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# Land Park News

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*Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years*

NOVEMBER 21, 2025

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## Give, Gather and Gobble

*Ways to Celebrate this Thanksgiving*

By Idaly Valencia

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - As the weather turns colder, it's clear that the holiday season is here, a time for gathering with friends and family to celebrate the festivities ahead.

With Thanksgiving Day approaching on Nov. 27, several events and activities across the Sacramento area offer residents an opportunity to give back, share a meal or simply enjoy time together.

### Run to Feed the Hungry

For those looking to give back while getting some steps in, the Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services will host its 32nd annual Run to Feed the Hungry on Thanksgiving

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Celebrate Thanksgiving by participating in a morning run, walk or jog at the 32nd annual Run to Feed the Hungry 5K or 10K. Photo courtesy of Run to Feed the Hungry

## Parade Honors Hometown Racing Hero



Pictured is Elk Grove native and professional racing driver Kyle Larson with his 2025 NASCAR Cup Series Champion Driver trophy. Photo by Roger Neria

By Nathan Felix Valencia

**ELK GROVE, CA (MPG)** - The Elk Grove community gathered on Friday, Nov. 14 for yet another parade during the week, but this time honoring Elk Grove native Kyle Larson.

The parade was held for Larson, who won his second NASCAR Cup Series Championship Nov. 2 after earning his first championship in 2021.

Born and raised in Elk Grove, Larson found a love of racing at a very early age when he went to his first race at just a week old. He attended Pleasant Grove High School before transitioning to being homeschooled to pursue his promising racing career, even being nicknamed "Young Money" early in his career in recognition of the talent he possessed.

Larson was able to turn his talent into greatness. He not only has two NASCAR Cup Series Championships, but has won the 2024 Brickyard 400, 2023 Southern 500 and the 2022 Daytona 500, with these wins just being the tip of the iceberg for his achievements. His greatness on the track also earned him the 2022 ESPY Award for Best Driver as well as being named one of NASCAR's 75 Greatest Drivers in 2023.

Larson's success on and off the track has made Elk Grove proud, as one of their own is making national headlines. This hometown pride prompted community members to celebrate with a parade for Larson's achievements. This is the second parade for Larson, as he had one

*Continued on Page 5*

## Downtown Ice Rink Open for 33rd Season



Skaters at the Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink on Nov. 12 exhibited all skill levels, from pro skaters showing off impressive spins, to children aided by skating walkers. Photo by Abbey Wicks

By Abbey Wicks

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - The Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink, presented by Dignity Health, is now open through Jan. 19. Located in Ali Youssefi Square across from DoCo and the Golden 1 Center, the rink attracts some 40,000 skaters each season.

Ali Youssefi Square is at 705 K St., Sacramento.

"The Downtown Sacramento Ice

Rink represents what downtown does best: bringing people together to create lasting memories," said Michael Ault, the Downtown Sacramento Partnership executive director. "It's a cherished Sacramento tradition and we're grateful to our community leaders and partners for their support in bringing this tradition to life year after year."

The price to skate remains the same as previous years: \$15 for general admission and \$8 for children

ages 6 and under. Skating admission includes skate rental and sizes run as small as youth 8 and as large as men's 15. Skaters can enjoy the rink from 2 to 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fridays through Sundays (weather permitting). Skaters can call 916-738-0703 to find out if the rink is open during inclement weather.

Season events catered for youth skaters include annual Princess &

*Continued on Page 2*

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# Downtown Ice Rink Open for 33rd Season

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Superhero Day, which took place Nov 15, and Crafting with Kindness, from noon to 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 23 and Sunday, Nov. 30. Copper House Boutique will lead both craft days with its jewelry-making lessons.

Donation Weeks have been implemented this year to help spread holiday cheer.

The ice rink has teamed up with Western Health Advantage and First Step Communities to organize donations for those experiencing homelessness in the Sacramento area.

The ice rink will collect much-needed items and accept donations all day during Donation Weeks, which run from Monday, Nov. 17 through Sunday, Nov. 30. Skaters who bring something to donate will receive \$5 off skate admission. Suggested items to donate include winter hats, gloves, scarves and blankets.

In an effort by the Downtown Sacramento Partnership to increase pedestrian activity and safety along K Street, including in Ali Youssefi Square, new LED lighting has been installed from DoCO to the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center.

“These lights embody our commitment to reimagine downtown block by block, paying homage to

the marquee lights which have lined K Street for generations and enhancing Sacramento’s central promenade for its next era of opportunity,” Ault said.

Along with supporting increased pedestrian activity throughout the evening hours, the new lighting also supports bicycle and public transportation use and embraces the foundational principle of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) by improving sightlines and increasing activity after dark, according to the partnership.

Better lighting encourages more foot traffic, which in turn promotes safety, supports local businesses and builds community pride.

The dynamic system will be capable of changing colors to mark holidays, community celebrations and Kings, Republic, Athletics and Hornets’ victories.

“When we invest in placemaking, we invest in people,” said Scott Ford, Downtown Sacramento Partnership deputy director. “Downtown Sacramento is truly a neighborhood that belongs to all residents and guests of our community. We want to ensure we are creating and maintaining an environment which is a positive reflection of Sacramento to the rest of the world.”



Skaters at last year’s Princess & Superhero Day were joined by characters including Disney princesses Anna and Elsa. This year’s event took place Nov. 15. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership



The Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink, presented by Dignity Health, is now open through Jan. 19. Photo by Abbey Wicks



Above and right: New LED lights have been installed along K Street to promote evening pedestrian activity and safety. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership



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# Lights and Magic in Old Sacramento Waterfront



The historic Old Sacramento Waterfront district transforms into a holiday destination filled with shows, shopping and seasonal surprises. Photos courtesy of Old Sacramento Waterfront

## Old Sacramento Waterfront News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The Old Sacramento Waterfront will once again shine bright this holiday season as downtown's most spirited destination for shopping, entertainment and festive fun. With its twinkling décor, a 60-foot holiday tree, beloved Theatre of Lights performances, pedestrian-friendly streets and a growing lineup of interactive experiences, the waterfront is where Sacramento comes together to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year.

Located just steps from Golden 1 Center and the Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink, Old Sacramento Waterfront offers a walkable, vibrant neighborhood full of small businesses, holiday activities and one-of-a-kind photo moments that make the season merry and bright.

Now in its 17th year, Theatre of Lights returns brighter than ever, with new Sunday performances added for 2025.

This free, family-friendly light show transforms the balconies of Old Sacramento Waterfront into a live holiday stage, blending a retelling of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" with stories from Sacramento's history. Narrated by Disney voice legend Bill Farmer (Goofy) and created by Stage Nine Exhibitions' Troy Carlson, the show continues to be one of Sacramento's most beloved traditions.

### Holiday Tree Lighting

On Wednesday, Nov. 26, opening performances by talented community groups begin at 5:30 p.m. The 60-foot Holiday Tree will be lit at 6 p.m. and the first Theatre of Lights performance of the season will follow shortly thereafter.

### Theatre of Lights

Theatre of Lights, produced by the Downtown Sacramento Partnership and sponsored by the Sacramento Kings, a free, immersive performance retelling of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" in a

uniquely Sacramento way on the balconies of Old Sacramento Waterfront.

Always free, guests can enjoy two performances each on Friday and Saturday at 6:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and now a special Sunday show at 6:30 p.m. every weekend from Nov. 28 through Dec. 21.

There will be two special show dates on Dec. 23, with shows at 6:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Dec. 24, with one show at 6:30 p.m. And to increase accessibility, an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter will be on-site for Saturday evening Theatre of Lights performances throughout the season, as well as our Tree Lighting Ceremony and our final show on Dec. 24.

