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# AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

MARCH 27, 2026

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## Spring Production Opens



"Dancing at Lughnasa" opens March 27 at the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center and runs through April 12. Photos courtesy of Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center

By Abbey Wicks

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - The Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center will open its spring production, "Dancing at Lughnasa," March 27 at the Black Box Theatre. The play, written by Brian Friel and directed by Jenny Connors, invites audiences to travel back in time to 1936 rural Ireland, following the five Mundy sisters as they navigate love, loss, faith and freedom during a season of change.

Connors serves as the president, founder and artistic director of the Women's Theatre Collective and as the executive director of Valkyrie Theatre Company, who are presenting the play in collaboration with the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center.

"The collaboration between the Women's



Pictured are cast members in "Dancing at Lughnasa," which opens March 27 at the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center.

Theatre Collective and Valkyrie Theatre Company is a celebration of our community's artistic spirit,"

said Cassie Blank, arts and entertainment associate for the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center. "This

partnership grew from a shared passion for storytelling and a commitment to bringing quality theater to Fair Oaks. Together, we're creating a vibrant platform where local talent can shine, enriching the cultural fabric of our community."

According to its website, womenstheatrecollective.org, Women's Theatre Collective shares a vision of a world safe for women and girls.

"Women's stories aren't chosen nearly as often as men's, in the theatre as well as TV and film," Connors said. "When I choose a play to direct, I want to know that audiences leave with a deeper appreciation and respect for women."

The play features a female-heavy ensemble cast, reflecting the collective's initiative, with  
*Continued on page 2*

## February a Solid Month for New Home Sales



Sales were up 4 percent from February 2025 and 7 percent above the historical average for the month. Photo courtesy Freepik

North State Building Industry Association News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - The first quarter of the year generally sees the greatest number of new home sales in the greater Sacramento region, and 2026 is no exception, as 542 sales were reported by North State Building Industry Association members in February.

Sales were down 10 percent from January, but because there were five weeks in January and four in February, the weekly totals were up 12 percent month over month. Sales were up 4 percent from February 2025 and 7 percent above the historical average for the month.

Tim Murphy, North State's president & CEO, said the sales reflected the continued demand for new homes in the region.

"Despite affordability headwinds, new homes in the region continue to sell at above-average levels thanks to incentives being offered by homebuilders and the fact that mortgage interest rates dropped at the end of February to just under 6 percent for the first time since 2022," Murphy said.

"While March historically marks the peak of sales in our area, the outlook for the immediate future is uncertain due to the current unrest in the Middle East and its potential for far-reaching impacts. But builders are continuing to work with buyers to make purchases possible, and the advantages new homes offer continue to make buying new a great option."

Rancho Cordova took the top spot in February with 112 sales, followed by Roseville close behind with 100. Sacramento saw 66 sales, Elk Grove had 53 and Plumas Lake rounded out the top five with 43.

There were 194 active communities at the end of the month in the region, which includes Amador, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties.

The North State BIA is the leading advocate for the home building industry in the greater Sacramento region. For more information, visit [www.northstatebia.org](http://www.northstatebia.org). ★

## Renovations Continue on Slocum House

Story and photo by Thomas J. Sullivan

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - The much-beloved Slocum House restaurant at 7992 California Ave. in Fair Oaks Village is under active renovation by owner Gary Juels, who admits completion isn't a process which can be rushed.

"It's been 11 years in the making," Juels said. "The details matter, and they take time to be done absolutely right."

Juels bought the former Slocum House in 2018. The historic hillside residential building, built in 1924 for local businessman Charles Slocum, operated as a restaurant from 1976 to 2011.

The interior of the restaurant is where the bulk of the refurbishment is taking place, Juels said.

His ongoing project is not changing the building's structure, but is focused on significant tenant improvements, kitchen



Ongoing renovations of the beloved Slocum House restaurant at 7992 California Ave. in Fair Oaks Village will reflect modern touches with the classic characteristics that have made the Slocum House a historic and treasured local landmark.

upgrades and revitalized landscaping.

"We're not touching the structure at all," he said. "The building is staying the same."

Once considered one of the finest restaurants

in the Sacramento area, the Slocum House drew crowds from all over the region for its high-end menu and ambiance.

The restaurant wove itself into the fabric of the community, becoming a

place where memories were made and gatherings were celebrated.

"Quality takes time, balancing the scheduling and work of skilled crafts persons all working to  
*Continued on page 2*

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# Orangevale History Project Holds Stone Corral Park Tour

# Renovations Continue on Slocum House

**The Orangevale History Project News Release**



**ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG)** - Orangevale History Project invites members of the community to participate in the annual tour of the Stone Corral Park managed by the Sacramento County Regional Parks at 9 a.m. to noon April 18. In case of rain, the event will be held on April 22.

In addition to its cultural significance, the park features a variety of seasonal wildflowers and is home to numerous native animal species that may be observed during the guided hike.

Did you play or ride your horse at Stone Corral Park when you were a teenager? Orangevale History Project hears many stories of summer days spent there. This is an opportunity to see the difference between the park then and now.

This annual tour offers a unique opportunity to explore and appreciate the natural beauty and rich cultural history of Stone Corral Park. People who have attended are excited about being able to view the area and many attend year after year.

