



East Sacramento News

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FEBRUARY 13, 2026

**SEE
INSIDE**

**NEW YEAR, NEW
ROADSIDE SAFETY
PROTECTIONS**



PAGE 10

**POPULATION AND
POLITICAL CLOUT
NEAR A PLATEAU**



PAGE 5

**A WIN IS JUST
AROUND THE
CORNER**



PAGE 5



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Celebrations of Love



Participants in the Valentine Run/Walk for Justice on Feb. 14 are encouraged to dress festively, competing for best-dressed awards while showing their Valentine spirit. Photo courtesy of Valentine Run/Walk for Justice

Valentine's Day Weekend Festivities

By Idaly Valencia

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Roses are red, violets are blue, Valentine's Day falls on a weekend; what's there to do?

Valentine's Day celebrates love, friendship and admiration, and with it falling on a weekend this year, it's the perfect opportunity to make plans with those you care about.

Sacramento area residents can expect a variety of activities and events designed for couples looking for a romantic getaway or friends wanting to celebrate and spend time together. Whether a wine tasting with the girls or a romantic evening with a special someone, there are plenty of options from Friday, Feb. 13 through Sunday, Feb. 15.

Vintage Vibes on Lover's Lane

The California Automobile Museum will host a free event with museum admission, inviting couples and families to enjoy a vintage Valentine's photo opportunity, create handmade valentines and explore the museum.

The Lover's Lane event runs from

Continued on Page 3

County Launches Land Use Regulation Library

**Sacramento County
News Release**

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Planning & Environmental Review recently announced the launch of the Land Use Regulation Library at landuse.saccounty.gov.

The Land Use Regulation Library is the new permanent home for the County's Development Code, which includes the General Plan, Zoning Code (including Special Planning Areas and Neighborhood Preservation Areas), Countywide Design Guidelines, Specific Plans, Master Plans, Climate Action Plan and South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan. This library aims to improve compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act's mandate of providing accessible website and mobile app content.

"I'm proud that our team has stepped up to the challenge and significantly improved the ease of use of a wide range of the County's land use regulatory documents," said Todd Smith, Sacramento County planning director. "This first step creates a single, easy to use interface for all internal and external customers."

The library is a work-in-progress project with documents actively being converted to the new webpage format. Some content will remain as an archived PDF or as a transitional PDF until conversion is completed.

Planning staff will be adding content and taking feedback during this open beta period to improve the library experience before its targeted completion in spring.

In addition to improving accessibility, the library includes many features to improve the experience of using the Development Code.

Instead of searching through hundreds of PDF documents, one search box is now available to explore all regulations posted in the new webpage format. Learn what uses are permitted, prohibited or require a conditional use permit in each zone with a few clicks. Explore Planning definitions, applicable regulations instantly. ★

Saluting the Royal Chicano Air Force

Local Museums, Galleries Showcase RCAF Exhibitions

Royal Chicano Air Force News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - La Raza Galeria Posada (LRPG) announced a six-month regional celebration titled "InFormation" in honor of the Royal Chicano Air Force (RCAF), a seminal collective of artists and activists founded in 1970 by Sacramento State art professors José Montoya and Esteban Villa, their students and other community artists.

Now through June 16, art and literary organizations (including museums, galleries, libraries and cultural centers in Sacramento, Roseville, Davis and Woodland) will present Rebel Chicano Art Front related exhibitions, artist panels, symposia, workshops, poetry readings and film screenings.

The name "InFormation" was chosen because it reflects the Rebel Chicano Art Front's military humor and persona and also references alignment with coordination along with communication and knowledge, which embodies the regional initiative.

"This historic and dynamic collaboration



The community is encouraged to learn about the artistic impact and cultural legacy of the Royal Chicano Air Force by exploring exhibits, events and workshops at local galleries/museums throughout spring. The artwork pictured was created by Royal Chicano Air Force artist Juan Cervantes in 2006. Photo courtesy of Royal Chicano Air Force

showcases the impact of the RCAF collective's 'artist wing' on Chicana/o art and U.S. art history along

with the cultural and political contributions of its activist members and community organizations,"

said La Raza Galeria Posada's Terezita Romo. "Featuring a cross-section

Continued on Page 2



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Saluting the Royal Chicano Air Force

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Crocker Art Museum

From Feb. 22 to June 28, the Crocker Art Museum will present the “Rebels With La Causa: Royal Chicano Air Force Art and Activism, 1970-1990,” exhibit.

This new exhibition is the largest ever of the Royal Chicano Air Force and explores Sacramento’s groundbreaking artist collective that began at Sacramento State in 1970 and revolutionized graphic arts as a political tool. The exhibition features 95 vibrant posters alongside an immersive recreated print studio where visitors can explore the screen-printing process.

Curated by guest curator, Terezita Romo, the exhibition documents how Royal Chicano Air Force artists used bold bicultural aesthetics and subversive humor to fuel activism, from supporting the United Farm Workers to launching community programs like La Raza Bookstore and Breakfast for Niños.

Throughout March, Crocker Art Museum will host a film screening and artist gallery talks all at 2 p.m. On March 14, the museum will show the film “Pilots of Aztlan: Flights of the Royal Chicano Air Force” (1994) with filmmaker, Steve LaRosa. On March 15, there will be an Artist Gallery Talk with Luis C. González and there will be an Artist Gallery Talk with Rudy O. Cuellar on March 22.

The Crocker Art Museum is located at 216 O St. More information is available at crockerart.org/art/exhibitions. KVIE Channel 6

During spring, KVIE Channel 6 will be presenting a broadcast of its “Royal Chicano Air Force: Art and Activism” (Steve LaRosa and Toby Momtaz, 2021). Check programming listings for dates and times of film airings at kvie.org.

For more information about the “InFormation: A Celebration of the Royal Chicano Air Force” initiative and a continually updated listing of events and activations, visit: LRGP.org. ★

its impact as the oldest in the Sacramento region. Curated by guest curator, Terezita Romo.

From 2 to 3:30 p.m. on March 28, the museum will host a Dia de los Muertos Founders Panel. More information is available at sachistorymuseum.org/rcaf-in-mictlan/. Sacramento History Museum is located at 101 I St.

California State Library

Now through June 28, the California State Library is presenting “Viva La Lucha: Art and Work of the Royal Chicano Air Force,” a speaker series of interviews on their YouTube channel featuring Royal Chicano Air Force artists, Juan Carrillo, Rudy Cuellar, Luis González, Irma Lerma Barbosa and Juanishi Orosco.

Visit youtube.com/@CSLmultimedia for more information. California State Library is located at 900 N Street in Sacramento

Verge Center for the Arts

Now through March 22, the Verge Center for the Arts is presenting the “R.C.A.F. Mid-Flight: The Artwork and Influence of the Royal Chicano Air Force,” exhibit.

The exhibition celebrates the groundbreaking contributions of the Royal Chicano Air Force and their blend of media, culture, performance, humor and activism that championed Chicano pride, social justice and community empowerment.

The center will also host two panel discussions, one from 6 to 8 p.m. on Feb. 18 for a Royal Chicano Air Force Artists Panel Discussion and from 6 to 8 p.m. March 18, featuring an Affiliated Artists Panel Discussion.