### Holiday Bingo Card

The district is home to over 150 small businesses, each ready to help shoppers find the perfect holiday gift. This year, visitors can support local merchants in a new way with the Old Sacramento Waterfront Holiday Bingo Card. Guests can explore



Theatre of Lights is a free, immersive performance retelling of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" in a uniquely Sacramento way on the balconies of Old Sacramento Waterfront. Photos courtesy of Old Sacramento Waterfront



In addition to the Old Sacramento Waterfront holiday tree, every building in the district will be adorned with garland and lights, street poles will sport red bows and storefronts will have their own decorations. Photo courtesy of Old Sacramento Waterfront

the district's shops, restaurants and attractions while collecting stickers for the bingo card. Completed cards can be entered for a chance to win a family four-pack of tickets to The Polar Express Train Ride in 2026, along with other festive prizes.

### North Pole Safari

Ten festive artifacts have mysteriously appeared across the Old Sacramento Waterfront, but which Christmas characters do they belong to? Embark on a North Pole Safari to find out! Guests can follow one of two themed routes, The Workshop Route or The Winterwood Route, to uncover holiday magic.

Scan QR codes at each trail marker to reveal 3D artifacts and their owners in augmented reality. Collect all five artifacts on either route to claim a prize, or complete both to become an official North Pole Explorer and unlock bonus digital gifts.

### Holidays on K

New this year, Holidays on K expands to both Saturdays and Sundays from Nov. 29 through Dec. 21. Between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., K Street will become a pedestrian-only zone, inviting visitors to stroll, shop and play amid the festive backdrop of Old Sacramento Waterfront.

From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., enjoy live music while relaxing in alfresco seating. The street will also feature a "Letters to Santa" station, interactive building blocks, mobile library carts and family-friendly games, creating a lively outdoor experience for all ages to enjoy.

### Festive Decor

In addition to the Holiday Tree that has nearly 24,000 lights, every building in the historic district will be adorned with garland and LED lights, every street pole will sport red bows, and storefronts will have their own decorations. To show off Sacramento pride, the Holiday Tree will be lit Kings' purple on game nights.

For more information about Old Sacramento Waterfront, visit [oldsacramento.com](http://oldsacramento.com). ★



This free, family-friendly light show transforms the balconies of Old Sacramento Waterfront into a live holiday stage, blending a retelling of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" with stories from Sacramento's history.



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## LAND PARK

Classic Comfort and Modern Updates in this three bedroom/two bath Land Park home! This property features a host of improvements, upgrades and designer touches. Spacious entry, over-sized living room, many windows and fireplace. Kitchen/dining combination is crowned by beautiful coffered ceilings. The remodeled kitchen stands out with flush-frame cabinets, luxurious Quartzite counters, a Wolf dual-fuel range, SubZero refrigerator, built-in coffee maker, speed oven, microwave, dishwasher, and a spacious island with breakfast bar including a pop-up countertop charging station for modern living. Hall bath, with custom penny and epoxy flooring, a Kohler vanity, double sinks, elegant Quartzite counters. The primary bedroom features a glass door that opens to the backyard, walk-in closet, and the primary bath dazzles with octagon and large subway tiles on the floors and shower area, Kohler vanity with double sinks, and Quartzite counters for a refined touch. Discover thoughtful details, such as a hidden laundry area concealed behind custom bookcases in the kitchen, a hallway desk niche perfect for remote work, and custom light fixtures that add a stylish glow throughout. 3124 17th Street



## LAND PARK

On a picturesque tree-lined street, in the sought-after College Tract of Land Park, this stately two-story home offers both charm and grandeur. The impressive entryway welcomes you with soaring ceilings, setting the tone for the home's spacious atmosphere. The formal living room is graced by a beautiful bay window, a cozy fireplace, and double French doors that open onto the patio, creating a seamless flow for entertaining. The recently remodeled kitchen features quartz countertops, stainless steel appliances, a central island, elegant cabinetry some with glass fronts and abundant storage options. Adjacent to the kitchen, the gathering room features window seat, cabinetry and French doors that lead to the backyard, ideal for relaxed gatherings. On the main level, a smaller bedroom serves perfectly as an office, accompanied by a separate guest bathroom for convenience. Upstairs, you'll find three generously sized bedrooms, including a luxurious primary suite complete with an expansive bath, walk-in closet, and dedicated dressing area. Step into the backyard where a flagstone patio, built-in pool, and mature landscaping provide a tranquil retreat, the perfect setting for outdoor entertaining and relaxation. 3621 17th Street



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# \$1-Per-Meal: Dine Downtown Seeking 2026 Nonprofit Partner



Nonprofit applications are being accepted now through Nov. 23 to partner with Downtown Sacramento Partnership and its sister organization, Downtown Sacramento Foundation, for the city's annual restaurant week that helps to enhance the downtown experience. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership

## Downtown Sacramento Partnership News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Downtown Sacramento Partnership and its sister organization, Downtown Sacramento Foundation, announced a call for qualifications on Nov. 5 from local nonprofits interested in becoming the charitable partner for the upcoming 2026 Dine Downtown program.

From Jan. 9 to Jan. 18, 2026, the 10-day culinary celebration brings together Sacramento's top restaurants to offer special three-course meals for \$45. For each meal purchased, \$1 will be donated to the selected nonprofit, supporting vital causes impacting Sacramento's urban core.

"Our incredible restaurants and talented chefs are an integral part of the culture of downtown Sacramento, and their contribution to the vibrancy of the city cannot be overstated," said Executive Director

Michael Ault of Downtown Sacramento Partnership. "Dine Downtown is an important tradition that introduces our unmatched culinary creativity to new guests, uplifts the restaurant community during a relatively slow time for the industry, and gives back to a community partner whose work aligns with our shared vision of a safe, engaging and prosperous downtown."

Dine Downtown's charitable component has grown over time, and the nonprofit partner rotates each year. In January, more than 13,500 meals were sold as part of the Dine Downtown program, resulting in thousands of dollars donated to support a worthwhile local nonprofit.

For 2026, a nonprofit partner will be selected based on alignment and focus on these issues critical to downtown Sacramento, including farm-to-fork initiatives and downtown restaurant support; downtown arts and cultural activations and

events; small business assistance; access to healthy food for those in need; and nonprofit partnership opportunity.

Proposals will be evaluated based on their alignment with the goals of Downtown Sacramento Foundation and potential impact for the community. Downtown Sacramento Foundation, the 501(c)(3) under Downtown Sacramento Partnership, is dedicated to fostering civic pride through the improvement of the social and physical environment of downtown.

Applying organizations should be designated as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization

and have a mission and vision that align with Downtown Sacramento Foundation's vision of fueling innovation in the downtown core through cultural arts, creating an active and attractive community and providing assistance for those in need.

The nonprofit partner proposal deadline is Nov. 23. After a selection process, the nonprofit partner for the 2026 Dine Downtown will be announced in mid-December.

Full proposal guidelines are available at [downtownsac.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/DineDT25\\_CharityRFP.pdf](http://downtownsac.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/DineDT25_CharityRFP.pdf). In general, visit [downtownsac.org](http://downtownsac.org). ★

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# Parade Honors Hometown Racing Hero

*Continued from Page 1*  
in 2021 after winning his first NASCAR Cup Series Championship.

The parade took place on Elk Grove Boulevard at noon. It started at DreamGirls Salon and ended at the Old Town Plaza. Before the parade, Wide Open Walls created a mural for Larson at The Sign Center, where the community gathered to see him sign the mural at 11:30 a.m. Fans then lined up on the street to support the hometown hero.

The parade was led by the Elk Grove Police Department and the Cosumnes Fire Department, followed by 20 parade cars. These 20 cars consisted of exotic cars and Chevrolet models old and new, with two classic cars from the Sacramento Auto Museum.

Once the parade was over, everyone gathered in the Old Town Plaza where Larson received a warm welcome home and a red-carpet arrival.

Elected officials gave speeches not only to praise the achievements Larson has made, but also the hard work and determination he has had throughout his career. A proclamation was even made that dedicates Nov. 22 as honorary Kyle Larson Day in Elk Grove.

