



# RIVER VALLEY TIMES

41ST YEAR • ISSUE 18

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SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

**SEE INSIDE**

**FOUR NINERS COMPETE AT WOODBRIDGE**



PAGE 2

**IN NEED OF HELP IN THE FRONT COURT**



PAGE 8

**DOES GOD HEAR ME NOW?**



**BY NORRIS BURKES**

PAGE 6

## Board Votes 3-2 to Begin Water Moratorium Process



More than 40 people attend a Rancho Murieta Community Services District Board meeting on Sept. 17 to discuss a possible water moratorium. Resident Jim Farrell is at the podium.

**Story and photos by Gail Bullen**  
*River Valley Times Reporter*

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - After a sometimes heated discussion, the Rancho Murieta Community Services District board voted 3-2 on Sept. 17 to begin the process of enacting a water moratorium on new development. More than 40 people attended the meeting.

Board President John Merchant and Directors Linda Butler and Bill Gere

supported the move, while Directors Randy Jenco and Tim Maybee opposed it. District Counsel Patrick Enright said state law requires the board to make formal findings before a moratorium can be imposed, including that "ordinary demands cannot be met without depleting the water supply to the point where it becomes insufficient for human consumption, sanitation and fire protection."

He said those findings must be based on collected

*Continued on page 7*



Jeff Burkheimer warns that a moratorium will trigger a multi-million-dollar lawsuit that the district will lose and that residents will ultimately pay for through higher rates.

## Wilder Named Interim General Manager at CSD



Amelia Wilder is assuming a new role as the interim general manager for the Rancho Murieta Community Services District after six years of service as the district secretary.

**Story and photo by Gail Bullen**  
*River Valley Times Reporter*

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - In July 2019, Amelia Wilder joined the Rancho Murieta Community Services District through a temporary agency for a two-to-four-week assignment. Six months later, following the retirement of the long-time secretary, the board appointed her as district secretary.

Fast forward six years to the Sept. 17 board meeting. That's when Board President John Merchant announced that Wilder had been appointed as the interim general manager, although he didn't go into detail.

Wilder said she was overjoyed by her selection to the new position.

"I hope to use the knowledge I have gained about the district during my tenure as the district secretary to bring equitable solutions to the challenges that face our community," she said. "I will particularly focus on building reserves so the infrastructure can be replaced without undue burden to the residents."

The district has technically been without a general manager since the board placed Mimi Morris on leave on Jan. 6. However, general manager duties, including overseeing staff and responding to emergencies, have been assumed by a Board Ad Hoc Committee since then. Morris agreed to resign in May as part of a \$375,000 settlement with the district, resolving her government claim that alleged retaliation, discrimination and harassment.

According to the temporary organization chart presented by Merchant at the Sept. 17 meeting, along

*Continued on page 9*

## Music Mike Draws Crowd to Free Concert



Music Mike has kids singing, dancing and laughing at Lake Clementia Amphitheater on Sept. 21. The Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta hosted the free family concert.

**Story and photos by Gail Bullen**  
*River Valley Times Reporter*

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - A long-time favorite in Rancho Murieta, Music Mike delighted children with an interactive concert at Lake Clementia Amphitheater on Sept. 21.

The Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta sponsored the free event, which drew 197 kids, parents and

grandparents. About 50 youngsters, ages 2 to 10, crowded onto the dance floor in front of Music Mike, while adults and babies looked on from the hillside.

Music Mike strummed his guitar, tooted his kazoo and led the kids through songs, stories and plenty of laughs.

At his cue, children twirled scarves, danced with abandon, rolled down the hill like hot dog rolls,

skipped around the amphitheater and lined up for close encounters with the limbo stick.

Music Mike mixed classics like "Skidamarink," "Skip to My Lou," "Ring Around the Rosie" and "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," often with a playful twist on the lyrics.

He also slipped in tunes parents knew well - including "Proud Mary," "Jambalaya" and "You Are My

*Continued on page 12*

# Four Niners Compete at Woodbridge

By Nancy Clevenger

**WOODBIDGE, CA (MPG)** - Four Rancho Murieta Country Club Niners visited Woodbridge Golf and Country Club at the end of August for a yearly Tournament of Champions.

Joanna Graf (Championship level), Alison Gomez (Flight One), MaryLou Dininger (Flight Two) and Cathleen Reibe (Flight Three) represented Rancho Murieta at this event.

To represent Rancho Murieta, the ladies competed in a Niner two-day competition at the home course. Those with the best scores in each of the four divisions for the two days of play went on to the district-wide tournament.

The August day lent

## GOLF SCORES

itself to good golf with pristine course conditions and great weather. The atmosphere set by the Woodbridge ladies was inviting and filled with grace.

After the golfing event, players were treated to a taco luncheon with the most delicious lemon bars for dessert.

Twenty-six different golf clubs were represented at the Tournament of Champions, including the four ladies from Rancho Murieta.

Three of the four ladies returned home with trophies by placing in their respective flights.

Joanna Graf played in

the Championship flight. Her play was consistent and even, scoring a gross 47. This earned her fourth place in her level against the 25 other women.

Flight One was represented by Rancho Murieta's Alison Gomez. Gomez scored a gross 48, net 36.

This consistent and focused play earned her the position of second place in her flight.

Rancho Murieta's MaryLou Dininger played in flight two. Her steady play netted her a score of 37, resulting in a fifth-place win.

Overall, Rancho Murieta was well-represented in



Tournament of Champion players are Joanna Graf, left, Championship Flight; Alison Gomez, Flight One; and MaryLou Dininger, Flight Two. Not pictured: Cathleen Reibe. Photo courtesy of Nancy Clevenger

the Northern California Women's Nine Hole Golf Association event. Any

woman interested in joining the Niners Golf Group can contact Cathy Niley

at CJNiley@gmail.com or visit ranchomurieta.com.



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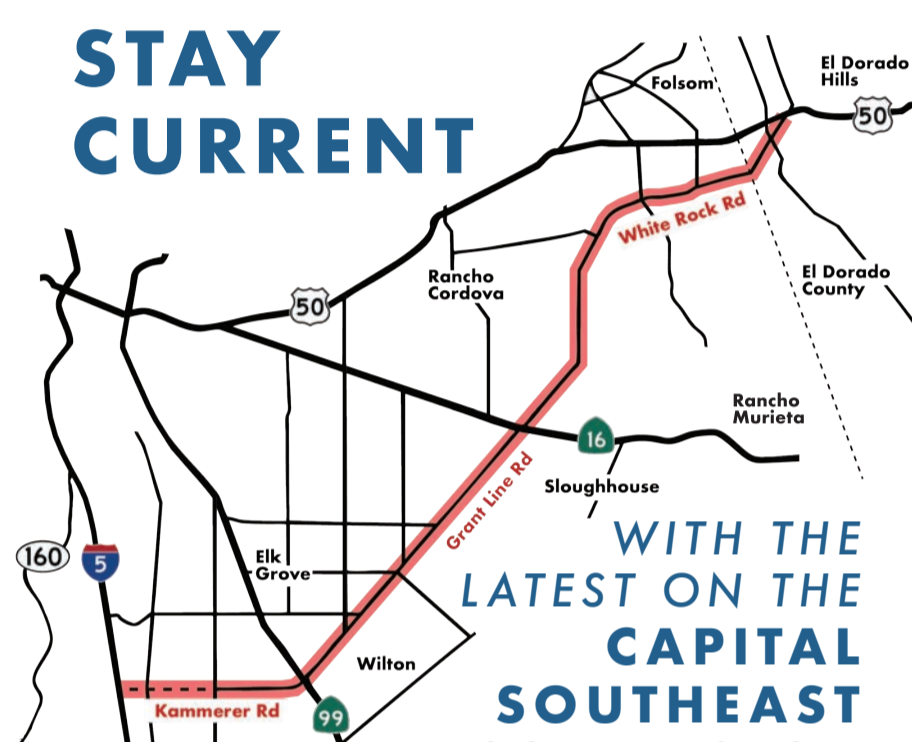
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# Association Discusses E-Bikes, HOA Fines

Story and photo by Gail Bullen River Valley Times Reporter

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - A proposed rule to regulate e-bikes and state legislation affecting the ability of associations to levy fines were among the topics discussed when the Rancho Murieta Association met on Sept. 16.

