsac.org.

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 print-making 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. **Sacramento History Museum** – “Sacramento In a Can – Featuring the Campbell’s Sacramento

Story” chronicles the fascinating history of the canning industry in the Capital City. The limited time “Sacramento In a Can” exhibit is perfect for visitors interested in learning how Sacramento became the Tomato Soup capital of the world. Through Sept 1.

Details at sachistory-museum.org. **Elks Lodge 6 Calendar of Events** Elks Lodge 6 Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am; \$15 tax included. Yoga, Monday 12 p.m., Wednesday 3:30 p.m. Lodge members free. Karaoke Nights,

Thursdays and Saturdays, 7 p.m. Martial Arts, Monday 5 p.m. Pickleball, Monday, Wednesday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; Thursday, 4:30-7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 4-7 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.net for weekly menu. ★

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City’s Response to Homelessness Updated



The City of Sacramento funds and operates shelter spaces every night for people experiencing homelessness. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento has released its weekly progress report for the City’s Incident Management Team (IMT) responding to homelessness.

From July 7-13, the city received 801 calls to 311 customer service related to unsheltered individuals.

Through the work of the IMT, 1,065 calls were closed, meaning that either

the issue was remedied, compliance was achieved or the issue no longer existed when city staff inspected the site.

Department of Community Response staff enrolled 108 people into shared local databases that match them with shelters and other resources.

In addition, 27 people were placed into the City’s Roseville Road campus or the Outreach and Engagement Center (OEC).

As of July 15, there were zero Pallet homes and one trailer available at the Roseville Road campus as well as five spaces available at the Outreach and Engagement Center. There was an average of 16 openings at city-funded shelters (excluding the Roseville Road campus and the Outreach and Engagement Center).

Regarding waste removal, the city cleaned up 100,880 pounds of trash. ★

Three Tips to Protect Rivers When Boating

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - With summer in full swing, City of Sacramento Department of Utilities staff are reminding boaters how they can help keep local waterways clean.

“Our rivers are great places to recreate but boats are a surprising source of waterway pollution,” said Emma Burke, an outreach specialist that manages the City’s Keep Our Waters Clean program, which helps educate boaters.

“Waste, fuel and oil from boats can harm local wildlife and affect drinking

water supplies.”

According to Burke, there are three simple ways boaters can help protect rivers:

Use public restrooms and dispose of pet waste properly

Waste carries bacteria, viruses and parasites that can threaten the health of humans and wildlife.

Use pumpout stations to remove wastewater from your boat’s holding tank

Improperly dumped wastewater often contains excess nutrients that contribute to harmful algal blooms and can harm fish and wildlife. Boaters can find a list of pumpout

station locations on the California State Parks website.

Recycle used oil and dirty bilge water at designated facilities.

Dirty bilge water can contain pollutants, such as oil, fuel and debris, which should never be dumped in waterways. Boaters can find facilities to recycle used oil and dirty bilge water on CalRecycle’s website.

“While these are some of the simplest ways boaters can help keep our waterways clean, they also happen to be some of the most effective,” Burke said. ★

Vision Zero Tracks Crash Causes

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento is beginning the process to update its Vision Zero Action Plan, renewing its commitment to eliminating traffic-related deaths and serious injuries through data-driven strategies and community input.

Originally adopted in 2018, the Vision Zero Action Plan serves as the city’s roadmap to reduce severe and fatal crashes.

The updated plan will align with federal guidance from the Safe System Approach and the Safe Streets and Roads for All program, as well as California’s Safety Corridor guidance. The new plan is expected to be completed in spring 2026.

“The Vision Zero update is more than a document; it’s a strategy for investment of policies, programs and infrastructure across all departments at the city,” said Jennifer Donlon Wyant, Mobility and Sustainability Division manager with the Department of Public Works. “We want Sacramento’s streets to be safe for everyone, all ages and abilities, all ways of traveling, whether you’re walking, biking, taking transit or driving. This is the beginning of a collaborative process to get us there.”