Larson is not just a hero for NASCAR fans, but a hero for the entire community of Elk Grove. Winning at the highest level possible yet still managing to come back to the community he grew up in to celebrate, he provides hope to the younger generation, showing that they can turn their dreams into reality. ★



Elk Grove celebrated hometown racing hero Kyle Larson with a parade on Nov. 14, celebrating his most recent NASCAR Cup Series Championship win. Photo by Roger Neria



Wide Open Walls created a Kyle Larson mural at The Sign Center on Elk Grove Boulevard. Photo by Nathan Felix Valencia



Kyle Larson poses with the drivers of exotic cars and Chevrolet models old and new that joined him in the parade. Photo by Nathan Felix Valencia



Sacramento County Supervisor Pat Hume presents proclamation to Kyle Larson dedicating Nov. 22 as "Kyle Larson Day." Photo by Roger Neria



Kyle Larson signs Hendrick Cars merchandise for a fan at Old Town Plaza on Nov. 14. Photo by Roger Neria



Kyle Larson signs the mural painted in his honor, done by local arts organization Wide Open Walls, on Nov. 14. Photo by Roger Neria

## Missing a Tooth?

### Here Are Your Options

By your local dentist Dr. Ashkan Alizadeh, Master at Academy of General Dentistry

Losing a tooth is more common than most people realize, whether it's from decay, gum disease, or an accident.

But even one missing tooth can affect more than your smile. It can make chewing more difficult, lead to shifting of nearby teeth, and even change the shape of your face over time.

The good news is, there are several ways to replace missing teeth. Understanding the options can help you make the best decision for your health and comfort.

#### 1. Do Nothing (Not Recommended)

While it may seem easier to leave the space empty, this can cause nearby teeth to drift, throwing off your bite and leading to more tooth wear or jaw pain. Once teeth move out of proper alignment, it becomes harder to clean, increasing the risk of cavities and gum disease. It also becomes more challenging to replace the teeth if you wait too long to replace the teeth, so it's best not to wait too long.

#### 2. Removable Partial or Full Denture

A removable denture is a simple and affordable way to replace one, several, or all missing teeth. These appliances are taken out at night and cleaned daily. While they can restore your smile and chewing function, they tend to cover a large portion of the mouth and can sometimes feel bulky or less secure.

#### 3. Fixed Bridge

A bridge is a permanent option that connects an artificial tooth to the natural teeth on either side of the gap. This provides a more natural look and feel than a removable denture. However, the neighboring teeth must be shaped to support the bridge, and it's not ideal if too many teeth are missing.

#### 4. Dental Implants

Dental implants are the most advanced and long-lasting option. An

implant is a small titanium post that replaces the root of a missing tooth and supports a crown, bridge, or even a full denture. Implants look, feel, and function like natural teeth, and they help preserve the jawbone beneath the gums. Implants aren't for everyone, though. Factors like bone quality, health conditions, and medications can affect whether they're the right choice. Your dentist can take X-rays and discuss if implants are a good fit for you.

#### The Bottom Line

Replacing missing teeth is about more than appearance. It's about maintaining good oral health, proper chewing, and a confident smile. Whether you need to replace one tooth or a full set, there's a solution that can fit your needs and lifestyle.

*If you're ready to explore your options, schedule a consultation to see what's best for you.*

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or at the door

# Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



November 5 seems like a long time ago, but that's the last time the Sacramento Kings won a basketball game. Since then, it has been a string of defeats that now registers six with an average deficit of 20 points per defeat.

When things are going this badly, it's important to look for a lifeline. A sliver of hope or a whisper of sunlight on a dreary day.

Fans are looking forward to the return of 4th year man Keegan Murray to help right the ship.

While Keegan has not ascended to the level of an all-star, Keegan has made definite strides in particular with regards to his defensive presence and his rebounding.

Domantas Sabonis is off to a slow start due to injuries and is still ranked 4th in the NBA in rebounding, but he needs some help. Drew Eubanks has been a pleasant surprise coming off the bench and keeping the Kings in games, but Jonas Valanciunas has been sorely missed.

Gone are the days when the celebrated big man would come off the bench and give the Kings perhaps the best one-two punch in basketball.

Fans will forever scratch their heads and ask the question why, as the Kings allowed Valanciunas to walk out the back door and sign with the Denver Nuggets. Not surprisingly, the Nuggets are in the top 10 in rebounding while the Kings rank 25th in the league.

But the conundrum is not just the lack of rebounding or even the lack of talent on this Sacramento team. It resides in their inability to work together as a team and play up to their individual ability. Cohesive they are not, and sadly the answer at point guard in Dennis Schrader has been a bust when he's in the starting lineup.

Head coach Doug Christie sent Schrader to the bench when his contribution became almost nonexistent, and surprisingly Dennis responded when 2 stellar games in a row.

Yes, there is talent on this team, but knowing how to place the talent so the team begins to flow has been a mystery.

Ten games back with a 3-11 start is far from what the Kings franchise had

expected, and it has prompted pundits and fans alike to begin calling for a complete rebuilding of the team.

What that represents to Kings fans is the likelihood that your favorite player may soon be playing for another franchise, and it's a hard pill to swallow.

For me, over the course of just one year, I saw Davion Mitchell, DeAaron Fox, Trey Lyles, Jonas Valanciunas, and Isaac Jones all cast to the winds, and I believe the Kings would be a much better team with a much better record if they had all 5 of these players back.

Bad decisions simply must stop. Some were made from the Monte McNair administration, but some are from current brain trust with Scott Perry at the helm. Make no mistake about it, Vivek Ranadive has had his hand in many if not all the player fax paus, and if things are going to change for the better, the owner must start letting the GM and coaches have some level of autonomy.

But fans are buying tickets and going to games with expectations. How can the players and coaches turn humbling defeats into victories.

Coaches must start analyzing the talent on this team and putting them in positions to win. That means using the strengths of every player and giving him the opportunity to use those strengths.

The Kings have a player under a guaranteed contract that has played in one game for limited minutes by the name of Doug McDermott. McDermott has a reputation for sinking 3's with great consistency but he has all but been forgotten.

Yes, there are bigger fish to fry than this example, but it starts with the coaching, and getting a maximum effort out of every player every night. Fans need to see that the players care as much as they do.

This team can still win games and even back-to-back games. Let's keep rooting for this squad and see if we can make some noise.

Don't lose heart Kings fans. These players are our extended family, and we need to treat them that way!

All the best!

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

## California is a High-Tax State

Are More Taxes Balm for Its Budget Deficits?



By Dan Walters,  
CALMatters.org

California has long had the reputation — backed by copious data — of being a high-tax state, which made Gov. Gavin Newsom's declaration last June, in a prerecorded State of the State address, a bit startling.

"Here's the truth Republicans never tell you: California is not a high-tax state," Newsom said.

Later he clarified his assertion, saying California's taxes on low-income residents are relatively lower than those in red states.

"Catering to big business and the rich is also why red states tax their lowest earners far more than California does. They punish you when you're struggling, but give you a free pass when you're wealthy," the governor said.

There's some truth to that. California's very progressive income tax system, with the nation's highest marginal rate of 13.3%, makes its state budget highly dependent on taxing incomes of its wealthiest residents, while those in low- and moderate-income brackets pay little or no income taxes.

Nevertheless, taxes imposed by state and local governments put California in the highest ranks of the 50 states, not only in total — more than \$400 billion a year from all sources — but in per capita terms

— more than \$10,000 each — and as a percentage of its \$3.6 trillion in total personal income.

The Washington-based Tax Foundation ranks Californians' state and local tax burden 48th, one of the highest in the nation, out-taxed only by New York and New Jersey.

"California combines high tax rates with an uncompetitive tax structure, yielding one of the worst rankings on the Index," the Tax Foundation says.

The state's \$322 billion 2025-26 budget counts on \$297 billion from about a dozen different taxes, while cities, counties, school districts and other local agencies take in another \$100 billion or so, primarily from property taxes and local shares of the sales tax.

The budget anticipates \$207 billion in general fund revenues. So far revenue is running a bit ahead, but general fund spending is budgeted at \$226 billion. Maneuvers to cover the gap include shifting \$7.1 billion from emergency reserves, pushing the June 2026 state payroll into the following fiscal year and tapping special funds for loans.