The board also scheduled a budget workshop for Oct. 14 to discuss a 2025 budget and dues increase, beginning with a proposed \$5, or 3%, hike in monthly dues to cover rising operational costs. Directors will also consider proposals to add staff and to improve community security with new fencing and gate upgrades, estimated to cost between \$263,673 and \$486,724.

In other business, the board formed an ad hoc committee to begin the search for a new general manager to replace Rod Hart, who will retire early next year. The board voted 6-0 to appoint Director Scott Adams as chair and authorized him to select the remaining committee members.

Board President Patrick O'Hern opened the meeting by welcoming the board's newest director, Ernie Cowles.

"I'm not going to go into his résumé or his curriculum vitae, but I can tell you he is an extremely well-educated person," O'Hern said.

Cowles said he looked forward to working with the board and staff. He also thanked the half-dozen audience members.

"It's great that the

community is involved," he said.

The board appointed Cowles to a vacant seat during a special meeting on Sept. 3. The vacancy was created by the resignation of Danny Carrillo in August.

## E-Bikes

Adams, who chairs the Governing Documents Committee, said he was pleased that nearly 50 residents responded to a request for comments on a proposed rule to regulate e-bikes, describing most of the responses as thoughtful and supportive. He said the community generally supports speed restrictions, age restrictions, helmet requirements and increased fines for bad behavior.

The most significant concern was the prohibition of e-bikes on dirt trails. Adams said the committee was concerned about heavier bikes, faster speeds, especially on uphill sections, and potential trail damage. Others wondered if the rules would be enforceable. Some wanted the bikes banned completely.

Audience member Robert Guerin expressed concern about the prohibition of earbuds. He said he uses his earbuds as hearing aids. Adams said they could write an exception for medical devices.

Adams said that after the committee discusses the comments, he will draft a rule for board review.

## HOA Fines

After discussion, the board voted to refer a new state law to the Governing Documents Committee for review and to determine how to amend RMA's non-architectural rules to



Audience member Robert Guerin emphasizes the importance of wearing a helmet while riding an e-bike during the Rancho Murieta Association board meeting on Sept. 16.

comply. Assembly Bill 130, which took effect July 1, caps the fine schedule for any homeowners association at \$100. The only exception is when a rule violation may cause an adverse health or safety impact on a common area or a member's property.

General Manager Rod Hart said speeding would fall under that exception.

"We've had extremes of 80 mph on the parkway, and it is pretty common to have 50 mph," he said. "It is our fiduciary duty to make sure that we keep our community safe, and \$100 fines do not change habits."

Other rules that could be affected include stop-sign violations, other traffic offenses and the dangerous use of fireworks.

Adams warned that compliance will be costly.

"This is a poorly written law. There is a lot that they leave open. It is going to cause much more legal fees over time," he said. "It has been highly criticized in the press by HOA attorneys."

The board packet included an FAQ sheet on the bill. The attorney author noted that

the language amending two sections of the civil code was added just days before enactment, "catching everyone by surprise." The bill did not go through the normal legislative process or allow for public comment. It also prohibits charging late fees or interest on fines, according to the fact sheet.

## Budget Workshop

Hart told the directors that they needed to schedule a budget workshop to discuss the draft 2026 budget proposed by staff, as well as some additional requests from board committees. After some discussion, they settled on Oct. 14 at 6 p.m.

Hart said the 2026 budget would increase by \$145,859 due to factors that RMA can't control, such as increases in wages and benefits, utility costs and increased insurance expenses. This would increase the monthly dues from \$165.50 to \$170 per lot, representing a 3% increase of \$5. The total project budget would be just over \$5 million.

The board will review the addition of several items at the workshop,

including a part-time maintenance employee for \$30,000, a \$1.03 dues increase, and the hiring of a third full-time compliance officer for \$86,000, which would result in a \$2.95 dues increase.

The largest request up for review comes from the Perimeter Security Ad Hoc Committee, chaired by Directors Chris Childs and Tom Reimers.

Their proposal to increase perimeter security carries an estimated cost of \$486,734, including \$431,725 for fencing using outside labor, \$40,000 for new gate controllers and \$15,000 for pedestrian gates. Using in-house labor for the fencing would reduce the cost to \$263,697. The respective dues increase would be \$16.70 or \$9.05.

## Other Business

Two residents of The Retreats subdivision, Steve Detrick and Kasey Cronavist, attended the board meeting and introduced themselves as newly elected members of the Rancho North Association, which is separate from RMA. Although they pay RMA dues in addition to

their own association's fees, they are not RMA members. Both said they hope to develop a working relationship with RMA.

Audience member Tom Shewchuk informed the board that two long-time country club members are resigning from the club due to gate-access issues. Since RMA deactivated their barcodes because they live outside the community, the women - both in their 60s - have become frustrated with having to stop at the gate and dealing with construction traffic and long lines.

Board President Patrick O'Hern referred Shewchuk to Hart for more information about the barcode policy.

Hart reported that insurance costs for 2025-26 will increase by 7%, amounting to \$10,575. The board retroactively approved the total premium of \$161,310 and also authorized \$4,415 for a review of the association's 2025 financial statements.

The board's next meetings are scheduled for Oct. 14 at 6 p.m. for the budget workshop and Oct. 21 at 6:30 p.m. for the regular monthly meeting. ★

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# Organization, Drinking Water, 'Frankenstein' are CSD Topics

By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times  
Reporter

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - While a proposed water moratorium drew a full house at the Rancho Murieta Community Services District board meeting on Sept. 17, directors also took up several other matters, most of them after the crowd left. (See separate story on the moratorium.)

Two topics involved maintaining the district's operations in the absence of a permanent general manager. Another dealt with minor odor and taste issues in the drinking water, and a fourth concerned a "Frankenstein" software problem that slowed follow-up work on an audit.

