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Celebrate Easter

The Official Newspaper of Record for the City of West Sacramento

Purple Pageant empowering young women

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West Sacramento News Ledger

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Serving the West Sacramento Region Since 1964

APRIL 3, 2026

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Esparto Fireworks Explosion

Grand Jury Says Officials Knew, None Acted



According to a report by the Yolo County Grand Jury, nearly a dozen county employees knew over the years of pyrotechnics operations at an Esparto warehouse prior to the fire on July 1, 2025, that caused several deadly explosions. Photo courtesy of the Esparto Chamber of Commerce

Yolo County Civil Grand Jury News Release

YOLO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Yolo County Grand Jury, after eight months of investigation, issued a report on March 26 concluding that “although numerous local officials, including Sheriff’s deputies, fire officials, officials in the County building, code enforcement, planning and County Counsel’s offices, all knew about the fireworks businesses, none of them took any action” to abate the prohibited activity. The complete report can be found at: <https://www.yolocounty.gov/living/grand-jury/>

“The Grand Jury has identified nearly a dozen County employees who knew over the years of the pyrotechnics operations at the Esparto site but failed to take any remedial action,” the report stated.

Furthermore, the Grand Jury concluded that “the Board of Supervisors over the years fostered a culture of tolerance of code violations that percolated through the County bureaucracy.”

During its investigation the Grand Jury reviewed hundreds of pages of documents and conducted more than 30 interviews that resulted in about

50 hours of testimony. Among the Grand Jury’s findings are the following:

Enforcement of county ordinances would have prevented the death and destruction from the Esparto fireworks explosion; rural fire districts in Yolo County do not have the resources to provide adequate fire training and fire prevention services to their communities.

Yolo County Community Services Department lacks the resources, training and systems to provide adequate code enforcement services to the unincorporated areas of

Continued on page 7

Boogie All Night with KC and The Sunshine Band

California State Fair News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - It’s time to put on your “Boogie Shoes” and “Get Down Tonight” to “Shake Your Booty” with the original Sunshine Man himself, KC & The Sunshine Band at the California State Fair, Saturday, July 25, as part of the Toyota Concert Series on the Main Stage.

KC & The Sunshine Band have entertained audiences for more than 45 years and sold over 100 million records. They were the first act since The Beatles in 1964 to score four No. 1 pop singles in a 12-month span, with three also reaching No. 1 on the R&B chart.

Their 1976 album Part 3 went triple platinum and featured hits like “I’m Your Boogie Man,” “Shake Your Booty,” and “Keep It Comin’ Love.” More hits followed, including “Boogie Shoes” from the Saturday Night Fever soundtrack, “Please Don’t Go,” and “Yes, I’m Ready,” a duet with Teri DeSario.

KC won Grammy Awards in 1978 for his work on the “Saturday Night Fever” soundtrack and received the NARAS Governor’s Award in 2001. In 2002 KC received the coveted Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. KC’s music is now being sampled by rappers, and whole new generations of fans have been introduced to his music.

“KC & The Sunshine Band is one of those groups that will have the crowd dancing for the entire concert,” said Tom Martinez, CEO of Cal Expo & California State Fair. “Have a corndog, funnel cake, a turkey leg and then come and get your groove on.”

All concerts are included with Fair admission. Guests who would like an up-close experience can purchase reserved seating. To purchase tickets visit www.CAStateFair.com.

The California State Fair runs from July 17 to Aug. 2. Gates open at 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and at 10 a.m. Friday through Sunday.

8th Annual ‘Music for Natalie’ Honors Natalie Corona

Odd Fellows News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - The 8th Annual “Music for Natalie” concert will be held from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 11 at the G Street Plaza. The Davis Odd Fellows sponsor the free community event to remember and celebrate the memory and spirit of fallen Davis Police Officer Natalie Corona.

After Officer Corona’s death in 2019, the Odd Fellows started a scholarship program in her name and have held an annual free music event for the community. “Music for Natalie” will be held at G Street Plaza for the first time. Bands this year include Misner & Smith, Julie and the Jukes, and

the Natalie Cortez Band. The event will also include food and beverage vendors and a beer garden.

The goal of the scholarship program is to provide assistance to high school students in Davis, CA and Arbuckle, CA who are pursuing a career in law enforcement, criminal justice, or as a first responder and to honor Corona’s ideals of excellence and service. The application period for 2026 closed April 1.

An endowment fund has been created to fund the scholarship annually. The Odd Fellows’ goal is make the endowment fund self-sustaining to enable the scholarship program to continue in perpetuity. Davis Odd Fellows Helping Hands, Inc., a



The “Music for Natalie” concert, sponsored by Davis Odd Fellows, celebrate the memory and spirit of fallen Davis Police Officer Natalie Corona. Photo courtesy of City of Davis

501(c)(3) corporation, will accept donations and manages the endowment fund.

For more information about the scholarship

program or the event, visit www.davislodge.org/officer-natalie-corona-odd-fellows-memorial-scholarship/.

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Community Calendar

FOOD RESOURCES

City of West Sacramento Parking Lot, 1271 West Capitol Ave., every Saturday, 8:30 a.m. while supplies last. This is a walk-up distribution. Please bring your own bags or cart.

Home Church, 108 W. Woodland Ave., Woodland, every Monday at 3:30 p.m. This is a walk-up food distribution. Please bring your own bags or cart.

Masjid Aisha, 700 Glide Ave., every Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. while supplies last. This is a walk-up food distribution. Please bring your own bags or cart.

Woodland Community College, 2300 E. Gibson Rd., Woodland, every Friday at 8:30 p.m. This is a drive-through distribution.

MARCH/APRIL

Turner Library, located at 1212 Merkley Ave. has the following events this week:

Friday, April 3: English conversation group, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Fairy gardens, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Join us to create your own miniature enchanted garden, perfect for attracting fairies (while supplies last).

Saturday, April 4: Russian story time, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Movie for teens and adults, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Join us for a showing of "Dune: Part Two," rated PG-13.

Monday, April 6: Family story time, 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. Teen library council, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Tuesday, April 7: Hug-a-bye baby, 11 a.m. to noon. Tech help, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Book a 30-minute one-on-one appointment with a library staff member to help you with your computer, phone, and

other technology questions. Bring your personal device or use a library computer. To make an appointment, visit the Information Desk or call (916) 375-6465.

Wednesday, April 8: Wiggle Wednesday, 11:15 a.m. to noon. English conversation group, 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Drop-in tutoring, 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Kids in grades 1 through 8 are invited to drop in after school for homework help in math, science, and more with a high school volunteer. Spots are first-come, first-served, and are limited to 20 minutes if other students are waiting. Evening book club, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Find this month's title at the library Information Desk.

Thursday, April 9: Tech help, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Book a 30-minute one-on-one appointment with a library staff member to help you with your computer, phone, and other technology questions. Bring your personal device or use a library computer. To make an appointment, visit the Information Desk or call (916) 375-6465. Yoga at the library, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Friday, April 10: English conversation group, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Favorite friends story time, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. This month, we're celebrating "The Lorax" with a special story time and crafts in honor of Earth Day.

Saturday, April 11: Russian story time, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Clarksburg Branch Library, located at 52915 Netherlands Road, Clarksburg, has the following events this week:

Wednesday, April 8: Teen library council, 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Board games, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Call 530-666-8005 for more information on any of these

events or events at any Yolo County Library branch.

Continuing through Saturday, April 4: "The Crucible" at the Woodland Opera House, 340 Second St. Woodland. Set in 1692 Salem, Massachusetts, the story follows the eruption of mass hysteria in a close-knit town after a group of young girls is discovered dancing in the woods. To avoid punishment, the girls begin accusing townspeople of witchcraft, igniting a wave of fear that fractures the wider community. For more information, including schedule and tickets, visit www.woodlandoperahouse.org.

Friday, April 3: Woodland First Friday Art Walk, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in downtown Woodland. Enjoy featured artists showing their latest work, live street music, gallery receptions, and the tastes from local restaurants and cafes. It's a great chance to explore Woodland's creative community while enjoying the lively atmosphere of our downtown.

Saturday, April 4: UC Master Gardener Spring Plant Sale, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Woodland Community College, 2300 E. Gibson Rd., Woodland. Drought-tolerant ornamentals will be available, including California natives, pollinator-friendly perennials and annuals that attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees, along with tomato plants, including heirloom varieties. Rain or shine.

Saturday, April 4: Breakfast with the Bunny, 9 a.m. to noon at the Odd Fellows Lodge, 415 2nd St., Davis. For \$15 per person, families will enjoy a cold breakfast at 9 a.m. with the Easter Bunny, then join the Bunny about 10 a.m. for a special parade through the farmers market toward the

Community Church lawn to hunt for eggs. Following the hunt, families return to the Lodge for more fun activities. Tickets available on Eventbrite.com.

Saturday, April 4: Earth Day and Spring Celebration, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Bryte Park, 425 Todhunter Ave. Get ready for a bloomin' good time. Learn, play, shop, eat, and have fun at this free community event. Free raffle with prizes like tickets to River Cats, A's and Sac Republic games, craft tables, activities and many free resources. It's a celebration you won't want to miss.

Sunday, April 5: Wiggle Worms Nature Play, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Bryte Park, 425 Todhunter Ave. Dress for active, and sometimes messy, play. Designed to engage ages 1 through 9 but siblings and babies are welcome. No registration required. This is not a drop-off program, and a caregiver must be present during the whole session. Brought to you by The Wonder Grove.

Sunday, April 5: Day in Downtown, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., E Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, Davis. Come check out local brick and mortar businesses, local artists and makers, vintage clothing vendors, and local non-profits. Davis Rave Co. will also be providing live music. Various downtown eateries will be running sweet deals all day long. Follow us on Instagram @dayindowntown for updates.

Tuesday, April 7: Soccer Field Ribbon Cutting, 1 p.m. at Woodland Community College Soccer Field, 2300 E. Gibson Rd., Woodland. The ribbon cutting ceremony kicks off a week of events celebrating our opening. Community members, students and families are invited to attend this ceremony with photo opportunities, scrimmage matches, and free youth soccer camps. More information, link to RSVP, and detailed schedule at www.wcc.yccd.edu/events.

Friday, April 10: Live@DCC 2nd Friday Free Noon Concert, noon to 1 p.m. at Davis Community Church, 412 C Street, Davis. This month we're featuring "MORE Great Songs from Unfortunate Musicals" with CapRadio's Stephen Peithman. Some of the best (and best-loved) songs of the Great American Songbook have come from flop musicals – and some of the best songwriters in the business. Peithman provides the inside stories, while Lenore Sebastian and Joe Alkire deliver the vocals, accompanied by LuAnn Higgs.