All participants in the event must be members of the Orangevale History Project. To join, visit [OrangevaleHistory.org](http://OrangevaleHistory.org), or at the Orangevale History Museum, 6920 Hazel Ave. The museum is open from

noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Comfortable footwear suitable for hiking and crossing streams with a long sleeve shirt and hat is recommended. Bring water.

Due to limited parking at the site, hikers should park at the History Museums with the carpools leaving promptly at 8:45 a.m.

All participants must be registered before the day of the tour. To register, email [ddill@orangevale-history.org](mailto:ddill@orangevale-history.org). ★

*Continued from page 1*

revitalize the historic restaurant space, all while maintaining its historical integrity," Juels said.

Juels, who has lived in Fair Oaks with his wife, Wei since 1995, opened the Fair Oaks Brew Pub at what once was a doctor's office.

Ongoing renovations will reflect modern touches with the classic characteristics that have made the Slocum House a historic and treasured local landmark.

The renovation includes general upgrades to both interior spaces and the kitchen, ensuring that customers are treated to not only a cozy atmosphere but also exquisite culinary delights.

The restaurant plans to introduce a menu that highlights seasonal ingredients sourced from nearby farms. This farm-to-table approach not only supports local agriculture but also guarantees freshness, allowing patrons to savor the best of what Fair Oaks has to offer.

While heavy lifting has been finished, it's the final details which has taken more time than anticipated to be completed, Juels said.

Outdoor dining will be a focal point, with a Sacramento County-approved construction permit for a new patio scheduled to start construction soon, he said.

The iconic establishment, widely recognized for its unique charm and rich

history, had captivated the hearts of locals and visitors alike for years. And soon, a new chapter in its history will be written.

As its grand reopening approaches, excitement among food enthusiasts and the Fair Oaks community continues to build with many asking how construction progress has been going, and when an opening date will be likely.

In addition to the farm-to-fork focused menu, the Slocum House is focusing on enhancing the overall dining experience. Guests can look forward to friendly service, a well-curated wine selection and possibly live entertainment to make each visit memorable.

Social media buzz and community chatter reflect a strong desire to return to one's favorite dining spot. Many residents recall fond memories of family gatherings, anniversary celebrations and casual nights out all experienced through the years at the Slocum House.

Don't miss the highly anticipated reopening of The Slocum House. The official date will be announced soon, and reservations are likely to fill up fast once they're open to the public.

Dinner at Slocum House has always felt like coming home, and after this extensive restoration, it's about to transform back into one of Fair Oaks favorite gathering spots.

Be ready to gather your loved ones and indulge in the remarkable offerings of this historic venue. ★

# Spring Production Opens

*Continued from page 1*

Alison Gilbreath as "Kate", Amy Caston as "Maggie", Rebecca Grayce as "Agnes", Katie Berger as "Rose" and Libby Plumb as "Chrissie". Additional cast members include James Gilbreath as "Father Jack", Jim La Ferriere as "Michael" and Kyle Kane as "Gerry".

"They are a talented cast who bring the characters to life," Connors said.

According to Connors, the play touches on relevant topics in our world today including advances in technology and how it displaces craftspeople and the cottage industry, which is something many industries are experiencing today with AI.

"It explores the clash between the nature of who people are and the rules society can hold us under," Connors said. "But most of all, it's about sisterhood, love and how music connects us. Themes that will always affect humanity."

Connors also serves as the executive director of Valkyrie Theatre Company, in association with Women's Theatre Collective, which brings theatre to the community through its workshops, school shows, directing mentorship programs and more. The company is holding two summer workshops in July, "Finding Nemo Kids" for 7- to 12-year-olds at the Orangevale Community Center, and "High School Musical" for 13- to 19-year-olds at the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center. Registration opens in April for both workshops.

Since its opening last October, the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center has set out to bring to high-quality, local theatre to the community following the closure of

the Fair Oaks Theatre Festival in August, a devastating loss to many members of the theater community.

The center has generated significant revenue for the Arts and Entertainment division of the Fair Oaks Parks and Recreation district, generating \$87,537.90 in ticket sales from October to December 2025, the division reported at its February meeting. Additionally, the revenue from art classes increased from \$9,659 in 2024 to \$29,336 in 2025.

Members of the community can support the theatre by attending shows and enrolling in arts classes, and by following the center on social media @fairoaksperformingartscenter. For more information or to donate to the Fair Oaks Recreation Foundation, which funds the center's arts programming, visit: [www.forpd.org/152/Recreation-Foundation](http://www.forpd.org/152/Recreation-Foundation).

"Attending Dancing at Lughnasa isn't just about watching a play; it's about experiencing a shared journey that connects us all through the power of storytelling," Blank said. "This production is a must-see for anyone in our community! It offers a heartfelt glimpse into the lives of the Mundy sisters, filled with laughter, music and poignant moments that will resonate with everyone."

"Dancing at Lughnasa" runs from March 27 through April 12 at the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center, 7991 California Ave. Tickets are \$32 general admission and \$24 for students, seniors and veterans.

To purchase tickets, visit: [fairoaksarts.vbotickets.com/event/dancing\\_at\\_lughnasa/181073](http://fairoaksarts.vbotickets.com/event/dancing_at_lughnasa/181073). ★

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## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Informing, Empowering and Engaging Readers with Their Community



By Patsy McGavock  
JustServe.org

There is a distinct difference when three generations share the same space. Youth bring energy and urgency. Older adults bring perspective shaped by time. And mid-life adults – often carrying the heaviest load – find something in between: steadiness.