More information is available at vergecontemporary.org/gallery/upcoming-exhibitions. The Verge Center for the Arts is located at 625 S St.

SMUD Art Gallery

Now through April 1, the SMUD Art Gallery is hosting “Face To Face: Portraits and Sketches by Esteban Villa & Juan Carrillo,” exhibit. SMUD Art Gallery is located at 6301 S St. This exhibition spotlights the personal work of two Royal Chicano Air Force founding members Esteban Villa and Juan Carrillo who helped define the collective’s aesthetic, political and community-centered practice.

From 4:30 to 6 p.m. April 1, the SMUD Art Gallery will be the closing reception and presenting the “The Sons of Villa and Carrillo: The RCAF Family Point of View,” exhibit.

California State University, Sacramento Library Gallery

Now through May 2, the California State University, Sacramento Library Gallery is hosting the “Painting la Comunitidad: Three Murals of the Royal Chicano Air Force,” exhibit.

The exhibition features large-scale reproductions of Royal Chicano Air Force murals and individual artworks, including posters and ceramics, from the university’s collections. Curated by Janina Lopez, it will also highlight the history of the Barrio Art Program and its on-going community engagement as well as audio from new oral histories with Royal Chicano Air Force artists and digital guide.

The library is located on the California State University, Sacramento campus at 6000 Jed Smith Drive. More details can be found at csus.edu/university-galleries/

Continued from page 1 of organizations and media, it will also bring attention to our region’s cultural vibrancy and the RCAF’s enduring spirit of art, activism and community.”

The “InFormation: A Celebration of the Royal Chicano Air Force” grassroots initiative was organized by members of La Raza Galeria Posada, a former Royal Chicano Air Force organization that was revived in 2024 by Royal Chicano Air Force artists, their descendants and community supporters (note: it has no relationship to the Latino Center of Art and Culture).

The mission of the initiative is to conduct and promote research on the Royal Chicano Air Force and its legacy as well as create Chicana/o and Latina/o cultural, artistic and scholarly activities for and with the community. La Raza Galeria Posada also supports the annual Dia de los Muertos observance at St. Mary’s Cemetery, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2025.

La Raza Galeria Posada’s partnership in Royal Chicano Air Force exhibitions and programming at the Sacramento History Museum, Crocker Art Museum and California State University, Sacramento Library Gallery provided the catalyst for inviting other organizations to present their own Royal Chicano Air Force-related programming.

Sacramento History Museum

Now through April 5, the Sacramento History Museum is hosting the “RCAF in Mictlán: 50th Anniversary of Dia de los Muertos” exhibit, featuring photographs, videos, ephemera and artwork. The exhibition documents the Royal Chicano Air Force’s Dia de los Muertos five-decade observance within Chicana/o history and

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Thank A Veteran TODAY

Celebrations of Love



Vocalist Vivian Lee and her quartet, joined by saxophonist Jacam Manricks, will perform Friday, Feb. 13 at The Sofia. The evening will feature classic jazz ballads, bossa novas and swing tunes for lovers. Photo courtesy of Vivian Lee



For a unique experience this Valentine's Day, couples and groups can board the River Fox Train for a two-hour dinner ride through a starlit countryside on Saturday, Feb. 14. Photo by ME Creative, River Fox Train



For those who prefer an active way to celebrate, the 23rd annual Valentine Run/Walk for Justice returns Saturday, Feb. 14. The event welcomes participants of all ages and abilities, including those using wheelchairs or strollers. Photo courtesy of Valentine Run/Walk for Justice

Continued from Page 1
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 14 at 2200 Front St. More information is available at calautomuseum.org/loverslanevalentines-dayevent.

open seating for connecting with others. The River Fox Train depot is located at 18095 County Road 117 in West Sacramento. More information and ticket reservations are available at riverfoxtrain.com/experiences/valentines-day-train.

and packages and VIP options are available for purchase as well for \$100 and are available at bit.ly/3M4X32d (case sensitive).

Valentine Run/Walk for Justice

For those who prefer an active way to celebrate, the annual Valentine Run/Walk for Justice returns Saturday, Feb. 14. Held for 23 years, the event welcomes participants of all ages and abilities, including those using wheelchairs or strollers.

The race supports Legal Services of Northern California, a nonprofit providing legal services to underserved communities. The event takes place behind Country Club Plaza Mall at 2310 Watt Ave. Participants are encouraged to dress festively, competing for best-dressed awards while showing their Valentine spirit.

The event includes Kids' Fun Runs of a quarter mile or half mile, a 1.8-mile untimed race and a 4-mile timed race for adults. The kids run begins at 8 a.m., followed by the adult races at 8:30 a.m. More information is available at www.valentine.run.

Romantic Dinner for Two

Several local restaurants are also offering special dining experiences throughout the weekend.

In Old Town Sacramento, V's Paradise at 1001 Front St. is preparing two options for Feb. 14, including a four-course meal priced at \$175 per adult and a buffet option at \$150 per adult. Guests can expect a curated wine list, craft cocktails and live entertainment featuring a saxophonist and singer. Reservations are required and can be made at bit.ly/49XHpOh (case

sensitive).

In Midtown, Paragary's at 1401 28th St. will feature a three-course Valentine's Day menu with plates such as Steak Tartare, Cacio E Pepe, 48-hour beef short rib and chocolate hazelnut tartlet. Tickets are \$150 per person, with reservations available at paragarysmidtown.com/valentines.

Zinfandel Grille, 2384 Fair Oaks Blvd., offers an Italian-inspired dining experience with freshly tossed salads, flat-iron steak, fettuccini, wood-fired pizza and cocktails. Entrée prices range from \$30 to \$50. Reservations can be made

at zinfandelgrille.com.

Galentine's Day Rosé Tasting

The weekend wraps up with a Galentine's Day Rosé Tasting on Sunday, Feb. 15 at The Tasting Fizz Champagne & Bubbles Bar inside DOCO Downtown Center at 615 David J Stern Walk, Suite 105.

The event features a tasting of rosé and brut sparkling wines and is geared toward friends looking to celebrate together. Valentine's Day reservations are also available.

For more information, call 916-573-3909 or visit fizzinsac.com. ★



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45 Years Marching for the Dream

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The 45th annual March for the Dream, hosted by MLK365, brought thousands of community members together on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 19, filling Sacramento streets with participants walking side by side in honor of Dr. King's legacy of civil rights and action.

The day's events began with "The Extra Mile" leadership march at the Oak Park Community Center at 8:30 a.m., leading into the larger March for the Dream at Sacramento City College. From there, the six-mile march set off with participants united in purpose and reflection.



This year's March for the Dream theme, "Walk and Talk," encouraged participants to converse with someone from a different background, offering a simple yet meaningful way to foster understanding and honor Dr. King's vision of unity.

addressed the crowd before the march began, including Sacramento Mayor Kevin McCarty, who delivered opening remarks to those gathered early to take part of the event. U.S. Rep. Doris Matsui joined the march, along with Elk Grove Mayor Bobbie

Singh-Allen and West Sacramento Mayor Martha Guerrero.

