



**Celebrate the
VW Split-Window
on a Sunday**

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Land Park News

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Making William Land Park Safer for All



In a recent news release, the Land Park Community Association called for action to make Land Park safer for all by addressing traffic-related public safety concerns. Photo courtesy of Land Park Community Association

**By Roman Ambroselli
Land Park Community
Association**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - For more than a century, William Land Park has been one of Sacramento's most treasured public spaces. Spanning more than 200 acres, it is where families gather, children learn to ride bikes, youth teams compete and

neighbors come together for recreation and community events. But as Sacramento grows, the park's infrastructure and policies must evolve, too. That is why the proposal introduced by Councilmember Rick Jennings and co-sponsored by Councilmembers Eric Guerra and Phil Pluckebaum deserves strong community support.

The William Land Park Public Safety, Bike and Pedestrian Safety, and Review of Current and Future Uses proposal offers a thoughtful path forward to ensure the park remains safe, accessible and welcoming for all. The proposal begins with a simple recognition: William Land Park was designed in a different era. When it

Continued on page 4

City Receives Grant to Support Cannabis Equity

**City of Sacramento
News Release**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - State officials have awarded the City of Sacramento \$2.5 million to support equity efforts in the local cannabis industry. The funding comes from the Cannabis Equity Grants Program for Local Jurisdictions, administered by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (Go-Biz). Sacramento received the second largest allocation from the program's \$15 million statewide funding pool, behind Los Angeles. The city previously received this funding, which has helped support participants in the city's Cannabis Opportunity Reinvestment and Equity (CORE) program. "This grant expands the support available to CORE participants as they navigate the cannabis industry and build sustainable businesses," said Al Romero-Gibu, who leads the city's Office of Cannabis Management. The grant funding will provide technical assistance and business support for CORE participants. Services may include guidance on legal and regulatory compliance, accounting and taxes, construction and architecture, security planning, marketing and branding, human resources and labor matters, and commercial real estate. The city established the CORE program in 2018 to help reduce barriers to entry in the local cannabis industry. The program provides training, mentoring, financial assistance and other support to individuals affected by the disproportionate enforcement of cannabis-related laws. Sacramento is one of 14 jurisdictions across California to receive local equity funding from the state this year. The city also continues to expand its local cannabis regulatory framework. In 2024, the City Council approved a pilot program for cannabis social consumption and the city is developing regulations for cannabis consumption lounges and related zoning updates. For more information about the CORE program, visit sacramentocore.org.

Film Grants Return to Boost Local Productions



The city recently announced that its Film and Media Department is accepting applications for grants available to local filmmakers and production companies, funded by the voter-approved half-cent sales tax, Measure U. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

**City of Sacramento
News Release**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento filmmakers and production companies can now apply for grants that help offset production costs and support film and television projects shot in the city. Administered by the Sacramento Film + Media office and funded by

Measure U, the grant program is now in its fifth year supporting productions filmed in Sacramento. "This program has helped Sacramento filmmakers bring their projects to life over the past several years," said Sacramento Film Commissioner Jennifer West. "Continuing to invest in local productions strengthens our creative economy, supports local crews and

businesses, and keeps film activity growing in our community." Applications close May 15. Up to six production grants of \$10,000 and up to two post-production grants of \$5,000 will be awarded across two grant rounds. Grant funds can be used to subsidize permit fees, offset the cost of safety personnel and reimburse

Continued on page 7

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Celebrate the VW Split-Window on a Sunday

Story and photos by J.G. Wirt

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Since the 2023 closure of Sacramento Raceway Park on Excelsior Road, and the end of the Bugorama, fans of classic and custom Volkswagens have had fewer opportunities to find their wheels of choice gathered in large numbers.

But for bus people, the twice-yearly gathering of the Society of Transporter Owners (SOTO) helps to fill the gap, bringing VW fans together to compare rides and talk shop. The club lives for split-window buses, vans, campers, trucks and specialty vehicles, from family haulers to rigs for tradespeople and emergency crews.

The free March 29 gathering in Carmichael will include resurrected barn and field-finds, lucky survivors and meticulously restored classics. And these are cherished vehicles with plenty of history.

The SOTO gathering allows only split-window transporters, those from 1950 to 1967. After that, Volkswagen began with the “bay-window” model, whose flatter face wasn’t quite as cartoon-friendly-looking.

The SOTO members’ air-cooled, rear-engined rides can range from original low-horsepower flat-four motivation on up to bored-out, custom 100-plus-horsepower mills that add a good dose of oomph.

Some owners also modify their suspensions and swap their original transmissions for “freeway-flyer” gearing so they



This 13-window Deluxe model has flip-up “safari” windows in front and extra corner windows in the rear.



This early Volkswagen’s panel advertises a fishing shop.

can keep up with traffic.

One big thing these days is VW vans with original shop logos on the sides. Windowless vans allowed for billboard-size ads for tradespeople and delivery drivers, and transporter enthusiasts are always on the lookout for original

paint. In Carmichael, there might even be a VW fire truck, an ambulance or a ladder truck (bring the kids.)

The SOTO meet happens from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, March 29 at Milagro Centre, 6241 Fair

Oaks Blvd. in Carmichael.

Stop by early and wander the rows. Praise the patina. Have a look inside. You might catch a whiff of wet dog and scorched oil. Tell the club members about that old bus your cool uncle once had. Buy a T-shirt. ★



The Society of Transporter Owners’ Spring Meet is Sunday, March 29 at Milagro Centre in Carmichael.



This early transporter is customized with flip-up “safari” windows, foglamps and a roof rack.



SacYard Community Tap House to Present Taste of East Sacramento

East Sacramento Chamber of Commerce News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The annual Taste of East Sacramento returns on 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 18 at Annunciation Greek

Orthodox Church, 616 Alhambra Blvd.

This popular community event, presented by SacYard Community Tap House, features tastings from more than 50 local restaurants and food and beverage vendors, along with live entertainment, a silent auction and a wine pull.

Guests can sample some of the best cuisine East Sacramento has to offer while connecting with friends and neighbors.

Bike valet will be provided by Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates.

Learn more and purchase tickets at tasteofeast-sacramento.com. ★

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Frank Returns by a Wing and a Prayer

By Stephen B. Clazie

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The March 13 issue of both the Land Park News and the Pocket News featured a front-page story about a lone turkey roosting on the roof of Sacramento Fire Station 13 at 6135 Gloria Drive. Fire crews on different shifts offered various names: Fred or Tony, but “Frank” stuck.

The story recounted how Frank quickly established his territory at the nearby intersection. Despite the presence of a perfectly good traffic signal, he appointed himself traffic controller. Firefighters inside the station would hear eruptions of honking horns. When they stepped outside, they often found Frank planted squarely in the roadway, cars frozen in every direction.

He had strong opinions about vehicles. Brown UPS trucks and the neighborhood mail carrier ranked high on his list of offenders. No one ever clocked his speed, but Frank could match the posted limit while charging down the center of the street, wings flapping, feathers flying and drivers retreating.

In January, Frank was

struck by a car and broke his left wing, ending his rooftop flights. The Station 13 crew made him a bed near the rear door and kept an eye on him. He continued to forage in Reichmuth Park, supplemented by breadcrumbs from firefighters and birdseed from a neighborhood resident who stopped by regularly.