At 45, I move through full, busy days like many do – with varied commitments and layered schedules. Yet it feels like a reset when I walk and volunteer with or seek advice from older adults. Priorities refocus. The urgent feeling softens. What feels uncertain becomes manageable.

And most often, it comes with a breath of fresh air – patience and civility – and a reminder that things have worked out before and often will again.

If Part 1 showed us why generational connection matters, and Part 2 showed us why it's often missing, Part 3 is simpler: how it actually happens.

Not through large programs or one-time events, but through small, repeated choices.

A grandparent invited into a weekly dinner. A neighbor asked to join a walk. A teenager lingering a few minutes longer in conversation. A parent choosing to stay and talk at a child's or grandparent's event instead of rushing out. Small moments. But over time, they become the threads that hold community together.

Mike Higgins is one of the

## Where Generations Meet

### Part 3: When Connecting Becomes Routine

olders. Speaking recently to a local congregation, he called grandparents “a too often hidden resource.” His counsel was simple: seek them out – the older generation. Ask their perspective. Involve them in decisions. Not because they have all the answers, but because they have lived through enough to recognize patterns and remind us what matters.

And his message wasn't only for younger generations. “We are parents forever,” he said. The role does not end when children grow up. The responsibility to guide, to show up and to stay engaged continues. “The power is in you. Be prepared to use it.”

Youth gain more than peer belonging when they are surrounded by adults who know them. Seniors gain more than social activity when they are needed and known. And mid-life adults – often stretched between responsibilities – find something essential when connected both upward and downward. Not just responsibility, but renewal.

We often think of connection as something we have to create. But more often, it's something we choose to allow.

In Deventer, Netherlands, a senior residence offers college students free housing in exchange for spending time with older residents – about 30 hours a month. Though a program choice, what has formed there isn't a program. It's daily life: relationships that grow not from obligation, but from proximity and time.

The principle is simple: connection grows where people share space, regularly, in routine.

It happens when we resist

the urge to rush past one another.

It happens when we learn names.

It happens when we stay – even just a few minutes before or after something else begins.

For midlife adults, this may be the quiet shift that matters most. Not adding something new to an already full schedule, but slightly reshaping what is already there: noticing, introducing, inviting. Allowing space for conversation where efficiency would normally win.

For older adults, this is a call not to step back, but to remain present. When family or neighbors seem busy or distant, it is not a sign you are no longer needed. It's often a sign they are stretched. Your reaching out can quietly bring balance back into routine.

And for youth, it is an invitation to see beyond their own generation – to recognize that support, guidance and belonging often come from unexpected places. An awareness they can keep all their life.

The question is whether we will make room for it.

Not someday. Not through a special event. But this week.

Reach across an age line that we've grown used to respecting or simply haven't noticed.

Because when three generations begin to share the same space – not occasionally, but regularly – something changes. Not just for them.

For all of us.

Patsy McGavock is a volunteer community advocate and community writer. Connect with Patsy at PatsyMcGavock.JustServe@gmail.com. ★

## Roger's Review

By State Senator Roger Niello



Senator Niello attended the Protect Our Kids rally held March 18 in opposition to Gregory Vogelsang's elderly parole release. Photo courtesy of Senator Niello

Outrage isn't always the right response to a policy mistake. But the decision to grant elder parole to David Funston – a man whose crimes were neither minor nor distant – shows a system dangerously out of touch with public safety. So today, I write with outrage.

David Funston was going to be released under California's Elderly Parole Program, which allows the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Board of Parole Hearings to release inmates who have served a minimum of 20 years and are at least 50 years of age. David Funston, aged 64, is a serial child predator.

Between 1995 and 1996, David Allen Funston kidnapped, assaulted and raped eight children between the ages of 3 and 7. He lured them to his car with toys and candy, only to sexually assault them. The judge sentenced Funston to three life terms plus 20 years, telling him, “You are the monster parents fear the most. There is no man on the face of this Earth who deserves this sentence more than you, Mr. Funston.”

The Elderly Parole Program was initiated in 2014 by a three-judge panel in the Plata/Coleman v. Newsom class-action lawsuit. The outcome of this decision was an order for the CDCR to implement a parole program in which inmates who are at least 65 years old and who have served 25 years of their sentence would be referred to the Board of Parole

Hearings to determine suitability for release.

Excluded from consideration were second- or third-strike offenders, those sentenced to death or life without the possibility of parole and those convicted of first-degree murder of a peace officer or former peace officer due to the performance of their duties. Violent sex offenders, however, were not excluded.

Years later, in the final hours of the last day of the 2020 legislative session, Assembly Bill 3234 passed. This bill expanded eligibility under the Elderly Parole Program by lowering the age threshold from 60 to 50 and reducing the minimum amount of time served from 25 years to 20. It is because of these changes that we are seeing more sexually violent predators released from prison, demonstrating more compassion for criminals than for their victims.

The saving grace in the David Funston case is that Placer County arrested Funston a day ahead of his release for a kidnapping and rape he committed in 1996. The Placer County

District Attorney's Office declined to prosecute the case at the time, believing his convictions in Sacramento County meant that Funston would remain behind bars for life. For the time being, Funston remains incarcerated. However, that will not be the case for other predators in the future, and a person who commits serial violent sex offenses should not be eligible for early release.

I am outraged over the lenient laws that enabled this to occur. That is why I have introduced Senate Bill 1278, which will exclude those convicted of rape, sodomy, lewd and lascivious acts, and sex offenses from being eligible for elderly parole.