"Now more than ever, we must stay unified as we continue the fight for justice," McCarty shared in a post following the march. "Let's honor Dr. King's legacy by turning our

values into action throughout the year."

Several Sacramento City Council members were also present to show their support, including Eric Guerra, Rick Jennings and Caity Maple.

This year's theme, "Walk and Talk,"



Sacramento Mayor Kevin McCarty walks alongside U.S. Rep. Doris Matsui, center, and Elk Grove Mayor Bobbie Singh-Allen, right, during the 45th annual March for the Dream on Jan. 19. Photos by Geneva Jacob, Office of Mayor Kevin McCarty

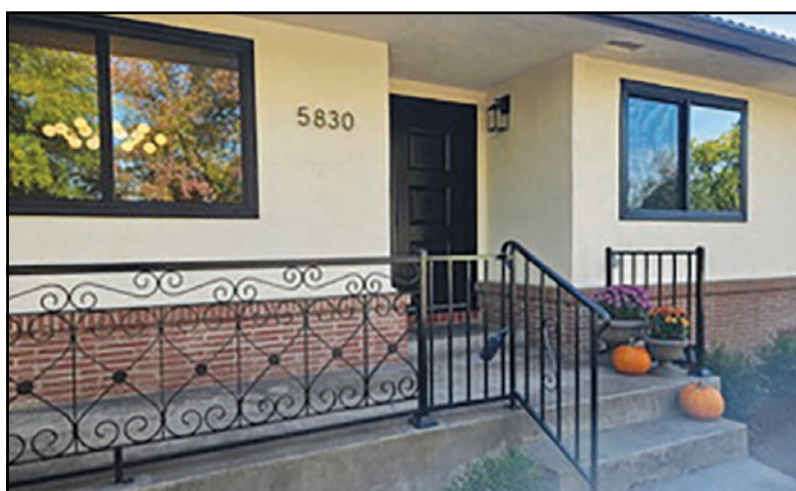
encouraged participants to engage in conversation with someone from a different background, offering a simple but meaningful way to build understanding and reflect Dr. King's vision of unity.

The march concluded at the Sacramento Convention Center, where a diversity expo was held,

returning for the first time in eight years. The expo offered attendees access to community resources, including employment opportunities, health services and educational programs, along with food and live entertainment.

Learn more about MLK365 and its mission at mlk365.org. ★

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By V.G. Harris



A Win is Just Around the Corner

There's an old saying, "it's always darkest before the dawn. Well, for the Sacramento Kings the dawn is here and very real.

Nursing a 12-game losing streak fans are more than ready to put the darkness away and welcome in the dawn. Currently, the Kings have the worst record in basketball at 12-42, and have lost four consecutive close games to Washington, Memphis, the LA Clippers and the Cleveland Cavaliers. All told the Kings lost by a total of 17 points total over a four-game span!

Many have remarked that the Kings are not as bad as their record, and if that's true, why is their record the worst in basketball?

Look no further than the resplendent coaching staff led by Doug Christie, and I say that tongue in cheek.

The game rotations are so frenetic that no one even has a guess as to who will and who will not enter the game at any given time.

Perhaps the best 3-point shooter on the team was suddenly awakened and asked to contribute six minutes in the last loss against the Cavaliers. Yes, none other than the forgotten man Doug McDermott. Someone I would like to see on a regular basis, but I have no such aspirations. Doug took one shot and returned to the bench for the rest of the contest.

Professionals simply can't succeed on a regular basis when they have no idea whether they will play or not.

While I agree with coach Christie playing the younger players given the current record, everyone on this team needs to clearly understand their role, and this team does not.

I have long wanted to see what first round draft choice Devin Carter has to offer, and finally he has managed to crack the lineup, and with notable success.

In the Cleveland game Carter was actually given 27 minutes and contributed 18 points! In addition, he had 4 rebounds, 4 assists and was 2-5 from beyond the arc. Likewise in the Clipper contest Carter contributed 14 points in just 22 minutes, adding once again 4 rebounds and 4 assists. Constantly mentioned in trade rumors,

it's time to find out what the Kings really have in a player that has been used sparingly and appears to have a big upside.

Recently, coach Christie has been putting him on the floor alongside Nique Clifford, and the tandem has produced good results.

Whether Carter and Clifford play the 1 or the 2, it's high time to find out what they each can bring to the floor every night.

Another bright spot has been the animated play of fan favorite Dylan Cardwell, who has demonstrated not only a penchant for blocking shots, but has been putting up double-doubles on a nightly basis.

Have the Kings finally found a big man to compliment Domantas Sabonis? They very well may have, and with addition of De'Andre Hunter fans are wondering what this lineup will look like when a healthy Keegan Murray returns.

No one wants to hear excuses, but the Sacramento Kings have been the walking wounded of the NBA for the vast majority of the season, and what everyone is waiting for is a healthy team that can give us an honest look into what the future may look like.

Scott Perry thankfully has resisted opportunities to trade Domantas Sabonis thus far, and I for one want to see this team build around a proven winner and someone with an attitude that is difficult to match.

Even with rotations that make fans scratch their heads, the Sacramento Kings are showing signs of life, and the recent games have been fun to watch.

Let's see if this coaching staff can bring it together and run off some impressive wins.

Nothing has been cast in stone except for the faithfulness of the Sacramento fan base, so let's give these gladiators the best we have!

The first 20 games of the season, the Kings were given one of the roughest schedules in the league, but that also means that the schedule is about to get easier.

Gird your loins Kings fans, because it's just possible that the missing piece may be either in the upcoming draft or just around the corner!

All the best! ★

Once Soaring Population Has Hit a Plateau, So Will its National Political Clout



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

The federal Census Bureau annually announces new population numbers for the country and its 50 states based on calculations of how births, deaths and migration have changed the numbers from July 1 to June 30 of the previous year.

The state Department of Finance annually announces a new California population numbers, based on its calculations of those same demographic factors during the same 12-month period.

The numbers often differ, and in past years differentials of a million persons or more have emerged from the two agencies' California calculations.

In December, the state agency declared that as of last July, California's population was 39.529 million, a gain of 19,200 since 2024. Although arithmetically insignificant, the tiny gain was hailed by officialdom and media as proof that California is no longer losing people.

Last month, the Census Bureau released its latest estimates, fixing California's population at 39.355 million, a decline of 9,465 souls from the previous year. It implies that California's slide, which began in the COVID-18 pandemic, is still happening, with a net loss of 200,394 residents since the

2020 census.

Although the 174,000 difference between the two numbers is relatively tiny, from a sociopolitical standpoint one shows growth while the other shows shrinkage. Thus California officialdom claims that predictions of the state's impending collapse are false, while its critics say California is still in decline.

There is, however, no doubt that California is, at best, at a population plateau — either gaining or losing very slowly after a 175-year history of sometimes stunning levels of population growth. During the 1980-90 decade, for example, the state's population soared by about 6 million people, a nearly 25% gain, thanks to high levels of immigration and a lofty birth rate.

Its current stasis, whatever the exact numbers, reflects stagnant levels of foreign migration, a much lower birth rate and an ongoing net loss in state-to-state migration.