Near the end of February, Frank was attacked by a dog. The last sighting of the now-grounded traffic officer was of him running at full speed away from the station.

Frank had become more than a familiar face; he was a neighborhood legend.

The story noted that his memory would linger long after the bay doors closed each night. In Southland Park, the children and families who came to visit him would not soon forget the warmth, laughter and quiet joy he brought to their lives.

Many visitors said they were offering prayers for Frank.

Then, exactly one month after the story was published, rumors began to circulate: Frank was alive!

After the dog attack, everyone assumed he couldn't escape; after all,



By a wing and a prayer, Frank, the beloved neighborhood turkey known to frequent the intersection near Sacramento Fire Station 13, has been spotted again following fears he may have taken his final roost. Courtesy photo

wild turkeys can fly only about a quarter of a mile. People wondered if it could really be him, and some speculated he may

have survived by a “wing and a prayer.”

Station 13 firefighter Eric Pohl said he could hardly believe it. He went

for a drive and was thrilled to confirm that Frank was, indeed, alive.

It brought to mind a famous line often

attributed to Mark Twain; one Frank himself might appreciate: “The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated.” ★

Front Street Animal Shelter Highlights Efforts in Annual Report

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The city's Front Street Animal Shelter recently released its 2025 Annual Report, detailing the year's successful programs and accomplishments.

Throughout the year, thousands of animals came through the shelter's doors in need of safety, medical care and a second chance.

Many more animals were supported through community outreach and prevention services such as the free community microchip and vaccination clinics, which provided service to over 5,000 community animals last year.

A few highlights from 2025 include: 3,380 dogs and 2,472 cats were adopted; 1,724 lost pets were reunited with their families; and 803 volunteers donated more than 80,000 hours of their time.

“Every adoption, reunion and life saved is possible because of this community,” said Animal Care Services Manager

Phillip Zimmerman. “From the staff and officers who care for animals each day to the volunteers, fosters and reporters who stand beside us, you are the reason hope is possible for Sacramento's animals.”

Last year, Front Street Animal Shelter continued its mission of caring for Sacramento's animals while expanding programs like the Homeless Outreach and Assistance Program (HOAP) that help pets and their families stay together. In 2025, 1,888 pets, a 43% increase from the prior year, were provided with care such as medical exams and preventative treatments.

In addition, programs like Doggie Day Out were expanded to offer Jog-a-dog, and Pups and PJs, to give community members the opportunity to take a dog out of the shelter for a day or night. These programs help dogs decompress and increases their chances of adoption.

To learn more about these programs and how to get involved, community members can visit frontstreetshelter.org. ★



In a recent news release, the city highlighted the Front Street Animal Shelter's efforts in animal control and care over the past year, citing its annual report, which includes thousands of adoptions, reunions of lost pets with their owners and hours of volunteer service. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

Upcoming Candidate Forums in the Community

East Sacramento Community Association News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - There will be a Sacramento County Supervisor District 1 Candidates' Forum taking place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 9 at the Coloma Center Auditorium, 4623 T St.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Early arrival

is recommended as space is limited. This forum is co-hosted by the Elmhurst Neighborhood Association, East Sacramento Community Association and the Southside Neighborhood Association. Confirmed attendees include candidates Dr. Flo Cofer, Councilmember Eric Guerra and former State Sen. Deborah Ortiz. All candidates that file will be invited.

The forum will be moderated by the League of Women Voters. For details, email ElmhurstNeighborhoodAssocSac@gmail.com.

Congressional District 6 Forum

With the Prop 50 redistricting, East Sacramento is now in District 6 with a long list of potential candidates.

District 6 extends from Roseville/Rocklin, Citrus Heights, and East Sacramento to Natomas, North Sacramento and West Sacramento. East Sacramento Community Association is partnering with neighborhood associations in the Natomas and North Sacramento areas for a Candidates Forum in late April. ★



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PENDING SALE

BRICK NORMANDY TUDOR

Located just across from William Land Park, this stunning Brick Normandy Tudor offers a blend of classic elegance and modern amenities. The decorative front wrought iron gate leads into a beautifully manicured formal garden with large fountain which sets the tone for the home's graceful charm. Formal entry leads to a spacious living room with cozy fireplace and French doors opening to a bright solarium room. The dining room has beamed ceiling and is perfect for formal entertaining. A smaller music room/den sits just off the dining room. The spacious remodeled kitchen boasts granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, an island with a sink, a wine refrigerator, and a breakfast bar for casual dining. The solarium room, accessible from both the kitchen and living room, features an artistically painted concrete floor and two sets of French doors that lead to the yard. The ground floor also features a half bath and access to a quarter

basement. Upstairs, you'll find three spacious bedrooms and two bathrooms. The primary bathroom is equipped with dual sinks, jetted tub, tiled floors and an over-sized two-person shower with a steam feature. The hall bathroom offers a large glass stall shower with Italian finishes. Custom French doors in all three bedrooms open to charming railings. The backyard is designed for relaxation and entertainment, complete with a built-in pool and spa, patio areas, an outdoor kitchen with BBQ, wine refrigerator, bar and a gas fireplace with a French flair. A custom electric driveway gate leads to a Carriage House garage with space for three cars, a workshop, and a full bathroom, which can be accessed from both the garage and pool area. The main home also includes two additional garage spaces. This exceptional property showcases exquisite details and offers a luxurious lifestyle in a prime location. 1716 Sutterville Road \$1,599,000



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CalBRE# 00784986



Easter Bunny Arriving Early at Lodge 6

Story and photo by Stephen B. Clazie

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Elks Lodge 6's brand-new Exalted Ruler, Carol "Coach" Mitchell, is proud to announce that, for the second year in a row, the Easter Bunny will make a special appearance a week before Easter at Elks Lodge 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd. The event is open to the public.

"This Sunday, March 29, we will feature a special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast with Easter Bunny photos and an outdoor egg hunt," Mitchell said.

Breakfast will be served from 8:30 to 11 a.m.

The Elks Easter egg hunt begins at 11 a.m. Glen Smith, who is in charge of the Elks breakfast, said the hunt will take place outdoors, weather permitting.

"If the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll move it indoors," Smith said. "The egg hunt is open to the public, and breakfast participation is not necessary."

The special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast will feature a ham carving station, cinnamon rolls and an egg casserole.

Pancakes or waffles, coffee and juice will also be served.

"We will not have our regular breakfast menu, and there will be no omelets," Smith said. He added that scrambled eggs will likely be prepared to order for children.

Breakfast is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children under 10. Children under 5 eat free.

Large family groups are encouraged to make reservations by calling 916-422-6666.

Bob Luttrell is looking forward to bringing his family to the special Elks Lodge 6 Easter Breakfast, which will include photos with the Easter Bunny and an egg hunt.



Pictured are Bob Luttrell's son-in-law Dustin Finch, Luttrell, his wife Kathy and daughter Shelby, overlooking the large collection of eggs gathered by Holland and Sofia Finch. Luttrell said last year's event was a great Easter celebration. ★

Making William Land Park Safer for All

Continued from page 1

was developed in the early 20th century, Sacramento was smaller, and cars were fewer and slower.