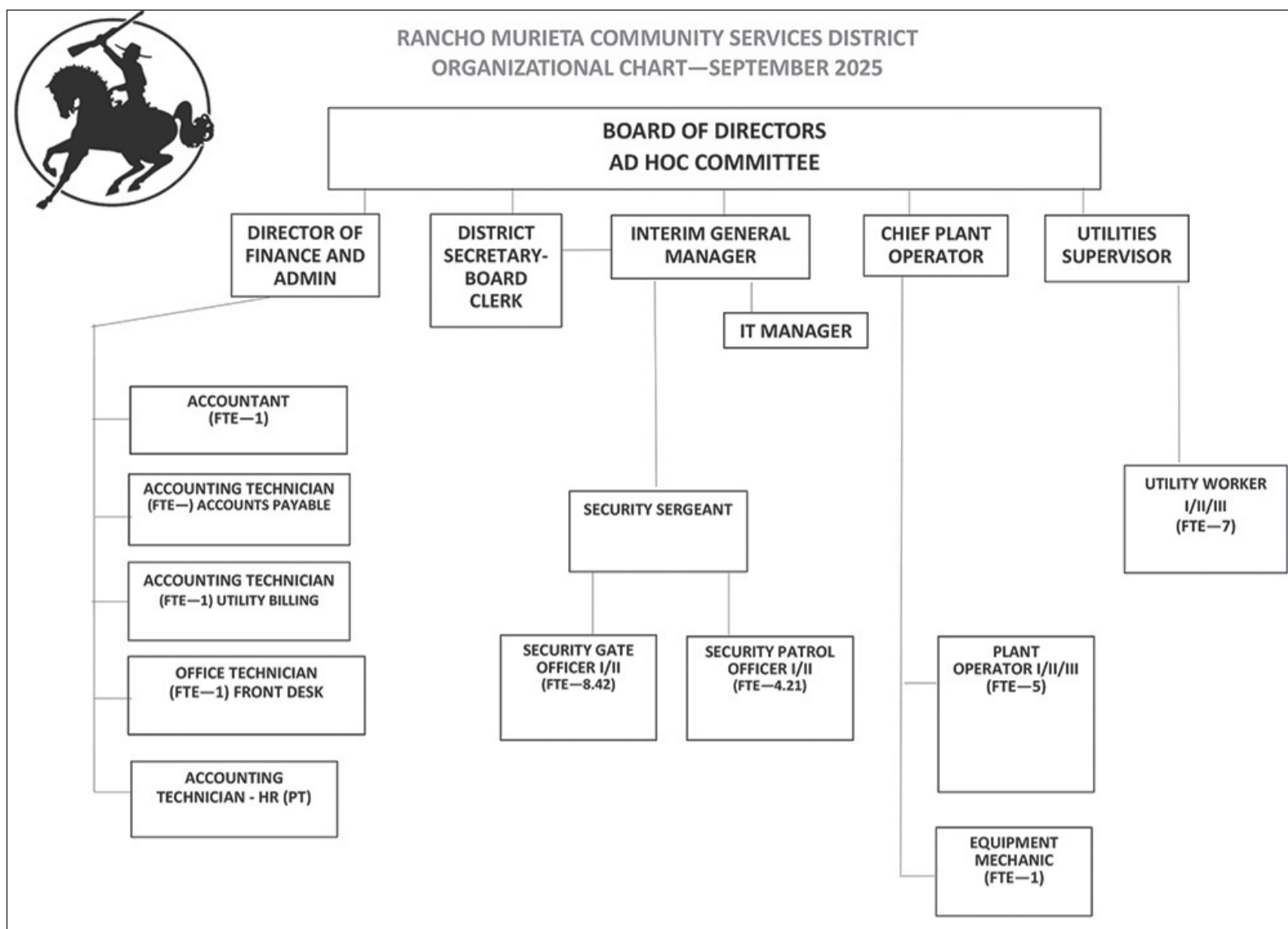
## Organizational Changes

Early in the meeting, Board President John Merchant announced that the board had appointed Amelia Wilder as interim general manager but offered no details. Wilder has served as district secretary since January 2020. (See separate profile.)

Merchant also presented a temporary organizational chart designed to maintain continuity and oversight until a permanent general manager is hired. The chart reflects Wilder's promotion, the creation of an interim board secretary position and adjustments following Operations Manager Eric Houston's leave of absence, which began Sept. 1 for undisclosed reasons.

At the top of the organizational chart is a Board of Directors Ad Hoc Committee that was formed to provide direction to staff and keep operations running smoothly after former General Manager Mimi Morris was placed on leave on Jan. 6. The committee initially included then-Board President Steve Booth and Vice President John Merchant. After Booth stepped down, Merchant continued as the sole member with board approval.

At the September meeting, Merchant said Director Bill Gere had joined him as the second member of the ad hoc committee, which will oversee four managers on "equal footing." The four are Cecilia Min, director of Finance and Administration; Travis Bohannon, chief Plant operator; Corey



A temporary organization chart shows how the Rancho Murieta Community Services District is being kept operational. Board President John Merchant and Director Bill Gere serve on the Board Ad Hoc Committee. Image courtesy of Rancho Murieta Community Services District

Carskaddon, Utilities supervisor; and Amelia Wilder, interim general manager.

Wilder now supervises the security staff, the IT manager and the interim board secretary, Dyanne Fleet.

When audience member Tom Shewchuk asked if the board planned to hire a new general manager, Merchant replied, "Legally, we haven't been without a general manager, and let's leave it at that."

Moments later, Merchant told Shewchuk he wanted to focus on the interim approach.

"We are not going to go forever without a general manager, but we have four people in the top line I feel pretty good about," he said. "I'd like to give it an opportunity to settle down and decide what we really want to do and what we really want to look for in the next hire that we make."

Later in the meeting, Wilder reminded the board about the temporary nature of ad hoc committees. After some discussion over the technicalities, directors agreed to hold a short special meeting at 11 a.m. Sept. 29 to effectively create a new ad hoc committee, define its scope and officially appoint Merchant

and Gere.

## Drinking Water

As part of his operations report, Chief Plant Operator Travis Bohannon addressed recent complaints about odors and tastes in the drinking water.

"This is only an esthetic issue, not a water quality issue," he stressed.

Bohannon said the problem stems from byproducts created by algae when hot weather warms the water.

"The district is prone to this due to how we store our water," he said.

The only way to remove the byproducts is to feed powdered activated carbon into the treatment process: a step that can only be done at the older conventional water plant, since charcoal would damage the membranes in the newer plant. To mitigate the issue, the district has been producing more water from Plant 2 and blending it with water from Plant 1.

He added that residents can minimize the problem by cooling their water before drinking.

Another solution also is in sight.

"Once the temperatures cool down, the issue will go away," he said.

To reduce algae, Bohannon is resuming annual mechanical harvesting of aquatic

vegetation along the Chesbro Reservoir shoreline and will recommend harvesting at Calero Reservoir every few years.

As for the taste and odor issue, Bohannon jokingly added that the ultimate solution would be to replace Plant 1 with a second conventional plant.

## Frankenstein

In addition to her detailed report on finances and overdue audits, Finance Director Cecilia Min briefed the board on what she, staff and a Great Plains software consultant have dubbed "Project Frankenstein."

The goal, she explained, is to get the district's accounting system to fully function with modules - "arms and legs," as she put it - that had not been used before.

But they weren't getting a heartbeat.

"Frankenstein should be waking up," she said.

Min said they recently discovered the main reason for the lack of response was the outdated server hosting Great Plains. IT Manager Andy Lee told the directors that the system had been pieced together over many years by different consultants, resulting in missing licenses, broken update services and frequent errors. He has

obtained a replacement server and is repairing the update functions.

On another topic, Min showed the board a new format for financial statements, developed from lessons in the last audit. She said the format will be used for the next three audits.

## Other Business

Director Linda Butler, chair of the Security Committee, reported that one new patrol officer has been hired and another candidate is in the background process. The district is budgeted for four patrol officers, so staffing is nearly complete. For gate officers, the district is authorized for seven full-time and eight part-time positions but is currently operating with only four part-time staff members.

Although directors did not discuss it, the board packet included a letter from Brad Beer, owner of Rancho Murieta Airport. Beer said he had received a water shutoff notice from Wilder for nonpayment of fees. Beer wrote that while he always has remained current on water, sewage and drainage charges, he has withheld security dues due to a longstanding dispute with the district: one he says has gone unresolved because of a lack of

response from district staff. He warned that cutting off the airport's water would also shut down nearby hydrants, creating a public safety risk.

Wilder told the board she intended to resolve the issue with Beer.

IT Manager Andy Lee reported steady progress on infrastructure upgrades and said he has also been assisting staff with "Project Frankenstein."

In other business, the board adopted an ordinance updating the district's purchasing and bidding rules and spending limits.

Directors also approved a temporary 5% pay increase for the chief plant operator and utilities supervisor, citing the extra duties they have taken on during the operations manager's absence.

The next board meetings will be at 11 a.m. Sept. 29 for the Ad Hoc Committee and 5 pm. Oct. 15 for the monthly meeting. The next Improvements Committee meeting, scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Oct. 2, will consider several topics of note, including water and sewer will-serve letters issued to the entitled subdivisions and a requirement that the developer of the Residences subdivision build a third water tank. ★

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# Applause for Literary Award Winners

By Kimberly A. Edwards

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Seven awardees will be recognized at the “100 Years of Writing Excellence in Sacramento” Gala on Oct. 18, when the California Writers Club Sacramento hits its century mark and celebrates at North Ridge Country Club in Fair Oaks.

The award recipients are 916 Ink, Capital Storytelling, Jan Haag, Ginger Rutland, Sacramento Poetry Center, Sacramento Press Club and Under the Gum Tree.

While recognizing that literary service abounds in our area, a Blue Ribbon Panel identified the above for nurturing the development of talent and appreciation for the written word and contributing to a larger purpose influencing Sacramento’s literary reach in children and adults.