State budget experts call it a "structural deficit" that will continue indefinitely in the absence of either sharp spending reductions or tax increases.

There's little appetite for the former in a Legislature dominated by Democrats but some support for the latter. The California Taxpayers Association recently reported that legislators proposed more than \$16 billion in new taxes and fees during the recently concluded 2025 session.

The battle over taxes

appears to be headed for the 2026 ballot, with two pro-taxation measures being pushed by public employee unions and other left-leaning groups and one that would create a new hurdle for local tax increases.

One proposal, backed by the California Teachers Association, would make permanent a temporary tax increase on high-income Californians, first approved in 2012 to close a budget deficit and later extended to 2030 via a ballot measure. All of its revenue, as much as \$15 billion a year, would go to K-12 schools and community colleges.

A second measure, sponsored mainly by the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West, would impose a one-time 5% tax on the wealth of California's billionaires, raising about \$100 billion, which would be spent at the rate of \$25 billion a year to cover the state's structural deficit and prop up health care services.

The third, sponsored by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, would overturn a state Supreme Court ruling and re-impose a two-thirds voter approval requirement on all proposed local taxes designated for particular purposes.

California is a blue state with relatively high taxes now. Do voters want to add more or make it difficult to add more?

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. ★

## Social Security Matters

### Did the Obama-era Social Security Tax Cuts Hurt the Program?



By Russell Gloor,  
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** I will be retiring early next year but my question to you is: During the Obama administration, payroll taxes that employees pay were cut in half from 6.2% to 3.1%, while the employer's part stayed the same at 6.2%. This continued for around a year I think. This was an attempt at giving people a tax cut, which I think was a bad idea or maybe the wrong way to have done it. How much damage do you think this may have caused to Social Security? **Signed: Soon to Retire.**

**Dear Soon to Retire:** FYI, the Obama-era cut in the employee portion of FICA payroll taxes and SECA (self-employment tax) was a temporary measure, which has long since expired. However, the legislation which enabled that cut in employee FICA/SECA taxes also included

a provision to replenish the Social Security Trust Funds from the General US Treasury in an amount equal to the estimated loss of tax revenue to the Trust Funds. So, in effect, there was little or no impact on the Social Security Trust Funds.

FYI, the Trustees of Social Security have been projecting for many years that the Social Security reserves would be fully depleted in the mid-2030s, unless Congress takes action to reform the SS program. Unfortunately, Congress has not yet taken any meaningful action to accomplish that reform, and the current projection from the Trustees is that all Social Security reserves will be depleted in about 2033, necessitating an across the board cut of about 21% in everyone's benefit. Time is running short, and we see signs that Congress is finally starting to seriously discuss Social Security reform.

At AMAC, we have developed and submitted to various Congressional Representatives a reform plan which would restore Social Security to full solvency. You can see AMAC's suggested plan at [www.amac.us/social-security-guarantee](http://www.amac.us/social-security-guarantee). And

AMAC is working every day in Washington, D.C. to promote Social Security reform to avoid future cuts in benefits. We believe and hope that Congress will eventually reform the Social Security program to avoid future benefit cuts but, unfortunately, not until they can muster sufficient bipartisanship to make the hard choices needed. To this end, contacting your Congressional Representative to demand Social Security reform now would be a good thing to do. The longer Congress delays reform, the harder the choices will be.

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org](http://amacfoundation.org)) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). ★*



Americans are going to get a little healthier. President Trump cut deals with the drugmakers Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk to increase access to obesity drugs in a major benefit to American public health.

The agreements are a win-win-win -- good for consumers, good for the companies and good for Trump.

One of the most irrational superstitions of our time is that Big Pharma, which has long been routinely delivering near-miraculous therapeutics to extend and improve our lives, is a public enemy. Its latest breakthrough is a class of so-called GLP-1 drugs that make it easier to lose weight and to avoid associated serious health problems, from Type 2 diabetes to heart disease.

The basic dynamic of the Trump deals is that the companies will, through lower prices, expand their market share, thus generating more revenue. The companies also get tariff relief and expedited review for select drugs.

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the MAHA leader with a paranoid streak about modern medical advances, has been hostile to GLP-1 drugs, the most famous of which is Ozempic, sold by Novo Nordisk.

If everyone could do as many pushups and pullups as the hyper-fit 71-year-old Kennedy, perhaps we could turn our back on GLP-1s.

Certainly, RFK Jr. is cor-

## Yes, Ozempic for All

rect that Americans should eat better and work out more. But our body mass index has been increasing for about 150 years, as we've made calories cheaper and more abundant over time. As it happens, the things that we like to eat or drink that are bad for us -- fast food, soda, chips, cookies -- are cheap, convenient and taste good.

Even if we manage to convince people that they should eat more fruit, vegetables and legumes, while taking a Peloton class every day, not everyone is going to do it as a matter of lifestyle constraints, individual preference or simple lack of willpower.

There's also the fact that once you put on weight, physiological changes make it more difficult to shed it.

About 40% of Americans are obese. Wouldn't it be great for them -- and for American society at large, which spends roughly \$170 billion a year on obesity-related medical costs -- if there were a safe, relatively convenient way for them to slim down?

Lo and behold, here it is. The GLP-1s started out as a treatment for diabetes and have exploded in popularity as weight-loss drugs.

Trump's reflex to make it easier for people to obtain Ozempic and the like -- while, not incidentally, boosting his reputation as the nation's foremost deal-maker -- is the correct one. Drug pricing is complicated, but by expanding the sale of the drugs direct to consumers, the companies can reduce prices. Meanwhile, Medicare will do

more to cover the drugs, also bringing down their cost.

According to Gallup, about 12% of Americans report having used a GLP-1 drug at some point for weight loss, a stunning increase from about 6% in early 2024. Not coincidentally, Gallup is also now showing a slight dip in obesity. From 2008 -- when the polling organization regularly began asking about weight -- to 2022, the percentage of obese Americans increased by 14 percentage points, to nearly 40%.

Where any number of fashionable diets and continual government exhortations for more physical exertion have failed (before RFK Jr., Michelle Obama was urging, "Let's Move!") drugs to slow digestion and reduce the urge to eat are working.

The percentage of Americans using GLP-1s will inevitably keep growing, especially if prices continue to go down, if more oral GLP-1s come online in addition to injectables, and if other medical benefits of the drugs emerge. GLP-1s could easily match the saturation level of statins, the cholesterol-reducing drugs.

By all means, we should all eat more arugula. Until then, we have found a pharmaceutical path to alleviating an ongoing health crisis. President Trump and the drug companies are to be congratulated for their creative cooperation to make it available to more Americans.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2025 by King Features Synd., Inc. ★

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# ABOUT TOWN

## Holiday Fair Nov. 30

The Green and Red Vintage Christmas Fair on Sunday, Nov. 30 will offer shopping for home décor, delicious baked goods and other food and drinks. Local vendors will show their wares from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Sacramento Portuguese Hall, 6676 Pocket Road.

## Breakfast with Santa Dec. 21

Elks Lodge 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd., invites families to take photos with Santa Claus during its Sunday breakfast from 9 a.m. to noon Dec. 21. The Elks breakfast will include a ham-carving station. Cost is \$20 adults, \$10 for ages 6 to 10 and under 5 free. For parties four or more, reservations are requested; call 916-422-6666.

## Area Museum Experiences

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

**Aerospace Museum of California** – “Snoopy and the Red Baron,” through Dec. 31. On loan from the Charles M. Schulz Museum, this national traveling exhibit brings the full story of the World War I Flying Ace to life. Featuring original comic strips, vintage toys and rare memorabilia, it’s a fun, family-friendly look at one of Peanuts’ most iconic storylines.

The exhibit will delight fans who grew up with Snoopy the Flying Ace and introduce new audiences to Snoopy’s adventures in the sky. Details at aerospaceca.org.

## California Automobile Museum

– Junk in the Trunk Antique and Vintage Market, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov., 23. Explore treasures from throughout time, along with art and local items, displayed in and sold out of our collection of antique and classic cars! This event is free with paid museum admission.