Friday, April 10: "Fighting Demons" by Shaunte Neely – Art Reception, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Gallery 1075, Community Center, 1075 West Capitol Ave. Gallery 1075 is pleased to welcome you for an evening of fun combining museful paintings and lively discussions with fellow art lovers. This free in-person event is an amazing chance to experience and support the arts in our community. "Fighting Demons" will be on exhibit April 6 through 30.

Saturday, April 11 and Sunday, April 12: NorCal Celtic Festival at the Yolo County Fairgrounds, 1250 E. Gum Ave., Woodland. Events are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Don't miss the Ceilidh Celebration dinner Saturday night – requires a separate ticket and doors open at 5:30 p.m. Tickets for all events and detailed schedule at www.norcalcelticfestival.com.

Saturday, April 11: Repair Café, 9 a.m. to noon at Holy Cross Parish, 1321 Anna St. Volunteers gather to repair or advise how to repair clothing, bicycles, small appliances and electronics, jewelry and more. Our mission is to reduce waste, decrease consumption and teach

community members how to repair their own items when possible.

Saturday, April 11: UC Davis Arboretum Spring Plant Sales, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 448 LaRue Rd., Davis. Find our new lineup of Arboretum All-Stars as well as a variety of climate-ready favorites, California natives, and thousands of other plants perfect for our region. Open to members, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. and open to all, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, April 11: Nature Day at the HIVE, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1221 Harter Ave., Woodland. Join us for a free family-friendly day discovering nature and celebrating pollinators. Enjoy engaging workshops and activities from local beekeepers, entomologists, farmers, conservationists, and horticulturalists. Call The HIVE Tasting Room and Kitchen at 530-668-0660 for more information.

Saturday, April 11: Raíces en Movimiento, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at International House, 10 College Park, Davis. Guests are invited to a dynamic gathering that weaves together dance, history, and musical exploration to celebrate stories of Latin American migration. Join us to witness, reflect, and celebrate heritage, connection and joy. Tickets available at bit.ly/raicesenmovimiento.

Saturday, April 11: River City Grizzlies Market, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Drake's: The Barn, 985 Riverfront St. Join us for a lively evening celebrating and supporting the River City Grizzlies Football Program and their mission to bring people together through football, teamwork, and community spirit. Enjoy a mix of local vendors, tasty eats, and live performances in a fun, family-friendly atmosphere.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

(Current as of publication, please verify schedule with the organization):

Café Yolo Social Dining meets on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in the West Sacramento Community Center, 1075 West Capitol Ave. Seniors over age 60 are invited to mingle and dine for free, sponsored by Meals on Wheels. Reservations required 24 hours in advance at 530-662-7035 or email welcome@mowyolo.org.

Center for Land-Based Learning Mobile Farmers Market will be popping up every third Tuesday and Wednesday through April to offer seasonal fruits and vegetables, connect with the team, and support local farmers – all at convenient community locations. Shoppers who use their EBT cards can get 50% off their produce purchases. More information and specific locations can be found at www.landbasedlearning.org/followthetomato. Next market dates will be Tuesday, April 14 and Wednesday, April 15.

Cub Scouts Pack 49 meets monthly from September through May on the first Monday at Our Lady of Grace School, 1990 Linden Road. For more information, contact westsacramentopack49@gmail.com.

Davis Craft and Vintage Fair, Sunday, April 12, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Central Park, 301 C St., Davis. Expect to see friendly vendors with local handmade and original art, crafts, quality vintage items, upcycled treasures, earth-friendly creations, good food and more. Information and more dates at www.daviscraftandvintage.org.

Home Depot Kids Workshops are free in-person at 690 Riverpoint Court on the first Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon, while supplies last. The next class will be

April 4, making a farm planter. Registration required by using the following link: www.homedepot.com/workshops/

Kitchen Garden Chat, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month. The next chat will be "Hardening Off Seedlings and Soil Temperature Requirements" on Saturday, April 4. Join UC Master Gardener of Yolo County, Treva Valentine for these events, free and open to anyone who wants to get more to eat from their garden throughout the year. No registration is required. Zoom link at www.ucanr.edu, look for the UC Master Gardeners-Yolo upcoming events webpage.

Lowe's Kids Workshops are free in-person each month from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. at 2250 Lake Washington Blvd. Next workshop will be Saturday, April 18 to make a terrarium. Registration required by searching "events" at www.lowes.com

Mighty Rotary Club of West Sacramento meets on Fridays at noon at Streets of London, 2200 Lake Washington Blvd. See www.rotaryclubofwestsacramento.org for more information, including how to join the Rotary.

OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) at UC Davis brings together adults ages 50 and better to keep minds active and connections strong – because learning is a lifelong adventure. For a schedule of stimulating lectures and discussion groups, captivating film screenings, educational field trips and online and in-person classes, email us at cpe.ucdavis.edu/lifelong-learners-OLLI.

Out of the Box Ministries holds a monthly event for volunteers to pack grocery bags for distribution to community members in need. Join us Sunday, April 12 at 2 p.m. to pack bags at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1500 Park Blvd. for April 16 distribution at the same location. On distribution days, doors open at 6 p.m. for volunteers and 6:30 p.m. for clients. More information at 916-371-5875.

The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Master Gardeners will be available to answer your gardening questions at their West Sacramento Gardening Q&A Desk. It will be open from 10 a.m. to noon at Lowe's, 2250 Lake Washington Blvd. This desk is held on the first and third Saturdays of every month, free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Jennifer Baumbach at jmbaumbach@ucanr.edu or call the Yolo County Master Gardeners hotline at 530-666-8736. Next session will be Saturday, April 4.

Washington Unified School District School Board Meeting, Thursday, April 23, 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 1110 West Capitol Ave.

West Sacramento City Council meets at 7 p.m. generally on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings are held at City Hall, 1110 West Capitol Ave., second floor, also viewable on Astound Cable channel 20 and AT&T channel 99. More information, including how to participate and Committee meeting schedules, can be found at: <https://www.cityofwestsacramento.org/government/city-council/city-council-meetings-agendas>. The next Council meeting will be on Wednesday, April 15.

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Tours run rain or shine on the third Sunday of each month, unless there is flooding. View seasonal and permanent wetlands, native grasslands and young riparian forests. Meet at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters, 45211 County Road 32B. Next tour will be Sunday, April 19. Registration is required at www.yolobasin.org ★

WEST SACRAMENTO'S

EARTH DAY

AND SPRING CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, APRIL 4TH | 10:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.

Bryte Park, 1225 Carrie Street, West Sacramento

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE EARTH DAY AND SPRING!

Learn, play, shop, eat and have fun at this **FREE** community event!

FREE TACO to the **FIRST 50 PEOPLE** that arrive at 10 a.m. to the Info Booth! *Limit 4 per family.*

50 FREE TICKET VOUCHERS to the first people to visit the **RIVER CATS** booth and sign-up for their newsletter (*Limit 2 per fan*)

Egg Hunt for the kids!

10:30 a.m.
ages 4 and under

11:00 a.m.
ages 5 - 7

11:30 a.m.
ages 8 - 12

HIGHLIGHTS

- Free raffle with great prizes including tickets for the **A's and Sacramento River Cats and Sacramento Republic FC**
- Music, fun activities, and giveaways for all ages
- Ideas and resources for living more sustainably
- Unique items for purchase from local artisans and makers
- Free seven-gallon recycle bin, kitchen pail, and compostable bags (while supplies last)
- Meet non-releasable Birds of Prey Ambassadors from "Hawks Honkers & Hoots"
- Free compost giveaway
- West Sacramento Fire Department with Engine
- Ride your bike to the event and park for free with SABA Bike Valet

JOIN US RAIN OR SHINE!

If you have questions, please call (916) 617-4590.

More info at <https://recyclingfun.org/>



Nominations Open for 2026 Golden Heart Awards

City of Davis News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - The City of Davis invites community members to submit nominations now through April 17 for the annual Golden Heart Awards. These awards recognize exceptional youth in the Davis community.

Nominations can be submitted in two different categories to help acknowledge youth who are “non-traditional achievers”:

The Service Award recognizes individuals who have given significant service to an expressed need in the community, to their peers and/or to their schools.

The Personal Challenge Award recognizes individuals who have overcome significant challenges in their lives.

In memory of Andrew Mockus, who was tragically killed in 1992, the

City Council adopted the Recreation and Park Commission recommendation to create the Golden Heart Awards as a way to recognize outstanding youth in the community, especially those students who are not typically recognized in other forums. The first award was presented in 1994.

“Through the Golden Heart Awards program, we honor the amazing accomplishments of Davis youth who have given of their time to focus on community service and those who have overcome considerable challenges in their lives,” said Mayor Donna Neville. “We applaud their resilience, grit and compassion for others. Their work makes the Davis community a better place to live.”

Nomination forms for the Golden Heart Awards are available at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/goldenheartawards>.

Community members are welcome to nominate a deserving Davis youth who is currently in the seventh through twelfth grade. Youth cannot nominate themselves nor can their parent/guardian nominate their youth.

Nomination forms are due no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, April 17 and must be submitted by email to Kellie Vitaich at kvitaich@cityofdavis.org or by mail to City of Davis, Golden Heart Awards – ATTN: Kellie Vitaich, 23 Russell Blvd. Davis, CA 95616.

Nomination forms can also be dropped off in person at the Parks and Community Services Public Counter, located at City Hall, 23 Russell Blvd.

The awards will be presented at the May 19 City Council meeting. For more information, email Kellie Vitaich at: kvitaich@cityofdavis.org or <https://www.cityofdavis.org/goldenheartawards>. ★

Gaines Supports California's Disabled Veterans Through Senate Bill 888



Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.) News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.), Vice Chair of the State Board of Equalization, submitted a letter of support for Senate Bill 888 (Seyarto, R), legislation that would exclude service-connected disability compensation from the definition of “household income” when determining eligibility for the low-income exclusion under the Disabled Veterans’ Property Tax Exemption (Revenue

and Taxation Code Section 205.5).

“Our state has a moral obligation to honor the sacrifices of those who served by ensuring that tax policies do not undermine their financial security. SB 888 is a practical, targeted step toward that goal and aligns with California’s commitment to supporting veterans and military families.”

SB 888 proposes to remove this barrier and enable more qualifying veterans and their surviving spouses to benefit from the exemption, helping them afford to stay in their homes and maintain stability in their communities.