Hans Johnson and Eric McGhee, demographers for the Public Policy Institute of California, have charted that trend and in a recent report declare, "This migration, over the decades, has the power to reshape the state. From 2010 through 2024 (the year of the latest data) almost 10 million people moved from California to other states, while just over 7 million people moved to California from other parts of the country, according to the American Community Survey. In fact, according to Department of Finance estimates, the state has lost residents to other states every year since 2001."

PPIC found that most of those leaving the state

are adults without college degrees. Texas is their top destination, and one could assume they are fleeing high living costs.

California is not alone in population stagnation or loss. New York and Illinois are two others and, overall, slow- or no-growth states tend to be politically blue, while the big gainers, such as Texas, Florida and the fastest grower, South Carolina, lean to the right.

The growth differential between red and blue states will likely bite the latter after the 2030 census, when the nation's 435 congressional seats are divvied up. Two new studies by reputable organizations project that California and other major blue states will lose a chunk of seats to fast-growing red states, based on the new Census Bureau data.

The American Redistricting Project and Jonathon Vervas at Carnegie Mellon University both see California losing four of its 52 seats, Texas gaining four and Florida getting either two or four.

The shift of congressional seats, of course, also shifts presidential electoral votes, meaning Republican candidates' prospects will improve and those of Democrats will decline after 2030.

There's an old saying that demographics are destiny. What's happening now underscores that truism.

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

Why is my Social Security Retirement Benefit So Small?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: Can you help me understand? I have paid into Social Security since I started working in 1978. I did have a lot of tax deductions, but I don't understand why I only receive \$350 a month from Social Security. **Signed: Befuddled Senior**

Dear Befuddled Senior: Your Social Security benefit is based upon your average monthly earnings for the 35 years over your lifetime that you earned the most while contributing to the Social Security program (however, your benefit isn't based on your contributions to SS). Your average lifetime earnings amount is called your "AIME" or "Average Indexed Monthly Earnings," which are adjusted for inflation for years before you turn 60. Your earnings (your net earnings if self-employed) are provided to the SSA by the IRS. Your average lifetime earnings number (your "AIME") is subjected to a formula which calculates your "Primary Insurance Amount" or "PIA," which is the SS benefit you receive if you start benefits in the month you reach your full retirement age. Your personal full retirement age (FRA) depends on the year you were born which, if you were born in 1960 or later, is age 67.

However, if you claim Social Security before reaching your FRA, you will get only a percentage of your PIA (reduced from what you would get if you claimed at your FRA).

For example, if you claimed at age 62, you would only get 70% of the amount you would have gotten had you waited until age 67, or if you claimed at age 63 you would get 75% of your age 67 benefit. The reduction is less as you get closer to your FRA; if you claimed at age 65, you'd get about 87% of your full retirement age amount.

You can see your lifetime Social Security earnings record at your personal "my Social Security" online account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount (you will need to first create that online account), or you can call Social Security at 1.800.772.1213 to request an "Earnings Statement" be sent to you. That statement will show your lifetime earnings by year, the 35 highest of which were used to calculate your PIA (your Social Security benefit at your FRA). Generally, your Social Security FRA benefit will be about 40% or less of your average indexed monthly earnings.

So, to recap, your SS retirement benefit isn't based on your contributions to the program; it's based on your average monthly lifetime earnings. If you had less than 35 years contributing to the program, SS would still use 35 years in the benefit formula by using zero dollars in earnings for some number of years, which would result in a smaller AIME. Thus, if you claimed before your full

retirement age of 67, your SS benefit was reduced because you claimed early. And if you had less than 35 years of SS-covered employment, your AIME was less, resulting in a smaller PIA. And that is likely why your monthly Social Security retirement benefit is low.

One other thought to consider: if you are married and your spouse's monthly SS benefit is considerably more than yours (e.g., more than twice as much as yours), you may want to explore your options for spouse benefits.

I hope this explains how your SS benefit is calculated, but if you still question your monthly SS retirement amount, I suggest you first obtain your "Earnings Statement" to review the lifetime earnings SS has on file for you. If there are any discrepancies in your Social Security's earnings record, there are correction remedies available to you. If that is the case, please feel free to contact us again for more information.

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 (amac-foundation.org/programs/social-security-dvisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amac-foundation.org. ★



Alex Pretti wasn't killed while "protesting." This is a common description of what he was doing on a Minneapolis street the fateful morning when a confrontation with federal immigration agents ended in his tragic shooting. But if Pretti had been a mere protester, he'd very likely be alive today.

Now that we've seen videos of an earlier struggle with federal agents and learned more about the organized nature of the anti-ICE resistance, it's become clear that the better word for Pretti was agitator, or perhaps even operative.

A protester, as typically understood, is someone who is making a point, often as part of a gathering of other like-minded people and, usually but not always, in opposition to something.

A protester might hold a sign outside a coal-fired power plant calling for it to shut down. He might go to Union Square Park to hear speeches from bullhorns whenever something happens that outrages the left. He might march against the Iraq War, or the Vietnam War -- or in favor of Hamas.

This kind of activity is not to everyone's taste -- personally, I hate the drums and the chants -- but there is no doubt that it is a legitimate form of political advocacy. Depending on the cause, it can even be admirable.

What we've seen in Minneapolis, though, is

Don't Abuse the Word 'Protest'

often quite different. Run-of-the-mill protesters don't seek out federal agents and harass and obstruct them. They don't follow and block their vehicles or establish a robust communications network to deploy resources to create maximum disruption of their operations.

Pretti was part of this effort, which is more a form of low-level and (by and large) nonviolent insurgency than conventional protest. In his first confrontation, 11 days before his death, Pretti was every bit an anti-ICE street brawler. He challenged, at close quarters, an agent to assault him, while screaming insults at him. He spat on a federal vehicle and kicked out its taillight.

If Pretti was an "observer," in the euphemism preferred by anti-ICE politicians and activists, he was observing how much unhinged behavior he could get away with. There's no doubt that at this event, he was the violent instigator.

After Pretti damaged the vehicle, agents got out and pushed him to the ground. For all the talk of ICE being the equivalent of the Gestapo, they didn't even bother to arrest him, despite his having committed a crime. If he'd been arrested and charged, Pretti might never have shown up at the other ICE operation and would still be with us today.

That Pretti, we now know, made it a practice to court violent encounters with federal agents while armed was incredibly irresponsible. He was fortunate that the first struggle didn't escalate into some-

thing much more hazardous to him and to others if an agent had noticed his gun.

The firearm wouldn't have been an issue in the second incident, meanwhile, if he'd really been protesting. If that were the case, he would have stayed on the sidewalk and held up a sign, or chanted, "ICE go home," and the officers might have been annoyed, but there never would have been an interaction to potentially go catastrophically wrong.

The calculation in Minneapolis, though, has been that this kind of benign activity is less effective than direct action, and unfortunately --with public opinion swinging against Operation Metro Surge -- this assessment looks to be accurate.

Why simply express a point of view when you can act to stop arrests and to create a hostile, threatening environment for agents?