To support the update, the city has launched a Vision Zero Crash Data



Vision Zero rejects the notion that transportation crashes are simply “accidents.” Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

Dashboard, providing data from 2013 to 2023. The 2024 dataset will be added soon.

The dashboard highlights the top contributing factors in severe and fatal crashes, including:

- Driving at an unsafe speed (15%)
- Impaired driving (13%)
- Failure to obey signs and signals (12%)
- Failure to yield (11%)

This analysis will help identify state-designated safety corridors, prioritize investments in traffic safety and monitor progress toward the city’s safety goals.

This summer and fall, city staff will attend local events, host engagement meetings and provide online tools to collect public input. Residents can stay informed by visiting VisionZeroSac.org and signing up for updates. ★

Top Tacos Compete in Bracket-Style Tournament

Continued from Page 1

inclusive, community-powered celebration that makes Sacramento special,” said Councilmember Roger Dickinson. “I’m proud to host Sac Taco Fest in District 2 and support the vendors, artists and residents who make it all possible.”

“Sacramento Taco Fest 2025 is more than a celebration of culture; it’s a powerful economic driver for our local

small businesses,” said festival sponsor Cathy Rodriguez, president and CEO of the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. “As a supporting partner, the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation is proud to champion events that spotlight our entrepreneurs, boost neighborhood vitality and build lasting opportunities for growth in our diverse communities.” ★

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Sapphires in the Mail, Arriving by the Day

Story and photos
by Kimberly A. Edwards

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The highlight of my day is awaiting the mail truck, as I'm on the watch for flats, bundles and cardboard boxes.

This new pastime is an unexpected treat of buying books and articles written by early authors of the California Writers Club Sacramento. Our club is turning 100 years old this fall. The hunt has made me realize that not only were these authors talented but that they deserve honor. They are deceased now but the books, poems and articles they left behind endure.

Daily, I scour club records for references to work published. Then I tear through the internet, screen after screen, chasing available titles.

Books are searchable, although covers changed by publishers make first editions hard to identify.

Magazines can be fleeting. For example, so-and-so sold stories to Love Stories, Argosy, Secrets, Intimate Stories, Essence, Popular Mechanics, Weird Tales, Dude, Popular Science, Better Homes and Gardens, Teen and so on. But our records don't specify the exact date of publication. So last night, I foraged for an hour for "The Torso on the Rocks," sold to Trapped Detective Story Magazine. No luck.

Each day's mail brings surprises, as I rediscover the forgotten gems I've ordered. Our club, an affiliate of the California Writers Club in 1925, claimed members who

published as early as 1914. Yesterday, I discovered early publisher Jo Anderson, "His Print Shop," at 416 J St., Sacramento. The illustrations done by a name described as "Sacramento Boy" went on to become an internationally famous article.

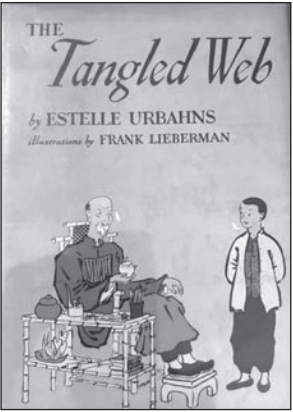
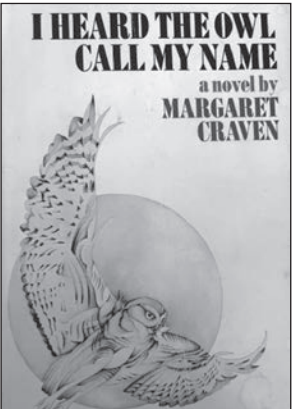
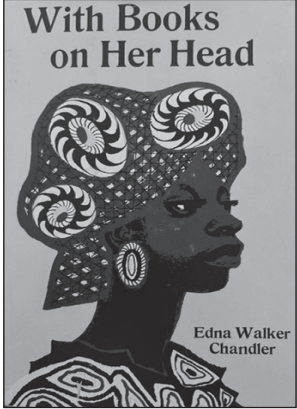
Enthusiasm can be dizzying. Four times I ordered duplicate copies of the same book but they were different editions with different covers. Twice I ordered "The Golfer's Bible" but one turned out to be a real Bible. Recently, the bank put my credit card on hold for charges thought to be suspicious.