Sunday Drives. The third Sunday of every month, enjoy a free ride (with paid museum admission) in one of the museum’s many beautiful cars from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There’s no better way to enjoy history than to experience it firsthand down the streets of downtown Sacramento. Details at calautomuseum.org.

**California Museum** – “Revolutionary Grain: Celebrating the Spirit of the Black Panthers in Portraits and Stories,” through Dec. 14. This temporary exhibition features striking contemporary portraits and deeply personal stories of former members of the Black Panther Party.

The exhibit portrays former Panthers as lawyers, social workers, teachers, and political activists who continue to make a difference in their communities.

**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** – RCAF in Mictlán: 50th Anniversary of Dia de los Muertos, through

April 5, 2026. The exhibit will be highlighted by public programs that document and celebrate the 50-year history of the Dia de los Muertos (DDL M) observance in Sacramento.

The exhibit will demonstrate why the anniversary is a major milestone in our city’s cultural history, as well an example of the enduring impact of the Royal Chicano Air Force (RCAF), a seminal collective of artists and activists.

It will also offer the Museum’s audience an exhibition and related programming that introduces or expands their knowledge of the RCAF’s contributions to Sacramento’s history. Details at sachistorymuseum.org.

**SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity** – Laser Concert Series is an immersive music experience, paired with spectacular full-dome lasers. Taylor Swift laser concert, Dec 5-6. Beastie Boys laser show, Jan. 9-10. Details at visitimosac.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. ★

# City Offers Free Legacy Planning Service

## City of Sacramento News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The city’s Financial Empowerment Center is expanding its free financial counseling and coaching program to help residents protect earnings and assets and take care of loved ones with legacy planning.

Through its longstanding partnership with the national non-profit Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, the Sacramento Financial Empowerment Center now offers one-on-one support to help residents create wills, add beneficiaries to accounts, and prepare essential documents such as powers of attorney to protect their assets for the future.

“Every Sacramento resident deserves the peace of mind that comes with planning for the future,” said city Financial Empowerment Manager Amy Williamson. “By offering free legacy planning services at the FEC, we’re helping residents protect what they’ve built and ensure their loved ones are cared for.”

Research shows that the majority of Americans

own at least one asset of value, such as a home or bank account, but nearly 70% have not taken the necessary steps to protect their assets. The new service aims to change that by making legacy planning more accessible for everyone, especially those who may not have access to traditional estate planning resources.

“FEC counselors work hard to help clients build assets. With the addition of legacy planning services, counselors can also help Sacramentans protect and preserve those assets for future generations,” said CFE Fund President and CEO Jonathan Mintz. “We’re thrilled to partner with the City of Sacramento to provide these crucial services and make legacy planning available to all.”

Residents can schedule a free appointment with a certified financial counselor/coach by visiting cityofsacramento.org/FEC, emailing FEC@cityofsacramento.org or calling 916-808-4927.

Counseling is available directly in English and Spanish, with interpretation available in some other languages. ★

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# Give, Gather and Gobble

Continued from Page 1  
 morning (8 to 11:30 a.m.). The long-standing Sacramento tradition, presented by KCRA/My58, offers participants the option to run, walk or jog a 5K or 10K course.

This family-friendly event helps to raise funds and awareness about hunger in the community. Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, which has served Sacramento County for more than 49 years, notes that the demand for food assistance has never been greater.

Whether you choose to run or walk, donate to a team or start your own fundraiser, every dollar raised will help to feed the more than one in four Sacramentans at risk of hunger.

For more information or to register, visit [run-to-feed-the-hungry.com](http://run-to-feed-the-hungry.com).

## Holiday Food Distribution

River City Food Bank is helping to make the holidays a little brighter with its Holiday Food Distribution, providing healthy groceries for families in need.

Two distribution events are planned: one at an Arden location, The Center at St. Matthew's, 2300 Edison Ave., from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 22; and another at the Midtown location, 1800 28th St., from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25.

Those looking to help can donate at [rivercity-foodbank.givingfuel.com/donate](http://rivercity-foodbank.givingfuel.com/donate), helping ensure



Those looking to help can contribute to the cause by donating at [rivercityfoodbank.givingfuel.com/donate](http://rivercityfoodbank.givingfuel.com/donate), helping ensure more families have a Thanksgiving meal to enjoy this season. Photo courtesy of River City Food Bank

more families have a Thanksgiving meal to enjoy this season.

## Share the Holiday Cheer

Since 1983, Sacramento Loaves & Fishes has provided homeless survival services and continues its mission this Thanksgiving by collecting donations to serve hearty holiday meals to its guests.

Requested donations include frozen turkeys, marshmallows, apple juice, store-bought pies, whipped cream, cranberry sauce, dinner rolls and dry stuffing mix. Due to county regulations, home-cooked food cannot be accepted.

Donations can be delivered between now and Nov. 23. For fresh bakery items such as pies, deliveries are recommended between Nov. 21 and 23 to ensure freshness through the holiday.

Drop-off hours are from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekends at the organization's warehouse, 1251 N. C St.

The warehouse will be closed Nov. 29 and Nov. 30. Monetary donations

can be mailed to P.O. Box 13495, Sacramento, CA 95813, or made online at [sacloaves.org](http://sacloaves.org). For questions, call 916-446-0874.

## Dine Out for Thanksgiving

Looking to skip the stress of cooking this year? Several local restaurants are offering Thanksgiving meals to either enjoy in-restaurant or at home with family and friends.

Chevy's Fresh Mex, 1369 Garden Highway, will feature a Thanksgiving buffet complete with a roasted turkey and ham carving station, unlimited champagne and mimosas, and an array of sides including apple-jalapeño stuffing, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, a taco station and dessert bar. Prices are \$43.99 for adults and \$14.99 for children. For more details, visit [chevys.com/open-thanksgiving](http://chevys.com/open-thanksgiving).

Yard House, 405 K St. Suite 100, will offer two turkey options of classic sliced turkey with gravy or fried Nashville hot turkey, both starting at \$29.99 for adults and \$13.99 for children 12 and under. Plates

include parmesan mashed potatoes, sausage stuffing, mac and cheese, brussels sprouts, cranberry sauce and a choice of pumpkin praline cheesecake or Oreo sundae for dessert. More details are at [yardhouse.com/events/thanksgiving](http://yardhouse.com/events/thanksgiving).

At The Firehouse Restaurant, 1112 Second St., guests can enjoy a three-course Thanksgiving menu for \$99 per person and \$45.95 for young patrons. The menu includes a Bloomsdale spinach salad, a choice of roasted breast of free-range turkey, pan-roasted Alaskan halibut, filet mignon or braised sweet potato and ricotta ravioli. Dessert options include Old World carrot cake and pumpkin cheesecake.

Reservations can be made at [firehouseoldsac.com/thanksgiving-menu](http://firehouseoldsac.com/thanksgiving-menu) or by calling 916-442-4772.

## Friendsgiving and Riverfront Dining

For a more casual celebration, Crawdads on the River will host its 10th annual Friendsgiving event at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 26 at 1375 Garden Highway. The evening



Those wanting a festive dining experience with a view can celebrate Thanksgiving aboard the historic Delta King Riverboat, 1000 Front St., from noon to 6 p.m. Nov. 27. Photo courtesy of Delta King Riverboat



With Thanksgiving Day approaching on Nov. 27, several events and activities across the Sacramento area are offering residents a chance to give back, share a meal or simply enjoy time together. Photo courtesy of Run to Feed the Hungry

will include food, music from DJ NADZ and plenty of time to share stories and make memories with friends. Register for the event at [bit.ly/4i1Zrm7](http://bit.ly/4i1Zrm7) (case sensitive).

Finally, those wanting a festive dining experience with a view can celebrate Thanksgiving aboard the historic Delta King Riverboat, 1000 Front St. Guests can enjoy a buffet

with roasted turkey, prime rib, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy and seasonal desserts, including pumpkin pie. The event runs from noon to 6 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. Tickets are \$70 for adults and \$28 for children ages 12 and under.