Today, the park's internal roadways often function as cut-through routes for drivers rather than quiet parkways.

As a result, pedestrians and cyclists frequently share space with fast-moving traffic, an environment that can feel unsafe for families and park visitors.

This challenge is especially evident in the Panhandle area, which functions as the neighborhood park within the larger park. With its splash pad, playground, picnic tables and open space, it serves families from Land Park, Upper Land Park and South Land Park. Yet vehicles routinely

pass through nearby streets at speeds that were never envisioned when the park was designed.

Creating safer green spaces for people, not just cars, should be a priority.

One of the most promising elements of the proposal is a 24-month pilot program that would create a car-free corridor along 12th Avenue between Riverside Boulevard and 13th Street.

Temporarily removing vehicle traffic from this segment would provide a safe space for walking, biking and recreation while allowing the city to evaluate the benefits through real-world data.

For families with young children, the benefits are clear. A car-free area offers a place where kids can bike, skate and play

without the constant concern of passing traffic. For pedestrians and cyclists, it creates a more comfortable and accessible park experience. And for the park itself, it helps restore the environment people expect when visiting a public green space.

The proposal also recognizes that safety requires a comprehensive approach. A Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) review conducted by the Sacramento Police Department would help to identify improvements in lighting, technology and park security.

These steps can help address longstanding concerns about illicit activity and ensure the park remains safe throughout the day and evening.

Equally important is the

proposal's emphasis on collaboration. A working group including representatives from the Sacramento Zoo, Fairytale Town, Funderland Amusement Park, youth sports organizations, neighborhood groups and park advocates will ensure that future decisions reflect the needs of the many communities who rely on William Land Park.

William Land Park remains one of Sacramento's greatest public assets. Protecting that asset requires thoughtful planning and a willingness to adapt.

By prioritizing safety, improving pedestrian access and engaging the community, this proposal moves us in the right direction.

Roman Ambroselli is a board member for the Land Park Community Association and serves as the chair for the association's Traffic Safety Committee. For more information, visit landpark.org. ★



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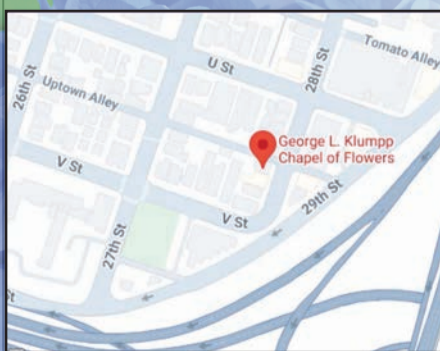
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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



The End Is in Sight

Things are happening in Sactown and not every Kings fan is happy. Yes, even though our hometown ballers have won five out of the last eight games, there are long time Kings fans that aren't entirely thrilled.

This is because with each win the Kings statistically have a lesser chance of garnishing the No. 1 pick, or even a top four pick in the upcoming NBA draft.

So, what's the option. To intentionally try to lose a game. I hope our team never stoops to such measures. Tanking is a matter left better to the commissioner's office, and I have no doubt Adam Silver has ideas to fix the problem. In the meantime, playing the youngsters and getting a look at as many players as possible, all while giving it their best effort is why fans are buying tickets.

Sunday afternoon saw a raucous Golden One Arena heartily applauding a consistent effort by the Kings as hometown favorite Malik Monk decided to put on a show, scoring 32 points and adding six assists to boot.

Devin Carter, finally getting a chance to play on a consistent basis, chipped in with 16 points, five rebounds, and three assists.

Maxime Raynaud added a double-double with 22 points and 10 rebounds and has been winning fans literally all season with his consistent play.

The question remains can he complement Domantas Sabonis and play alongside him, or will he become just a capable backup for Sabonis when he's not on the floor.

Although I wish nothing but good things for Raynaud, I think the Kings have found a good backup center for years to come, but I'm not seeing the shot blocking ability that I would like to see from a 7-footer.

In the 126-122 win over the Brooklyn Nets the fans got to see newcomer Patrick Baldwin perform, and Patrick wasted no time in putting up nine points and shooting three for four from 3-point land.

Doug McDermott did the same and the Kings will be faced with some uncomfortable decisions in the off season as they make decisions on who to keep and who to let go. Sadly, McDermott's 3-point shooting could have been used all season, but coach Christie relegated this talented sharpshooter

to the bench for the majority of the season for reasons that have never been very clear.

Yes. Decisions will be made and not all Kings fans are going to like them. Names like Precious Achiuwa, Dylan Cardwell, Devin Carter and others are not promised next season, although I believe all the aforementioned need to come back next year.

The draft will be a mystery until the ping pong balls do their thing but just know this Kings fans. This year's draft is deep, and whether the Kings choose #1 or #7 there is going to be a player with the talent to make the Sacramento Kings a better team.

More than anything what this franchise needs is people that can assess talent better than in the past. People that can separate the wheat from the chaff, the blue chippers from the pretenders.

Please, no more Marvin Bagleys or Thomas Robinsons. Surely, we can do better than the past has seen, and I'm convinced we will.

So, have heart Kings fans and let's continue to put our hands together for players like Russell Westbrook that is breaking all-time records right in front of our hometown fans!

Westbrook has been a bright spot all season and has done everything asked of him.

I'm hoping the younger players have been paying attention because there is much to learn from this can't miss future hall-of-famer.

Here's some positive but I believe very accurate news.

The Sacramento Kings are closer to becoming a playoff team than the NBA expects.

I don't like to dog on a coaching staff, but with the talent the Kings have and even in spite of the bad luck they've had with injuries, this team should have won 30 games.

Coach Christie is like a young rookie finding his way, but he has to do better than spout out that the Kings must play tough defense.

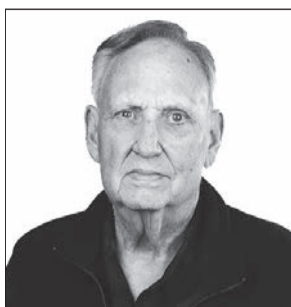
Start with being a better free-throw shooting team and take it from there.

Let's stick together and look forward to a winning 2027!

All the best!



It's Supposed to be a Race for Governor, but Candidates and Voters Seem Disengaged



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

The shortage and costs of housing are, by any rational standard, one of California's most pressing issues, which is why several thousand advocates of affordable shelter gathered in Sacramento last week to ponder potential solutions.

Housing California, the event's sponsor, invited candidates for governor to participate in a panel discussion of how they would approach the housing crisis.

Neither of the two Republican candidates, Steve Hilton and Chad Bianco, appeared, which was not surprising given the left-leaning tenor of the event.

It was, however, odd that only four of the eight Democratic candidates showed up, since it was a terrific opportunity for them to impress a large audience of political activists, with just a few weeks remaining before voters begin marking and mailing their ballots for the June 2 primary election.

Of the four who participated in the housing panel, just one candidate, billionaire Tom Steyer, is in the top tier of candidates, as revealed in a new poll by the UC-Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies, with just barely 10% support.

The other three — state school Superintendent Tony Thurmond, former Los

Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and former state Controller Betty Yee — collectively garnered just 6% support among the sample of voters, with Thurmond and Yee at 1% each.