On a dark night, I realized that I had accidentally disposed of something in the garbage bins. With a flashlight and a stool, I dug for a discarded photo of nationally-syndicated columnist "Helen Help Us" Helen Bottel.

It's exciting to find an early book, especially a scarce one. I'm not a professional book trader, so I obviously don't know what I'm doing. I'm just snatching what I can, convincing myself that the dazzle of yore belongs to us in Sacramento.

Having studied multi-cultural children's books in the '70s, I know that librarians in those days had little guidance when ordering books with diverse characters. I am, thankfully, finding in this growing trove of jewels respectable renditions.

What tested my mettle, however, were two early books with "Pickanny" in the title. One was dedicated to the students of



These books are just a few of the works by Sacramento-area writers. Some of the authors were published as early as 1914. California Writers Club, Sacramento will celebrate 100 years of excellence in writing on Oct. 18 at North Ridge Country Club. Go online to sacramentowriters.org for more information about the writers club and its 100th-year anniversary.

own our past and understand that perspective at the time differs from love on the page crafted laboriously by an author with good intentions.

Many of our early authors' books were made into movies. One inspired the TV series, "Grizzly Adams."

Edna Chandler and Lee Roddy published more than 50 books apiece.

Duane Newcomb sold 2,000 articles. Leo Rosenhouse sold dozens monthly.

Psychiatrist Walter Bromberg, author of "Crime of the Mind," served as an expert on famous criminal cases.

Edna Mae Burnam Nauman wrote the "Dozen a Day," music instruction for piano students.

Attorney Ken Donelson and his wife, Irene, wrote "Married Today, Single Tomorrow: Marriage Breakup and the Law." Diane Davidson wrote "Feversham" about a real-life murder in Tudor England.

Walter T. Boyd, having worked in secret military operations, wrote about cryogenics.

Amparo Campeón wrote a column for Spanish-language newspaper, "El Hispano."

Bud Gardner became the most inspirational writing teacher in the U.S.

Eva Rutland wrote, "When We Were Colored."

So what will we do with this stockpile of early work of which we are so proud? We plan to display it at our "100 Years of Writing Excellence in Sacramento" event from noon to 3 p.m. Oct. 18 at North Ridge Country Club. Presenters

will include award-winning featured speaker Jack Ohman, Rich Ehisen, poet Carol Lynn Stevenson Grellas, literary agent Sandra Proudman and Alison Linton of the local CBS affiliate. For tickets or more information, go to sacramentowriters.org.

The 102-year Kiyo Sato International award winner will be on hand. Attendees will learn about early magazines and trends in publishing.

We thank our partners, the Crocker Art Museum, the California State Library, the Sacramento Public Library and the Center for Sacramento History.

As a child whose hands leaked stories from the minute I awoke, I believe that everyone who wants to write should be encouraged and we need to applaud all who have.

Questions remain: will my credit card be deactivated due to flagged purchases around the globe? What am I going to do with these treasures after the event, since they are taking over my condo?

Sapphires shine and can last forever, as will these works, long past my condo and me.

Kimberly A. Edwards, *first vice-president of the California Writers Club, is a long-time writer with credits in national magazines, international media, newsletter publishing, reporting, column writing, poetry and memoir. Everyone in the writing community is invited to join the Centennial event (sacramentowriters.org) to honor early writers and those currently devoted to all genres, including journalism.* ★

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New Poll Finds Vast Majority of Californians Believe Special Interest Money Has Too Much Influence in Sacramento

By Evan Symon, California Globe

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According to a new UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) poll released Thursday, the vast majority of Californians believe that special interest money has too much influence in Sacramento politics and decision making, with only 2% of Californians disagreeing in any capacity.