In his support letter to Senator Seyarto and members of the Legislature, BOE Vice Chair Gaines states, “I applaud Senator Seyarto for his leadership on this important issue. This commonsense

reform recognizes that disability payments are earned for injuries sustained in service to our country, not discretionary or supplemental income. Including these benefits in the income calculation unfairly penalizes disabled veterans, many of whom rely primarily on Social Security and VA disability payments to make ends meet.”

Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.) was elected to represent the Board of Equalization’s First District. He is a leading taxpayer advocate, defender of Prop. 13, and is committed to providing trustworthy and transparent representation for nearly ten million constituents in 34 counties of northern, eastern, and southern California. For more information, visit www.boe.ca.gov/Gaines. ★

Aguiar-Curry Unveils True Cost of Child Care Act to Improve Affordability and Accountability

Supporters say AB 1981 will help families, providers, and the economy by ensuring fair childcare reimbursement rates

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Assembly Majority Leader Cecilia Aguiar-Curry announced Assembly Bill 1981 (AB 1981), the True Cost of Child Care Act, at a press conference joined by childcare advocates, providers and labor partners. The legislation aims to ensure accountability and transparency in implementing fair childcare reimbursement rates across California.

“Childcare is essential to our workforce and economy, yet too many families are struggling to afford it while providers are underpaid,” said Assembly Majority Leader Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters). “AB 1981 creates a clear path forward to make sure reimbursement rates reflect the true cost of care, so our families can access the care they need and providers are fairly compensated.”

Across California, many families spend 20–30 percent of their income on childcare, far exceeding the federal affordability benchmark of 7 percent. At the same time, childcare providers, 98 percent of whom are women and over 70 percent women of color, often earn less than \$16 per hour without benefits. This imbalance has contributed to workforce shortages and limited access to care for working families. AB 1981 addresses these challenges by requiring the California Department of Social Services to submit a clear timeline to the legislature for implementing childcare reimbursement rates that reflect the true cost of care. The bill also requires regular updates to ensure accountability, transparency and measurable progress.

Aguiar-Curry was

joined at the press conference by representatives from Child Care Providers United, United Domestic Workers, Service Employees International Union and Parent Voices, who voiced strong support for the measure and highlighted the real-life impacts of unaffordable childcare. Childcare advocates emphasized the urgent need for reform and the broader economic stakes. Supporters noted that without affordable and accessible childcare, parents are forced out of the workforce, businesses struggle to retain employees and providers are unable to sustain their operations.

“As a young girl I watched as my mother and fellow providers fought for basic rights and recognition as providers and today I carry the torch on her behalf, and on behalf of the more than 40,000 providers across the state. I am grateful to Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry for truly listening to providers and fighting to ensure our pay reflects the full cost of providing care for California’s working families. My community needs me to keep my doors open, and I need to pay the bills. AB 1981 is a critical step toward making that possible,” said Miren Algorri, a family childcare provider from San Diego County.

Nancy Harvey, a family childcare provider from Oakland added, “Being a childcare provider means living in constant fear that an unexpected expense will shut down our businesses and leave the families who count on us scrambling. AB 1981 by Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry demands California finally recognize the true value of childcare by paying us a living wage that will allow us to keep our

doors open through the ups and downs of owning and operating our businesses.”

Sylvia Hernandez, a family childcare provider in Van Nuys added, “Systemic racism, sexism, and devaluation of care work have left childcare providers with empty pockets and empty plates on our family dining tables for far too long. Without access to quality, affordable childcare, thousands of providers and working-class parents are at risk of losing their jobs. Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry is fighting for providers with AB 1981, the True Cost of Care Act, to ensure we can keep our doors open and make a livable wage. With the support of this decades-long childcare champion and providers united in this fight, we know we’ll win.”

By establishing a transparent and accountable framework for setting reimbursement rates, AB 1981 will create a more equitable childcare system that supports providers, expands access for families, and promotes long-term economic stability across the state.

“AB 1981 brings transparency to the process, holds the state accountable, and keeps the focus where it belongs—on getting to a system that reflects the true cost of care,” concludes Aguiar-Curry. “Because we’ve already made that promise. This bill just makes sure we keep it.”

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry represents California’s 4th Assembly District, which includes all of Lake, Colusa, Napa, and Yolo Counties and part of Sonoma County. She serves as the Assembly Majority Leader and Chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus. ★



Farm Bureau Leaders Advocate at Capitol

Farmers who serve on the California Farm Bureau Board of Directors gathered in Sacramento last week to meet with legislators and regulatory officials to advocate on issues that affect agriculture. Among the issues Farm Bureau board members spoke to lawmakers and their staff about were the recent increase in wolf-livestock conflicts, a proposed tax credit to offset the cost to farmers paying overtime wages, a bill that would require any wine labeled as “American” to be completely made from U.S.-grown grapes, and regulation of nitrate contamination in the state’s water supply. Roger Everett, a Tulare County beekeeper and citrus farmer, described the Capitol visits as an opportunity for farmers to highlight agricultural issues that legislators from urban areas might not be aware of. “The majority of these people don’t engage in agriculture,” Everett said. “It’s on us to provide them with the information of our operations and what affects us, and how we’re going to survive in the world they’re trying to create for us.”

Mentorship Program Grows Next-Generation Farmers

The California Bountiful Foundation, a nonprofit research and education arm of the California Farm Bureau, created the Expanding Our Roots mentorship program to connect beginning farmers and ranchers with experienced producers who share practical, real-world knowledge. Through the program, mentors and mentees work through topics such as production planning, business management, market

access, navigating regulations, managing risk, adopting climate-smart practices, and accessing resources and grants. The program continues to grow. To date, 246 farmers from 46 counties have enrolled. Expanding Our Roots serves a diverse group of producers, including 62 participants who speak a language other than English. Carol Thong of Sonoma County said working with her mentor, Andrew Forchini, a winegrape grower in Sonoma County, helped her better understand vineyard operations and identify ways to reduce costs, helping her make more informed decisions on her operation.

Vision Tech Allows Dairies to Identify Lameness Early

Lameness is one of the main reasons a dairy cow will be culled from the herd due to cost of treatment and impacts on milk production and reproduction. It affects 90% of dairy cows at least once during their lifetime. But methods used to detect lameness did not significantly improve for years. Some dairy farms have begun to use vision technology, which allows them to detect and treat lameness earlier. The trademarked SmartSight system, for example, is an artificial intelligence-driven lameness detection tool that monitors cow locomotion and generates reports on lameness status before it may be visible. Early detection means fewer severe cases, milk production and fertility are preserved, and cow health and welfare are improved. “Lameness has been a huge unknown, but that is changing with vision technology,” said Joya McCarthy, technical product manager with Specialty Herd Solutions in Fresno. ★

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A Veteran

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



Look to the Draft!

With a total of six games to go, the Sacramento Kings have only three teams in the NBA with a worse winning record. That would be the Indiana Pacers and the Washington Wizards with 17 wins apiece, and the team that beat them Sunday, the Brooklyn Nets.

So, what does that mean for the Sactown boys exactly? It means that barring some unforeseen event, the Sacramento Kings are likely poised to qualify for one of the top selections in the upcoming NBA draft. And thankfully, we can finally put a stop to the conversation of tanking!

A professional and storied organization such as the NBA should never have to resort to finding a remedial method to combatting something as pernicious and utterly distasteful as actually trying to lose a contest.

I can't imagine what commissioner Adam Silver must be thinking, and David Stern must be turning over in his grave. Already significant fines have been metered out to teams that have shown evidence of intentionally losing games, and this needs to come to a stop once and for all.

No fan or season ticket holder ever buys a ticket to see his/her hometown team try to lose a game, and if this isn't stamped out now, the NBA will surely be in a world of hurt.

I was gratified to see the Philadelphia Nets put their best effort forward in Sunday night's game with nothing to play for but the gratification of a win.

Sacramento, with eight healthy players to suit up had an abysmal shooting night, scoring just 99 points while shooting 36/84 from the field.

With 19 wins for the season and only six games remaining, one thing is abundantly obvious. The Sacramento Kings will in all likelihood garnish one of the cherished high draft picks in the upcoming lottery.

Nothing is ever cast in stone, but the handwriting is on the wall, and it remains to be seen what acumen Scott Perry really has when it comes to assessing talent. Critical doesn't even begin to describe the importance of having the ability to pick players with the talent to succeed in the NBA, but soon we will see what this relatively new Sacramento GM is going to bring to the table.

Whether big man A.J. Dybantsa becomes available or possibly Cameron Boozer, either of these talented big men could change the landscape of the Kings team.

Yes, we know Rome wasn't built in a day, and I'm not expecting miracles, but sometimes the ping pong balls bounce your way, and just maybe this is the year.

Without a doubt this year's draft will take on monumental interest with the fan base in Sacramento, so let's continue watching the rookies perform and put this season of hurt in the rear-view mirror.

The question is, did we learn anything this year, because I certainly did.

The Kings problems are not relegated to the players alone, and serious question marks rest with regards to the coaching staff of the Sacramento organization. What if anything can be done will loom large as the Kings formulate their team, hopefully build around Domantas Sabonis, and present to the team and the fans a leadership base that has totally changed direction.

This can happen, whether it's getting better at what you do, or whether ownership has to step in and make sweeping changes, going into next season with a staff incapable of teaching players how to shoot free throws or play some semblance of defense, is simply unacceptable.

I would hesitate to guess what Vivek Ranadive is going to do, but the upcoming draft will probably determine which direction his decisions will take him.

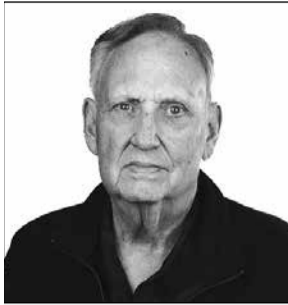
So, what's the good news? Good news is the Kings are poised to add an impact player in the draft, and there is abundant talent on this team that has been utterly devastated by injuries all year.

If there is anything positive about a 19-win season, it has been giving the Kings an opportunity to overhaul their roster from top to bottom while picking up castoff former first-round draft picks and giving them a thorough look. Former No. 7 pick in the 2020 NBA Draft, Killian Hayes has already signed a two-year contract.

A good draft, a healthy team, and 2026 can be filled with optimism, and that relates to wins!

All the best Kings fans! ★

Newsom May Spend \$19 Million to Sugarcoat California's Stalled Economy



By Dan Walters,
CALMatters.org

California hasn't had a truly balanced state budget for four or maybe five years, and the current one continues to overspend its revenues.