The Oct. 18 Centennial will bring writers, reporters and historians together to learn about early writing and publishing in Sacramento. Partners and friends include the Crocker Art Museum, the California State Library, the Center for Sacramento History and the Sacramento Public Library

Keynote speaker and Pulitzer Prize winner Jack Ohman will talk about “At Wit’s End.”

A star-studded line-up featuring Rich Ehisen of Capitol Weekly, literary agent Sandra Proudman, Sacramento journalist at local CBS affiliate Alison Linton, Pushcart Prize nominee Carol Lynn Stevenson Grellas, cultural historian Maryellen Burns and documentary filmmaker Al González will entertain.

Kiyo Sato, 102 and the William Saroyan International Writing Award winner for “Dandelion



Keynote Speaker Jack Ohman will challenge attendees with his interpretation of “At Wit’s End.” California Writers Club of Sacramento



Kiyo Sato, 102 and the William Saroyan International Writing Award winner for “Dandelion through the Crack” (renamed “Kiyo’s Story”) will be at the gala. Sato’s book is on display at the Smithsonian Institute. California Writers Club of Sacramento

through the Crack” (renamed “Kiyo’s Story”) will attend. Her book is on display at the Smithsonian Institute. Attendees can bring along a copy of her book if they want an autograph.

Rare books from early California Writers Club members will be displayed at the gala. Many books were made into movies or popular TV series. One movie was nominated for an Academy Award. Also displayed will be a 1913 woodcut of the club logo designed by University of California, Berkeley professor Perham Nahl, nephew of Charles Christian Nahl, whose work hangs in the Crocker Art Museum.

The celebration includes a buffet, the Jazz Band “Syncopating Sea-Monkeys” of River City High School, and a no-host bar, including a Jack London “Glass in Hand.”

The California Writers Club is a nonprofit organization. For information on the event, buying tickets or sponsoring this literary event, visit online

sacramentowriters.org.  
**2025 Greater Sacramento Literary Awardees**

916 Ink is a creative writing and literacy nonprofit organization since 2010 that provides workshops and tutoring to transform youth into strong readers, confident communicators and published authors. Programs increase literacy skills, improve vocabulary, teach empathy, positively impact social and emotional learning, and expand communication skills. Partnerships are with school sites and community groups serving marginalized students, including economically-disadvantaged, system-impacted youth and English Language Learners. 916 Ink has transformed more than 6,000 youth into authors in 300-plus professionally published anthologies.

Capital Storytelling is an arts education organization in Sacramento that empowers individuals to share their personal stories and, in doing so, to foster connection, empathy and compassion across race,

gender, religion, abilities, orientation and political affiliations. This is accomplished through classes and workshops and special programs, including an Immigrant Storytelling Program, which empowers first- and second-generation immigrants to share their stories, and a Story Ambassador Program, which trains leaders to lead storytelling workshops.

Jan Haag was a writing professor at Sacramento City College and journalism department chair, advising the student newspaper, literary journal and nonfiction magazine. Before that, she was a copy editor and feature writer for the Sacramento Bee, covered the capitol for United Press International and was editor of Sacramento Magazine. Haag has had many poems, essays and fiction published in journals and anthologies. Her poetry collection, “Companion Spirit,” is comprised of poems about her late husband. She is co-publisher of a Sacramento publishing company, River Rock Books. She

publishes daily poems on her website (janishaag.com) and is working on a poetry collection and a novel set in Sacramento in the 1950s and 1970s. She hosts writing groups, including a monthly Writing as Healing group in Elk Grove.

Ginger Rutland spent 17 years as a reporter with KCRA TV in Sacramento and then with KRON TV in San Francisco as that station’s capitol bureau reporter. She earned a local Emmy at KRON for her documentary, “Showdown at Diablo,” about the controversy surrounding the nuclear power plant’s building and commissioning at Diablo Canyon in San Luis Obispo County. Rutland wrote and produced a play, “When We Were Colored, A Mother’s Story,” adapted from her mother, Eva Rutland’s, memoir. The play is about a middle-class Black family’s journey from the segregated south before World War II to post-war California, through the Civil Rights era and Black Power Movement to the

racially-blended families of today.

The Sacramento Poetry Center, founded in 1979, offers readings, workshops, writers’ conferences, publications and a lending library. “Landing Signals, released on Oct. 26, 1986, was the first major anthology (print and audio) of Sacramento poets. The center’s annual writers’ conferences and Poetry Month celebrations have featured some of today’s leading poets, including Pulitzer Prize winners Gary Snyder and Philip Levine, former U.S. Poets Laureate Juan Filipe Herrera and Robert Hass.

The Sacramento Press Club, established in 1961, is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to supporting the next generation of journalists through scholarships for college students. The scholarship program is paid for through member donations and ticket sales to regular events with California and national newsmakers. The Sacramento Press Club annually awards nearly \$60,000 in scholarships to a proudly diverse array of students.

Under the Gum Tree is a reader-supported, quarterly literary arts magazine publishing creative nonfiction and visual art. It champions the mantra of telling stories without shame since 2011. The mission is sharing stories that remind readers of shared humanity. Each issue includes seven to 10 original nonfiction stories and personal essays, one photo essay and one cover artist whose work is featured throughout the interior pages. The magazine nominates for the Pushcart Prize every year and essays published have been listed as notable in the Best American Essays. ★



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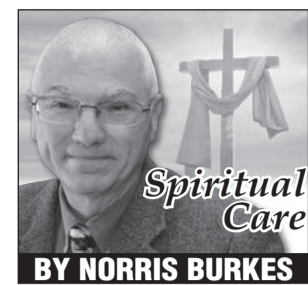
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- Honor Thy Elders – Caryl Abshire
- KDgraphics
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*We sincerely hope we have not forgotten anyone and apologize if we have omitted your name!*

# Does God Hear Me Now?



It had been one of those weeks where the inconsistencies of my faith had been apparent to more than just myself. It was one of those weeks where I was longing to simply be the same person I had been the previous week.

So, as my grandson dug tunnels in the sand and my wife kicked at the cold waves, I walked alone up the rocky beach, explaining to God my ground rules of our upcoming conversation.

“I just need a moment to double check stuff with you – a moment to make sure you’re still covering my back.

“So, I thought I’d say ‘howdy’ here at the beach. I know that you make every day special, but I’m needing this day to be extra.”

There, on the water’s edge, I found an isolated rock and quickly breached its top. Sitting atop the rock with my soul exposed, I began scanning the waves for some kind of epiphany.

As I searched, the cold wind pounded my heart like a burglar’s hammer working to unlock a treasure, so I hid my face beneath my sweatshirt’s hood.

From this rock, I hoped to find a still place, a space where I could both hide and be exposed, see and be seen – an abode high enough to make my prayer heard but low enough to nurture humility.

My prayer began: Lord, find what I’ve hidden.

Touch what I’ve hurt

Open what I’ve closed.

Teach what I wouldn’t learn.

Fill the places I’ve emptied.

And empty what

consumes me.

Release what I’ve captured.

Hold what escapes me

Invade what I defend.

And defend what I’ve surrounded.

Amen

Opening my eyes, I saw my grandson writing messages in the sand, but the finicky waves quickly rinsed them away, like an Etch-a-Sketch turned upside down.

On the horizon, I watched the pacific swallow the setting sun. “Wow! God really does own beachfront property!”

As I made my way back to my family, I inched around a deep rocky tide-pool and fell – hard. Blood oozed from my shins and elbows, but I still managed to get up to check if anyone was looking.

Becky came running over with my grandson.

The next day, bandaged, but ambulatory, I heard God’s voice again.

“See what I did there, son.

“I met you on the top of the rocks where I heard your praises.

“But I also fall with you to the bottom of those rocks.

“I always hear you perfectly, even when you’ve lost reception on your end.

“I’m with you always and I will never leave you.”

My reception was clear again.