The poll specifically found that 55% of Californians strongly agreed with the question ‘Do you agree or disagree: Special interest money has too much influence in Sacramento politics and decision making?’, with another 20% somewhat agreeing. With 1% somewhat disagreeing and 1% strongly disagreeing, the rest of the 23% were either in the middle and not agreeing or disagreeing, or simply chose not to respond.

When broken down by party, a grand total of 73% of all Democrats agreed with the question, albeit with only 49% strongly agreeing and 24% somewhat agreeing. Only 3% disagreed. Republicans brought a much stronger response, with 81% agreeing, including 69% strongly agreeing, while only 2% disagreed. No party preference voters stood at 75% agreeing.

The question of special interest money having too much influence in the state capitol also showed significant racial fluctuations, although like the party



The vast majority of Californians believe that that kind of spending has far too much influence in the state. Image MPG file photo

registration section, disagreeing with the question only saw a maximum of 3%. White voters proved far more skeptical, with 82% agreeing (64% strongly and 18% somewhat). Meanwhile, Latino voters were the least skeptical, with only 66% in total agreeing (44% strongly, 22% somewhat).

Finally, voter age showed the largest divisions on the question, albeit once again with only a maximum of 3% disagreeing with the question per age group. As it turned out, the younger the voter, the less skeptical of the question they turned out to be. Heading down from age groups, 85% of those aged 65 and older agreed with the question,

followed by 81% of 50 to 64 year olds, 77% of 40 to 49 year olds, 70% of 30 to 39 year olds, and 59% of 18 to 29 year olds.

If measured by only strongly agreeing, all age demos showed 50% or more agreeing, except for the young 18 to 29 year olds section. There, only 38% strongly agreed.

The IGS team pointed out even more demographic fluctuations, while likewise hammering home the fact that the vast majority of Californians all agree on special interest money having too much of an influence on lawmakers in Sacramento.

“Strikingly, this was a question on which there was little partisan split, with 73% of Democrats,

81% of Republicans, and 75% of No Party Preference voters agreeing. At least 59% of each regional, gender, age, education, income, and racial group also agreed with the statement,” said the IGS in their poll findings. “Strong agreement was highest among white (64%), male (63%), and 65 years and older (66%) voters. It was lowest among young voters (38%) and low-income voters (37%). Californians who vote regularly are the most fed up with the money in California’s political system: 87% of them agree strongly or somewhat, compared to 67% of respondents who are not regular voters.”

“The numbers don’t lie.

Californians overwhelmingly recognize that big money wields far too much power over our elected officials,” added California Common Cause Deputy Director Russia Chavis Cardenas. “People from every political party, every race, and every walk of life are united behind one urgent demand. They want Sacramento to break the grip of big money on our democracy.”

The California Globe has continuously shown the high amount of special interest money flowing through Sacramento, as well highlighting the groups giving the most. This includes pointing out the hundreds of millions being spent by public sector unions each year on lawmakers and groups in Sacramento, and thus, having a huge amount of influence as a result.

In 2024 alone, lobbying groups spent \$540 million to influence the state government, jumping up 10% from 2023. The largest individual private sector group, the Western States Petroleum Association, spent a total of \$17.3 million in an attempt to influence lawmakers, while the largest sector, public sector unions spent, as mentioned earlier, into the hundreds of millions.

As of early July, 2025 mid-year figures are unavailable for special interest funding. However, as the poll showed, the vast majority of Californians believe that that kind of spending has far too much influence in the state. ★

Bombshell Declassified ICA Report on 2016 Plot to Overthrow Elected President



By Harold Pease, Ph. D., LibertyUnderFire.org

The new CIA Director John Radcliffe just released ICA’s Tradecraft Review of the 2016 Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) revealing the CIA, FBI and DNI’s unsuccessful attempt to nullify Trump’s 2016 election victory over Hillary Clinton because of alleged Russian collusion in the election. In this, outgoing President Barack Obama and then CIA director John Brennan played major and intentional roles in both. The Russian Hoax and its coverup, is now the biggest political scandal in American history. The Report, showed that “then-CIA Director John Brennan, FBI Director James Comey and Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, who were “excessively involved” in its drafting, and rushed its completion in a “chaotic,” “atypical” and “markedly unconventional” process

that raised questions of a “potential political motive” (“Obama’s Trump-Russia collusion report was corrupt from start: CIA review,” by Miranda Devine, New York Post, July 2, 2025). The obvious intent, though not cited, was to leave Trump, the 2016 election victor, unseated, against the will of the people who elected him.