I am taking action to provide victims of sex offenses and their families the peace and security of knowing that the person who violated them will not be eligible for early release simply because they turned 50. I will do everything I can to keep people who commit these terrible crimes where they belong, in prison. ★

# San Juan Unified Employees of the Year Recognized

## San Juan Unified School District News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - San Juan Unified School District is honored to announce the 2026 Classified Employees of the Year. These outstanding staff members were nominated by our San Juan Unified community for their incredible contributions in supporting the success of our students.

Debbie Armstrong, Nutrition Services Cook at Del Campo High School: Armstrong's dedication to student wellness and nutrition at Del Campo High School is seen in everything she does. As a cook, she consistently finds ways to improve and innovate, ensuring students have access to meals that support their health and success. Her genuine care for students shines through in the pride she takes in her work each day.

William Dreifus, Technology Support Specialist for Technology Services: Since 2017, Dreifus has played an integral role in supporting requests submitted to Technology Services. His consistent reliability and responsiveness have earned the trust of San Juan Unified staff, who often refer to him as their “go-to” resource for technical support.

Joseph Lausmann, Operations Technician for Transportation: Lausmann's commitment to service during these past nine years has made a lasting impact across San Juan Unified. As his nominator shared, “When he first started at transportation, he was outstanding when caring for students with special needs, not just driving them, but truly taking care of them.”

Cortney Lloret, Instructional Assistant, Alternative Learning Center at Meraki High School: Lloret brings professionalism, positivity and exceptional skill to her role as an instructional



The San Juan Unified 2026 Classified Employees of the Year pose with their certificates of recognition. Photo courtesy of San Juan Unified School District

assistant at Meraki High School. Widely recognized as the organizational backbone of the school, she keeps complex projects, calendars and daily logistics running smoothly while anticipating the needs of both students and staff.

Mikalai Lutsyk, Lead Custodian at Grand Oaks Elementary School: Lutsyk has served as lead custodian for seven years and is widely recognized for his strong work ethic, professionalism and deep pride in his school community. Known for his kindness and steady presence, he manages daily requests with efficiency, a positive

attitude and a gentle sense of humor, even during unexpected challenges.

Omar Marroquin, School Community Specialist at Encina High School: For nearly a decade at Encina High School, Marroquin has served as a dedicated school community specialist, building strong, meaningful relationships with students, staff and families. In addition to his role supporting the school community, he coaches five different sports throughout the year, further deepening his connection with students both in and out of the classroom.

Peter McGuinness, Lead Electrician for Maintenance and Operations: For more than 16 years, McGuinness has been a dependable and highly skilled member of San Juan Unified's Maintenance and Operations team. As lead electrician, he brings deep technical expertise, steady leadership and a consistent positive attitude to his work each day.

Joanne McLaughlin Strauch, Site Secretary at Earl LeGette Elementary School, Jamileh Piran, Health Instructional Assistant for Health Services: Strauch is a valued member of the Earl LeGette Elementary

School community, known for her exceptional work performance, leadership and dedication to students, families and staff. Her contributions have made a meaningful impact at her school site and across San Juan Unified.

Jamileh Piran, Health Instructional Assistant for Health Services: Each day, Piran makes a meaningful difference in the lives of students and families at the Ralph Richardson Center. Her dedication and compassion are especially impactful for families of students with severe disabilities who are new to the school and often new to the country. ★

# Koi Club Hosts Self-Guided Pond Tour

## Camellia Koi Club News Release

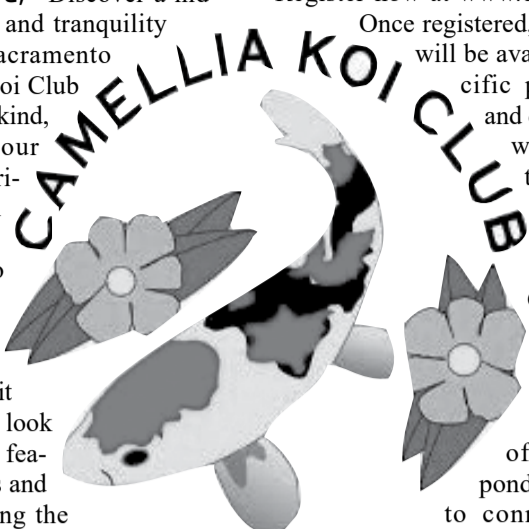
**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Discover a hidden world of beauty and tranquility right here in the Sacramento area. The Camellia Koi Club is holding a one-of-a-kind, self-guided pond tour featuring stunning private ponds and koi collections across the region from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 25.

Explore at your own pace, choose which locations to visit and enjoy an up-close look at breathtaking water features, lush landscapes and magnificent koi. Along the way, you will have the opportunity to meet fellow koi enthusiasts, connect with experienced hobbyists and speak with koi experts, breeders, suppliers and pond designers. Whether you are a seasoned pond keeper, dreaming of building your first koi pond or simply curious about the

hobby, this tour offers inspiration, education and plenty of eye-catching scenery.

Register now at [www.camelliakoi.org](http://www.camelliakoi.org).