This doesn't mean that Pretti got what he deserved, or that the officers acted appropriately. It does mean that the state and city officials should have been telling people not to "monitor" DHS activity, but to stay well clear of legitimate law-enforcement activities.

Reasonable people can disagree about the desirability of the goal that Pretti was pursuing, but there's no doubt about how he was going about it, and it didn't involve conventional protest.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2026 by King Features Synd., Inc. ★

Batteries are a Curbside Collection Fire Risk

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)

- Batteries are not accepted in the residential curbside collection program – here's why! Fires sparked by improperly discarded batteries and battery-embedded products are becoming an increasingly common and costly problem.

When any battery or battery-embedded product is tossed in curbside collection carts or bulky waste piles, the material is compacted together. This process is essential for efficient collection service, but when batteries are crushed, punctured or exposed to metal or liquid during compaction, they can spark, explode or ignite. Lithium-ion batteries are especially volatile, but all rechargeable batteries contain flammable and toxic materials that can create a hazardous situation.

Battery-related fires on collection routes put collection employees in immediate danger and can threaten nearby homes, businesses and roadways. Expensive collection trucks can be severely damaged or destroyed. Entire collection routes may be delayed or suspended while emergency crews respond.



When batteries are crushed, punctured or exposed to metal or liquid during compaction, they can spark, explode or ignite. Photo courtesy of Freepik

The fire risk doesn't end at the curb, either. Once a battery is at a disposal or recovery facility such as Kiefer Landfill and the North Area Recovery Station, large machinery continues the compaction process. Here too, crushed batteries can ignite and damage infrastructure, disrupt operations, harm the environment and put our staff and the public at risk. These preventable

emergencies waste time, money, resources, and most importantly, create unnecessary danger.

Complicating the issue further, many people don't realize how often batteries show up in everyday items that require proper disposal. They are inside toys, tools, greeting cards, vapes, small electronics, all rechargeable products and other everyday household devices.

Even small coin-sized batteries can trigger dangerous fires when crushed.

The good news is you can stop battery fires right at home! The safe way to get rid of old batteries and non-functioning battery-embedded products is free, easy and only takes a few steps – Tape, Tub, Take:

Tape – Check for leaks or corrosion. Tape over the positive

(+) and negative (-) ends with only clear tape for all rechargeable batteries, lithium coin/button batteries, and 9-volt and higher volt batteries.

Tub – Collect and store used batteries in a hard plastic tub or sturdy box at home.

Take – For drop-off recycling, take batteries to a local Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) drop-off facility or find a nearby battery recycling location by searching the Earth911.com website. For products embedded with permanent batteries, drop them off for free e-waste recycling at Kiefer Landfill, North Area Recovery Station or another e-waste recycling site.

One improperly discarded battery can ignite a truck, shut down services or put lives at risk. But your informed choice to drop off batteries instead of tossing them can prevent fires. Please share this message with friends, family, and neighbors. The more people who know, the safer we all are. Bottom line – batteries don't belong at the curb. Instead drop them off for proper recycling, and help protect our workers, our neighborhoods and our environment.

Learn more about proper battery recycling at SacGreenTeam.com. ★

SacRT Transitions to New Transit App

Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) is reminding riders currently using the ZipPass mobile app to begin transitioning to Transit Connect, SacRT's new mobile fare payment app, as ZipPass will retire later this year.

Transit Connect is designed to provide a smarter, simpler way to pay fares and will eventually integrate with regional transit partners for a seamless experience.

The final day to purchase passes or tickets in ZipPass was Jan. 30. The final day to use any ZipPass passes or tickets will be April 30. Los Rios students can continue using ZipPass through May 31.

Yolobus and Unitrans riders can

continue using ZipPass and will transition to Transit Connect at a later date.

Transit Connect will expand to include SacRT's transit partners throughout the region and will transition thousands of

riders from Connect Card to

Transit Connect. Full integration is expected by

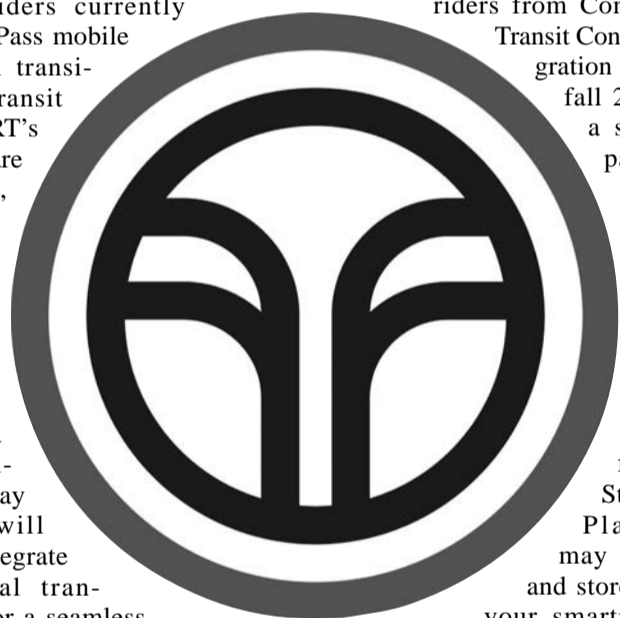
fall 2026, creating a seamless fare payment experience across multiple transit providers in a single app.

Riders can download Transit Connect now from the App Store or Google Play. Tickets may be purchased and stored directly on

your smartphone. Show your activated ticket or pass to

bus operators or fare inspectors, just like ZipPass.

For more details and instructions on setting up discount fares visit sacrt.com/transitconnect or call 916-321-BUSS (2877). ★



SCOE Honors 50 Years of Access, Equity and Inclusion

1975 IDEA Law Transformed Public Education for Millions of Children

Sacramento County Office of Education News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is one of the most significant civil rights laws in U.S. education. Enacted in 1975, IDEA ensures that children with disabilities have the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) delivered in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Before IDEA was passed, millions of children with disabilities were denied access to public schools or educated in separate settings with limited expectations. IDEA established legal protections rooted in equity, access, and inclusion, and made participation in public education a guaranteed right rather than a privilege.

SCOE Special Education Programs

For decades, the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) has been widely recognized for pioneering numerous programs in the special education field. A few Special Education Program highlights include:

Launching the Infant Development Program in 1976 to serve children (birth to age three) countywide who have delays in one or more areas of development.

Launching a program in 1980 (at what is now Leo A. Palmiter Junior/Senior High School) to provide behavioral and career technical support to students (grades 7-12) with emotional disabilities.

Providing programs through the Foundations Academy for students (ages 3-22) with emotional disabilities, severe cognitive/physical/medical disabilities or autism.

Establishing the first MOVE (Mobility Opportunities Via Education) Model Site in Northern California to empower children with severe orthopedic impairments. Serving students at El Centro Junior/Senior High School (the Juvenile Court School located inside the Sacramento County Youth Detention Facility) and at three Community School sites that provide an alternative educational program for students from local school districts.

Building district partnerships through Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Network to engage families, schools, and communities, including families of children with disabilities.