For more information, contact [inquiry@deltaking.com](mailto:inquiry@deltaking.com) or call 916-444-8052. ★

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# DOJ Sues California Over Prop 50's 'Power Grab'

*The Lawsuit Cites the Equal Protection Clause:  
'Our Constitution Does Not Tolerate This Racial Gerrymander'*

By Megan Barth,  
California Globe

Today (Nov. 13), the U.S. Department of Justice, led by Attorney General Pam Bondi, announced they have joined a lawsuit against California's redistricting ballot initiative, Proposition 50, which overwhelmingly passed in a special election last week. The lawsuit names Governor Gavin Newsom and Secretary of State Shirley Weber as defendants (see below).

"Race cannot be used as a proxy to advance political interests, but that is precisely what the California General Assembly did with Prop 50," said Jesus A. Osete, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. "Californians were sold an illegal, racially gerrymandered map, but the U.S. Constitution prohibits its use in 2026 and beyond."

In a social media post, AG Bondi states, "Newsom should be concerned about keeping Californians safe and shutting down Antifa violence, not rigging his state for political gain."

In an emailed statement to the Associated Press, Bondi continued, "California's redistricting scheme is a brazen power grab that tramples on civil rights and mocks the democratic process. Governor Newsom's attempt to entrench one-party rule and silence millions of Californians will not stand."

Newsom spokesperson Brandon Richards responded in a statement, "These losers lost at the ballot box and soon they will also lose in court."

The lawsuit cites, "Race cannot be used as a proxy to advance political interests, but that is precisely what the California General Assembly did with Proposition 50 — the recent ballot initiative that junked California's pre-existing electoral map in favor of a rush-job rejiggering of California's congressional district lines."

The AP reports: "The Trump administration accuses California of racial gerrymandering in violation of the Constitution by using race as a factor to favor Hispanic voters with the new map. It asks a judge to prohibit California from using the new map in any future elections." (Last) week, The Globe reported that the



Gov. Newsom signs ACA 8, redistricting on ballot. Photo courtesy of gov.ca.gov

United States Supreme Court could rain on Newsom's Prop 50 parade by finding that redistricting by race is unconstitutional, in that race-based redistricting could violate the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause.

A case currently with the U.S. Supreme Court about racial gerrymandering could nullify California's just-passed Proposition 50, the mid-decade redistricting scheme Governor Gavin Newsom and Democrats cooked up ahead of the 2026 midterm elections to secure more Democrat seats in Congress by redrawing district maps, or "gerrymandering" numerous California Republicans out of their congressional districts.

The Supreme Court will decide in *Louisiana v. Callais* whether the state's intentional consideration of race to create these voting districts violates the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. The Supreme Court could also invalidate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and require race-neutral maps.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a landmark U.S. federal law that prohibits racial discrimination in voting, aiming to protect the voting rights of all citizens, particularly racial minorities.

The high court appears ready to strike down Louisiana's 2024 congressional map as unconstitutional racial gerrymandering — a violation of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause.

Elections Law attorney Mark Meuser explained in detail that "The Supreme

Court could soon change how every congressional map in America is drawn, including California:"

"*Callais v. Louisiana*, a case that could reshape redistricting for decades.

Here's what's at stake: for years, federal courts have interpreted the Voting Rights Act (VRA) to require states to gerrymander congressional districts so minority groups are virtually guaranteed the ability to elect a representative of their same race. *Callais* challenges that approach, arguing that the current interpretation of the VRA violates the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution because it forces states to make race the predominant factor in drawing district lines.

Democratic-aligned advocacy groups have weaponized this reading of the VRA to carve out safe Democratic seats. Instead of drawing compact districts that follow cities, counties, and communities of interest, states are pressured to create bizarre, snake-like districts designed to hit racial targets. The result is a distorted Congress.

In 2024, Donald Trump won the presidential election decisively, yet Republicans hold only a razor-thin margin in the House. That mismatch is not by chance. When districts are drawn to guarantee that one party always wins, it shifts power away from the people and toward special interests. It lets political insiders and activist groups pick the politicians who govern us, rather than letting voters choose their representatives.

If the Court agrees with *Callais*, the decision could dramatically limit the use of race in redistricting nationwide. That means the gerrymandered maps Gavin Newsom is pushing with Prop 50 could be ruled unconstitutional. This is one of the most important redistricting cases in decades. The outcome could restore fairness, compactness, and accountability to how congressional districts are drawn."

The DOJ's lawsuit uses the public statements made by California Democrats as the basis for their complaint:

In the press, California's legislators and governor sold a plan to promote the interests of Democrats in the upcoming midterm elections. But amongst themselves and on the debate floor, the focus was not partisanship, but race.

"[T]he first thing" that map drawer Paul Mitchell "did in drawing the new map"—the "number one thing that [he] first started thinking about"—was to create a new "majority/minority Latino district." And legislators focused—not on the purported vote dilution of Democrats elsewhere across the country—but on the supposed dilution of the voting power of racial groups in other states. They feared that a "Latino voice in Texas is worth one third of the representation as a white voice." That Texas would "slid[e] back" to the days of "Black Codes and Jim Crow." And that Texas legislators would "silence the voices of Latino voters." Proposition 50 would serve as a "shield" against "racist maps," they told each other, so that minorities in California could "stand up and be counted." The end result is a map that manipulates district lines in the name of bolstering the voting power of Hispanic Californians because of their race.

Our Constitution does not tolerate this racial gerrymander.

Should the Supreme Court find that states have gerrymandered districts based on race, thereby violating the Equal Protection Clause, an estimated 30 states may be impacted and forced to redistrict ahead of the 2026 midterm elections, in an outcome that could lead to Republicans drawing 19 more seats and Democrats losing up to a dozen local seats, primarily in the South. A decision by the Supreme Court is expected as early as next Spring. ★

## Prop. 50 Passage Sets Off a Chain of Political and Legal Maneuvers

By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

When California voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition 50 on Tuesday (Nov. 4), they set in motion political and possibly legal maneuvers that will ultimately determine whether its overt purpose, increasing Democratic congressional members by five or more seats, becomes reality.

The first is a political scramble among politicians in both parties to determine who will run where in next year's congressional elections.

Ambitious Democrats are lining up to run in the newly gerrymandered districts, some of which have been tailored to favor particular candidates.

The most obvious example is a district that stretches from the heavily Republican northeastern corner of the state to the northern suburbs of San Francisco, seemingly made to order for Mike McGuire, the outgoing president pro tem of the state Senate. In creating that district, Gov. Gavin Newsom and the Legislature aim to unseat Republican Doug LaMalfa, who now represents northeastern California in Congress.

The plan would, if successful, shrink Republican districts from nine to four, meaning that in some areas, such as in inland Southern California, current GOP incumbents would be compelled to either retire or joust among themselves for survival.

Prop. 50's political impacts hinge on the assumption that maps ratified by the ballot measure actually are in effect for next year's elections. While it's likely they will be used, there's a possibility that courts will intervene.

By happenstance, Prop. 50's pro-Democrat gerrymander and the recent pro-Republican gerrymander in Texas are occurring just as the U.S. Supreme Court weighs a major case involving the federal Voting Rights Act. Its outcome could impact both.

The Voting Rights Act, passed by Congress in 1965 to bolster the civil rights of minorities, particularly Black people in Southern states, prohibits any voting procedure "which results in a denial or abridgment of the right of any citizen of

the United States to vote on account of race or color."

While the law bars exclusionary voting laws, it has been widely interpreted to require creation of districts specifically to increase chances for racial groups to elect representatives from their communities.

California's independent redistricting commission, in plans drawn after the 2010 and 2020 censuses, adopted that interpretation, and the newly gerrymandered districts do as well.

However, the interpretation is being challenged before the Supreme Court in a case out of Louisiana, and its conservative members, a majority, have indicated both during arguments and in past rulings that they may consider it to be racial discrimination against white voters.