Once registered, a detailed map will be available with specific pond locations and descriptions one week prior to the tour so you can plan your perfect day. "The Camellia Koi Club's pond tour is more than a showcase of stunning koi ponds. It's a chance to connect with fellow koi enthusiasts, spark ideas for your own pond and learn directly from koi experts," said Susan Reyes, Camellia Koi Club president. "Participants will meet club members at each stop, discover what the club offers, and have the opportunity to join our welcoming koi community." ★



# California Farm Bureau Celebrates Passage of Farm Bill

## California Farm Bureau News Release

**CALIFORNIA (MPG)** - California Farm Bureau President Shannon Douglass commented today on the House Agriculture Committee's bipartisan passage of H.R. 7567, the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026. She said:

"California Farm Bureau applauds the House Agriculture Committee's bipartisan passage of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026. We greatly appreciate Chairman G.T. Thompson's ongoing dedication to advancing the farm bill process and including key provisions that will modernize farm policy, increase certainty and enhance the competitiveness of California farms and ranches. We especially thank California Reps. Jim Costa and Adam Gray for their support of

the bill and their ongoing support for California farmers and ranchers.

"Farmers and ranchers have been without certainty of a new farm bill since it first expired in 2023, and have been grappling with low commodity prices, rising supply costs, inflation and uncertain international trade dynamics. While there is still more work to be done, passage of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act would provide California producers with assurance of a full five-year farm bill, thus strengthening America's rural communities. We urge House leaders to move swiftly and bring H.R. 7567 to a vote on the floor."

The 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](http://www.cfbf.com) or follow @cafarmbureau on Instagram, LinkedIn, X or Facebook. ★

# Shake Off the Winter Blues with \$8 A's Tickets



The A's are welcoming fans back to the ballpark this season with \$8 tickets for select April and May games at Sutter Health Park, giving families and friends the opportunity to enjoy America's favorite pastime together with some affordable family fun. Photo courtesy of the A's

## Athletics News Release

**WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The A's are welcoming fans back to the ballpark this season with \$8 tickets for select April and May games at Sutter Health Park, giving families and friends the opportunity to enjoy America's favorite pastime together with some affordable family fun.

"We are thrilled to kick off our second season in Sacramento and can't wait to see families, friends, co-workers and community groups filling Sutter Health Park for a fun experience at the ballpark," said Catherine Aker, senior vice president, marketing and communications, with the A's. "With \$8 tickets available for many games in April and May, fans can plan a family outing, a date night or a group get-together, all while enjoying competitive matchups in Sacramento's beautiful spring weather."

Springtime promises to be loaded with Major League fun at the ballpark. From must-have collectibles to meaningful celebrations, April and May give fans of all ages the chance to be part of unforgettable moments.

In addition to the \$8 tickets for select

games, fans can also take advantage of several special promotions and celebrations, including: Sacramento Saturdays with a Sacramento focused promotion every Saturday home game throughout the season and giveaways for kids every Sunday home game throughout the season.

Season events also include the Fireworks Show at the home opener vs. Houston Astros on April 3, Sacramento Baseball Jersey Giveaway vs. Houston Astros on April 4, Jackie Robinson Day vs. Texas Rangers on April 15, A's Basketball Jersey Giveaway vs. Cleveland Guardians on May 2 and Postgame Fireworks Show vs. San Francisco Giants on May 15.

"With so many special promotions and celebrations, great ticket prices, and an always exhilarating gameday experience, we couldn't be more excited for A's fans and the Sacramento region this season," Aker added.

Fans can secure their seats and view the full promotional schedule at: [www.mlb.com/athletics/tickets/single-game-tickets?partnerId=it-20260217-16900609-ath-1-A&utm\\_id=it-20260217-16900609-ath-1-A#series=6](http://www.mlb.com/athletics/tickets/single-game-tickets?partnerId=it-20260217-16900609-ath-1-A&utm_id=it-20260217-16900609-ath-1-A#series=6) ★



# Shred Day 2026

St. Vincent de Paul Fund Raiser

## "Help Us Help The Poor"

5057 Cottage Way, at the Walnut Avenue Parking Lot

**Saturday, April 18th**

**8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**

(Or until the truck is full)

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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. ★*

## Social Security Matters

### Help! Social Security Reduced my Monthly Payment



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** My last Social Security payment decreased by about \$400, so I went to my online SS account and found a November 2025 letter explaining that my 2024 tax return showed a greatly enlarged AGI (Adjusted Gross Income). Thus, SSA decided to withdraw monies, as of Jan 2026, from my bank account because I'd owed far more monies to them! The letter itemized my greatly diminished 2026 SSA monthly payment, explaining should my next tax return show a regular AGI, then SSA would return my SS income to regular amounts (and return every prior month's deficits?). Said letter also mentioned an optional recourse, that of compiling an "Appeal" to regain my ongoing decreased income! The extra amounts now withdrawn for Medicare Parts A and D alone are outrageously high. I'm a retired senior citizen on a fixed income.

According to SSA, my having sold a piece of land in 2024 allows SSA to decrease my SS income! Has this become a common practice against USA (senior) citizens? Thank you in advance for your input! **Signed: Feeling Wronged**

**Dear Feeling Wronged:** From what you have shared, it appears that your SS benefit amount has been affected by a provision known as

"IRMAA" (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount). IRMAA isn't really a Social Security issue, rather it is a Medicare premium thing. But when IRMAA applies, it reduces your net Social Security payment because Medicare premiums are automatically taken from your Social Security benefit, thus making your net SS payment less. If you look at your gross Social Security payment (at your online "my Social Security" account) you will see that your gross SS payment did not change, but your Medicare premium did, thus affecting your net SS payment.