Sacramento County Office of Education also operates a number of projects funded by the California Department

of Education (CDE) Special Education Division. Sacramento County Office of Education co-leads the new California Center for Inclusive College (CCIC) to expand programs for postsecondary students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Seeds of Partnership, a training and technical assistance program with a focus on family engagement and school partnerships, supports 33 Family Empowerment Centers. Robin Ryan, the Seeds of Partnership Coordinator, is one of several guests invited to speak at an IDEA celebration ceremony being held by the California Department of Education this February.

Sacramento County Office of Education continues to be involved in a variety of short- and long-term initiatives that support and advance services for students with disabilities – including their families and the educators who serve them. One of the top priorities of the Sacramento County Board of Education continues to be working to advance equity within SCOE and school districts.

Get Ideas for Classroom Activities

In recognition of IDEA's 50th anniversary, the Sacramento County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) has partnered with the SELPA Administrators of California to share a monthly series of teacher resources and disability highlights. Topics, including suggestions for possible school activities, encompass accessibility, inclusion, student voice, and transition to postsecondary life. It also highlights the accomplishments of California pioneers whose advocacy shaped disability rights and inclusive education.

Sacramento County Office of Education helped the Sacramento County SELPA mark the 50-year milestone by hosting a display in its lobby this January for visitors to learn about the history, progress, and lasting impact of IDEA.

IDEA Background

Originally passed as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, IDEA emerged from the broader civil rights movement and was influenced by landmark court cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education* and *PARC v. Pennsylvania*. Over time, amendments expanded disability categories, strengthened parental involvement, emphasized transition services, and aligned special education with general education reform. IDEA continues to be the foundation of special education nationwide, promoting meaningful educational outcomes for students with disabilities. ★



Board Approves SHRA Assessment and Interim Executive Officer

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved yesterday, in a unanimous vote, an agreement with CVR & Associates to provide an organizational assessment to evaluate Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency's (SHRA) public housing and voucher programs, housing finance processes and governance structure.

The Board also approved the appointment of Kris Warren of CVS & Associates as the Interim Executive Officer for Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. The agreement is a one-year term from Feb. 1, 2026, to Jan. 31, 2027.

"This item...could lead to the greatest changes in affordable housing policy at the County of Sacramento in 40 years," said District 2 Supervisor Patrick Kennedy, who pulled the item for discussion. "It's been a long time coming and there's more hard work ahead of us."

"This will go further in housing people who are currently unhoused or are in critical need of housing than almost anything we have done in years."

The outcomes of the organizational assessment will include actionable recommendations and implementation

guidance to enhance efficiency, transparency, and alignment with County priorities and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements.

CVR & Associates was selected through a Request for Proposal process seeking qualified firms to provide consultant services and an experienced executive leader.

A four-member evaluation committee, comprised of two representatives from the County and two representatives from the City of Sacramento, selected CVR & Associates based on its demonstrated expertise in housing policy, organizational assessments and executive consulting.

The Sacramento City Council continued the agenda item to a later date at its meeting yesterday.

The organizational assessment will move forward. The Interim Executive Officer appointment is subject to concurrence by the Sacramento City Council at a future meeting, following the Board of Supervisors' approval yesterday.

Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency is a Joint Powers Authority between the county and city of Sacramento. It was created to ensure the ongoing development of affordable housing in the city and county of Sacramento. ★

Sacramento Children's Home to Host Annual Crab Feed & Auction

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Children's Home will bring the community together for its 28th Annual Crab Feed & Auction from 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 21 at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in East Sacramento.

The crab feed is the nonprofit's largest fundraising event of the season, drawing supporters for an evening centered on food, connection and giving back. Guests will be treated to all-you-can-eat crab along with pasta, bread and desserts, plus



The Annual Crab Feed & Auction, Feb. 21 at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, is Sacramento Children's Home's largest fundraiser of the season, benefiting vulnerable children and families throughout the region. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Children's Home

unlimited beverages throughout the night. An open bar is included with the price of

admission. In addition to dinner, the event will

feature live and silent auctions (as well as the crowd favorite cake auction) offering a range of items and experiences. Proceeds from the evening will support the Sacramento Children's Home's mission of providing care and resources for vulnerable children and families in the region.

The Sacramento Children's Home Annual Crab Feed & Auction will take place at 616 Alhambra Blvd. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit kidshome.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/CrabFeed2026. ★

ABOUT TOWN

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,” closes Feb. 15. 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 aerospacemuseum.org.

California Automobile Museum – 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. Details at calautomuseum.org.

California Museum – “Kokoro: The Story of Sacramento's Lost Japantown,” through March 29.

Featuring rare family photographs drawn from the personal collections of community members, the exhibit documents the

memories at the heart of a once-thriving downtown community devastated first by forced removal during World War II and again by redevelopment in the 1950s. Details at californiamuseum.org.

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

Sacramento History Museum – RCAF in

Mictlán: 50th Anniversary of Día de los Muertos, through April 5. The exhibit will be highlighted by public programs that document and celebrate the 50-year history of the Día de los Muertos (DDL) 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. Grateful Dead laser show, “for Phil, Donna and Bobby,” March 6 and 7. Details at visitmosac.org.

Elks Lodge 6

Calendar of Events
Valentine's Day Dinner and Dance with the Leaping Blennies, 4:30 to

10 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 14. Beef bourguignon dinner \$30; \$15 for dance only. Tickets weekdays 9-3 at Elks Lodge 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd. or call (916) 442-6666.

Irish Tea Party, 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 1. St. Patrick's Day themed. Irish music band, food and fun for adults and kids. Adults \$35; kids \$20. Tickets weekdays 9-3 at Elks Lodge 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd. or call (916) 442-6666.

Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am; \$15 tax included.

Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.net for weekly menu. ★

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Gymnastics Sweeps MPSF Weekly Awards

UC Davis Athletics News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - For the first time this season UC Davis gymnastics has brought home Mountain Pacific Sports Federation weekly awards sweeping all three following the weekend with Amelia Moneymaker (Gymnast of the Week), Molly Osborne (Freshman of the Week) and Avah Reichow (Specialist of the Week) all bringing home the honors.

UC Davis used the top performances by the three Aggies to win its quad meet at Sacramento State on Saturday, Jan. 23, besting the Hornets, Western Michigan and UW-Whitewater at the Nest.

For the 18th time in her career, extending her school record, and 13th-straight time (school record) going back to last season Moneymaker broke the 39,000 threshold in the all-around, winning the title at Sacramento State with a mark of 39.275. Along the way she posted the first 9.900 (beam) by an Aggie this season and won the individual floor (9.875) and beam events. The



Pictured is Molly Osborne, who was named UC Davis Gymnastics Freshman of the Week. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

Aggie all-rounder added a season-high mark of 9.825 for a second-place finish on bars to help power the Aggies to the quad meet victory.

Moneymaker was named the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) Gymnast of the Week four times in 2025, with this being her first of 2026.

Osborne played her part on beam, posting a career-high

mark of 9.800 that gave her a fourth-place finish on that event. Osborne also had solid marks on vault (9.700) and bars (9.725) to add to the Aggie totals that eventually gave them the meet victory, sending stingers down.