Although California is a thoroughly blue state, the two Republicans were 1 and 2 in the poll, thus feeding worries among Democratic leaders that they could wind up that way in the June 2 voting if none of the Democrats catches fire.

Among the Democrats, Congressman Eric Swalwell and former Congresswoman Katie Porter polled highest at 13% each, followed by Steyer at 10%, former Attorney General Xavier Becerra at 5%, with Villaraigosa and San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan at 4%.

Mark DiCamillo, director of the poll, told the Los Angeles Times he is stunned by how fragmented and disengaged voters are about choosing the state's next governor.

"This is historic for me," DiCamillo said, "and especially given that none of the candidates have really a positive image rating with voters, also startling. I mean, perhaps one of the reasons why voters are disengaged, they're just not enthusiastic about any of the candidates. They're kind of sleepwalking to this election."

The lethargic nature of the contest is also demonstrated by the inability of the California Federation of Unions to settle on one Democrat, instead giving endorsements to four of the eight.

One could say, therefore, that the passive attitude of candidates vis-a-vis this

week's housing conference captures the broader lack of enthusiasm among candidates and voters.

This should be a referendum on how California deals with not only housing and homelessness but the many other issues that Gavin Newsom will leave behind when he exits the office next January, almost certainly embarking on a quest for the White House.

However, the gubernatorial campaign so far has revealed very few differences among the eight Democratic candidates on those issues, nor any truly novel proposals. In response to questions about housing, homelessness, health care and living costs, the four who did participate in Thursday's panel generally responded that they would spend a lot more money and impose new taxes on corporations and wealthy Californians to pay for it.

Given the paucity of new ideas and the overall lethargy, one could almost hope that Hilton and Bianco do finish 1-2 and give the state a Republican governor for the first time in two decades. The Capitol conflict that would ensue as a GOP governor battles with a Legislature dominated by Democrats would at least be interesting.

It would be karmic justice for a Democratic Party that apparently is incapable of generating enough energy to power a light bulb.

Dan Walters is one of the most decorated and widely syndicated columnists in California history, authoring a column four times a week that offers his view and analysis of the state's political, economic, social and demographic trends. ★



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unfortunate passing left many of his family, friends and fellow service members at a loss. This heartbreaking loss is not something the people Robert has touched and left his mark on will ever forget. He lost his life far too young and leaves behind his wonderful wife, and two wonderful children.



The hope for this fund is to help relieve some of the travel and housing expenses associated with this unforeseen tragedy. All funds and donations raised will go directly to the Marzan family. Rest in power Robert and may we meet again."



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State Treasurer Honored with Champion of Agriculture Award

California Farm Bureau News Release

CALIFORNIA (MPG) - In recognition of her long record of advocacy for California farmers, ranchers and rural communities, California State Treasurer Fiona Ma has been honored with the Champion of Agriculture Award.

The California Farm Bureau presented the award March 18 at the organization's annual legislative action day. The award recognizes dedicated service to agriculture and honors individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to protecting and advancing the needs of California farmers and ranchers.

Nicknamed "The Urban Cowgirl," Ma is a founder of the San Francisco Farm Bureau and serves as its adviser. As the 34th state treasurer and throughout her career in public service, Ma has backed policies that support the Golden State's diverse farming communities.

"Treasurer Ma has shown a long commitment to California agriculture," said Shannon Douglass, president of the California Farm Bureau, which represents more than 23,000



Treasurer Fiona Ma, center, receives the Champion of Agriculture Award from California Farm Bureau COO Dan Durham, left, California Farm Bureau President Shannon Douglass, First Vice President Shaun Crook and Second Vice President Ron Peterson. Photo courtesy California Farm Bureau

farmers and ranchers statewide. "Her work on behalf of farmers and ranchers across the state is exactly what this award celebrates."

A member of the state Assembly from 2006-2012, Ma

authored and supported legislation beneficial to agriculture, including the Eat Local Buy California Grown Act, which prioritizes California-Grown products in state institutional purchasing and expanding

market access for small, local and underserved farmers.

She also crafted legislation to create the California Blueberry Commission to help promote California-grown blueberries. In addition, Ma has worked to

secure funding for agricultural programs and infrastructure. In her commitment to understanding California's agricultural landscape, she has participated in numerous farm tours, visiting agricultural operations across the state.

"I'm honored to receive the Champion of Agriculture Award," Ma said. "My appreciation for California agriculture began in 2009 when I helped protect the Cow Palace from being sold – an experience that opened my eyes to the vital role our farmers and ranchers play in producing more than 400 agricultural products and feeding our state and nation."

"California Farm Bureau is proud to honor Treasurer Ma with the Champion of Agriculture Award and for her commitment to California farmers, ranchers and rural communities," Douglass said.

California Farm Bureau works to protect family farms and ranches as part of a nationwide network representing more than 5 million Farm Bureau members. Learn more at www.cfbf.com or follow @cafarmbureau on Instagram, LinkedIn, X or Facebook. ★

California Flagged for "Weak Oversight" in Federal Fraud Crackdown

Assembly Republican Whip Macedo Cites Hospice Investigation Showing System "Wide Open" Under Newsom

Assembly Republicans News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - California was flagged for "insufficient safeguards and weak oversight" March 16 in a federal fraud crackdown announced by President Donald Trump.

The White House said states like California have failed to maintain basic safeguards, including verifying eligibility and enforcing oversight standards, creating conditions for

large-scale fraud.

Assembly Republican Whip Alexandra M. Macedo (R-Tulare) said that lines up with what she has already seen on the ground.

"California did not end up on this list by accident," Macedo said. "Seven years into Gavin Newsom's governorship, the consequences of years of negligence are catching up, and the people in the most vulnerable moments of

their lives are the ones being harmed."

"When fraudulent actors bill for 'ghost



patients' or enroll healthy individuals without their consent, they deplete the very funds

intended to provide high-quality care by the legitimate hospice providers for those truly in their final days," Macedo added.

In January, Macedo visited a Los Angeles property linked to 197 hospice licenses, all registered to the same address. Many of the phone numbers were disconnected, and there was no sign any legitimate hospice business was operating there.

A state audit warned that

weak oversight was allowing large-scale fraud, including cases where licenses were approved despite red flags, and complaints have continued to mount.

"Programs meant to help vulnerable people in their time of need are being exploited. The Newsom Administration owns that failure 100%."