IRMAA, essentially, makes Medicare a "means tested" program, where those with a higher AGI can pay a higher Medicare Part B (and Part D) premium. However, IRMAA is usually based on AGI from two years prior to the current year (because your current AGI information isn't available from the IRS when Medicare premiums are determined in October of each year). FYI, you may have received a notice in the mail in early December telling you what your 2026 Social Security and Medicare amounts would be. In a nutshell, the land you sold in 2024 apparently increased your AGI to exceed the base IRMAA thresholds (which are \$109,000 if you file your taxes as a single, or \$218,000 if you file your income tax as "married/jointly"). And the IRMAA supplements are "progressive" (higher if your AGI is more), so if your Medicare premiums went up by about \$400 (about twice the 2026 standard premium) it's likely that your 2024 AGI was over \$137,000 if you filed as a single (or over \$274,000 if you filed as "married/jointly"). FYI, you can see the 2026 IRMAA brackets/

premium amounts at this link: [www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/medicare-premiums.html](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/medicare-premiums.html)

A couple of additional points:

- Your Medicare premiums will, indeed, revert to the standard amounts for 2027, if your 2025 AGI amount is under the IRMAA threshold for your tax filing status.

- There is no premium for Medicare Part A (which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization care) because you are receiving Social Security benefits. However, there is a premium for Part B of Medicare (which is coverage for outpatient medical services), and you must also separately pay a premium for Part D (which is coverage for prescription drugs offered by private insurers). And these IRMAA supplements apply even if you have a Medicare Advantage plan from a private insurer.

Unfortunately, your only "recourse" is, as SSA suggested, to appeal the IRMAA supplement, but that is usually successful only if you can prove you had a "life changing event" which caused (or will cause) your AGI to be less than that used to determine your IRMAA surcharge. Your best option at this point will likely be to appeal using a "Request for Reconsideration" (Form SSA-561) asking that your 2026 Medicare premium be based on a recent year's (e.g., 2025) lower income.

Finally, IRMAA isn't really a new thing — it was enacted in 2003, effective in 2007. But it does have a profound effect on many seniors, as I explained in this article I recently published on the topic: <https://amacfoundation.org/irmaa-a-medicare-surprise/>

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. ★*



## Iran is Challenging a Bedrock of American Geopolitical Power

oil, but aluminum, fertilizer and any number of other products are being affected. If shipping in the strait remains as constrained as it is now for months rather than weeks, the economic damage could become intolerable.

Iran is the equivalent of a piratical Barbary state that is managing to undermine a defining element of American geopolitical strategy, despite the beating that it is taking otherwise. We have two carrier strike groups in the region, representing alone more firepower than many nations can muster, and the Iranians have some missiles, drones and mines -- and yet, they've effectively closed the strait and we, for now, can't reopen it.

This is a stark demonstration of asymmetrical power, and the longer it goes on, the more it will look like a national humiliation. There's no one who is going to bail us out because we have a world-class navy, whereas our allies don't -- even if they wanted to help.

Trump would like to muster an international force to reopen the strait, but Germany has rebuffed him, and the Japanese and Australians aren't interested. France is putting together a force -- to deploy after the end of hostilities. Imagine if that had been our attitude about the Battle of Belleau Wood. The fact of the matter, though, is that allied countries aren't going to think it's possible to reopen the strait if we haven't managed to do it on our own.

Just consider the global pain from the current effective closure of the strait, which is being felt at the pump in the U.S. and threatens to hammer Europe and countries throughout Asia. Not just

Trump's two basic options are to seek some unsatisfactory accommodation with the Iranians that ends in a ceasefire -- with the Iranians having demonstrated their de facto control of one of the most consequential waterways in the world -- or to break their grip on the strait by force of arms, perhaps up to and including the deployment of ground forces to secure the shores of the strait.

Trump seems inclined to bludgeon the strait free of Iranian control. U.S. officials say we could begin naval escorts in a matter of weeks, and they worked during the Tanker War between Iran and Iraq in the 1980s.

The great 19th-century naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan argued, "Control of the sea by maritime commerce and naval supremacy means predominant influence in the world." This was the experience of the British, and has been ours for a long time. "The necessity of a navy," Mahan also said, "springs from the existence of peaceful shipping and disappears with it."

In the Strait of Hormuz right now, peaceful shipping has largely disappeared, while we are deploying a mighty navy. If our forces can't restore free navigation, it will represent a significant failure of a traditional pillar of U.S. power.

*Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.*

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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. ★



## Easter Blessings

Christian or not, Easter is a special time. History can attest to the many traditions and rituals. But what is most important in all of them is that it is a time for renewal... of life...of hope...especially with so much happening worldwide that makes us really concerned. But we must look at the future. Perhaps it is time to just enjoy the little things that make Easter so special and put a smile on our faces and food for our soul. And there’s fun too. Ever wonder where some of the symbols of Easter originated. It’s a mixed bag, but here are some theories.

Peter Cottontail will come hopping down the bunny trail once again. He is universal and secular, but I found some interesting history about this funny bunny. Here’s one that surprised me. Perhaps the hare and not the rabbit should be the leader of the pack. Since ancient times the hare has been the symbol of the moon. Legend has it the hare never closes its eyes, not even for a single blink. Maybe it’s because of the fact that hares, not rabbits are born with their eyes open. Rabbits are born blind. Fertility might have some bearing on the picture since rabbits beat hares in being more prolific. So many more bunnies can hop down that bunny trail.