A glaring curiosity was the timing, “on December 6, 2016, six weeks before his presidency ended,” and a month after the election, “Barack Obama ordered the assessment, which concluded that Russian President Vladimir Putin ‘aspired’ to help Trump win the election”—thus Russian collusion (Ibid.). Brennan had an obvious obsession to include in the report the unverified , even discredited Steele dossier, “despite objections of the authors and senior CIA Russia experts, so as to push a false narrative that Russia secured Trump’s 2016 victory.” Still another unexplained anomaly for a guy leaving the presidency within weeks, is Obama’s wire tapping of Hillary’s political opponent. Trump responded, “Just found out that Obama had my ‘wires taped’ in Trump Tower just before the victory. Nothing found. This is McCarthyism!” (X22 Report, Ep. 3679b, July 3, 2025, 47:19, X). “Never

has a president left office to collude with others to impede the next sitting president of the United States of America until Obama! (Ibid. 52:23).

The release of the classified “Tradecraft Review of the 2016 Intelligence Community Assessment [ICA] on Russian Election Interference” was conducted by career professionals at the CIA’s Directorate of Analysis and was commissioned by CIA Director John Ratcliffe last May. It concluded that in 2016, then CIA director Brennan and others rushed the Russia Election Interference Intelligence Assessment. In it “Brennan is shown to have dismissed high-level warnings that the Clinton campaign opposition research, the ‘Steel Dossier,’ was not credible. The intelligence community CIA, FBI, DNI, etc. intentionally fabricated intelligence information to create an entirely fictitious storyline”and weaponized the fake narrative against Donald Trump to prevent him from taking office after being elected by the people (Ibid., 48:19).

If the Coup d’état. was unsuccessful then why does this matter now in 2025—nine years later? Because those unpunished then remained in place enabling them to cheat even more so in every two year election cycle thereafter, potentially to infinity if

not exposed, punished and stopped.

Rasmussen Reports labeled the CIA Directors’ recent release as “An Enormous Scandal, Dwarfing Watergate and the Pentagon Papers,” much much bigger than Watergate (Ibid., 48:52). To which Lee Smith, an investigative reporter replied, “Useful detail but misses crucial fact. I’ve reported in three books: Obama ordered ICA and knew by August 2016 [that the] only intel tying Trump to Russia was [the] dossier. That’s the scandal, not bad tradecraft or stove piping intel etc: Obama framed Trump” (Ibid. 49:25). Let us repeat, “Obama framed Trump.”

General Mike Flynn, who was himself victimized by the Deep State, said, “The newly declassified ICA proves without a shadow of a doubt that the entire operation was a rigged partisan hack job. It wasn't intelligence. It was propaganda meant to undermine the incoming POTUS. And who orchestrated this disgrace – John Brennan, a man who wore the title of CIA Director but acted like a political assassin in service to the Obama/Clinton machine. He didn't just fail in his duties. He betrayed it. He weaponized the CIA to push a lie, boxed out the rest of the intelligence community and engineered a fraudulent narrative that tore our nation apart. He

knew the Intel was a lie yet he led a small handpicked Cabal to hide the truth and manufactured a story that served their agenda Everything they accuse Trump, myself, and others of doing they were doing behind the scenes. That is what Marxists do. And while they pushed their fiction, real Americans paid the price. I exposed all of it in my new book ‘Pardon of Innocence.’” General Flynn’s suggestion now is that “John Brennan needs to be put under investigation immediately.” (Ibid., 49:47). Kash Patel in his book “Government Gangster’s” verifies in detail how this was done—this whole attempted Coup d’état.