"This court held that race-based affirmative action in higher education must come to an end," Solicitor Gen. D. John Sauer wrote in his brief in the Louisiana case. The same is true, he said, for using the Voting Rights Act to draw legislative districts that are likely to elect Black or Latino candidates.

President Donald Trump's Justice Department monitored Tuesday's (Nov. 4) voting and could contend that California's new congressional maps are discriminatory and should be suspended until the Supreme Court renders its decision.

Trump seemed to hint about intervention in a Truth Social post Tuesday (Nov. 4) denouncing Prop. 50 as a "GIANT SCAM" and said that mailed ballots, by far the most prominent form of voting, disenfranchise Republicans and are "under very serious legal and criminal review." He closed with "STAY TUNED!"

In 2001, the threat of intervention by Republican President George W. Bush's administration thwarted plans by California's Legislature for a gerrymander favoring Democrats, forcing them to make a deal with Republicans on maps that maintained the partisan status quo.

Even a brief interruption could undermine what Newsom and the Legislature seek in Prop. 50 because candidate filing for congressional districts opens on Dec. 19, and if the new maps are in legal limbo, current districts would be used for the 2026 elections. ★

## McGuire Challenges GOP Rep. LaMalfa for New Prop. 50 Seat

By Maya C. Miller,  
CALMatters.org

California Senate President Pro Tem Mike McGuire has officially launched his challenge to longtime Republican Rep. Doug LaMalfa in a congressional district drastically redrawn by Proposition 50.

The Santa Rosa Democrat, who will hit his 12-year term limit in the Legislature next year, was widely viewed once the new maps were drawn as a prospective challenger to LaMalfa, a rice farmer from Oroville who has represented the North State in Congress since 2013.

LaMalfa's current district stretches from Siskiyou County and much of the Oregon-California border down through rural Shasta and Sutter Counties. Under the new voter-approved Prop. 50 maps, the district shifts south out of Modoc County and jogs westward to pick up parts of Sonoma County and McGuire's home base of Santa Rosa.

McGuire will face heavy skepticism from some northern rural residents in the 1st Congressional District, who just a few years ago tried to secede from liberal California to form the conservative "state of Jefferson" with rural parts of southern Oregon.

In an apparent effort to head off inevitable accusations of being out of touch with rural life, McGuire spent much of his launch video doubling down on promises to prioritize farmers' needs and "make sure rural communities get their fair share."

"I know these roads. I



Senate President Pro Tem Mike McGuire speaks during a press conference before Gov. Gavin Newsom signs the Election Rigging Response Act at the Capitol Annex Swing Space in Sacramento on Aug. 21. Photo by Miguel Gutierrez Jr., CalMatters

know these towns," McGuire says as he strolls down a tree-lined country road, a white pickup truck clearly visible in the background. "This district is big, it's rural, and now more than ever, it needs a fighter."

After devastating wildfires that wiped out thousands of homes and killed dozens in Sonoma and Napa counties in 2017, McGuire made wildfire prevention his signature issue in the Legislature. Following the Palisades and Eaton fires in January, McGuire ushered through an ambitious 13-bill package that expanded insurance coverage and sped up rebuilding of damaged homes after destructive fires.

His critics have said McGuire's singular focus on wildfire issues sometimes clouded his ability to balance and prioritize other policy areas, especially once he ascended to the role of pro tem last February, succeeding the well-regarded former Sen. Toni Atkins and becoming the chief traffic cop for which bills could come to the Senate floor.

McGuire also developed a

reputation for holding out on negotiations until he could extract a win for his policy priorities or his constituents: He was the top recipient of budget "earmarks" for local projects back home, funds that he will surely tout as major wins during his campaign.

During last-minute negotiations on a multi-pronged climate and energy policy deal earlier this fall, Gov. Gavin Newsom had to make an eleventh hour visit to the Capitol to push McGuire and his team onto the same page as him and Assembly leadership.

McGuire promised in his launch video to deliver "no drama, no BS, no gimmicks" if elected to Congress. And while he mostly shied away from the argument that he would flip a seat from Republican to Democratic control, he did acknowledge that he would push back on the Trump administration.

"Don't worry, I will always stand up to the destructive policies of Donald Trump," he said in the video. "I'm all in — every damn day." ★

# River City Water Polo Makes History

## Girls Capture Third Straight Title, Boys Return to Championship Stage

**River City High School Athletics News Release**

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The 2025 season marked another historic chapter for River City High School Water Polo. Both the varsity boys' and varsity girls' programs advanced to their respective Monticello Empire League (MEL) Championship Games, a testament to the depth, talent and culture of excellence continuing to thrive within the program.

The varsity girls once again set the standard, defeating league rival Rodriguez High School 22-11 to capture their third consecutive league championship and second straight Monticello Empire League title. The victory also secured the best record in program history and cemented River City High's status among the Sac-Joaquin Section's Division I elite.

Led by the dynamic scoring tandem of Reagan Eisberg and Cat Hadba-Guimaraes, widely regarded as one of the most prolific offensive duos in California, the Lady Raiders combined relentless offense with disciplined defense anchored by senior Reese Castro. The team now heads into the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Sac-Joaquin Section Playoffs with confidence and championship experience, opening against



The River City High School Water Polo varsity girls once again set the standard, defeating league rival Rodriguez High School 22-11 to capture their third consecutive league championship and second straight Monticello Empire League title. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Sibayan

Laguna Creek High School in the first round.

The defending Monticello Empire League Champion

varsity boys also returned to the title stage, falling just short in a hard-fought 13-16 battle against Rodriguez. Despite the loss, the

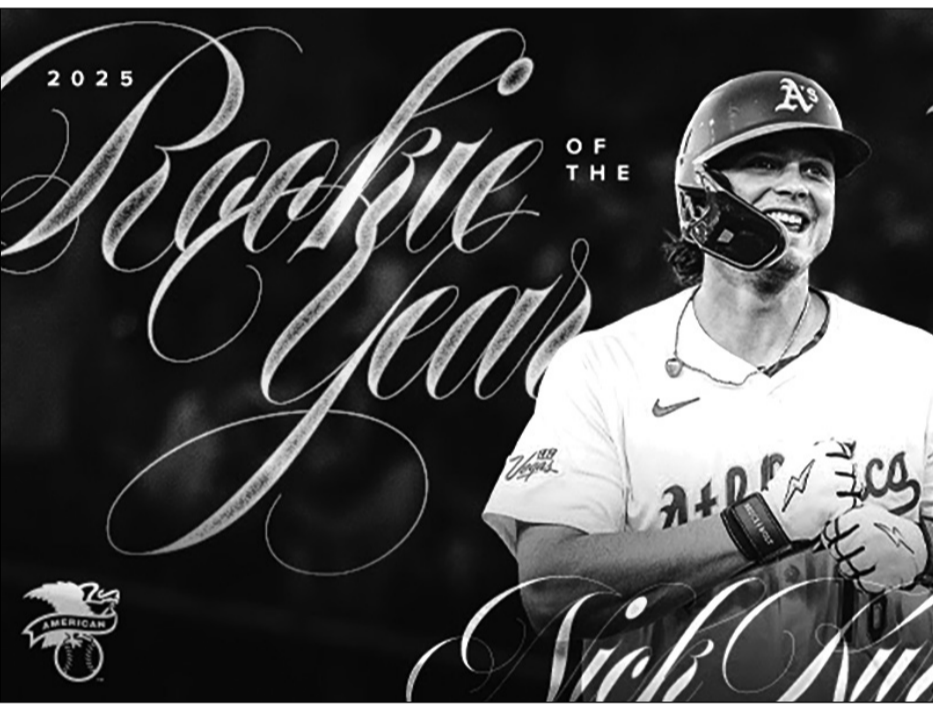
Raiders showcased grit, maturity and tremendous promise for the future. The young squad, featuring only one junior in the

starting lineup, is anchored by a talented core of sophomores and freshmen, including stand-out goalie Elijah Stone-Eisberg, one of the section's top young keepers. Offensively, the Raiders were powered by one of the region's most dangerous scoring tandems, Brendon Bryner and Caleb Eisberg, with defensive leadership from Joshua Diaz, Preston Caldwell, and Shane Castaneda.