The task force, led by Vice President JD Vance, will focus on fraud in federally funded programs, including health care, housing and food assistance. ★

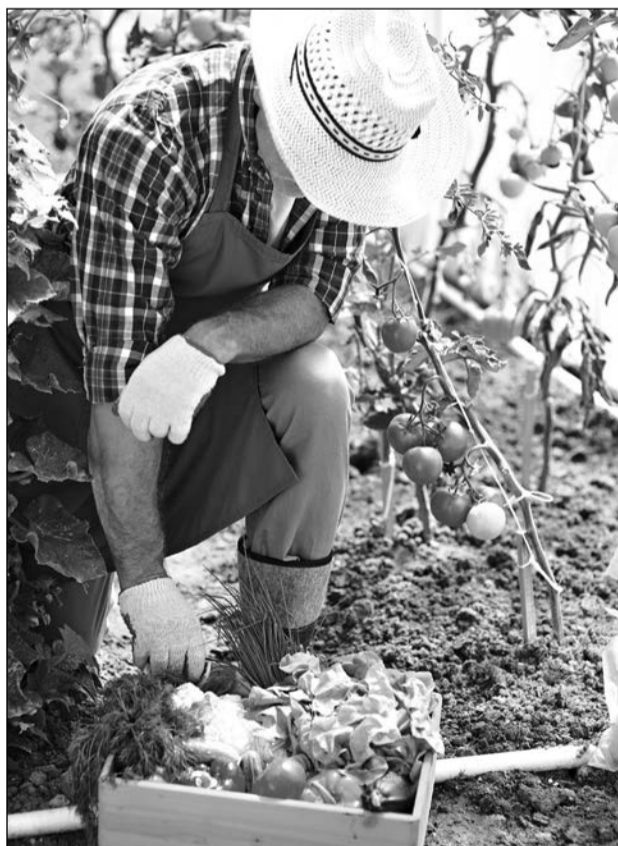
César Chávez Day to be Renamed Farmworker Day

Assemblywoman Alexandra M. Macedo News Release

CALIFORNIA (MPG) - In light of the horrific news reports of César Chávez's sexual assaults of minors and women, Assemblywoman Alexandra M. Macedo (R-Tulare) introduced legislation to rename the March 31 California State holiday to Farmworker Day.

"Farmworkers are essential to our everyday lives – from the food we eat to the economy we enjoy," said Assemblywoman Macedo. "The fight for dignity in the fields was never about one person – it is about the millions of workers who sweat, toil and aspire for a better life."

California is the largest state producer and exporter of agricultural products, including animal products, fruit and nuts. Over a third of the country's vegetables and nearly three-quarters of the country's fruits and nuts are grown in California. With 69,900 farms and ranches, California agriculture is a \$49 billion dollar industry that generates at least \$100 billion in related economic activity, according to the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development.



California is the largest state producer and exporter of agricultural products, including animal products, fruit and nuts. Over a third of the country's vegetables and nearly three-quarters of the country's fruits and nuts are grown in California. Photo courtesy of Freepik

California's agricultural industry depends on farmworkers. Farmworkers ensure food safety and freshness by harvesting within tight windows. Their work supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and contributes to the state's economy.

Without their hard work and dedication, perishable food would remain in the

field – leading to severe shortages and higher food prices for consumers.

Assemblywoman Macedo is amending her current legislation, Assembly Bill 2407, to rename César Chávez's Day to Farmworker Day.

"It is about the movement, not one individual," said Assemblywoman Macedo. ★

California Comment on Latest Small Business Optimism Index

Main Street entrepreneurs thanked for helping keep the 20% Small Business Deduction alive

National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - From John Kabateck, state director for the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) in California, on findings from the monthly NFIB Small Business Optimism Index, which fell 0.5 points in February to 98.8 but remained slightly above the 52-year average of 98. The Uncertainty Index decreased three points from January to 88.

"With tax season upon us, I want to take this opportunity to once again thank every California small business owner who spoke up for keeping the 20% Small Business Tax Deduction alive and preventing it from expiring at the end of last year. I think of small business owners like Beth Booth from San Diego County, who is now chair of our leadership council, for traveling to Washington, D.C. to make a compelling case for preserving a valuable tool for small business solvency. It's members like her and many others who provide optimism when it's needed most."

In conjunction with the February report, NFIB also released a new episode of the NFIB Research Center's "Small Business by the Numbers" podcast. Listen to the latest episode here.

"Although optimism declined slightly, small businesses report feeling more certain in February as they look toward the coming months. High sales and increased profits made February a more positive month for many owners, but competition from large businesses is putting stress on Main Street firms as

they navigate the current economic climate," said NFIB Chief Economist Bill Dunkelberg.

Highlights from the Latest NFIB Small Business Optimism Index include the following.

Seasonally adjusted, a net 34% reported raising compensation, up 2 points from January and the highest level since March 2025.

The frequency of reports of positive profit trends rose 7 points from January to a net negative 14% (seasonally adjusted). The last time earnings trends were this high was in December 2021.

The net percent of owners raising average selling prices fell 2 points from January to a net 24% (seasonally adjusted). This marked the third consecutive month that actual price increases slowed, though the changes remain well above the historical average.

When asked to evaluate the overall health of their business, 12% rated it as excellent (down 2 points), 55% as good (up 1 point), 26% as fair (down 1 point) and 5% as poor (up 1 point).

Keep up with the latest California small business news at www.nfib.com. Follow us on X @NFIB_CA and on Facebook @NFIB.CA.

For over 80 years, NFIB has been advocating on behalf of America's small and independent business owners, both in Washington, D.C., and in all 50 state capitals. NFIB is a nonprofit, nonpartisan and member-driven association. Since our founding in 1943, NFIB has been exclusively dedicated to small and independent businesses and remains so today. For more information, please visit nfib.com. ★

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 – “The Force Takes Flight: Open Cockpit Day,” May 2. This fan-favorite event combines hands-on aircraft access with the creativity of one of the world’s most iconic science-fiction universes.

Guests will have the rare opportunity to explore select aircraft up close, climb inside, ask questions, and experience what it’s like to sit in the cockpit, while interacting with members of the Central California Garrison of the 501st Legion, a nonprofit costuming club known for its screen-accurate recreations inspired by the beloved space saga. Details at aerospacemuseum.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.

Sacramento History Museum – RCAF in Mictlán: 50th Anniversary of Dia de los Muertos, through April 5. The exhibit will be highlighted by public programs that document and celebrate the 50-year history of the Dia de los Muertos 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. Details at sachistorymuseum.org.

California Automobile Museum – “A Little Fellow: The Legend of A.P. Giannini” documentary screening, 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday, April 16. Enjoy a screening of the film, a Q&A with Director Davide Fiore, a cash bar and concessions

available for purchase. We’ll even have Giannini’s personal 1933 Lincoln on display! Details at atcalautomuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum – California Invention Convention, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 18. This is an initiative to bring invention education into California schools and to celebrate the young inventors with a statewide event. Winners from this event will go on to compete at the National Invention Convention at The Henry Ford in Dearborn, Michigan.

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.

SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity Laser Concert Series – K-Pop Demon Hunters, 10:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Saturdays in April. Rage Against the Machine, 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. April 3 and 4. This immersive music experience,

paired with spectacular full-dome lasers, is the best way to listen to your favorite artists outside of a live performance. Details at visitmosac.org.

Elks Lodge 6 Calendar of Events

Handball Fun Day, Saturday, April 11, Elks Lodge 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd. \$20 buy-in person; open to members and the public. All doubles; lucky draw. Starts 8 a.m. Call or text John, 916-608-5670. or call (916) 442-6666.

Greenhaven /Pocket Farmers Market reopens Sunday, April 12.

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. ★

Film Grants Return to Boost Local Productions

Continued from page 1

qualified production expenses incurred in the city.

Launched in 2021, the film grant program has awarded more than \$302,500 across 38 projects filmed or produced in Sacramento. Supported productions have included a range of projects featuring diverse casts, crews and storylines.

To qualify, productions must film at least 50% of their project in the Sacramento region with at least two locations within the city of Sacramento. The program also supports projects completing

at least 75% of their post-production work in the city.