There are good reasons why Trump could not go after those who went after him and Flynn when he was president before Joe Biden. Then, few knew of the Deep State. Even fewer would have believed him and had he sought justice who would have investigated and who would have prosecuted—a rogue FBI and Department of Justice? And with the corrupt judicial justices that are only now being exposed, who would have convicted? Even now that the vast majority of the people are awakened to these coup conspirators we are probably not ready to give long prison sentences to them—perhaps executions? If justice is not

restored they will be back in power.

Fortunately, “there exists no statute of limitations for conspiring to defraud the US government,” none also for criminal Rico activities, more especially, if criminal activities are ongoing or there exist any attempt to cover them up. This includes cheating in elections in 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024—much of which has been documented. This is why Trump allowed them to continue to do this. It removes the statute of limitations.” (Ibid., 52:08). But we must win decisively both houses 2026.

Ratcliffe in an exclusive interview summarized the rational for the released Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA). “This was Obama, Comey, Clapper and Brennan deciding ‘We’re going to screw Trump.’” And they did. Others called it treason then and now.

Dr. Harold Pease is an expert on the United States Constitution anda syndicated columnist. He has dedicated his career to studying the writings of the Founding Fathers and applying that knowledge to current events. He taught history and political science from this perspective for over 30 years. Newspapers have permission to publish this column. Read more of his weekly columns at www. LibertyUnderFire.org. ★



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SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Softball Western "B" National Championship Tournament Features 500 Players



Above: Teams are comprised of all-star players or are select teams, where girls try out for squads and practice and play together for several months.
Middle: Almost 40 teams, including about a dozen from the Sacramento region, swing into action with opening ceremonies at 9 a.m. July 22 at Maidu Regional Park, 1550 Maidu Drive, Roseville for USA Softball's Western "B" National Championship.
Right: About 500 players between the ages of 9 and 11 will compete in the World Series-like tournament that draws teams throughout California and the western states. Photos courtesy of Lisa Zeng



By Ron Trujillo

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Clutch hits, defensive gems and must-win games will highlight USA Softball's Western "B" National Championship 10-under girls'tournament that runs from July 22 through July 27 in Roseville, bringing about 2,500 athletes, coaches and fans and generating more than \$1 million for Placer Valley.

Almost 40 teams, including about a dozen from the Sacramento region, swing into action with opening ceremonies at 9 a.m. July 22, after press time, at Maidu Regional Park, 1550 Maidu Drive, Roseville.

The first games start at 9 a.m. July 23 at Maidu Regional Park and Mahany Park, 1545 Pleasant Grove Blvd. in Roseville and continue into the evening. The championship games are on July 27 at Maidu Regional Park.

About 500 players between the ages of 9 and 11 will compete in the World Series-like tournament that draws teams throughout California and the western states.

Fans can enjoy the games for free. Drinks and snacks

are available for purchase at the parks.

"You're going to see some very good softball," said Pocket Aces 10-under team manager Corey Chatman.

The Pocket Aces 10-under team, from southwest Sacramento, has practiced since December and has compiled a record of 27-17 this season.

"The teams that are seeded at Nationals are very sound," Chatman said. "It's top tier."

Teams are comprised of all-star players or are select teams, where girls try out for squads and practice and play together for several months.

"They've worked so hard for this," said Woodland Elite manager Fabi Michel.

The 13-player Woodland Elite team has practiced since January and started playing games in February.

"They've learned to communicate with each other on the field and have grown as a team," Michel said. "They go on the field and play their hearts out."

Placer Valley Tourism has hosted the Western Softball "B" Nationals Championship for

various age groups more than a dozen times since 2010, according to organizers.

"It's a long-standing relationship that helps make the tournament go very smooth,"-said USA Softball of Sacramento tournament director Karla Burket. "Roseville has great fields and all of the leagues in our association have such amazing volunteers."

Placer Valley Tourism, which competes with other communities for the high-profile Western National tournaments, has made significant improvements to local softball fields in the past few years.