*Email me with questions or comment at [comment@thechaplain.net](mailto:comment@thechaplain.net).*

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*★*

# COMMUNITY BRIEFS

## Sign Up for Summerfest Trivia Night, Cornhole Tourney

The 25th annual Summerfest carnival will take place at Stonehouse Park on Friday, Oct. 3 and Saturday, Oct. 4. The nonprofit is accepting sign-ups for Trivia Night on Friday and the Cornhole Tournament on Saturday at [summerfest-ranchomurieta.org](http://summerfest-ranchomurieta.org).

Advance tickets also can be purchased on the website. Tickets cost \$35 per day, with a \$20 discount when purchasing four tickets.

At the gate, tickets will be \$40. Children 4 and younger will be admitted free. The event is only open to community residents and their guests. A schedule of Summerfest events will be published in the Oct. 10 issue of the River Valley Times.

## Corvette Club Slates Poker Run

The Rancho Murieta Corvette Club will host a Poker Run on Oct. 12 to raise funds for its annual Thanksgiving Dinner project, benefiting families in the River Valley area of South Sacramento County. Over the years, the club’s effort has grown from donating turkeys to the Sacramento Food Bank to

providing complete holiday dinners to families in need within the local community. This year’s Poker Run is dedicated to Jerry McDonald, a past president and longtime member of the club, who passed away in 2024.

A Poker Run is a driving event in which participants follow a predetermined scenic route, stopping at five designated locations to collect playing cards. The goal is to assemble the best poker hand and win prizes. This year’s route winds through foothill and lower Sierra roads and concludes at Moonraker Millhouse Brewery in Cameron Park for lunch and prize distribution. Written directions will be provided to help participants stay on course. The drive takes approximately 90 minutes.

The event is open to all vehicles, not just Corvettes; sports cars, sport sedans, SUVs, and trucks are all welcome. The entry fee is \$30, which includes two poker hands: one for the driver and one for the navigator. Entries are due by Oct. 3. To participate, download the entry form at [ranchomurieta.corvettes.com](http://ranchomurieta.corvettes.com). Complete the form and mail it with a check made out to Rancho Murieta Corvettes to the address provided.

## Caregiver Support Group to Meet Oct. 1

If you find yourself in a situation of caregiving for a loved one, it can be rather perplexing. Those attending the Rancho Murieta Caregiver Support Group are helpful to each other. Receive helpful information and take some respite time for yourself. Privacy is strictly observed.

The group meets the first Wednesday of the month. The next meeting will be at 2:30 p.m. Oct. 1 at the Rancho Murieta Association Building. If you have any questions, contact Nan at 916-354-2281.

## Improvements Committee to Discuss Third Water Tank

Rancho Murieta Community Services District’s Improvements Committee will meet at 7:30 a.m. Oct. 2, with key items including water and sewer will-serve letters for entitled subdivisions and a proposed requirement that the Residences developer build a third water tank.

To allow extra discussion, staff moved the start time up by 30 minutes and delayed the Security and Communications committee meetings by several hours. ★



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# Clean California Soars Past Major Milestone

**California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) News Release**

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - More than 136,000 garbage trucks worth of litter has been cleared from state highways and communities in the four years of Gov. Gavin Newsom's Clean California effort.

That Sept. 4 announcement comes after the governor convened a statewide task force to prioritize and remove encampments and bring services and shelter to individuals experiencing homelessness along state rights-of-way in California's 10 largest cities.

Emerging as one of the most successful environmental initiatives brought forward by Newsom, the \$1.2-billion Clean California effort has provided a visible and lasting impact on communities throughout the state, while also supporting long-term goals aimed at climate resiliency, economic equity and public safety.

Program highlights include maintenance crews dedicated to cleaning state highways and public rights of way; 650 free dump



What was once a plain concrete wall along State Route 99 has been transformed into a vibrant community landmark, where Clean California funding supported the creation of colorful murals that now welcome residents and travelers into Sacramento. Photo courtesy of Caltrans

days hosted in urban and rural communities; 639 pieces of art installed on the highways; 72,000 community clean-up volunteers (according to a survey from Keep America Beautiful); 314 beautification projects, including the development of new parks, public art and improvements at several transit stations.

Of these, 191 projects have been completed and 18,000 job opportunities created.

So far, 110 communities have pledged to become a designated Clean California Community

by agreeing to complete specific criteria that demonstrate long-term commitments to zero litter, community beautification and environmental enhancement. Thirty communities have achieved full designation status.

"Clean California has become an overwhelming success and a model our state can continue to build on. Yes, we've removed hundreds of thousands of garbage trucks worth of trash from our roads and highways," Newsom said, "but it's more than that; we've invested in

communities all across our state with public art projects and parks, creating thousands of jobs and lifting up countless neighborhoods in need."

Caltrans District 3 completed the \$5.7-million State Route 99 Beautification and Safety Improvement Project in Sacramento. This project improves and upgrades a nine-mile stretch of State Route 99 between the Broadway Undercrossing and the Stockton Boulevard Overcrossing.

Key project features include rehabilitation,

illumination and beautification of four pedestrian overcrossings; community-designed steel art panels installed on newly painted sound walls at five locations; new fencing, landscaping, slope paving, and curbs to improve drainage and safety; beautiful mosaic tile art panels at on- and off-ramps visible to pedestrians, cyclists and motorists; and two large murals sponsored by Caltrans at 2nd Avenue and 21st Avenue, bringing vibrant color and community identity to the corridor. The project was made

possible thanks to partnerships with the City of Sacramento, Vietnamese American Community of Sacramento, Oak Park Neighborhood Association, Sierra Curtis Park Neighborhood Association, Valley Hi Neighborhood Association/Mesa Grande Neighborhood Association and the Franklin Neighborhood Development Corporation.

Together, these partners turned a vision into reality in just over 19 months, delivering lasting safety improvements and a strong sense of community pride for Sacramento residents.

"This project shows the power of collaboration between Caltrans, the City of Sacramento and neighborhood groups. By working together, we turned a gray corridor into a welcoming gateway filled with art, color and community identity," Caltrans District 3 Director Sergio Aceves said. "These improvements not only enhance safety and drainage but also create spaces Sacramento residents can feel proud of every day."

To learn more about how California is creating a brighter future by building more, faster, for all, visit [build.ca.gov](http://build.ca.gov). ★

# Board Votes 3-2 to Begin Water Moratorium Process

Continued from page 1

data and the Integrated Water Master Plan and addressed in one or more public hearings. Enright also stressed that the board will need to determine how to treat the roughly 300 subdivision lots that already hold will-serve letters.

Supporters of a moratorium argued the community needs time to identify a secondary water source, possibly new wells or emergency use of Clementia Lake, and determine how costs will be shared. They said that Rancho Murieta lacks sufficient water to sustain future development and could potentially run out of water during a drought. Opponents countered that a moratorium would invite costly lawsuits and harm property values, and they questioned whether there is any evidence of a shortage.

## Moratorium History

The moratorium debate first surfaced at the July 17, 2024, board meeting after then-Director Steve Booth asked to place an action item on the agenda to declare a water emergency until the community's water capacity could be evaluated. Although the board discussed the proposal, it did not take any action. District counsel Patrick Enright noted that the district "isn't quite there yet" and pointed to other complicating factors.

Several days later, Merchant – then-vice president of Save Our Lakes & Open Spaces and not yet on the board – launched the moratorium petition drive. SOLOS collected 2,025 signatures and presented them to the board in December, but directors did not take action until the Sept. 17 meeting.

## Audience Voices

The sharpest criticism of a moratorium came from resident Jeff Burkheimer, who runs Lodi Electric Utility and recently purchased a custom lot in the Residences

subdivision. Drawing on his government experience, he warned that moving forward without strong legal grounds could trigger lawsuits, damage the district's bond rating and force significant rate hikes.

"The only question is, do you get us all sued into oblivion on the way there, or did you act like public officials and do your homework and do the right thing?" he said. "I've never seen such a goddamn circus in my life. This isn't about whether you're pro-development or not."

Former board member Booth supported beginning the moratorium process. He said he and Butler voted against issuing will-serve letters to already entitled subdivisions a year ago "on the basis we needed to make sure we had all the facts and would have sufficient water to honor the will-serve letters."