How about those colored eggs? Some historical reasons for them too. At the Passover Seder, a hard-boiled egg dipped in salt water symbolizes both new life as well as the Passover sacrifice offered at the Temple in Jerusalem. The ancient Persians painted eggs for

Nowrooz, their New Year celebration falling on the Spring Equinox. In Christian tradition, the egg was a symbol of new life as a chick might hatch from the egg. In Medieval times, eggs were forbidden during Lent, and then eggs were on the menu after the strict Lenten fast. Wonder if they were scrambled or bunny side up?



And oh those lovely Lilies. They came from Bermuda. Goes back to the 1880’s when Ms Thomas P. Sargent fell in love with their beauty blooming in Spring. She brought back bulbs to her home in Philadelphia. You can’t bring plants past customs these days. So happy they are now Easter beauties.

Can’t leave out chocolate. Chocolate eggs began in 19th century France and Germany, and soon spread to the rest of Europe and eventually the United states. Children were told to make nests or baskets so the Easter Bunny could leave them there. I’d go on an Easter egg hunt for chocolate any time! So after the Lenten time sacrifice, what a treat. Bring on the chocolate in any form, ANYTIME!

So there. Got some traditions of your own? Dig them out from the past and share them. Caring for each other is so important in our times of war, disease, hate and crime. The bottom line is we can make it through these times with that blessing of new life and rebirth that is the promise for a better tomorrow. **BLESSINGS AND HOPE ON THIS GLORIOUS DAY!** ★

## Community College Students Can Claim CalKIDS Scholarships

CalKIDS News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - In a significant step toward strengthening college access and affordability, State Treasurer Fiona Ma, CPA, announces that CalKIDS, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO), and the California Cradle-to-Career Data System (C2C) have launched a coordinated initiative to help eligible community college students access their CalKIDS Scholarships.

Through this partnership, state education leaders are leveraging existing student data systems to help community colleges pinpoint enrolled students who have CalKIDS Scholarships available to claim and use. The effort identified 40,000 community college students with approximately \$20 million in CalKIDS Scholarships available. These insights will strengthen targeted, campus-level outreach to connect students with those funds for qualified educational expenses.

CalKIDS, administered by the ScholarShare Investment Board and chaired by State Treasurer Fiona Ma, CPA, is a statewide automatic scholarship program created to expand access to college and career training. Eligible California public school students automatically receive up to \$1,500 in CalKIDS Scholarships and must claim their account to use the funds for qualified educational expenses until age 26.

Since CalKIDS launched in 2022, the program has supported nearly 70,000 students with more than \$37 million for expenses at community colleges across the state.

“This partnership reflects California’s commitment to ensuring that students can access the opportunities already available to them,” said California State Treasurer Fiona Ma, CPA. “Through CalKIDS, we are investing in students long before they arrive on a college campus, and this effort helps ensure those scholarships are actually reaching the students who need them most.”

As part of the initiative, CalKIDS participating information is securely matched through the California Cradle-to-Career Data System, which has an existing data-sharing arrangement with the Chancellor’s Office. The matched eligibility report is now available to authorized

college staff through their Data on Demand platform. Community college districts can use this information to conduct individualized outreach to enrolled students who have available CalKIDS Scholarships, ensuring students are aware of funds that can immediately support their educational goals.

“This collaboration demonstrates the power of connected systems, with Californians at the heart of our shared goals,” said Mary Ann Bates, executive director of the California Cradle-to-Career Data System. “This joint initiative is government efficiency and effectiveness in practice, and the California Cradle-to-Career Data System is eager to continue delivering actionable insights that can directly benefit students in their higher education journeys.”

The California Community College system serves more than 2.2 million students annually and plays a central role in advancing economic mobility across the state. By integrating CalKIDS Scholarship data into existing student support systems, campuses can further strengthen affordability efforts and student persistence.

“Imagine what \$1,500 from CalKIDS can mean for a first-generation community college student juggling two part-time jobs. It can be the difference between stopping out and staying enrolled. That is why the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office has partnered with the Cradle-to-Career Data System and State Treasurer Fiona Ma. Together, we are building the systems that deliver on this promise. This is what Vision 2030 is about: strong partnerships and modern data systems that ensure every student, in every community, can access the opportunity they have already earned,” said California Community Colleges Chancellor, Sonya Christian.

Community college districts are encouraged to use the Data on Demand platform to identify enrolled students with CalKIDS Scholarship indicators and conduct targeted outreach through existing campus communications and student support channels.