Eligible productions include feature-length films, short films, episodic television, television pilots, television movies and miniseries, documentaries, docuseries, commercials, music videos and unscripted television.

One recent recipient, Atrium 916, received grant support for the Sacramento-produced documentary series “Citizens of Planet Earth,” which began airing March 14.

Applications will be reviewed and

scored by a panel consisting of staff, film industry peers and economic development professionals.

To review eligibility guidelines and apply, visit the Sacramento Film + Media grants website.

About Sacramento Film + Media

The Sacramento Film + Media office provides services to those interested in filming in the Sacramento area. The office works to promote regional locations, strengthen the local crew base, assist local filmmakers and attract out-of-town productions.

The office facilitates film permitting and provides location assistance, production information, regulatory guidance, internships and grant opportunities.

Forty-nine film permits were issued in 2025 for 83 days of filming. Overall filming activity resulted in 440 local hires, 1603 hotel nights and over \$1.3 million in direct economic impact.

The office also launched a film and media incentive program in July 2025, establishing a \$250,000 rebate to attract additional large independent films, commercials and television projects to the region.

Guidelines and the application are available on the program website, filmsac.com. ★

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Queens in Action

Purple Pageant marks a decade of empowering young women on and off stage

By Omella Rossi

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - For a decade, the Purple Pageant has been more than crowns and sashes; it has been a launching pad for leadership, confidence and community service. Since its debut in 2016, the Greater Sacramento-based pageant has nurtured young women and girls to become not just queens on stage, but leaders in their communities.

Lisa D. Taylor, the visionary behind the Purple Pageant, said the inspiration came from her own pageant journey.

"I have run in 13 pageants and won 12 titles, but I didn't see very many young girls or women that looked like me," Taylor said. That absence motivated her to create a space where multiculturalism, mentorship and service could shine alongside talent and grace.

With more than 30 years of community involvement in the Sacramento area, Taylor has built a system where giving back is key.

"What you put into the community is what you get out. You can't build an empire alone," Taylor said.

The pageant emphasizes leadership, confidence and service, and Taylor sees those qualities grow in participants over time. Mentors work closely with each contestant to identify goals, create career development plans and offer constructive guidance.

"The Purple Pageant has been a transformational force in my life, shaping me as a woman, mother, and entrepreneur," said Queen Tamara Johnson. "Through this experience, I found my voice and gained the confidence to step into rooms of influence I once felt unqualified for. The pageant helped me



The pageant emphasizes leadership, confidence and service, and Lisa D. Taylor sees those qualities grow in participants over time. Photo courtesy of Lisa D. Taylor, Purple Pageant

recognize my gifts and turn them into action. It didn't just change my life, it expanded it, positioning me to lead, build and give back in ways I never imagined."

The Purple Pageant's programs start early. Princess and Ambassador programs lay the foundation for participants to develop leadership and community skills before vying for the title of Queen. Beyond stage presence, the pageant incorporates life skills, etiquette and mental health awareness into every aspect of its programming. Contestants attend galas, parades, fashion shows and even golf tournaments, learning to navigate a variety of social and professional settings.

Taylor calls mentorship "a trusted, experienced guide who facilitates personal, professional and emotional growth." She



Purple Pageant, the Greater Sacramento-based pageant, has nurtured young women and girls to become not just queens on stage, but leaders in their communities. Photo courtesy of Lisa D. Taylor, Purple Pageant

says one of the most rewarding moments since launching the pageant has been witnessing her own growth in giving back to others.

"Seeing the growth within myself to give back, that's priceless," Taylor said.

Over the last 10 years, the pageant has helped teens graduate with honors, attend college and

even launch businesses. Adult participants have pursued careers in nursing, the military and writing, often fueled by the skills and confidence gained through the program. Internationally, the Purple Pageant now has queens in Kenya and Nigeria, with plans to expand further.

The pageant's mission is clear: to empower young women

through community service, etiquette, life skills and leadership, all while fostering inclusivity. Taylor hopes the next generation will carry this mission forward by starting new chapters and mentoring future queens.

"Join the Purple Pageant and gain the skills to open a chapter in your own community," Taylor advises aspiring participants.

The 10-year anniversary event is set for April 26 at Granite Bay Country Club, starting at 3 p.m., promising surprises for guests while celebrating a decade of achievements. Those interested in supporting the pageant as volunteers, sponsors or mentors can contact Taylor at 916-856-4536.

As Taylor puts it, the Purple Pageant is not just about who wears the crown, it's about preparing young women to wear it well, on and off the stage. ★

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Celebrating the First CARE Court Graduation

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - "I conclude you have completed the CARE plan and have officially graduated from the program," said Honorable Jennifer K. Rockwell, the Collaborative Courts Supervising Judge.

An eruption of applause could be heard from the Sacramento Superior Courtroom on Tuesday morning as more than a dozen people gathered to celebrate the first Sacramento County CARE Court graduation.

Lorenzo Leon, joined by his mother and care team, marked a major milestone after a year-long journey through the program, becoming the County's first CARE Court graduate.

CARE Court, short for Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment, is a civil court process designed to connect individuals living with untreated schizophrenia and other severe mental illnesses, such as bipolar I disorder, to community-based treatment, services and housing support. Through a court-ordered care plan, the program helps ensure participants receive the services they need while creating a pathway toward long-term stability.



The celebration of Lorenzo's graduation ended with cake, cards and yet more rounds of applause, marking not just the completion of the program, but the beginning of a new chapter. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

For Lorenzo, that pathway led to housing, consistent treatment and a renewed sense of direction. Over the past year, he worked closely with County staff, service providers and his family to stay engaged in care and build a more stable future.

His care team, including County staff, community partners and loved ones, filled the room to recognize the work he put in to reach this moment. One by one, they took turns sharing how proud they are of his progress.

Judge Lawrence Brown, who presided over Lorenzo's case, reflected on the journey and the family's initial hesitation.

"I can recall that the mom in particular was a bit skeptical whether or not this was going to be able to make any real difference," Brown said. "I remember the moment I saw her shift and begin to see the fruits of everyone's efforts, and I couldn't be more proud or honored to have witnessed your journey. While this may be the first graduation, Lorenzo is

now setting the example for those who will follow. No pressure," he added with a laugh.

Sacramento County Behavioral Health Director Ryan Quist encouraged Lorenzo to take in the moment and look around the room, reminding him that everyone there is part of his support system and a team he can continue to rely on moving forward.

For Lorenzo's mother, the moment was not only a celebration, but a reflection of the persistence and care shown by the team around her son.

"May I take a moment to give a special shout out," asked Lorenzo's mom. "There was one County staff in particular who didn't give up on him. Even when he would leave, she would go look for him and bring him back. I'm so thankful to the County staff and everyone who kept helping him and stayed on him, because it made all the difference."

The celebration ended with cake, cards and yet more rounds of applause, marking not just the completion of the program, but the beginning of a new chapter.

If you or a loved one would like to file a petition to start your own CARE Court journey, visit: selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/jcc-form/CARE-100 to learn more about eligibility and the process. ★

The Roy C. Marcum Animal Care Faire Returns this Spring

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Mark your calendar: The Roy C. Marcum Animal Care Faire returns on Saturday, May 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Bradshaw Animal Shelter, and this year, we're making it bigger, more vibrant and more fun than ever.