Nevertheless, Gov. Gavin Newsom wants to spend \$19 million on a marketing campaign to portray California as having a vibrant economy, to counter "myths driven by misinformation and political rhetoric."

"California and its business climate have been falsely and maliciously maligned for years, and the state has a right to tell the true story — California is a great place to live, work, invest and visit," Newsom spokesperson Tara Gallegos told the Los Angeles Times. "Setting the record straight will benefit every business, worker and resident of this state."

The solicitation of contractors for the campaign quotes a passage from Newsom's State of the State speech: "California has never been about perfection. It's about persistence. The courage of our convictions and the strength to embody them. That's the California Way."

It appears to be a \$19 million contribution from California taxpayers to Newsom's forthcoming campaign for the presidency. The state is

a target of ceaseless social media and internet criticism, some of it far-fetched but, unfortunately, much of it is deserved, such as its seemingly intractable homelessness crisis. Being from California would be one of the hurdles Newsom faces if he seeks the presidency.

The marketing campaign will attempt to put a positive spin on California's economy and business climate, echoing how Newsom typically responds when interviewers ask about corporate migrations and loss of population to other states. He cites California's having the globe's 4th largest economy were it a nation.

The hard fact, however, is that California's economy isn't doing so well these days, and it cannot be dismissed, as Newsom often does, as something dreamed up by political foes.

Take, for instance, a report that the Legislature's budget analyst, Gabe Petek, issued in 2024, describing California's economy as "sluggish."

"California's economy has been in an extended slowdown for the better part of two years, characterized by a soft labor market and weak consumer spending," Petek said, adding, "Outside of government and health care, the state has added no jobs in a year and a half. Similarly, the number of Californians who are unemployed is 25 percent higher than during the strong labor markets of 2019 and 2022. Consumer spending (measured by inflation-adjusted retail sales and taxable sales) has continued to decline throughout 2024."

This week, the California Center for Jobs & the Economy, an offshoot of the California Business

Roundtable, issued a report that mirrors and builds on what Petek said.

"California's economy in 2025 presents a troubling paradox," the detailed report declares. "While the state continues to rank among the largest economies in the world, the underlying data reveals an economy that is no longer delivering broad-based growth, opportunity, or stability."

"Rather than expanding," the report continues, "California's economy is increasingly defined by stagnation in job creation, erosion in its private sector base, and mounting structural challenges tied to affordability and competitiveness. Many of the state's headline strengths — particularly in technology — are masking deeper weaknesses across the broader economy. The data show an economy that has largely stalled since the pandemic recovery, with employment barely returning to pre-2020 levels, private sector job losses accelerating, and consumer activity weakening in real terms."

Newsom obviously wants to bury these sobering facts, but doing so undercuts his duty — as governor for another nine months — to be straight with Californians, not just conjure up taxpayer-financed propaganda.

He'll have plenty of time to spin fables after he's out of office and on the presidential campaign trail.

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

I'll be 70 on New Year's Day.

When Should I Apply for Social Security?



By Russell Gloor,
AMAC Certified Social
Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I was born on January 1st, 1958, so I believe Social Security considers me to be 70 as of December 2027. I'm planning on filing when I turn 70 to maximize the payment. I'm not sure if I should start in December, with the first payment in January 2028. Or should I start in January with the first payment in February 2028? I know I can start anytime, however I don't want to file before the maximum payment, even by one month. **Signed: Wanting Maximum Benefit**

Dear Wanting: You are correct that if your birth date is January 1, 1958, you are entitled to your full age 70 benefit in December 2027. So, if you claim your SS benefit

to start in December 2027 you will get your maximum benefit amount and you will receive that payment in January 2028 (on the 2nd Wednesday). Basically, anyone born on the first of any month is considered to have been born in the previous month for SS benefit purposes.

You can apply for your benefits up to 4 months prior to your birthday month, and SS usually suggests applying about 3 months in advance to give them time to process your application. When you complete the application, you will specify the month you wish your benefits to start, so applying early does not present a problem. You can either call SSA at 1.800.772.1213 to make an appointment to apply over the phone, or you can apply online at www.ssa.gov/apply.

The one thing you might want to do is put the following in the "Remarks" section of your application for SS benefits: "I do not wish to receive any retroactive Social Security benefits. I want my benefits

to become effective with the first month of my age 70 eligibility (December 2027 because I was born on the first of January)."

Including that remark will ensure that your benefit will be the full maximum amount you are entitled to at 70 years of age, without any reduction. And I congratulate you on choosing a strategy which maximizes your monthly benefit and will likely provide you with the most in cumulative lifetime Social Security benefits.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-dvisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. ★



The Israel Hoax

we've heard now suggests anything other than that he genuinely relishes killing Iran's leaders and destroying its weapons.

Temperamentally, Trump loves exercising power, always wants to do it on his own authority and seeks to preserve his options. It shouldn't be surprising, then, that as commander in chief of the world's most proficient military, he's been drawn to using and threatening force.

Israel didn't talk Trump into conducting his Venezuela raid, or menacing Denmark over Greenland, or looking to Cuba as his next potential target.

One argument, based on a distortion of remarks made by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, is that Israel forced Trump's hand; it was going to attack Iran no matter what, and we knew U.S. personnel would be hit by Iran in response and would be particularly vulnerable if we didn't hit Iran as well.

Check and mate, Bibi Netanyahu.

The idea, though, that Trump was too sheepish to stay Netanyahu's hand if the Israeli prime minister was about to launch a military operation that Trump opposed and was going to jeopardize American lives is preposterous.

Trump has been happy to say "no" to Netanyahu before. He pressured the Israeli leader into turning back planes at the end of the 12 Day War last June.

By alleging that Israel forced the U.S. into war, the isolationists think they are making a harsh criti-

cism of the Jewish state, but they are really damning Trump. What worse offense can a president of the United States commit than subjugating his own nation to a foreign power? It's a treasonous act that deserves impeachment and removal.

This is exactly why the Russian obsessives so delighted in believing that Trump was a tool of the Kremlin.

Most of the right-wing dissenters blanch at following their own logic. An alternative tack -- seen in intelligence official Joe Kent's resignation letter -- is to argue that Trump was fooled. Kent said there was "a misinformation campaign" that created an echo chamber "to deceive" the president.

This argument is still a stinging condemnation. It paints Trump as an easily manipulated naif, and on a consequential matter of war and peace. In reality, there was no broad-ranging media drumbeat for war and no wave of popular support. This, again, emphasizes how the decision was Trump's, and his alone.

The Russian hoax was, in part, driven by the left's shock at Trump's victory in 2016. Likewise, the isolationists are having trouble processing the fact that the president whom they invested so much in launched a major Middle Eastern war. But Trump was not owned by this faction of the right, any more than he is owned by Israel.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Yolo Child Rapist Recommended for Early Release; DA Urges Governor Newsom to Review

Yolo County District Attorney's Office News Release

WOODLAND, CA (MPG) - Israel Ceja was convicted of 20 counts of Forceful Rape and other charges in 2000. On Jan. 29 he was recommended for parole by a two-commissioner panel. On Friday March 13 the Yolo County District Attorney submitted a letter to California Governor Gavin Newsom urging to him to take action and have the decision recommending parole for this convicted child rapist reviewed and reversed.

In 1993, Ceja married the victim's mother and began participating in bathing the then 11-year-old. He began molesting her and she was in fear that she would be removed from her mother's care if she reported sexual abuse, again. The defendant knew a former boyfriend of her mother had sexually abused the victim, leading her to be removed from the home.

The defendant's abuse progressed and continued until the victim fainted in public in 1999 and was taken to the hospital where it was discovered she was pregnant. The DNA of the fetus confirmed the defendant was the genetic father. Investigation determined that he had tried to make her jump from the house and a truck ramp to try to induce miscarriage. Additionally in July of 1999 after coming home intoxicated from a party he had pointed a gun at the victim, accused her of looking at other men, then pulled the trigger. Fortunately, it did not fire, and the victim was able to escape.

On Sept. 29, 2000, a Yolo County jury convicted

Ceja of multiple counts of forcible rape, assault with a firearm, child endangerment and lewd acts. On Nov. 1, 2000, Yolo County Superior Court Judge Timothy Fall sentenced Ceja to 139 years in state prison.

The Elderly Parole law in California allows inmates who are 50 years or older and have served at least 20 years in prison, or those who are 60 and have served 25 years, to apply for early release and parole. While certain offenders, such as those sentenced to death or life without parole are excluded from this program, child rapists and other sex offenders are eligible for consideration. Ceja was 63 years old and had served 26 ½ years in custody at the time of this hearing.

California Board of Parole Commissioner Neil Schneider and Deputy Commissioner Letizia Pinitore opined that Ceja no longer posed an unreasonable risk to society if released. Commissioner Schneider explained that Ceja's age, his extensive programming, numerous laudatory notes, lack of misconduct while incarcerated, his lower Static 99 and Criminal Risk Assessment and his "genuine" plans for parole were very "authentic and real" and therefore justified the joint decision to recommend him for parole. Commissioner Schneider referred to Ceja as an "excellent citizen."

Ceja admitted in the same hearing that he suffered from the "disorder" of being attracted to young girls. He also indicated that his primary way of controlling his pedophilic urges is "praying."

The victim was not

present for the hearing. The Yolo County District Attorney's Office attended the hearing and opposed Ceja's release.

The case now goes to Governor Newsom to review the Parole Board's decision and decide to accept or reject the recommendation. The Board of Parole Commissioners are all appointed by the Governor and serve at his pleasure.

California State Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen has introduced AB2727, cosponsored by the Sacramento and Orange County District Attorney's office proposing excluding individuals convicted of the most serious sexual offenses from eligibility under Elder Parole. For other aggravated sex offenses, the bill proposes increasing the age to 75 and serving a minimum of 30 years before being eligible.

"This decision to recommend elder parole and early release for this monstrous child rapist, whose primary plan is to "pray" away his admitted desires for little girls, defies all common sense and reasonable interpretations of justice and public safety," said District Attorney Reisig. "There is nothing "excellent" about a sexual predator who raped and destroyed the childhood of a little girl for nearly a decade. Governor Newsom must use every ounce of his Constitutional executive authority to stop and reverse this release and all of the other outrageous elder parole releases being ordered by his appointed parole commissioners. California should not be a safe harbor for child rapists." ★

Crime Reports WEST SACRAMENTO



ARREST REPORTS

Geniva Andrews, 37, was arrested Friday, Feb. 13 on Waterfront Place by West Sacramento Police. Officer responded to report of battery at the location. The victim stated he had been hit in the face twice and spit on by the suspect. On arrival, officers located the suspect, later identified as Andrews, and she attempted to flee from officers but was detained without further incident. Victim signed a citizen's arrest form and stated he wanted to seek prosecution. Andrews was transported to Yolo County Jail, charged with battery and resisting a peace officer.