"The Western Nationals is always a big hit with the community, from the athletes and their families to area businesses that enjoy the boost in revenue," said Kim Summers, CEO of Placer Valley Tourism and @the Grounds, home of the Roebbelen Center. "Placer Valley's good quality fields combined with the area's amenities make it a great destination for the athletes and their families."

More than 25 teams will be traveling and staying in hotels during the tournament. Area

teams appreciate the ability to stay close to home, saving time and money, while playing against some of the best teams in the West.

"It's a luxury to be so close to home," said Chatman, whose team will come home every night. The close-to-home tournament "is an easy sell to parents."

Winning a championship is the goal but building camaraderie and meeting new girls, especially during the opening ceremonies, are also a huge part of the six-day tournament. Players will exchange pins and wear costumes (the outfits are a surprise until the event) as part of a long-standing opening ceremonies tradition.

"They are super excited about Nationals," Michel said. "Winning is obviously great but having more time to bond and playing together is special. They are so proud to represent Woodland."

Softball has been generating more interest among girls and fans in recent years.

Almost 30,000 girls played for their high school softball teams last year in California, an 11.4% increase compared to

five years earlier, according to the California Interscholastic Federation. Several thousand girls play the sport in the Sacramento region.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's College World Series had a record 1.3-million viewers on average per game for the 15 games this spring on ESPN, including a record 2.4-million viewers for the third and deciding game between the eventual national champion University of Texas Longhorns and Texas Tech Red Raiders.

In June, the Major League Baseball-sponsored Athletes Unlimited Softball League (AUSL) started with four teams that will play a 24-game season this summer. The league has already announced plans to expand to six teams in 2026.

So some of the girls competing in the tournament could continue playing the sport in high school, college or even in a pro league.

"It could be a groundbreaking moment, where they fall in love with the sport," Chatman said. "Western Nationals is going to be something they will remember forever." ★

Baker Claims Championship at Women's Amateur

Sacramento Golf Council News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Taylor Baker of Sacramento emerged victorious at the 2025 Sacramento Valley Women's Amateur Championship, capturing the Championship Flight title at the Alister MacKenzie Golf Course at Haggin Oaks on July 13.

Baker led wire to wire, firing a superb opening round 66 and closing with an even-par 72 for a two-day total of 138 (-6).

Hot on her heels was Rancho Murieta's Hannah Camara, who surged with a final-round 70 (-2) to finish just one stroke back at 139 (-5).

Defending Champion, Rocklin's Kaylyn Noh rounded out the podium at 140 (-4), carding rounds of 68-72.

When asked about the 10-foot birdie putt on hole #18 to win, Baker replied "I was really shaking but I decided to commit to my routine. Ellis (Baker's caddy) and I really liked our line and I just decided to make my best stroke."

The leaderboard was packed with impressive performances, including Erica Villegas (Suisun, -2) in fourth and a tie for fifth at -1 between Darla May Dela Torre (Fairfield) and Tavia Burgess (Mather), who posted low rounds of 70 and 69, respectively.

Notably, Ellie Bushnell of Granite Bay recorded a blazing 68 (-4) on Sunday to vault into a tie for eighth at +1, demonstrating the depth of talent in this year's field.

Karen Garcia of Cool emerged as the Senior Championship Division winner. Garcia posted rounds of 72 and 74 to finish at +2 (146 total), claiming a decisive four-shot victory. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council



Taylor Baker of Sacramento holds her championship trophy from the 2025 Sacramento Valley Women's Amateur Championship at the Alister MacKenzie Golf Course at Haggin Oaks on July 13. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council



Karen Garcia of Cool emerged as the Senior Championship Division winner, posting rounds of 72 and 74 to finish at +2 (146 total), claiming a decisive four-shot victory. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council

It was another victory for Garcia before she heads to the United States Women's Senior Open at San Diego Country Club in August.

Tied for second at +6 (150) were Deborah Robertson of Martinez and Tina Barker of Fairfield. Both players battled in the final round, with Robertson carding a 79 and Barker a 77.