Developer Greg Dyer, CEO of Rancho Murieta Properties, questioned the need for a moratorium. He said there is no documented shortage, pointing out that the district holds a 6,000-acre-foot diversion right but has never used more than 2,000 acre-feet in a year. He said past requests for water-rights extensions were based on slow construction, not supply problems.

"What the community really needs to do is follow the law and not go out on some sort of wild goose chase that's going to cost the district millions of dollars," Dyer said.

Resident Jim Farrell, who served on a working group that reviewed the draft Integrated Water Master Plan, said that the community has been discussing augmenting the supply for 15 years.

"So to the degree that the moratorium leverages it in that direction, I'm in total favor of it," he said. "To the degree that it's doing nothing but causing a waste of time and stopping us from resolving these other important issues, I am opposed."



Bill Gere, the newest director, casts the deciding vote, saying he supports the moratorium if it encourages residents and developers to work together.

Carol Anderson Ward, principal investor in Rancho Murieta Properties, stressed her long ties to the community. She said that without projects she helped bring in – including the Bel Air shopping center and equestrian center – Rancho Murieta "would be a hick town." She also addressed SOLOS directly: "The open spaces are not yours. They are mine. I've taken out a lot of development to keep those open spaces, and I would like some credit from you."

Ward's main argument was that more housing is needed to support aging infrastructure.

"It's going to be a whole lot more if you don't get help from new housing, new residents and new income coming into this community," she said.

Ward added that while an alternative supply and emergency backup are needed, "Who is going to pay for it? I am done," she said. "I'm asking for reason. I'm asking for help, and I want to save this community and make it what it was supposed to be when it started out 45 years ago."

Resident Tom Shewchuk, who is buying a custom lot in the Residences subdivision, urged the district to honor the will-serve letters, noting he is about to invest \$300,000. He praised the water expertise of Operations Manager

Eric Houston, currently on leave, saying Houston told him "the normal process will take care of itself and that a moratorium is not needed and adds no value."

Resident Bob Keil, the developer of the Residences subdivision, said a moratorium should only be considered if the well study now underway reveals that groundwater is not a viable option.

Resident Steve Grove asked the board to explain the benefit of declaring a moratorium, saying he had not heard a clear rationale.

## Board Debate

Before the discussion turned to the moratorium itself, Merchant reported that he had met with Sacramento County officials about the Rancho North project. He said the application now covers 561 lots and no longer includes the back-lake parcels. Rancho Murieta Properties has also not applied to develop the 39 acres next to the CSD office, he added, noting that new applications would be required for those properties.

Jenco spoke strongly against the moratorium.

"It's an initiation of let's pay a lot of legal fees: That's where this thing would head," he said. He argued the board should focus on expanding supply rather than "kicking the can down the road."

Maybe voted no but did



Former CSD Director Steven Booth voices support for starting the process to enact a moratorium.



Developer Carol Anderson Ward testifies that additional housing is needed to sustain local infrastructure and strengthen the economy.

not state a reason.

Butler called the moratorium a temporary step, saying, "It would give us the time we need to do and what we have been doing," she said.

Gere, the newest director, cast the deciding vote, saying past development often proceeded without adequate infrastructure.

"I'm all for a moratorium if it leads residents and developers to come together and talk about how to secure additional water," he said.

Merchant also highlighted the community's vulnerability during droughts, noting that the district cannot pump water from the river for 153 days each year.

"The problem magnifies if you get into a repetitive situation where the worst-case scenario is you start a second year, and now you don't have reservoirs that are completely full," he said.

Merchant closed the discussion by moving to initiate the process.

"Again, I clarify that this is to begin the process, and

when all the data and the public testimony is accumulated, we will make a decision."

## Other Issues

Two separate but related concerns surfaced. A new homebuilder at the Residences subdivision said the district refused to inspect open trenches at three construction sites or let him pay water connection fees.

Residents also raised potential conflicts of interest for board members voting on the moratorium. They pointed to Jenco's purchase of 11 acres that he could subdivide later, and the circulation of the moratorium petition by Merchant and Butler. Both matters will be addressed in future coverage.

## Next Steps

Merchant said he preferred to hold two public hearings instead of one. When Enright asked if he wanted to schedule the first for the Oct. 15 board meeting, Merchant replied that he would decide on the dates later. ★

# Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



Can it be that the NBA preseason is upon us, and less than two weeks away? Yes, Kings fans, it's nearly time to don those jerseys and break out the rally towels once again.

Much has been said about the lack of moves the Kings have made during the offseason, and the numbers don't lie.

Aside from shoring up the point guard position with the acquisition of veteran Dennis Schroder, Sacramento has only the draft to look back on as it relates to adding talent to this year's squad.

Much discussion about adding Russell Westbrook to the team, and a constant dialogue about acquiring Jonathan Kuminga from the Golden State Warriors, but as of today, neither of those transactions has been consummated.

Do the Sacramento Kings really need those two players to be successful this year? You bet they do, and Scott Perry is on the hot seat before he literally has a chance to sit down. This is the life of an NBA general manager, and it's what he signed up for.

Obviously, there are other players besides Westbrook and Kuminga that could add talent to the current squad, but for now if we can believe what we hear and read, the focus remains on these two veterans to boost our winning chances.

Fans and Pundits are looking askance at the Kings in general, so what are the glaring needs that can silence the critics and get the Sacramento Kings out of the gate on a winning note?

Front court help remains the most pressing need, and athletic big men are a tough commodity to come by, particularly this late in the off season.

Watching 6'9" Trey Lyles quietly walk out the back door after four plus years with the Kings made no sense, and loosing a proven veteran was a gut punch to those of us that appreciated what Lyles brought to the court every night. Mistake, yes, I believe it was a definite mistake, but the Kings will have to move on and try to find someone to replace those missing minutes going forward.

Isaac Jones has been waiting for an opportunity to log more minutes, and this may be the chance he has been

looking for. But even if Isaac steps up and plays well, the Sacramento Kings are still in need of front-court help.

Apparently, the pressing issue that has stalled trade talks with Jonathan Kuminga, has been the Kings reluctance to giving the Warriors a 1st round unrestricted free agent in the package.

The Kings have been willing to offer up a first round draft pick, but it comes with restrictions.

I believe the time has come to acquiesce and give the Warriors the unrestricted 1st round pick they're looking for. Kuminga is worth it, and his upside is huge.

On paper this just doesn't seem to be a difficult decision, so I'm baffled that the Kings don't see the obvious upside to pulling the switch.

The energy that the Kuminga trade would bring to Sacramento is incalculable, but rest assured it wouldn't hurt ticket sales!

As fans we can only go by what's reported and what we read, but for this writers money, do what is necessary to put the name of Jonathan Kuminga on the roster, and let's start the 2025/2026 season of a high note.

I also support adding aging veteran Russell Westbrook, largely because he has a reputation for being an excellent team player and would add a presence in the locker room that is hard to measure. In addition, Westbrook looks and plays like he did ten years ago, and whether occasionally starting or coming off the bench, there is no doubt in my mind that Westbrook will be a welcome addition that will bring with it wins.

Is there a surprise in store that no ones heard or read about? Probably, and let's hope that Scott Perry has done his homework and has just such a surprise in store for the Kings faithful.

Don't lose heart, Kings fans because it's always darkest before the dawn.

Stay tuned and get ready, because NBA basketball is right around the corner!

All the best!

Your thoughts are always welcome at [vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com](mailto:vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com). ★

# Social Security Matters

## Should I Claim Social Security Early Because it is Going Bankrupt?



By Russell Gloor,  
AMAC Certified Social  
Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** My best friend is going to be 62 and wants to begin taking her Social Security immediately. Her reasoning not to wait is the thought that it is going to run out in 10 years, so she wants as much of her money before that happens. I have paid into Social Security my entire working life (44 years and counting). What are your thoughts on taking it as soon as you are eligible? **Signed: Uncertain what to do.**

**Dear Uncertain:** Deciding when to claim Social Security is a sometimes-confusing task, but no one should ever claim SS early because they believe Social Security will go bankrupt in the near future. Social Security cannot and will not go bankrupt. What your friend may be referring to is the fact that Social Security will be facing some financial issues in 2033 unless Congress acts soon to reform the program. And they will act, but likely not until they must.