Kae Torn Saetern, 38, was arrested Sunday, March 8 at Reed Avenue and Riverpoint Court by West Sacramento Police for DUI. Officer observed a vehicle driving erratically on Interstate 80, unable to maintain a consistent speed and swerving in its lane. Officer conducted a traffic stop off the freeway, and observed signs of intoxication in the driver, Saetern. He denied drinking any alcohol and refused field sobriety tests. He eventually consented to an evidentiary breath test which revealed blood alcohol concentration >.08. He was transported to Yolo County Jail.

Amari Walker, 31, was arrested Monday, March 9 on Riverpoint Court by West Sacramento Police for petty theft of retail merchandise. This was a merchant detention.

Eliud Aradi Martinez, 18, was cited Sunday, March 15 at Waterford Place and 3rd Street by West Sacramento Police. Officer was parked in front of the CalSTRS building when he observed a vehicle within the cul-de-sac accelerate loudly and slip traction of the rear wheels to spin the car in circles in an exhibition of speed. An enforcement stop was conducted and the driver, Martinez, was unable to produce any proof of insurance. The vehicle's registration had also expired. Martinez was cited for speed exhibition, false proof of financial responsibility, and lack of current registration. His car was impounded from the scene.

William Frederick Gillaspay, 38, was arrested Tuesday, March 17 at Ballpark Drive and 5th Street by West Sacramento Police for DUI. Officer on patrol observed a vehicle traveling at high speed and veering onto the right shoulder and into the bicycle lane. A traffic enforcement stop found the driver, Gillaspay, exhibiting signs of intoxication. He consented to field sobriety tests, which he performed poorly. He was transported to Yolo County Jail.

Dwayne Joseph Miles McDaniel, 33, was arrested Wednesday, March 18 on 65th St. Sacramento. Officer was dispatched to the location for report of a suspicious vehicle. The reporting party's Ring camera captured four subjects in a minivan who were taking items from a neighbor's vehicle. The vehicle's owner confirmed that a drill and cement tools valued at \$500 were taken. Officers located the suspicious vehicle and conducted an investigative stop. The driver, McDaniel, was found to have an active warrant. A search of his person found a .22 long rifle round in his pocket. A search of the vehicle found multiple clear baggies with a white crystalline substance that tested positive for methamphetamine. A loaded long rifle was found in the trunk of the vehicle. Due to McDaniel's prior convictions, he was not allowed to possess ammunition or firearms. Officers also found burglary tools and three clear pipes commonly used for methamphetamine. Since McDaniels was the driver, he was aware of the theft. McDaniel was transported to Yolo County Jail on the warrant, possessing unlawful paraphernalia, being a felon possessing a firearm and ammunition, and conspiracy to commit crime, along with the three others in the vehicle, listed below.

Jennifer Lynn Robbins, 48, was arrested Wednesday, March 18 on 65th St. Sacramento. She was in the passenger seat of McDaniel's vehicle and found to have two prior convictions for controlled substance. A search of her person found a clear baggie with a white crystalline substance that tested positive for methamphetamine, and burglary tools. She was seen outside the vehicle in the original Ring video and was aware of the theft. She was transported to Yolo County Jail, charged with possession of a hard drug with prior conviction, theft of personal property, possessing burglary tools and unlawful paraphernalia, and conspiracy to commit crime.

Francisco Roberto Jose Lastra, 37, was arrested Wednesday, March 18 on 65th St. Sacramento. He was in the back seat of McDaniel's vehicle, on the driver side. A records check found outstanding warrants and two prior convictions for possession of a controlled substance. He was transported to Yolo County Jail, charged with his warrants, possession of a hard drug with prior conviction, possessing burglary tools and unlawful paraphernalia and conspiracy to commit crime.

Dennis Reed Schiveley, 47, was arrested Wednesday, March 18 on 65th St. Sacramento. He was in the back seat of McDaniel's vehicle, on the passenger side. A records check revealed he was on probation and had two prior convictions for possession of a controlled substance. A search of his person found nine shaved keys that appeared to be for vehicles. Schiveley was seen actively engaged in the theft on the original Ring video. He was transported to Yolo County Jail, charged with petty theft, possession of a hard drug with prior conviction, possessing burglary tools and unlawful paraphernalia, and conspiracy to commit crime.

Terrance Jerome Carter, 36, was transported Wednesday, March 18 from Sacramento Main Jail on I Street, Sacramento to Yolo County Jail by West Sacramento Police for an outstanding felony warrant.

Anthony Davonne Woods, 30, was transported Wednesday, March 18 from Sacramento Main Jail on I Street, Sacramento to Yolo County Jail by West Sacramento Police for an outstanding warrant.

Larry Brandon Bethune, 39, was arrested Thursday, March 19 at Sacramento Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard by West Sacramento Police for an outstanding misdemeanor warrant.

Anthony Saint Christopher McGinnis, 34, was arrested Thursday, March 19 on Merkle Avenue by West Sacramento Police. Officer was dispatched to the location for a report of trespassing. Upon arrival, officer recognized McGinnis from prior contacts. A records check revealed McGinnis was on post-release community supervision (PRCS) until May 2028. A search found McGinnis was in possession of seven live .22 rounds inside a small ammunition box. Officer also found a white powdery substance wrapped in clear plastic inside McGinnis' wallet. The substance later tested positive for cocaine. McGinnis was transported to Yolo County Jail, charged with possessing a narcotic controlled substance, prohibited person possessing ammunition, and revocation of PRCS. Later, a victim reported someone named Anthony had stolen her iPhone and it was currently pinging at the West Sacramento Police Department. It was later confirmed McGinnis had stolen the phone earlier that morning, and a charge of grand theft was added for McGinnis.

Kenneth Lee Smith, 40, was arrested Thursday, March 19 on West Capitol Avenue by West Sacramento Police for DUI: any

drug. Officer responded to the location for report of a male talking about killing someone. Upon arrival, officers contacted Smith, who was filling up his vehicle at the gas station. He displayed objective signs of being under the influence of a controlled substance. Due to this, his apparent intention to drive, and a citizen calling in with concern, he was deemed a danger to himself and the public. He was transported to Yolo County Jail.

Paul Sterio, 41, was arrested Thursday, March 19 at Michigan Boulevard and Lilac Lane by West Sacramento Police. Sterio had been pulled over for an enforcement stop and found to have outstanding warrants. He was transported to Yolo County Jail.

David Maria Dale, 54, was arrested Thursday, March 19 on West Capitol Avenue by West Sacramento Police for an outstanding misdemeanor warrant and transported to Yolo County Jail.

Mercedez Renee Silva-Sims, 30, was arrested Thursday, March 19 at Sycamore Avenue and West Capitol Avenue by West Sacramento Police. Officer was dispatched to the area for a homeless complaint. Upon arrival, officer contacted a female, later identified as Silva-Sims, who exhibited objective signs of being intoxicated. A records check found an outstanding felony warrant and she was transported to Yolo County Jail.

Santra Rose Young, 33, was arrested Thursday, March 19 at Sacramento Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard by West Sacramento Police for an outstanding misdemeanor warrant and transported to Yolo County Jail.

Davon Donte Allen, 32, was arrested Friday, March 20 on Alabama Avenue by West Sacramento Police. Officer was dispatched to the location for report of a male actively attempting to break into a residence. Upon arrival, officers contacted a male, identified as Allen, standing near the front door of the residence and next to a tube-stemmed pipe with a bulbous end containing charred residue. The neighbor and reporting party advised officers he observed Allen attempting to open the front door, check windows and looking under the door mat. Officers later contacted the homeowner, who stated he did not know Allen and Allen did not have permission to be on the property. Homeowner wanted to press charges. Officers observed there was fresh debris near the front door, indicating a forced entry attempt. A records check revealed Allen was a parolee at large and a parole hold was issued. He was transported to Yolo County Jail charged with attempted first-degree burglary and possession of unlawful paraphernalia.

Derrail Dashone Hendrix, 21, and Darian D. Lampkin, 30 were arrested Saturday, March 21 on West Capitol Avenue by West Sacramento Police. Officers responded to the location for a call about a suspicious subject running through a trailer park. Upon arrival, officer contacted Lampkin, who stated a male he knew took some money and ran away. Another male, later identified as Hendrix, came up in a vehicle. Lampkin got in and the pair drove away. A victim was located in the park, who stated he was at a motel the previous evening when two males arrived. One had a firearm, pointed it at him, and told him to get in the car or else they would kill him. The victim stated that the male with the gun hit him in the head with it, resulting in a visible injury. The suspects kept the victim in the vehicle and turned on the child locks so he could not get out since early this morning. The victim's wallet was also taken, and some cash removed. While in the car, both suspects used a taser on the victim to tell them where to find a drug dealer. The victim stated that the two males in the vehicle seen earlier were the suspects. Officers located the vehicle, found the victim's wallet inside and detained Hendrix and Lampkin. Under Miranda, Lampkin denied any crimes occurred. They were both transported to Yolo County Jail, charged with assault with a deadly weapon, threatening crime with intent to terrorize, kidnapping, torture, and conspiracy to commit crime.

Deshana Amari Leeann Lewis, 23, was arrested Saturday, March 21 at Gateway Drive and Sansome Street by West Sacramento Police for an outstanding misdemeanor warrant. Officers were dispatched to the location for report of an assault with scissors. A records check revealed Lewis, one of the parties involved, had the outstanding warrant and she was transported to Yolo County Jail.

Jose Valentin Virgen, 31, was arrested Sunday, March 22 on Harbor Boulevard by West Sacramento Police for DUI. Officer was dispatched to a gas station and found Virgen passed out in the driver's seat of a car. He woke up and refused medical attention. Officer smelled alcohol on his breath and observed other signs of intoxication. Virgen told the officer he had two glasses of wine at a comedy club about three hours earlier and had nothing since. He stated he had recently been arrested for DUI and that his license was suspended. Virgen refused to perform field sobriety tests. Officer determined Virgen was driving under the influence. A search of this vehicle found eight open and empty 50ml bottles of cognac and four open and empty bottles of wine, some of which were in reach of the driver's seat. Officer also found several glass bong in the trunk. Virgen was transported to Yolo County Jail.