Rounding out the top five were Deanna Payne of Lakehead in fourth at +11 (155) and Melissa Spencer of Santa Cruz in fifth at +13 (157).

The Low Net Champion was Michele Ross of San Leandro with a net score of 137.

The Alister MacKenzie Golf Course at Haggin Oaks is among California's most historic public courses.

Opened in 1932, it was designed by Dr. Alister MacKenzie, the legendary Scottish architect famed for Augusta National and Cypress Point. Known for its masterful routing, undulating greens and deceptive bunkering, the MacKenzie Course has long been a test for amateurs and professionals alike.

Haggin Oaks has hosted numerous USGA championships, state championships and local events, cementing its place as the "people's championship course" in Northern California.

The course's blend of tradition and challenge made it an ideal venue for this year's Sacramento Valley Women's Amateur, continuing a proud legacy of women's competitive golf in the region. ★

Zack Mate Wins Men's Amateur Championship

Sacramento Golf Council News Release

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - The 2025 Sacramento County Men's Amateur Championship was held on July 12 to July 13 at Ancil Hoffman Golf Course in Carmichael.

Zack Mate of Elk Grove captured the title with an impressive final round 66, paired with an opening 71, for a two-day total of 137.

Finishing just one stroke back in second place was Taylor Knoll of Rancho Cordova, who carded rounds of 70-68 for a total of 138.



Zack Mate of Elk Grove wins the 2025 Sacramento County Men's Amateur Championship, held at Ancil Hoffman Golf Course in Carmichael on July 12 and 13. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Golf Council

Rounding out the top three was Sacramento's Keith

Okazaki, who posted consistent rounds of 70-70 for a total score of 140.

The prestigious 36-hole stroke-play event was open to all male amateur golfers with a GHIN (Golf Handicap & Information Network) index of 3.0 or less.

The tournament was conducted by the Sacramento Golf Council, which oversees all city and county amateur golf championships.

Chuck Honeycutt served as tournament chair, with assistance from Scott Bland.

For more information about upcoming events, visit sacgolfcouncil.org. ★

Republic FC Signs 2024 Breakout Striker Khorl Bennett



Sacramento Republic FC's newest forward, Khorl Bennett. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Republic FC

Sacramento Republic FC News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Republic FC announced on July 17 that the club has signed forward Khorl Bennett. He will be added to the team's roster, pending league and federation approval. Per club policy, the terms of the contract were not disclosed.

"Khorl is an important addition for us at this stage in the season to bolster our front line," said Republic FC President and General Manager Todd Dunivant. "He brings strength, physicality and tenacity in front of goal

and we are looking forward to quickly integrating him into our group."

The 27-year-old was a breakout star in 2024. He led the Western Conference with 15 goals to help Las Vegas Lights make their first post-season appearance in club history. Bennett helped the team with six goals and an assist in June 2024, culminating in his selection as Player of the Month. He earned a second Player of the Month nomination in August with a four-game scoring streak. In the playoffs, Bennett netted the game-winning goal in Las Vegas' upset over first-place New Mexico United to punch its ticket to the Western Conference Final.

Bennett's play was recognized beyond the league and in November, earned his first call up to the Jamaican National Team for the Concacaf Nations League Quarterfinals. Earlier this year, Las Vegas announced that he had been transferred to Kuwait Premier League club Al-Nasr SC for

a record fee, where he added one goal and two assists in eight appearances.

Bennett made his professional debut in 2022 for USL League One club Charlotte Independence and across two seasons scored 18 goals and added three assists in 64 appearances. Bennett recorded his first career hat trick on July 28, 2022 and was later named USL League One Player of the Month. The Jacks reached the postseason in both years Bennett was there and in 2023 made its first appearance in the USL League One Final.

Originally from Saint Andrew, Jamaica, Bennett first came to the U.S. to play collegiately at Northeastern University and in three years made 44 total appearances with five goals and three assists. For his senior year, Bennett transferred to Radford University where he started in 15 of 16 games and added three goals and one assist to reach the Big South Conference Semifinals. ★