The fact is, Social Security still has about \$2.7 trillion in reserved funds which are now being

used to pay full benefits. If that Reserves balance were to be fully depleted, then Social Security would need to go to a "cash basis" (essentially, paying out in benefits only what is received in SS taxes), which would result in about a 21% cut in everyone's benefit. In other words, even if Congress neglected to reform the program, beneficiaries would still get about 79% of their monthly benefit starting in about 2033/2034. Hardly anyone believes that Congress will fail to eventually reform Social Security, and, in fact, they already know how to do that reform (they just currently lack the bipartisanship to accomplish it). But neglecting reform would amount to political suicide for all members of Congress, which is extremely unlikely to happen.

Here at the AMAC Foundation, we are confident that Congress will soon address Social Security's future financial dilemma, and we have been working on potential solutions. We have, for several years, been providing these suggestions to various members of Congress, and those members are now considering our proposals. Thus, we do not suggest making a Social Security claiming decision based on fear of the program going bankrupt. That fear is unfounded. Instead, we suggest that everyone decide when to claim based upon their individual personal situation,

considering their need for the SS money, their life expectancy, and their marital status. And remember, claiming early (before one's SS full retirement age (FRA)) also means Social Security's Annual Earnings Test (AET) will apply (the AET limits how much can be earned from working before FRA is attained).

So, our thought on the wisdom of taking Social Security as soon as you are eligible is that it is often not a wise decision, and certainly not if that decision is made based on fear of Social Security "not being there" soon. Instead, we suggest making your Social Security claiming decision based upon your unique personal circumstances, including, especially, your life expectancy, financial need, and marital status.

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events about public affairs, and never managed it. No worries. Kirk figured it out for them. That he was shot while he engaged in an act of peaceful persuasion makes his murder all the more devastating.

Kirk wasn't a literary figure, but his assassination was a little like, say, William F. Buckley or James Baldwin getting gunned down in the midst of their famous 1965 debate at the Cambridge Union.

What Kirk was doing drew on some of the finest traditions of civilized life. Gathering on a hill to hear people speak and argue, like what we saw at Utah Valley University prior to the shot ringing out, is as old as the Pnyx in ancient Athens.

The university as a battleground of ideas, with clashing worldviews vying for influence, goes back to the Middle Ages. Founded in 1231, the University of Paris quickly became "a forum where great questions of theology, society, and government were analyzed and answered," writes historian Dan Jones.

More fundamentally, language and abstract reasoning make us distinctly human; violence, the tool of brutes, does not. What are young people on the right to conclude from the horror at Utah Valley? Progressives viewed Kirk as a "MAGA troll" (as a New Republic headline put it in the immediate aftermath of his shooting), but for his fans, he was a figure of hope and inspiration.

It's also important to realize that Kirk worked diligently and effectively to bring disaffected kids into mainstream politics.

He pushed back against anti-semitism and other poisonous influences. The far-right envied and hated him.

It would be natural for Utah Valley to become the Right's equivalent of Kent State in the 1970s, a shattering experience, and a radicalizing one.

Charlie Kirk did it the right way, and now he's gone. He espoused the Christian faith, and what did it get him? He believed in open debate, and it left him defenseless unto his enemies. He did his enemies the favor of taking their arguments seriously, whereas (presumably) one of them used a bullet to silence him forever.

To quit on persuasion, though, is the counsel of despair. Political violence in a free society is always wrong. There's no substitute for convincing our fellow citizens, and we should also assume -- as Kirk did, even with the odds stacked heavily against him -- that they can be convinced by good arguments made sincerely and passionately.

Kirk's murder will long be remembered as a symbol of the irrationality and hatred of this era, with, one fears, worse to come. His life's work, on the other hand, is a testament to how one person can, with enough pluck and talent, move the needle of our politics.

Kirk fought back against illiberalism, and his supporters -- when the shock and grief subsides -- should be equally committed to his mission.

Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*.

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# Sky-High Living Costs Afford It the Nation's Highest Poverty Label - Again



By Dan Walters,  
CALMatters.org

Last year's presidential election underscored, particularly to Democrats, that the costs of living were a major factor in the outcome.

Inflation had increased sharply during Joe Biden's presidency, and voters' angst about rising prices worked against Vice President Kamala Harris' campaign to succeed him in the White House.

Not surprisingly, therefore, when the California Legislature opened its 2025 session, its dominant Democrats declared that they would focus on taming the state's notoriously high costs for housing, fuel, utilities and other necessities of modern life.

The session ended last week and as it did, by happenstance, the Census Bureau reported that California once again has the nation's highest "supplemental" rate of poverty when its living costs are included in calculations over a three-year period.

California's rate, 17.7%, means that nearly 7 million of its residents are impoverished, 5 percentage points higher than the national rate and tied with Louisiana. The lowest rate is 6.7% in Maine.

California's rate is also 2.3 percentage points higher than it was in the Census Bureau's previous three-year calculation, implying that its living costs vis-à-vis incomes had

increased markedly.

The situation is even gloomier in a report last month from the Public Policy Institute of California and the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality.

Using methodology similar to that of the Census Bureau, they calculate that 16.9% of Californians were poverty-stricken in 2023 and another 17.9% were near-poor. That translates into 13.2 million Californians struggling to put roofs over their heads, food on the tables, fuel in their cars and electric power in their appliances and light fixtures.

Los Angeles County, which has about 25% of the state's population, has the highest poverty rate of any county, 19.9%. Poverty in the Central Coast region is nearly as high at 19.3%, while Sacramento has the state's lowest rate, 13%.

Another data point about poverty in California is found in the newly enacted state budget. It declares that 14.9 million Californians are enrolled in Medi-Cal, the state's health care program for the poor.

So, one might wonder, did the Legislature's 2025 session deliver on promises to reduce the costs of living?

Legislative leaders claim some success.

"We went big," Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, said in a summary of the session's work. "We produced results. We delivered historic progress — on housing, on energy, on climate, on health care, and on human rights. And that progress is something every one of us can be proud of.

"And while our work is not finished fixing California's housing system,

this year marked a turning point in California's housing story," Rivas continued. "And today, we also advanced the most significant energy package in years. We passed measures that will deliver real relief for families on their electricity bills. We took action to stabilize gas supplies, to prevent price shocks — while keeping health and environmental protections in place."

By easing what had been a crackdown on gasoline refiners and sanctioning more oil production, legislators and Gov. Gavin Newsom say they are avoiding a gasoline supply crisis that could send costs soaring as the state shifts to a zero-emission economy. Two refineries have already announced closure plans, and Chevron has dropped hints that it could abandon its Richmond refinery.

By integrating California's electric power grid with those of other Western states, the elected officials say, shortages of electric power will be mitigated.

By reducing impediments to housing development, they say, higher levels of construction will moderate increases in rents and home prices.

Whether any of these legislative efforts actually lower or at least stabilize Californians' living costs won't be known for months, or even years. Meanwhile, California's high poverty rate will continue to be a civic embarrassment.

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. ★

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# SECURITY LOGS

Following is a summary of activity for the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Security Department for the following dates. Note: these log entries are condensed. For full security log details, go to the CSD website at [rmcsd.com](http://rmcsd.com).

### Sept. 5

8:25 a.m., Sgt. Arino responded to the area of Murieta North Parkway at Alameda for a report of a possible female transient wearing a plaid shirt and black pants.

Upon arrival the subject in question was gone. The area was canvassed and

checked clear. Moments later a bag full of personal belongings was turned in to the North Gate.

Upon search of the items a name was found on a check issued by Placer County Jail. At approximately 8 a.m. Sgt Arino while on site of a traffic collision on the Jackson Highway observed a female on a bike matching the description heading into the North community. Metro 59 and CHP took over the scene of the traffic collision.