This free, family-friendly, pet-friendly event is one of our favorite days of the year. It's a chance to bring the community together in celebration of animals, compassion and the life-saving work happening every day at Bradshaw Animal Shelter.

Whether you're a longtime supporter or visiting us for the first time, this is the perfect opportunity to experience the shelter in a whole new way.

What to Expect

The Animal Care Faire is a

full afternoon of activity for all ages. This year's event will feature adoptable dogs and cats ready to meet their forever families, local vendors and small businesses, craft breweries and wineries, food trucks serving up delicious bites, live music and entertainment, demonstrations and interactive activities and new additions for 2026 that will make this the most exciting Faire yet.

Bring your family. Bring your friends. Bring your dog on a leash (6 feet or shorter). Stay awhile and enjoy everything the day has to offer.

Honoring Roy C. Marcum

The Animal Care Faire is held in honor of Roy C. Marcum, a dedicated animal control officer who devoted his life to serving animals and the Sacramento County community. This event continues his legacy of compassion, service and advocacy for

animals in need.

Every adoption, every conversation and every smile shared that day reflects the heart of the work he believed in.

Want to Be Part of the Faire?

We are currently welcoming vendors, local craft breweries and wineries, and event sponsors who want to participate in this growing community celebration.

This event draws hundreds of animal-loving families and provides a meaningful opportunity to connect with the community while supporting a great cause. If you are interested in becoming a vendor or sponsor, we invite you to apply!

To learn more or to apply to be a vendor, visit saccounty.gov.

Join us as we celebrate animals, community and the life-saving work happening right here in Sacramento County.

We can't wait to see you there. ★



The Roy C. Marcum Animal Care Faire will feature adoptable dogs and cats ready to meet their forever families. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County



The Roy C. Marcum Animal Care Faire is a free, family-friendly, pet-friendly event offering the community a chance to come together in celebration of animals, compassion and the lifesaving work happening every day at Bradshaw Animal Shelter. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Free Fair to Connect Families to Early Learning Options



The free Family Fun & Playfest at Fairytale Town will showcase early learning programs and community organizations, offering education, health, and wellness information to parents. Photo courtesy of SCOE

Sacramento County Office of Education News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

- What a child learns in their early years is critical to building a foundation for lifelong success. High-quality preschool programs help children develop vital social skills and prepare them for academic achievement. California's Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) initiative ensures all children have access to these opportunities before kindergarten. Through the use of a "mixed delivery system," families get diverse choices (ranging from public schools to home-based care) to meet their specific needs.

The Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) invites families to explore these early learning options at its third annual Family Fun & Playfest, which will

showcase 50 early learning programs and 30 community organizations, offering education, health, and wellness information to parents.

The Family Fun & Playfest takes place from 5 to 7 p.m. April 25 at Fairytale Town, 3901 Land Park Drive. This is a free event; however, families should register online at <https://bit.ly/SacEarlyLearning>.

Sponsored by the Local Child Care and Development Planning Council (LPC) and hosted by the SCOE Early Learning Department, the annual fair helps parents navigate the early education landscape.

"The fair is so much fun because it brings the early learning system to life by showcasing a vast network of providers in one location," said Julie Montali, Ph.D., executive director of Early Learning. "Families

are excited to discover new resources that help them make the best choices for their children."

The event ties into one important element of the key vision, mission, and goals set forth by the Sacramento County Board of Education: to provide pathways for learners to thrive.

Flexible Options for Early Care

A key focus of the event is explaining the mixed delivery system. This approach emphasizes family choice, providing high-quality options for early care that fit specific family schedules and values. Instead of a single model, Universal Prekindergarten allows children to attend various programs, including Transitional Kindergarten at local public schools; California State Preschool Programs; Head Start; center-based care; licensed family childcare; and family, friend and neighbor care.

Sacramento County's UPK Mixed Delivery Workgroup emphasizes the critical need for options starting as early as infancy, advocating that children aged 0 to 3 be fully integrated into the mixed delivery system to support continuous development. This system empowers parents to choose the best setting for their children, whether it is on a school campus or in a home-based environment. ★

County Director of Waste Management and Recycling Appointed



Jennifer Claiborne has been appointed as the County's new Director of Waste Management and Recycling, effective March 23, 2026. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, at its Tuesday, March 10 meeting, unanimously concurred with the County Executive's appointment of Jennifer Claiborne as the County's new Director of Waste Management and Recycling, effective March 23, 2026.

"Jennifer's appointment reflects exactly the kind of experienced, values-driven leadership our Department of Waste Management and Recycling needs," said Dave Defanti, Deputy County Executive of Community Services. "Her deep knowledge of operations, her commitment to building strong teams, and her dedication to Sacramento County's organizational

culture make her exceptionally well-suited for this role. We are confident she will continue to ensure our customers are well served and that our services are delivered with efficiency and reliability."

Claiborne has more than 15 years of experience working in the waste management field, with eight of those years being with Sacramento County's Department of Waste Management and Recycling. She currently serves as the Chief, Division of Solid Waste Management and has been in this position for one year and eight months. In this role, Claiborne has directed countywide waste collection and transfer operations; established division policies, safety standards and performance metrics; overseen budgets, capital projects and vendor contracts; and has expanded recycling, organics diversion and resource recovery programs in alignment with state mandates and County goals.

Prior to her current position, Claiborne was a Waste Management Superintendent over collections for one year and seven months, a Waste Management Program Manager overseeing Commercial Solid Waste for more than three years, and a Solid Waste Planner II for nearly two years with the County's Department of Waste Management and Recycling. Before that, Claiborne held the role of Office and Project Manager for one year and six months with Peabody Civil Engineering. She was with CleanWorld for more than five years, where she held the role of Project Manager.

Some of Claiborne's notable work includes developing strong leaders, improving communication and advancing the County's organizational culture initiative within the Department of Waste Management and Recycling.

In addition to her professional experience, Jennifer has a Master's Degree in Urban Land Development and a Bachelor of Science in Economics from California State University, Sacramento. ★

UC Davis Athletics Director Named NACDA Athletics Director Of the Year

UC Davis Athletics News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - University of California, Davis, Director of Athletics Rocko DeLuca has been named a 2025-26 NACDA Athletics Director of the Year (ADOY), the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) announced.

DeLuca was selected as one of 28 recipients across seven divisions of college athletics and represents the Division I FCS level. The award recognizes athletics directors for their commitment to student-athletes, campuses and communities while demonstrating outstanding leadership within intercollegiate athletics.

“Rocko DeLuca and his family are important members of the Aggie community and strong representatives of UC Davis,” Chancellor Gary S. May said. “He’s had a transformative impact elevating academic achievement among our student-athletes, delivering championship performances and strategically positioning Aggie Athletics through meaningful resource enhancement. Rocko has led with integrity, vision and purpose. This recognition reflects the strong trajectory of



University of California, Davis, Director of Athletics Rocko DeLuca has been recognized as the 2025-26 NACDA Athletics Director of the Year (ADOY) by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA). Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

our athletics program and we are proud of the leadership Rocko continues to provide UC Davis.”