With career highs on both beam and floor, Reichow brought home her first career Mountain Pacific Sports Federation weekly award after top finishes across

three events. On floor, Reichow finished second just behind Moneymaker, posting a 9.850 to help UC Davis sweep the podium and win the overall floor event. While on vault her 9.750 gave her a fifth-place finish to go along with her 9.700 on beam.

General admission for all meets runs \$13 while youth (3-13), UC Davis staff members and fans Seniors (65-plus) can

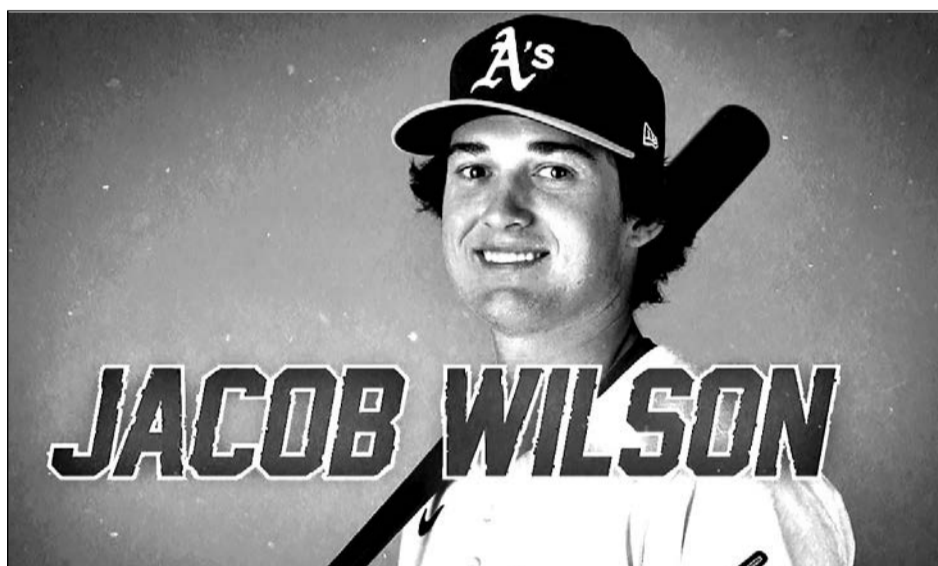
get in the door for \$10. Group outings (minimum of 10) can get their tickets at \$10 apiece. With the \$80 Flexbook, fans receive 10 general admission ticket vouchers that can be redeemed for any of the four home meets during the season in any combination desired. Fans can secure their spot in the University Credit Union Center by hitting the link, by calling the Aggie Ticket Office at (530) 752-2471 or by emailing the Aggie Ticket Office at aggietickets@ucdavis.edu.

About UC Davis Athletics

UC Davis, the No. 2 ranked public university by the Wall Street Journal, is home to 40,000 undergraduate students and 12,000 employees. Ranked No. 1 in Agriculture and Forestry as well as No. 1 in Veterinary Medicine, UC Davis is in a true California college town nestled between world-class destinations such as the San Francisco Bay Area, Napa Valley and Lake Tahoe. Over 650 Aggie student-athletes compete in 25 Division I varsity sports, with 16 sports transitioning to the Mountain West Conference beginning in 2026-27. ★

A's Agree to Terms with SS Jacob Wilson

Midfielder Pep Casas to Join 2026 Campaign



The Athletics have agreed to terms with shortstop Jacob Wilson on a seven-year contract through the 2032 season. Photo courtesy of MLB

Athletics News Release

LAS VEGAS, NV (MPG) - The Athletics have agreed to terms with shortstop Jacob Wilson on a seven-year contract through the 2032 season with a club option for 2033, the club announced today.

Wilson batted .311 with 13 home runs, 63 RBI, .355 OBP and an .800 OPS in 125 games last season with the A's. He struck out just 39 times in 2025 and his 13.41 strikeouts per plate appearance were second fewest in MLB behind San Diego's Luis Arraez (32.14). His .311 batting average was tied second highest in MLB in 2025 behind New York-AL's Aaron Judge (.331) and tied with Toronto's Bo Bichette.

Wilson earned American League Rookie of the Month honors for the month of May after posting a .368/.437/.538 slashline with six doubles, four home runs, 16 RBI and just eight strikeouts in May. He was the runner-up for American League Rookie of the Year to teammate Nick Kurtz, marking the first time a team has had the first and second place finishers in American League Rookie of the Year Voting since the 1984 Mariners (Alvin Davis, Mark Langston).

Wilson was elected by the fans as

starting shortstop for the American League in the 2025 All-Star Game and became the first rookie shortstop to be elected by the fans. He was also the second rookie shortstop to start an All-Star Game along with the Orioles Ron Hansen, who started both All-Star Games in 1960. He was the first Athletic to start an All-Star Game since Josh Donaldson at third base in 2014 and the first shortstop since Bert Campaneris made three straight starts from 1973-75.

Since debuting on July 19, 2024, Wilson is a career .301 hitter with 13 home runs, 66 RBI and a .772 OPS in 153 games in two seasons in the majors. He was the A's first round selection in the 2023 First-Year Player Draft out of Grand Canyon University.

Wilson is one of four players under contract through at least the 2028 season, when the A's are scheduled to open their new ballpark in Las Vegas. He joins Lawrence Butler, who inked a seven-year deal through the 2031 season with a club option for 2032 on Mar. 10, 2025, Brent Rooker, who signed a five-year contract through 2029 with a club option for 2030 on Jan. 23, 2025, and Tyler Soderstrom, who signed a seven-year contract through 2032 with a club option for 2033 on Dec. 29, 2025. ★

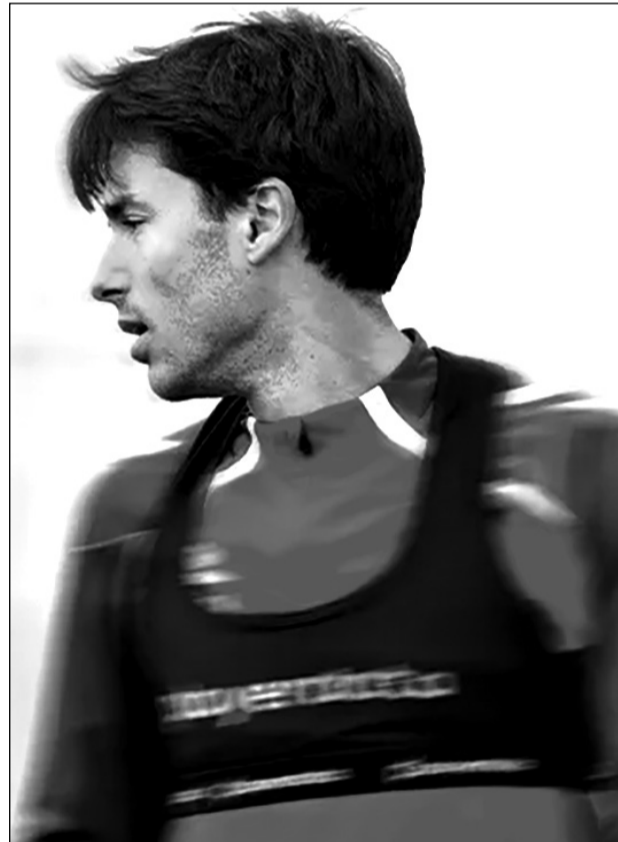
Sacramento Republic FC News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento Republic FC recently announced that the club has signed midfielder José "Pep" Casas. He will be added to the team's roster pending league and federation approval. Per club policy, the terms of the contract were not disclosed.