The appearance marked another milestone in River City High's continued rise, following the boys' 2024 league championship, and reaffirmed that the foundation for sustained success is firmly in place. The boys now turn their attention to the postseason, opening California Interscholastic Federation play against Rocklin High School.

As both programs prepare for playoff action, River City Water Polo has firmly established itself as one of the most competitive and respected programs in the region, built on hard work, unity and the relentless pursuit of excellence. ★

## Big Amish is the 2025 AL Rookie of the Year



A's shortstop Jacob Wilson finished as the runner-up, marking the first time a team has had the first and second place finishers in American League Rookie of the Year Voting since 1984. Photo courtesy of the Athletics

**Athletics News Release**

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - First baseman Nick Kurtz has been named the 2025 Jackie Robinson American League Rookie of the Year Award winner. Kurtz won the award unanimously with all 30 first-place votes. He is the 14th player to win the AL award by a unanimous vote.

Kurtz slashed .290/.383/.619 with a 1.002 OPS in 117 games played this season after making his MLB debut on April 23. He led American League rookies in home runs (36), RBI (86), runs (90), walks (63), and extra-base hits (64). Kurtz joins Aaron Judge (2017) and Albert Pujols (2001) as the only rookies in MLB history to hit at least 35 home runs, score at least 90 runs, and record an OPS of at least 1.000.

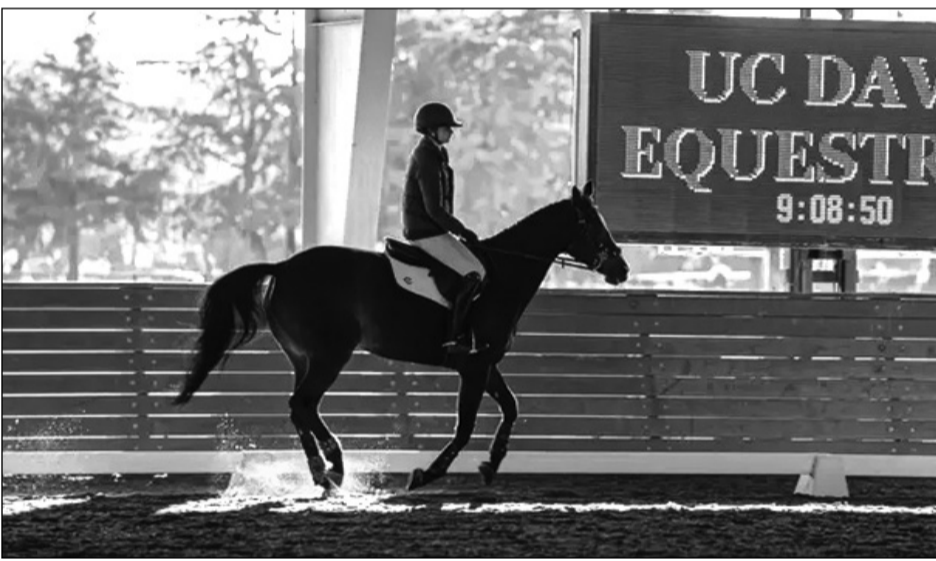
His 36 home runs were the second most in a season by an A's rookie, trailing only Mark McGwire's 49 home runs in 1987.

On July 25 at Houston, Kurtz went a perfect 6-for-6, tying the MLB record for home runs (4), extra-base hits (5), and total bases in a game (19). He won both American League Rookie of the Month as well as American League Player of the Month for July.

Kurtz joins Mark McGwire (1987) as the only A's first basemen to win AL Rookie of the Year. This year, he has already won the Player's Choice Outstanding Rookie Award, Sporting News Rookie of the Year, and the Louisville Slugger Silver Slugger Award for first basemen.

A's shortstop Jacob Wilson finished as the runner-up, marking the first time a team has had the first and second place finishers in American League Rookie of the Year Voting since 1984. Wilson was the starting shortstop for the 2025 All-Star Game and was the first rookie shortstop to be elected by the fans. ★

## Aggies Earn Third Rider of the Week Sweep



Chloe Fares, Eliza Plum, Cavan Smith, and Mya Clader were each recognized for their standout performances during the Aggies' doubleheader weekend on Nov. 8 and 9. Courtesy photo

**UC Davis Athletics News Release**

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - For the third time this season, University of California, Davis swept the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) Rider of the Week awards following back-to-back victories over Delaware State and UT Martin.

Equestrian team members Chloe Fares, Eliza Plum, Cavan Smith and Mya Clader were each recognized for their standout performances during the Aggies' doubleheader weekend on Nov. 8 and 9.

Fares continued her strong season over in fences with high-scoring, point-winning rides over both meets. She notched an 82 aboard Cici to capture the first of four points for the Aggies against Delaware State. The sophomore then delivered a Most Outstanding Player (MOP)-winning 86 on Salty versus UT Martin, the top score of the event, outscoring her opponent by an outstanding 20 points to help UC Davis secure both weekend events.

Plum was a steady performer for horsemanship, picking up key points in both meets. The sophomore edged her Delaware State opponent with a 66.5 riding Cinch,

then posted a standout 76 on Brady versus UT Martin, earning herself MOP honors and a spot in the UC Davis individual records book. That led the Aggies to a 3-0 sweep in the event.

Smith delivered commanding rides in flat across both meets. She opened the weekend with an 84 aboard Kevin against Delaware State, defeating her opponent by a whopping 21 points to clinch the event's final and fourth point for UC Davis. The freshman then carried that momentum against UT Martin, earning an 86 on Cooper to win by another large margin of 18 points, claiming the MOP honors as the Aggies took the event three to one.

Clader anchored the Aggies' reining team with back-to-back winning rides. She earned the lone reining point against Delaware State with a 65 on Aspen, then turned in the event's top score of 70.5 aboard Delta versus UT Martin to capture MOP honors. The senior now boasts six winning rides this season, continuing to set the tone for the UC Davis Western lineup.

The Aggies are back at home to battle against No. 5 Oklahoma State at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 22. ★

## Blake Willey and Chibi Ukaegbu to Join U.S. U-19 National Team

**Sacramento Republic FC News Release**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - U.S. Soccer announced that Republic FC midfielder Blake Willey and defender Chibi Ukaegbu were selected to the U.S. U-19 Men's National Team roster for its training camp in Wrexham, Wales from Nov. 9 to Nov. 19.

They are the only players representing a United Soccer League Championship club on the roster.

The camp included friendlies against Germany on Nov. 12, Wales on Nov. 15 and Japan on Nov. 18.

The 18-year-olds signed their first professional contracts with Republic FC ahead of the 2024 season, following a successful tenure with the club's

youth academy.

Willey had a breakout year this year. After becoming the second-youngest player to start in a Republic FC season opener, Willey went on to set a new club record for homegrown players with 27 appearances, 19 starts and 1,590 minutes in the regular season. Willey's three assists ranked first among the league's top young players, earning him two Team of the Week selections. In May, Willey competed with the U.S. U-18 National Team in the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Friendship Cup and appeared in every game to help the team bring home the championship trophy.

Roseville-native Ukaegbu set a new career high with 19 appearances and

949 minutes played across all competitions this year. In league play, Ukaegbu is among the top five in defenders under age 20 with 36 clearances, 16 interceptions and 49 duels won. Ukaegbu also spent time playing up two age groups with the U-20 Men's National Team, earning training camp call ups in January, September and October.

Season ticket memberships are now on sale for the 2026 season, offering a range of benefits including discounts on merchandise and access to exclusive fan experiences, as well as priority access to seats in the new Republic Stadium at The Railyards. For more information, or to buy a membership today, visit online [SacRepublicFC.com/Memberships](http://SacRepublicFC.com/Memberships). ★



Season ticket memberships are now on sale for the 2026 season, offering a range of benefits including discounts on merchandise and access to exclusive fan experiences, as well as priority access to seats in the new Republic Stadium at The Railyards. Photo courtesy of Sac Republic FC