Sgt. Arino then located the female heading west on Lago Drive. Sgt Arino made contact with her,

advising of the complaints of trespassing. She stated her husband was in the black Acura ADX that pulled through the Lago inbound gate. Both parties confirmed they knew each other and she was picked up by who she called her husband.

8:52 a.m., Traffic collision westbound Highway 16; no injuries, both vehicles out of way of traffic exchanging info. Both parties declined medical.

8:53 a.m., Shortly after first collision a second happened.

White Chevy Colorado blocking westbound lane no injuries. Pushed vehicle

to the side to allow traffic to pass. CHP/Sac Metro en route.

### Sept. 6

10:22 p.m., Golf cart vs. outside resident lane. Arm was struck and put back into place with no damage or info on the golf cart or its occupants.

### Sept. 12

12:11 a.m., Noise ordinance violation. House party and excessive noise past 10 p.m. Citation issued.

### Sept. 14

7:15 p.m., Repots of multiple dogs off leash at

Stonehouse Park. Upon arrival, patrol located multiple dogs off leash. Contacted dog owners, advised of leash regulations, requested to leash the animals. All persons complied with request and cleared the area.

### Sept. 15

12:45 a.m., Report of juveniles in golf cart creating a disturbance and traveling on cart path past the permitted time. Searched area, which was quiet on arrival and departure.

### Sept. 16

5:25 p.m., Report of

speeding at Lake Calero: pickup truck without doors.

Upon arrival, patrol located vehicle matching the description at the Calero levee on the west side of the lake. Vehicle, late-'80s/early-'90s Toyota Tacoma, guest of the South resident.

Contacted driver, advised of complaint, informed of the back roads speed limit. Guest accompanied by the resident.

### Sept. 21

10:29 p.m., Black BMW found at Riverview after hours. Vehicle departed after asking over loud-speaker. ★

# Wilder Named Interim General Manager at CSD

Continued from page 1

with his comments, the Ad Hoc Committee now consists of Merchant and Director Bill Gere. They are overseeing four managers, including Wilder. The chart shows Wilder supervising employees from the security department, the IT manager and the interim district secretary. (See separate story.)

Wilder was asked to summarize her previous responsibilities.

"As the district secretary, I was tasked with researching multiple aspects of the district's history, which has given me an understanding of the elements that shaped our community," she said. "Through great partnerships, the residents have benefited. I look forward to leaving the team of professionals to service the community."

Wilder was also asked to reflect on her six years with the district, during which she has served under four general managers and the Board Ad Hoc Committee.

"I have seen many changes in leadership and have tried to learn from the strengths that each of them has brought to the position," she said. "There has been a common theme in past leadership to set RMCSO on a solid footing, and I plan to continue that work."

In a January 2020 interview with the River Valley Times, Wilder said taking the temporary job as the district interim secretary was "probably the luckiest thing that ever happened to me."

Then-General Manager Mark Martin brought Wilder in after long-time District Secretary Suzanne Lindenfeld went on medical leave. When Lindenfeld

later decided to retire, it created a vacancy and necessitated the posting of the job. Wilder aced her interview.

Martin announced her appointment as district secretary at the Jan. 15, 2020, meeting.

"We liked our interim secretary and found someone who looked just like her," he joked. "She had good references and a good interview. Lots of energy and lots of ideas."

Wilder grew up in Grass Valley and has always loved the feeling of a small town.

"It is wonderful to return to the atmosphere of a small community, with the sense of neighborhood that I have found in Rancho Murieta," she said in a 2020 interview.

Wilder graduated from Sacramento State University with a degree in

Recreation Administration, Parks, and Natural Resource Management. She went on to work as a district sales and marketing manager for the nation's top dealer of Hot Spring Spas, a position she held for years.

"This gave me a valuable education on the management of people and resources, marketing and event coordination, as we attended home shows throughout Northern California and the annual California State Fair," she said.

Wilder later moved to Boulder City, Nevada, where she worked as a research analyst for a public financial advisor.

"This position not only gave me a flavor for the creation, sale and annual reporting required in the issuing of bonds, it also taught me valuable skills

in extracting vital information concerning the entities requiring the bonds and accurate projection of revenues required to repay the bonds," she said.

After moving back to California, she became the executive assistant to the executive vice president of sales for a private mortgage banker.

"I was there for seven years, supporting senior management, managing multiple calendars, correspondence, making travel arrangements, event coordination, preparing documents for executive briefings and acting as liaison for the sales team," she said.

Wilder said that all three positions helped prepare her for her new role as district secretary.

"The one underlying theme in my employment career is the wonderful

people I have worked with and the lasting friendships I have made," she said. "I plan to continue that here and look forward to many years working with the district."

Wilder lives in Sacramento with her husband, who was her high school sweetheart. When they reconnected 23 years after graduation, they had six children between them.

"They are all grown and out of the house, so we get to spend our time enjoying each other's company," she said. "We love all things Disney and attending events that allow us to enjoy our creativity."

They also make time for their three dogs: two Dachshunds and a Chihuahua mix.

This story is online at [therivervalleytimes.com](http://therivervalleytimes.com). ★

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# Music Mike Draws Crowd to Free Concert

*Continued from page 1*

Sunshine” – and the kids sang along just as eagerly.

The children roared with laughter when Music Mike teased that the prizes would be underwear or socks.

They squealed with delight as he announced a “Happy Birthday” song for an eight-year-old standing beside him, then surprised them by jumping into “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” and “Sweet Home Alabama.”

Kiwanis sponsors the event each year as a way to give back to the community. The late Joe Mazzone first suggested the idea, and President Joanne Brandt organized this year’s program.

The club handed out child-sized bottles of cold water and provided bubble solution with wands for the kids to enjoy during the show.

Rene and Susan Mellegers attended their first Music Mike concert when their oldest great-grandchild, Autumn Brandt, was a year old. This year, at 7, she joined in the fun with her 4-year-old sister, Ayla, and her 3-year-old twin brothers, Harrison and Walker.

“This is a great event for kids,” Rene Mellegers said. “I’m also amazed how he can control all these children. I think parents should learn from him.”

Mike Grmoyes has been performing as Music Mike in the greater Sacramento area for more than 25 years. Grmoyes is available for birthday parties and other children’s events and can be reached at 530-823-2380.

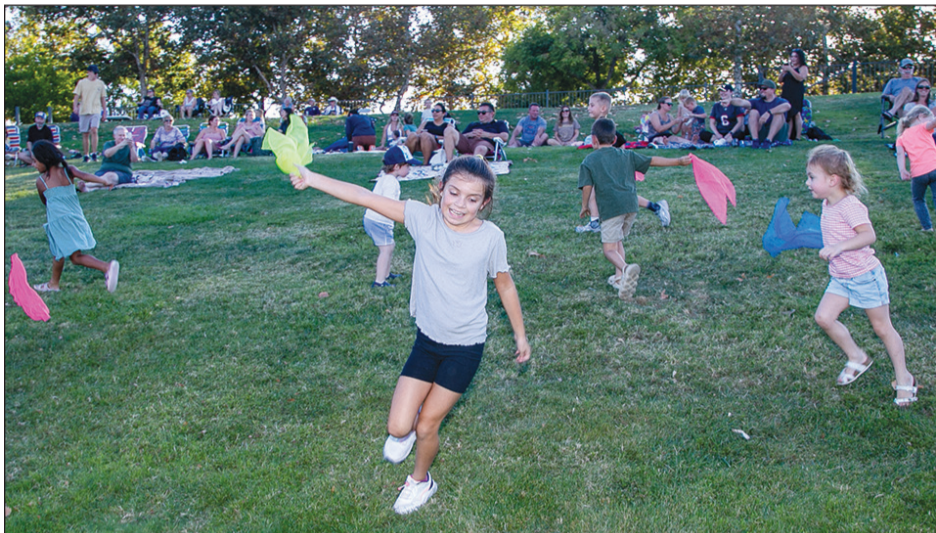
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Youngsters lean in, wide-eyed, as Music Mike works his magic.



“Put your belly out: That’s what the limbo’s all about!”



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