Students can visit CalKIDS.org to confirm eligibility and claim their scholarship. To claim funds, students will need their Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), a ten-digit number that can be found on their high school transcript or by contacting their former high school. ★

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# COMICS & PUZZLES

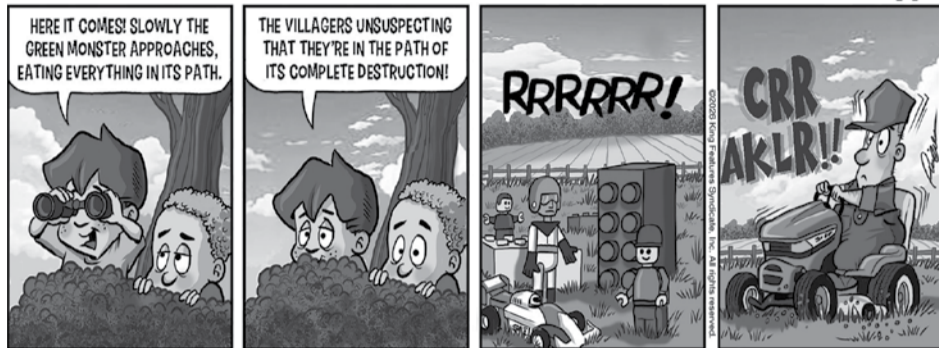
## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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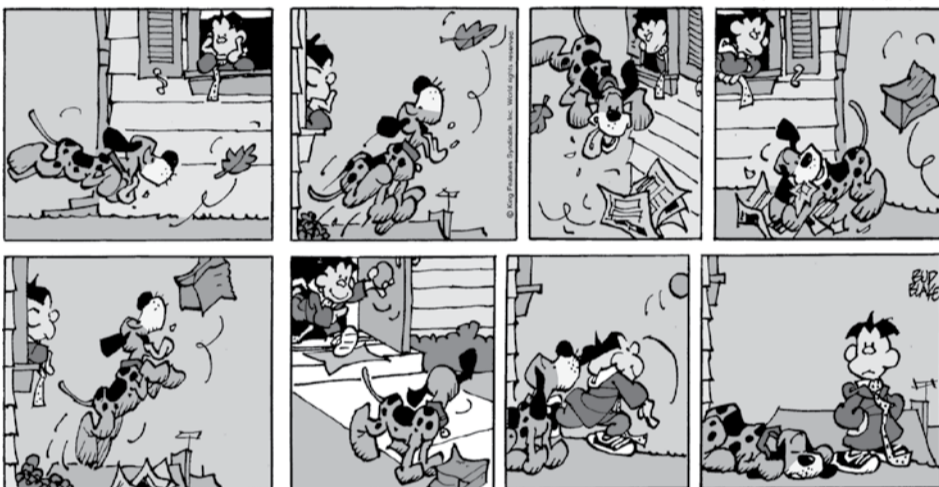
Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Meter is moved. 2. Foot on dress in window is missing. 3. Finger is moved. 4. Tag on dress is thinner. 5. Man is thinner. 6. Arm is not as wide.

## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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  - Kindred
  - Jeopardy
  - Dog foot
  - Threepold
  - Throat dangler
  - Mogul rider
  - Right-hand page
  - \*Lady Gaga: "You and me could write a bad"
  - \*Missy Elliott: "Get Ur"
  - Exclamation of disgust
  - At the apex
  - Pérignon of champagne fame
  - Two-masted vessel
  - Cast out
  - Larger-than-life
  - Electrical resistance units
  - Star bursts
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  - Alexander, for short
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  - Sushi option
  - Alpine lift
  - Impose a tax
  - Forward and email, e.g.
  - Made in Vegas
  - Siren's domain
  - Cajole
  - \*Drake: "I need a dance"
  - \*Adele: "We could've had it all in the deep"
  - \*Olivia Rodrigo: "I got my"
  - Earliest stage of sickness
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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](http://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](http://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 life-saving 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 wins 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. ★



# BurnBot Wins National Award



Hundreds of people attended the event that featured live demonstrations of tele-operated firefighting robots, mobile solar microgrids and AI-powered lightning detection systems and vulnerability maps. Photo courtesy of Verizon

## Verizon News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Verizon announced the winners of the 2025 Community Disaster Resilience Prize on March 5 at Cal Expo. Public officials, including Sacramento Mayor Kevin McCarty and State Senator Henry Stern, along with tech innovators gathered to showcase groundbreaking technology designed to shift the focus from disaster response to proactive preparation.

Hundreds of people attended the event that featured live demonstrations of tele-operated firefighting robots, mobile solar microgrids and AI-powered lightning detection systems and vulnerability maps. These technologies are being deployed to help communities in California build long-term resilience against wildfires, extreme heat and power outages. Learn more about the winning companies at: [www.verizon.com/about/news/verizon-investing-new-generation-life-saving-disaster-resilience-technology](http://www.verizon.com/about/news/verizon-investing-new-generation-life-saving-disaster-resilience-technology).

Additionally, more than 100 Verizon employees and



Tech innovators gathered at Cal Expo on March 5 to showcase groundbreaking technology designed to shift the focus from disaster response to proactive preparation. Photo courtesy of Verizon

community partners volunteered to create hundreds of disaster resilience kits, which will be distributed to the United Way of California Capital Region and the United Way of California Bay Area.

Mayor McCarty thanked the crowd for attending and highlighted emerging technologies. He also emphasized how communities can work together with technology and communications partners to find solutions to these issues together.

Senator Stern appreciated the timely nature of this important event, which sits at the intersection of disaster management and policy, especially as California enters severe weather

awareness season.

Winners of the prize include BurnBot out of San Francisco, tele-operated robotics designed to reduce wildfire fuel loads in high-risk landscapes. Another winner, FNN out of Gainesville, FL, is an AI-powered ignition detection system that provides real-time insights into emerging fire risk. The Footprint Project out of New Orleans, LA are mobile solar microgrids that provide clean, resilient backup power during outages. Finally, the Atlantic Council & ClimaSens out of Washington, DC/Melbourne offer climate vulnerability mapping that enables cities to proactively manage extreme heat risk. ★

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