The NACDA Athletics Director of the Year program, now in its 28th year, honors administrators who exemplify excellence in leadership, program development and service to higher education.

Since becoming UC Davis Director of Athletics in 2021, DeLuca has guided Aggie Athletics through a period of

significant competitive, academic and strategic growth. Under his leadership, UC Davis student-athletes have achieved a program-record 93% Graduation Success Rate, ranking among the top 10 nationally, while Aggie teams have captured 13 conference championships and 29 individual conference titles.

DeLuca has also led major initiatives that position UC Davis Athletics for long-term success, including the department’s

IGNITE strategic plan; Aggie Ascent, a long-term vision for the future of our facilities; and the university’s upcoming transition to the Mountain West Conference beginning July 1, 2026.

“I am honored and humbled to be recognized by NACDA along with my peers, and I am grateful to those on the selection committee for the recognition,” said DeLuca. “Ultimately, this award reflects the incredible student-athletes, coaches and staff

who make Aggie Athletics what it is.” They work hard each and every day to represent UC Davis with pride, and their commitment to excellence in competition, in the classroom and in our community is what drives the success of our programs. I am fortunate to work alongside such a dedicated group who care deeply about the student-athlete experience and about doing things the right way.

“Chancellor Gary May and our campus leadership team have been incredible partners to me and to Aggie Athletics and they recognize the importance of a strong athletics program within the university community. Finally, I want to recognize our fans, alumni and donors who believe in what we’re building and who continue to help us build tremendous momentum for our programs. Together, we are positioning UC Davis Athletics for an exciting future and the opportunities that lie ahead.”

Recipients of the NACDA Athletics Director of the Year award will be recognized during the 61st Annual NACDA & Affiliates Convention, held June 7-10 in Las Vegas. Award winners will be honored during the Association-Wide Featured Session on Tuesday, June 9 at Mandalay Bay Resort. ★

Beavers Shutout Porterville and Sequoias

American River College Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - ARC men’s tennis took a trip south to the central valley to take on Porterville and College of the Sequoias.

Against Porterville, Tijme Brunner stepped up to the #1 position and won in dominant fashion by the score of 6-1, 6-2 against the Porterville #1, Knautilus Vankham. Rudy Golen was even more dominating at #2 against Samuel Campos, winning without dropping a single game.

AJ Dipotra stepped into the lineup and also earned a 6-0, 6-0 victory. On Day 2 of the trip the Beavers took on the #7 team in NorCal, The College of the Sequoias Giants. It was another one-sided victory for ARC, winning the dual



ARC men’s tennis took a trip south to the central valley to take on Porterville and College of the Sequoias. Photo courtesy of American River College Athletics

match 9-0.

The Giants competed well, pushing ARC at the #1 doubles position, with the Beaver team of Landon Arendt/Tijme Brunner closed out a 9-7 victory after a hard-fought battle. In the singles, ARC put in their best performance of the season, beating the

competitive COS players at each position without any Beaver player dropping more than 4 games.

Arendt beat a tough opponent, Robert Dan, at the #1 spot by the score of 6-0, 6-4. Carson Parent dropped the fewest amount of games at #6, winning by the score of 6-0, 6-1. ★

Republic FC Signs Brooks Doolittle



Brooks Doolittle joins a group of six current and former Academy players on this year’s first team roster. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Republic FC

Sacramento Republic FC News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Republic FC announced March 6 the addition of academy player Brooks Doolittle to the club’s first team roster. The goalkeeper has signed a USL Academy Contract, pending league and federation approval, and will be eligible to play in first team matches in 2026.

“Bringing academy players onto the first team and introducing them to its environment prepares them for the next level,” said Republic FC Head Coach Neill Collins, “This is not an opportunity that everyone gets, and we’re looking forward to seeing how Brooks continues to grow from it.”

A Greenbrae, California native, Doolittle is a new addition to Republic FC’s academy. Since joining the Indomitable Club just last year, he has earned seven clean sheets in 12 appearances. Prior to his appearance with SRFC, the 6’3” seventeen-year-old played for San Jose Earthquakes Academy and Bay Area Surf. He has also received invitations to both U.S. Soccer ID camps and

national training camps.

Doolittle joins a group of six current and former Academy players on this year’s first team roster. Da’vian Kimbrough, Blake Willey and Chibi Ukaegbu have risen through the ranks to sign professional contracts with their hometown team, while defenders Rohan Chivukula and Luke Strassburg signed USL Academy Contracts in December. USL Academy Contracts allow academy players the chance to train and compete with the first team in professional matches while retaining their NCAA eligibility.

Since its inception in 2015, Republic FC’s Academy has created a strong, local pipeline of youth players ready for professional-level competition, with over 40 players earning the opportunity to join the first team on USL Academy contracts and over 25 going on to sign professional contracts with Republic FC or other clubs. In 2025, players from Sacramento’s youth academy combined for 80 gameday roster selections, 56 appearances and over 3,000 minutes.

Tickets are available now at SacRepublicFC.com. ★

Riva Picks Up Second Big Sky Honor of 2026

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Junior Irene Riva capped off an unbeaten 4-0 week by earning Big Sky Conference Player of the Week laurels, helping the No. 66 Sacramento State women’s tennis team to win over Cal State Fullerton and league rival Northern Arizona last week.

The award is Riva’s second of the season and the fourth by a Hornet this year along with teammates Lou Baudouin (Feb. 11) and Reese Walker (Feb. 25). The four awards are the most by any Big Sky school this season while Riva collected the fifth of her career, tying her for fifth on the program’s all-time list with former teammate Mayya Gorbunova (2023-24) and Tatsiana Kapshai (2010-12). Alongside partner Palina Saulevich, Riva posted a



The award is Riva’s second of the season and the fourth by a Hornet this year along with teammates Lou Baudouin (Feb. 11) and Reese Walker (Feb. 25). Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Athletics

pair of doubles wins to start each match, clinching the doubles point against the Titans with a 7-5 win at No. 1, then followed that up with a tiebreaker victory against the Lumberjacks to help Sacramento State sweep the doubles point for only the second time this season — the first since the regular season opener.

In singles, Riva extended her personal winning streak to five straight matches with a pair of straight set wins at the No. 3 spot in the lineup. Her win over Fullerton’s Amelia Zylberman clinched the 4-2 win over the Titans and she added another straight set win over NAU’s Andrea Noguera to close out the weekend. ★

ARC Wins Big 8 Invite

American River College Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Despite coming off a hard week of training, ARC delivered an impressive performance to win the Big 8 Invite. The team showed resilience and depth across both swimming and diving events.

Sasha Samoylovich stayed right on her rested times and led the team in scoring, helping set the tone for ARC’s strong showing. Ella Hanson also continued her momentum from a breakout meet the previous weekend, managing to swim close

to those same fast times.

Amber Inderkum took on the 100 fly for the first time and turned in a very respectable 1:05, while Meg Gardner tackled the 200 fly and dropped an impressive eight seconds from her previous best.

The diving crew added valuable points as well. Ashley Johnson dominated the boards, winning both events, while Arie Black placed third. Bridget Adams also contributed key top-three finishes on both boards, helping secure crucial points for the team.

Overall, it was a strong team effort and a great result for ARC after a demanding week of training. ★