INCIDENTS / CRIME REPORTS

Friday, Feb. 13 – victim reports trespassing at a single-family home on Bevan Road. The victims had a fraudulent lease from the suspect and are starting the eviction process. Suspect has been identified, no stated value of loss.

Friday, March 6 – victim reports their neighbor observed a female stealing a package from the front porch of the victim's residence on Alabama Avenue. The unknown suspect entered a sedan and fled the scene. \$45 loss.

Friday, March 13 – victim reports he parked his vehicle in the employee parking lot at his work on Shore Street. After work, he came out to his vehicle and found his catalytic converter was missing. No suspect information and loss valued at \$2,000.

Sunday, March 15 – victim reports their license plate and pocketknife were stolen from the center console of their vehicle on Bradford Way by an unknown suspect. \$100 estimated value of loss.

Sunday, March 15 – a church on Park Boulevard reports the eastern side glass door was vandalized at some point since the previous Friday by an unknown suspect. There are no video cameras. Undetermined value of damage.

Monday, March 16 – a business on Channel Drive reports several feet of copper wire, valued at \$8,000, were stolen by unknown suspects some time since the previous Friday.

Monday, March 16 – victim reports an unknown suspect took a bag from her unlocked vehicle on F Street. The bag contained perfume, makeup, a wallet and multiple gift cards. Several unauthorized transactions have now appeared on her credit cards. \$1,584 value of loss.

Monday, March 16 – victim reports theft of items valued at \$20 from their vehicle and vandalism to the vehicle's driver-side door. The unknown suspect left behind a can of Monster Energy drink.

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Esparto Fireworks Explosion: Officials Knew, None Acted

Continued from page 1

the county. The County lacks a system that prioritizes potential code enforcement issues and an accountability system that tracks who is responsible for making code enforcement decisions.

The Board of Supervisors “has encouraged a laissez-faire attitude toward new construction and businesses located in unincorporated areas.” The Board of Supervisors has not provided adequate

resources for the enforcement of building and safety codes. The Yolo County Sheriff’s Office failed to provide training about crucial Yolo County safety ordinances or to enforce the county’s fireworks ordinances. The Yolo County Sheriff’s Office failed to enforce its own rules monitoring outside employment by department staff.

In addition to the Grand Jury’s findings, it has proposed a total of 16

recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, Community Services Department and the Yolo County Sheriff.

Among the recommendations are the creation of a Fire Warden position to establish a fire prevention and inspection program in unincorporated areas as well as improved training for the County’s rural fire districts; the establishment of enhanced ethics training and code enforcement for employees in

the Community Services Department; the addition of a second code enforcement officer to the Community Services Department as well as additional clerical support; the use of aerial surveys to identify unpermitted new construction in the county; upgrading the county’s system of tracking code enforcement activities; and additional training for all Sheriff’s sworn deputies on significant county ordinances to protect health and safety.

Additionally, the Grand Jury has recommended requiring the Sheriff to audit all existing authorizations for employees engaged in outside employment to verify they meet department requirements as well as an annual review of these permissions. Prior to approving any outside employment, the Sheriff shall ensure the businesses are compliant with all required local, state and federal operating permits.

The Yolo County Civil Grand Jury is a grand jury with a one-year term charged with examining local government entities within Yolo County. It has no jurisdiction over state or federal agencies. Furthermore, civil grand juries do not normally consider criminal matters. It has been the practice of the Yolo County District Attorney to convene a special grand jury to consider criminal cases. ★

Yolo County Responds to Oakdale Fire Civil Grand Jury Report

Yolo County News Release

WOODLAND, CA (MPG) - The Yolo County Superior Court has released the Civil Grand Jury report regarding the July 1, 2025, Oakdale Fire incident.

Yolo County recognizes that this incident had a profound impact on the Esparto community. The County extends its deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the seven individuals that lost their lives. The Board of Supervisors understands why residents are seeking answers and is committed to the safety of our community, to fully understanding what occurred and to ensuring accountability moving forward.

The Civil Grand Jury is an independent body of citizen volunteers appointed by the Court to evaluate local government operations, promote transparency

and identify opportunities for improvement. Its findings and recommendations are administrative in nature and should not be confused with criminal investigations or potential charges, which are handled separately.

Several reviews related to this incident are underway or have been completed by partner agencies. These include investigations by CalFire and the Yolo County District Attorney’s Office, which are focused on cause, origin and potential criminal accountability. Together, these efforts will evaluate far more information than was available to the Civil Grand Jury and provide a more complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this incident.

While the Civil Grand Jury report raises important issues related to communication, coordination and emergency

response, it represents one part of a broader, ongoing process. Yolo County will carefully review the report and ensure its response within the 90-day legal timeframe is complete, accurate and grounded in the full set of facts.

The Board of Supervisors respectfully disagrees with the report’s suggestion that the County does not take code enforcement seriously. While funding levels have varied historically, the Board has consistently supported and funded the County’s code enforcement program in recent (compared to previous) years and continues to recognize the essential role it plays in protecting community health and safety.

Consistent with this commitment, the County has initiated internal reviews of its processes, including code enforcement procedures, and continues to work

closely with local fire agencies and regional partners to strengthen coordination and communication. Since the Oakdale Fire, Yolo County has taken steps to improve overall preparedness and additional actions will be identified as part of the County’s ongoing evaluation.

In addition, the Board of Supervisors will receive an overview at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, April 14 regarding limited building permit exemptions for agricultural buildings, permitting processes and related policies and procedures to help inform future improvements and Board direction.

At the state level, legislation such as Senate Bill 828 (SB 828) is currently being considered to strengthen coordination, permitting and oversight of fireworks activities across state and local agencies. Among other

improvements, the bill would give local agencies the opportunity to validate land use compatibility as part of the state licensing process, closing a significant gap in the current regulatory framework. Yolo County will continue to monitor these efforts as part of the broader discussion on improving safety and accountability.

The County’s review of the Grand Jury report is ongoing. Yolo County will provide a formal written response to the Civil Grand Jury report within the required 90-day timeframe, outlining actions taken or planned in response to its findings and recommendations and, where warranted, respectfully challenging conclusions that are speculative or otherwise unfounded. Updates will be shared with the public as more information becomes available. ★

Ryan Davis Announces Judicial and Community Campaign Support

Ryan for Yolo News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - Court Commissioner and Yolo County Judicial Candidate Ryan Davis is proud to announce over 50 endorsements from current and retired distinguished members of the California Judiciary, signaling confidence from those who best understand the responsibilities, demands and standards of the judicial role.

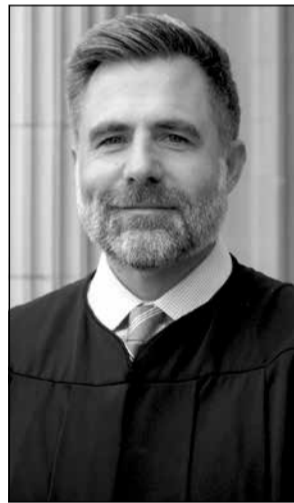
These 50-plus judicial officials join a host of local elected officials including Congressman Mike Thompson, the Mayors of Davis, West Sacramento,

Winters, and Woodland, four County Supervisors and dozens more.

Among those endorsing Davis is Samuel McAdam, current Judge of the Yolo County Superior Court.

“Ryan Davis has A+ credentials and is a proven leader both statewide and locally. He has established himself as a fair, independent, agenda-free judicial officer. I also personally admire his commitment to public service and his good temperament and humility,” Judge McAdam said. “Ryan will make a terrific addition to the Yolo Superior Court bench.”

Former Yolo County Presiding Judge Dave



Court Commissioner and Yolo County Judicial Candidate Ryan Davis is proud to announce over 50 endorsements from current and retired distinguished members of the California Judiciary. Photo courtesy of Ryan for Yolo

Rosenberg also endorses Davis, emphasizing the importance of experience on the bench.

“Judicial elections are not about politics: they are about who is prepared to administer justice fairly from day one,” Rosenberg said. “Ryan has the background, the temperament, and the integrity necessary to serve the people of Yolo County with distinction. He has earned the confidence of those who know the job best.”

Davis currently serves as a Court Commissioner, where he presides over family law cases. His career in public service, including work as

a Deputy State Public Defender and Deputy Attorney General, has provided Ryan with broad experience in both criminal and civil law, as well as a deep understanding of the real-world impact of judicial decisions.

“I am deeply honored to receive the support of so many fellow judicial officers, judges who have devoted their careers to fairness and justice,” Davis said. “Their endorsement reflects a shared commitment to an independent judiciary and to equitable, dignified, and respectful treatment for every person who enters the courtroom.” ★

Davis also has strong ties to the community. He attended Davis public schools, where he met his wife who teaches at Patwin Elementary, and both his daughters attend Davis public schools. With strong backing from respected members of the bench and community support across the county, Davis is excited to continue to talk with voters around a clear message: experienced, impartial leadership that will uphold the integrity of Yolo County’s courts.

To learn more, visit ryanforyolo.com or email info@ryanforyolo.com with any questions. ★

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NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE

and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Petitioner/Attorney for Petitioner: STEVE C. BENTON 114, 461, 3600 AMERICAN RIVER DRIVE, SUITE 185, SACRAMENTO, CA 95864, Telephone: (916) 484-4465

3/20, 3/27, 4/3/26
CNS-4021941#
NEWS-LEDGER 4-3-26

TRUSTEE SALE

APN: 014-245-002-000 T.S. No. NR-53445-ca U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT NOTICE OF DEFAULT AND FORECLOSURE SALE. Recorded in accordance with 12 USCA 3764 (c) WHEREAS, on 7/23/2004, a certain Deed of Trust was executed by RICHARD L. LUKE and PAULINE LUKE, HIS WIFE, AS JOINT TENANTS as trustee in favor of FINANCIAL FREEDOM SENIOR FUNDING CORPORATION, A SUBSIDIARY OF INDY MAC BANK, F.S.B. as beneficiary, and ALLIANCE TITLE COMPANY, CA as trustee, and was recorded on 7/28/2004, as Instrument No. 2004-0033839-00, in Book XX, Page XX, in the Office of the County Recorder of Yolo County, California; and WHEREAS, the Deed of Trust was insured by the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban

Development (the Secretary) pursuant to the National Housing Act for the purpose of providing single family housing; and WHEREAS, the beneficial interest in the Deed of Trust is now owned by the Secretary, pursuant to an Assignment of Deed of Trust dated 9/26/2014, recorded on 11/5/2014, as instrument number 2014-0025331-00, book XX, page XX, in the Office of the County Recorder, Yolo County, California; and WHEREAS, a default has been made in the covenants and conditions of the Deed of Trust in that the payment due on 3/2/2025, was not made due to a borrower dies and the property is not the principal residence of at least one surviving borrower and remains wholly unpaid as of the date of this notice, and no payment has been made sufficient to restore the loan to currency; and WHEREAS, the entire amount delinquent as of 3/2/2025 is \$298,161.27; and WHEREAS, by virtue of this default, the Secretary has declared the entire amount of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust to be immediately due and payable; NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to powers vested in me by the Single Family Mortgage Foreclosure Act of 1994, 12 U.S.C. 3751 et seq., by 24 CFR part 27, subpart B, and by the Secretary’s designation of Nationwide Reconveyance, LLC as Foreclosure Commissioner, recorded on 4/5/2021 as instrument number 2021-0013366, book XX, page XX notice is hereby given that on 4/30/2026 at 12:45 PM local time, all real

and personal property at or used in connection with the following described property will be sold at public auction to the highest bidder: Legal Description: LOT 41 ELKHORN VILLAGE NO. 2, IN THE CITY OF WEST SACRAMENTO, COUNTY OF YOLO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF, FILED FOR RECORD IN THE OFFICE OF THE RECORDER OF YOLO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, ON MAY 21, 1953 IN BOOK 4 OF MAPS, AT PAGE 61. Commonly known as: 971 BEARDSLEY DRIVE, WEST SACRAMENTO, CA 95605 The sale will be held AT THE REAR (NORTH) ENTRANCE TO THE CITY HALL BUILDING 1110 WEST CAPITOL AVENUE, WEST SACRAMENTO, CA 95691. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development will bid an estimate of \$323,450.62. There will be no proration of taxes, rents or other income or liabilities, except that the purchaser will pay, at or before closing, his prorata share of any real estate taxes that have been paid by the Secretary to the date of the foreclosure sale. When making their bids, all bidders except the Secretary must submit a deposit totaling \$32,345.06 [10% of the Secretary’s bid] in the form of a certified check or cashier’s check made out to the Secretary of HUD. Each oral bid need not be accompanied by a deposit. If the successful bid is oral, a deposit of \$32,345.06 must be presented before the bidding is closed. The deposit is nonrefundable. The

remainder of the purchase price must be delivered within 30 days of the sale or at such other time as the Secretary may determine for good cause shown, time being of the essence. This amount, like the bid deposits, must be delivered in the form of a certified or cashier’s check. If the Secretary is the high bidder, he need not pay the bid amount in cash. The successful bidder will pay all conveyancing fees, all real estate and other taxes that are due on or after the delivery of the remainder of the payment and all other costs associated with the transfer of title. At the conclusion of the sale, the deposits of the unsuccessful bidders will be returned to them. The Secretary may grant an extension of time within which to deliver the remainder of the payment. All extensions will be for 15-day increments for a fee of \$500.00, paid in advance. The extension fee shall be in the form of a certified or cashier’s check made payable to the Secretary of HUD. If the high bidder closes the sale prior to the expiration of any extension period, the unused portion of the extension fee shall be applied toward the amount due. If the high bidder is unable to close the sale within the required period, or within any extensions of time granted by the Secretary, the high bidder may be required to forfeit the cash deposit or, at the election of the foreclosure commissioner after consultation with the HUD Field Office representative, will be liable to HUD for any costs incurred as a result of such failure. The commissioner may,

at the direction of the HUD field office Representative, offer the Property to the second highest bidder for an amount equal to the highest price offered by that bidder. There is no right of redemption, or right of possession based upon a right of redemption, in the mortgagor or others subsequent to a foreclosure completed pursuant to the Act. Therefore, the Foreclosure commissioner will issue a Deed to the purchaser(s) upon receipt of the entire purchase price in accordance with the terms of the sale as provided herein. HUD does not guarantee that the property will be vacant. The amount that must be paid if the Mortgage is to be reinstated prior to the scheduled sale is \$323,450.62, as of 4/29/2026, plus all other amounts that would be due under the mortgage agreement if payments under the mortgage had not been accelerated, advertising costs and postage expenses incurred in giving notice, mileage by the most reasonable road distance for posting notices and for the Foreclosure Commissioner’s attendance at the sale, reasonable and customary costs incurred for title and lien record searches, the necessary out-of-pocket costs incurred by the Foreclosure Commissioner for recording documents, a commission for the Foreclosure Commissioner, and all other costs incurred in connection with the foreclosure prior to reinstatement. Tender of payment by certified or cashier’s check or application for cancellation of the foreclosure sale shall be submitted to

the address of the Foreclosure Commissioner provided below. NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS:

Please be advised that the trustee may require entity or trust bidders at this trustee’s sale to provide information, documentation and/or certification of the vesting instructions and the data required to be reported pursuant to FinCEN regulations effective for transfers of residential real property to covered transferees on or after March 1, 2026. The required information must be provided to the trustee before a trustee’s deed upon sale will be issued for covered transfers. Additional information regarding these regulations and the required transferee information and certifications can be found at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/08/29/2024-19198/anti-money-laundering-regulations-for-residential-real-estate-transfers> and <https://www.fincen.gov/re-faqs>. Date: 3/25/2026 By: Rhonda Rorie, rr@nationwidereconveyance.com Nationwide Reconveyance, LLC U.S. Dept. of HUD Foreclosure Commissioner 9665 Chesapeake Dr., Ste. 365, San Diego, CA 92123 (844) 252-6972 Fax (858) 348-4976 (TS# NR-53445-CA SDI-36899) Published 4/3/2026, 4/10/2026, 4/17/2026 NEWS LEDGER 4-17-26