"Pep fits the mold for the types of talented, up-and-coming players who do well in USL Championship," said Republic FC Head Coach Neill Collins. "We look forward to welcoming him to the Indomitable Club and are excited to be a part of this next step in his career."

Casas added, "I'm really excited to join Sacramento Republic. It's a club with a great culture and passionate fans, and I can't wait to get started and give everything I have for the team."

A native of Barcelona, Spain, Casas got his start in FC Barcelona's famed youth academy, La Masia. He later made the move to English club Ipswich Town before closing out his youth career in Spain with CE Europa. The 25-year-old came to the United States to begin his collegiate career Indiana Tech before transferring to University of North Carolina Wilmington. With the Seahawks, he appeared in every game possible and recorded two goals and two assists and earned selection to the 2023 Coastal



Sacramento Republic FC recently announced that the club has signed midfielder José "Pep" Casas. Photo courtesy Sacramento Republic FC

Athletic Association Second Team.

In 2024, Casas was selected 61st overall in the Major League Soccer (MLS) SuperDraft by Inter Miami CF. He made two Major League Soccer appearances for the club before joining Inter Miami CF II. With the Major League Soccer (MLS) NEXT Pro side, he made 25 appearances and added two assists, while maintaining an impressive 86 percent passing accuracy. Last year, he joined Nashville SC's reserve side Huntsville City FC and played over 2,000 minutes to help the team reach

the postseason for the first time. He closed out the season with a stellar 91 percent pass success rate.

Sacramento Republic FC will open the 2026 season at home on March 7 when the Indomitable Club hosts Western Conference Champion FC Tulsa. Kickoff for the 13th season is set for 7 p.m. at Heart Health Park. Fans secure their seat for the entire 2026 season by becoming a member today and lock in the lowest prices of the year. Group tickets are on sale now and single match tickets will be available beginning Feb. 5 at SacRepublicFC.com. ★

Men's Tennis Wins the 2025 CCCAA Team GPA Award



American River College Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - For the second consecutive season, and the third in four years, the ARC men's tennis team won the CCCAA Team GPA Award. The honor goes to the men's tennis team that

had the highest cumulative team GPA in the state of California. The Beavers also won the award in three consecutive seasons from 2008-2010. In 2025 the program posted its highest team GPA in their history, with an overall GPA of 3.89, far surpassing their previous record of 3.53 set in 2024. ★

For the second consecutive season, and the third in four years, the ARC men's tennis team won the CCCAA Team GPA Award. Photo courtesy American River College

New Year, New Roadside Safety Protections

California's Expanded "Slow Down, Move Over" Law Now Covers All Stopped Drivers and Passengers Roadside

California Office of Traffic Safety News Release

CALIFORNIA (MPG) - California's expanded "Slow Down, Move Over" law officially took effect Jan. 1, adding lifesaving protections for all stranded drivers and passengers on the roadside. The strengthened requirement compels drivers to move over, or slow down if unsafe to do so, for any stopped vehicle using hazard lights or emergency indicators, including everyday drivers experiencing mechanical trouble or emergencies.

The change, authorized under Assembly Bill 390, legislation sponsored by AAA, comes during a nationwide spike in roadside deaths that safety leaders are calling a crisis.

"Whether you're a stranded driver or a first responder, standing just feet from high speed traffic has become increasingly deadly," said Auto Club Corporate Communications Manager Doug Shupe. "This law equips California drivers with a clear, enforceable rule that can prevent more needless deaths."

With AB 390 now in effect, California joins 28 other states, and the District of Columbia, with expanded Slow Down, Move Over protections to include all stopped vehicles.

Violations in California can result in fines up to \$1,000 and points on a driver's record for unsafe behavior near stopped vehicles.

"Too many Californians are losing their lives simply because passing drivers fail to slow down or move over," said CHP Commissioner Sean Duryee. "This expanded law makes clear that every person on the roadside, whether a driver or a passenger,



The change, authorized under Assembly Bill 390, legislation sponsored by AAA, comes during a nationwide spike in roadside deaths that safety leaders are calling a crisis. Photo courtesy of California Office of Traffic Safety

deserves the same margin of safety. Obeying 'Slow Down, Move Over' is not just a courtesy; it is a legal responsibility that saves lives."

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, using data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System, reveals roadside fatalities are rising sharply. In California, the number of people killed roadside increased nearly 77% from 2014 to 2023. This alarming trend in people killed roadside is driven by higher speeds, distracted driving and limited shoulder space on modern freeways, data shows.

Additional recent national findings highlight the severity of

the problem. According to the Emergency Responder Safety Institute, 46 emergency responders were killed last year in the U.S. after being struck while assisting at roadside scenes — police officers, firefighters, EMTs and tow truck operators. Tow operators face some of the deadliest conditions on America's roadways. Hundreds of stranded drivers are killed every year while waiting for help or attempting simple fixes like changing a tire.

"Everyone traveling on California's roads and highways deserves to arrive safely at their destination," said Caltrans Director Dina El-Tawansy. "The provisions added to the Move

Over law will help keep more people safe and continue protecting the highway workers and first responders risking their lives to serve others. When we make conscious decisions to benefit the safety of our fellow travelers and dedicated public servants, it creates a safer, more enjoyable travel experience for all."

Daniel Lazaro, a tow truck operator for Preferred Towing, lost his friend at the roadside in October last year. Fifty-seven-year-old Carlos Trejo was struck and killed while helping a stranded Auto Club member on I-110.

"Carlos was a caring person who would always bring up his family in a joyful and proud

way, especially his grandchildren," said Lazaro. "As he would clock out every day to go home, he would always tell everyone clocking in to be careful and to be safe out there."

Many drivers don't understand the law and it's costing lives. An Oct. 2025 national study from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found the following. 36% of drivers captured on roadside video did not slow down or change lanes — violating the law entirely; drivers were least likely to protect tow operators, with only 58% complying near stopped tow trucks; and two thirds of drivers said they were familiar with "Slow Down, Move Over" laws, yet many could not accurately explain what was required.

The research also found that while some drivers do change lanes, many fail to reduce speed, leaving dangerously little margin if something goes wrong.

As of Jan. 1, drivers must take these simple actions when approaching a stopped vehicle. Change lanes away from the stopped vehicle, if safe to do so. If changing lanes is not possible, slow down to a safe, reasonable speed. The message is clear: See hazards or a stopped vehicle? Slow down. Move over. Save a life.

"As you head out on your next trip, keep in mind that the driver with a flat tire or other roadside car trouble could very well be you," OTS Director Stephanie Dougherty said. "Please move over a lane or slow down for highway workers, first responders, tow truck drivers and other stopped vehicles on the side of the road or shoulder. Make safety the destination we all share by looking out for every vehicle and person on the roadside." ★

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