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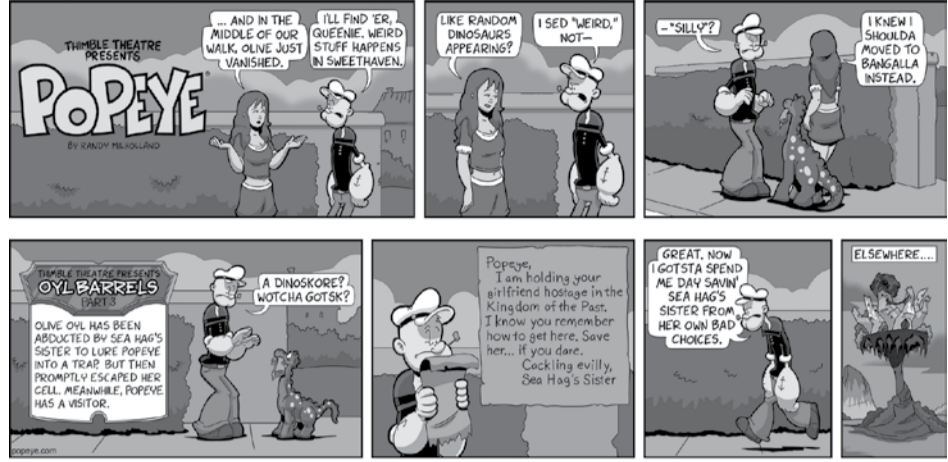
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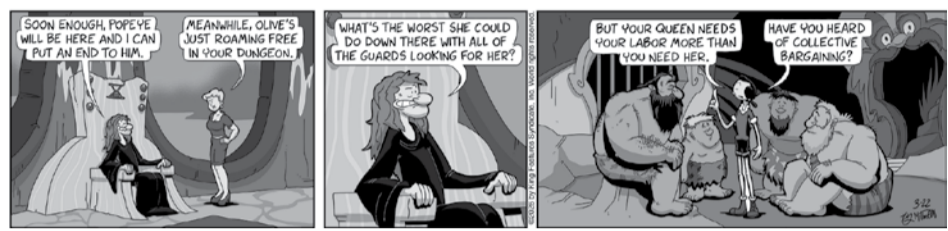
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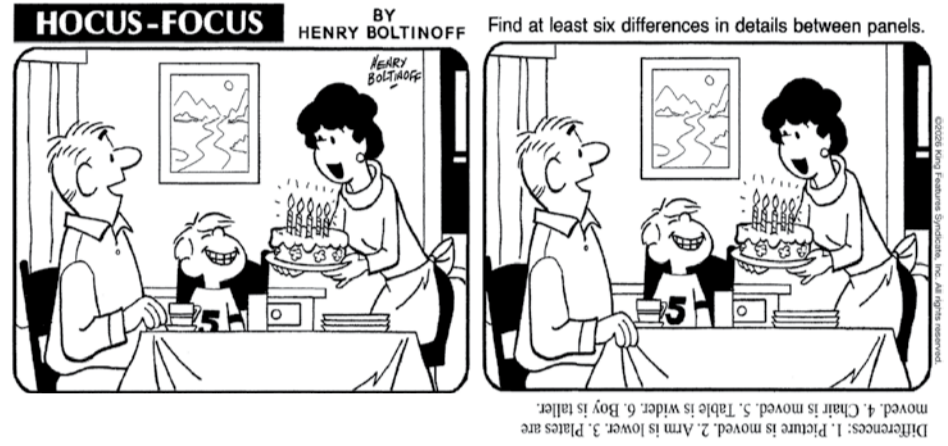
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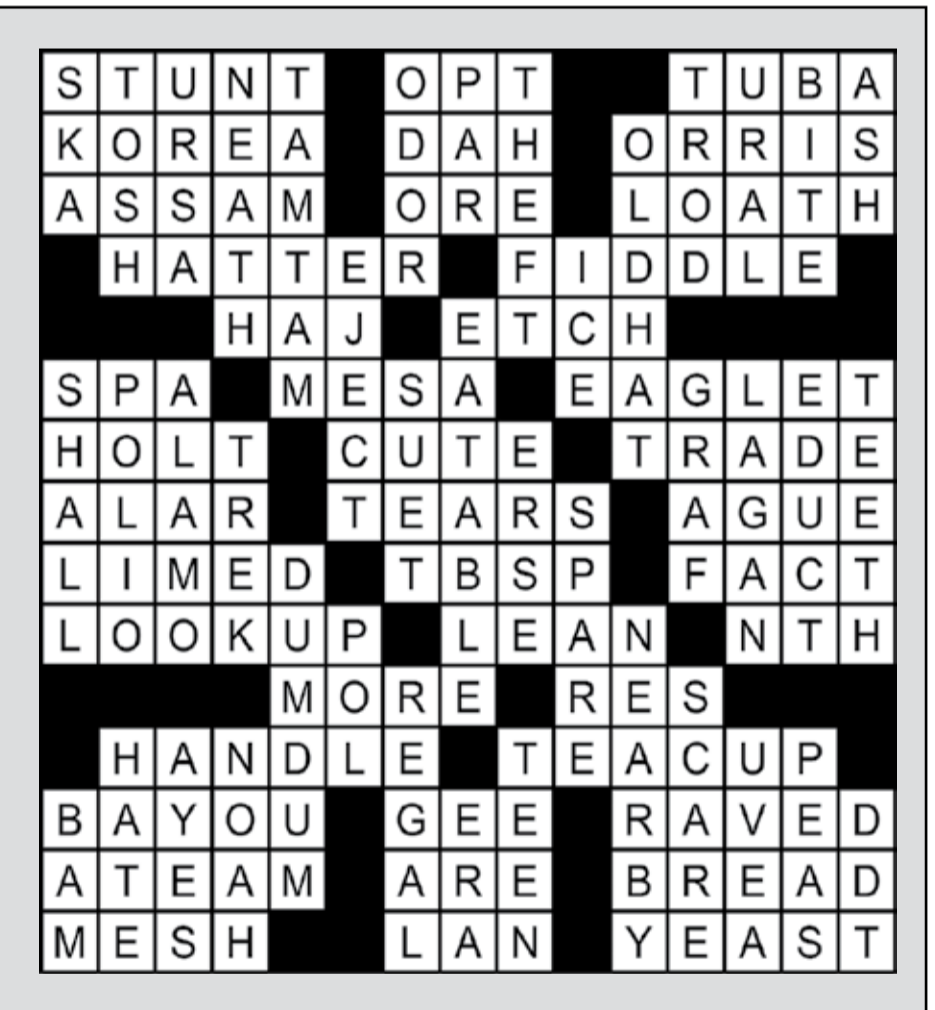
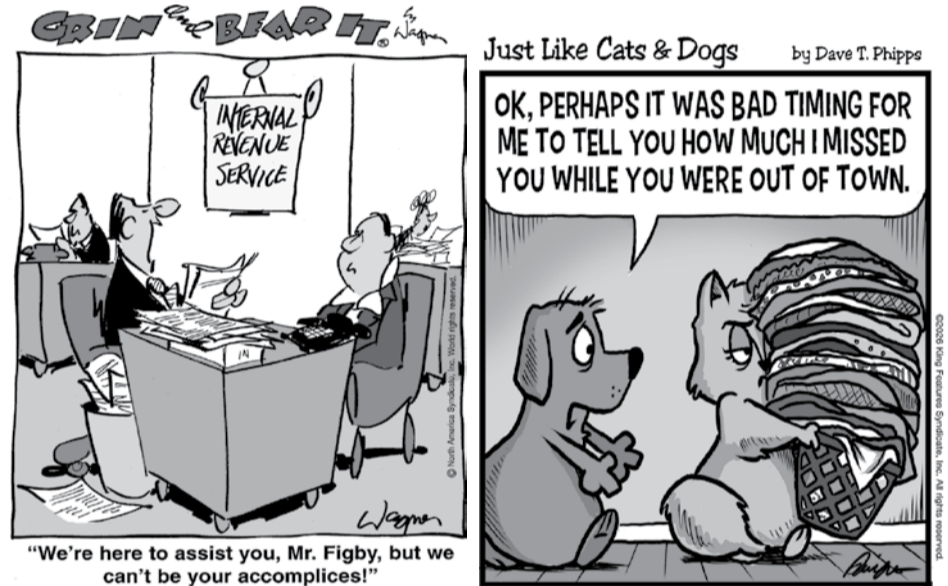
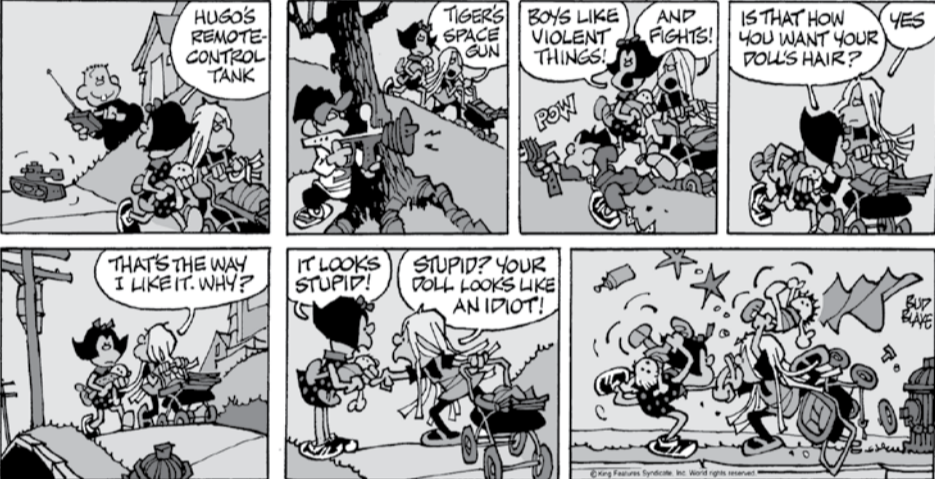
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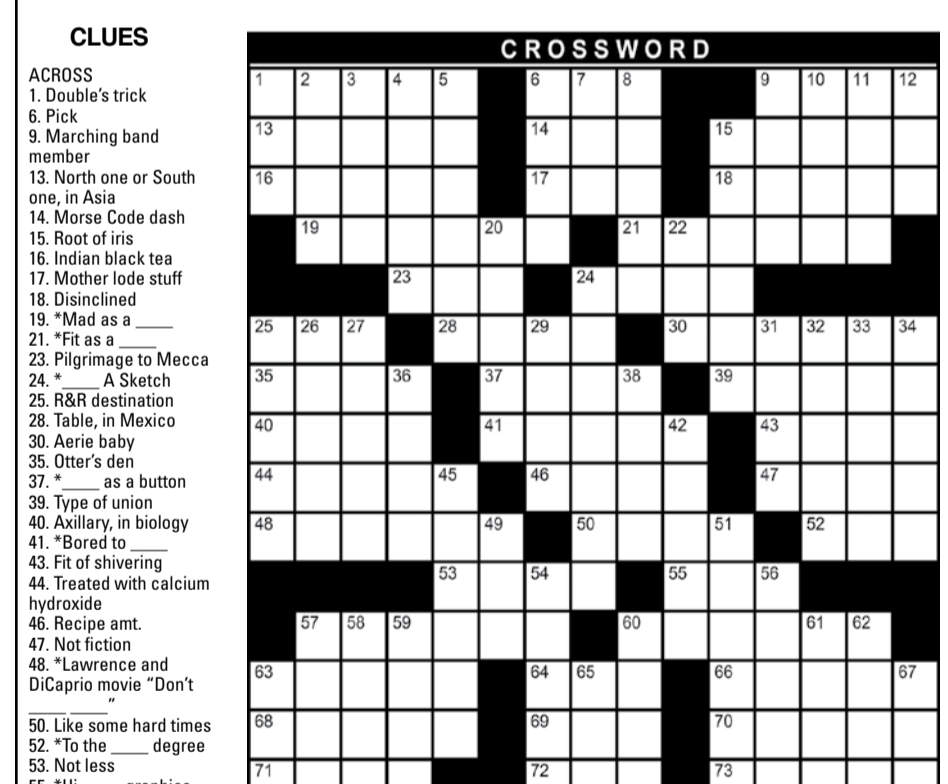


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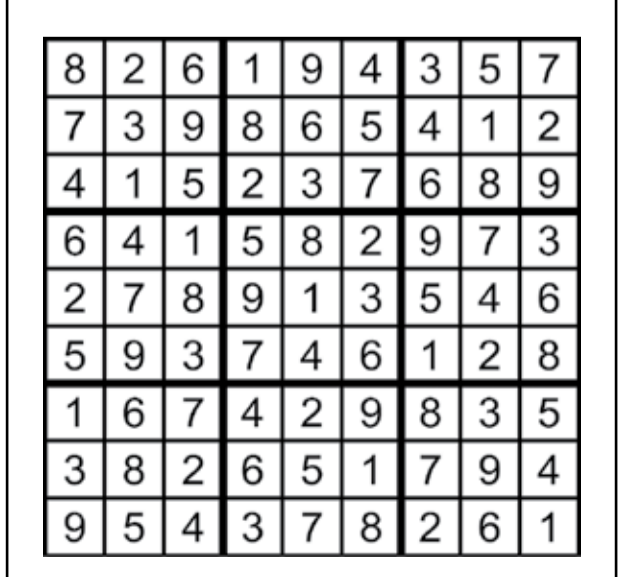
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Queens in Action

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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Why are Butterflies Considered a Pest by Some Farmers?

- Opemipo, 11, Texas

Dear Opemipo,

We usually think of adult butterflies. Those fluttery insects flit from flower to flower. They sip nectar and move pollen. They're beneficial insects. They help plants and people.

But baby butterflies are another story.

I talked about it with my friend Downen Jocson. She's an insect scientist at Washington State University.

Young butterflies or moths are larvae, or caterpillars. They hatch from an egg deposited near a plant. Then they get busy eating and growing.

Caterpillars have jaws adapted for chewing. Their munchy mouths will change when they transform into adult butterflies. Then, they'll have a straw-like mouth for slurping up nectar. Nectar doesn't have much protein. So, caterpillars eat a ton, so they can grow and store protein. They'll use that stored protein to make eggs when they grow up.

Caterpillars do all that feasting in one spot.

"They don't have wings, so the larvae are going to eat as much as they can in one place," Jocson said. "And that's what makes them pests—especially on farms where their favorite food is all over like a buffet."

We usually think of adult butterflies. Those fluttery

These are some common butterfly pests. Cabbage white caterpillars (top) eat cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower. Sulfur butterfly larvae (bottom) eat alfalfa, clover and beans. ©James Lindsey CC BY-SA 3.0 ©Andy Mansker CC BY-SA 3.0

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Some predatory wasps do that in a super gnarly way.

They lay eggs inside another insect's body—like a very hungry caterpillar. The eggs hatch, and the wasp larvae live inside the caterpillar, feasting on its guts. When they're ready to become adults, the wasps chew through the caterpillar and spin cocoons. Then they transform and take off—leaving the dead or dying caterpillar behind.

Some wasps secrete or inject chemicals to take over the caterpillar's brain. They force it to protect the baby wasps, even though they're killing it.

Since that caterpillar never makes it to adulthood, it doesn't reproduce.

That means fewer pests to bug the crops—and farmers.

Sincerely,
Dr. Universe