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East Sacramento News

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MAY 22, 2026

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Art Fiesta Returns for 68th Year



The Art Fiesta features a range of artwork including paintings and mosaics. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Club

Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Club News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Club will host its 68th Art Fiesta on Saturday, June 6 and Sunday, June 7 at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center in Sacramento.

This two-day, family-friendly event is free to attend and features fine art, emerging student talent and a

deep commitment to community, all while kicking off summer with a celebration of creativity and connection.

The artists in the juried arts show will be on site.

This year's Art Fiesta includes an exciting relatively new addition: a student art exhibit showcasing the work of seventh- through 12th-graders from the San Juan Unified School District. These rising artists will have their pieces displayed and some 70

professional painters, photographers, ceramicists, glass and woodworkers, textile artists and jewelers from across the region will offer their work for sale.

Since 1952, the event has supported the Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Club's mission, which is committed to changing lives, one community and one child at a time. The Art Fiesta was held at Town & *Continued on page 3*

City Repairs 7,761 Potholes in 49 Days



The city reported that 7,761 potholes were repaired in 49 days following a citywide effort to identify streets and intersections in need of repair. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento repaired 7,761 potholes in 49 days as part of a citywide "pothole blitz" directed by City Manager Marakeshia Smith and carried out by the Department of Public Works.

The effort began after city officials asked City Council offices on March 4 to identify streets and intersections in need of repair.

"Potholes have been one of the most consistent things I've heard about on my ride-alongs and interactions with residents," Smith said. "I'm proud of the work our Public Works crews accomplished through this blitz and appreciative of the collaboration between council offices, staff and community members who helped identify priority locations across the city."

Officials said all requests submitted by council offices, along with locations identified through field inspections, were addressed during the blitz.

Crews prioritized repairs using pavement condition data, resident service requests and district surveys. The city also assigned two employees to help identify potholes and pavement hazards throughout Sacramento's council districts.

Work initially relied on overtime to accelerate repairs and included weekend operations to reduce traffic impacts and avoid conflicts with scheduled overlay projects.

District-level totals for potholes repaired during the blitz include District 1 with 264; District 2 with 1,597; District 3 with 814; District 4 with 1,981; District 5 with 1,205; District 6 with 601; District 7 with 287; and District 8 with 1,012.

City officials said roadway maintenance efforts will continue as part of an ongoing infrastructure improvement program. ★

Zoo Expansion Proposal Moves Forward

Story and photos by Idaly Valencia

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On April 28, the City Council approved an agreement with the Sacramento Zoological Society to explore a potential 5.8-acre expansion of the Sacramento Zoo in William Land Park.

The action comes as the zoo marks its 100th anniversary and would be its first major expansion since the 1960s.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets terms to study the expansion proposal, with any land or funding decisions requiring further City Council approval. The agreement expires Sept. 1, when staff are expected to return to request an extension and outline their next steps.

Under the agreement,



The Sacramento Zoo is moving forward with a potential expansion at its existing site after earlier plans to relocate to Elk Grove were abandoned in 2025.

the Sacramento Zoological Society will develop conceptual designs showing potential uses for the additional space and conduct

community outreach to help ensure the project aligns with the surrounding neighborhood.

The MOU also includes

plans for the society to identify potential funding sources, assess impacts to historic features, trees,

Continued on page 2

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Fire Captain Recognized for Service Extending Beyond Career Duties

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento Fire Department had the honor of welcoming the National Life Group Do Good Heroes to Station 2 as they presented the Do Good Heroes Award to Captain Joe Hunter for his work.

This recognition celebrates first responders who go above and beyond their duty to serve their communities. As part of the award,

Hunter was presented with a \$1,000 donation to give to a nonprofit organization of his choice, and he selected the Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center, an organization that holds deep personal meaning to him and his family.

"I'm so grateful for this wonderful opportunity," Hunter said.

"The Family Justice Center does amazing work in the community to bring justice to those experiencing domestic violence, human trafficking, and

elder abuse, and our family wouldn't have been as successful without this organization," he added.

Through his continued advocacy and dedication, in honor of his late sister Joanna, Hunter has worked tirelessly to bring awareness to domestic violence and support the mission behind Joanna's Law, helping to create meaningful change for families across California.

"Joe is a great representative and mentor to many here with Sacramento



Sacramento Fire Captain Joe Hunter recently received the Do Good Heroes Award, a recognition honoring first responders, along with a \$1,000 donation presented to the Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center as his nonprofit of choice. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

Fire Department and a true inspiration in all he has accomplished," said Battalion Chief Keith Wade.

Do Good Heroes is a program that lets agents of National Life Group recognize fire-rescue-emergency medical services,

police departments and personnel for community service activities above and beyond their public safety duty. ★

Zoo Expansion Proposal Moves Forward

Continued from page 1 utilities, traffic and parking, and determine the need and timing of an environmental CEQA review.

City staff emphasized that the approval does not permit construction and does not commit the city to an expansion, but instead sets a framework for further review.

"The themes of expansion and relocation stretch back more than 40 years. The zoo has faced space challenges for decades," said Dustin Hollingsworth, assistant director of the city's Department of Convention and Cultural Services.

The proposal would increase the zoo's footprint from 14.3 acres to about 20.1 acres, an expansion of roughly 40%. It includes a 4.4-acre parcel across Land Park Drive, formerly home to a pony ride attraction that closed in 2022, and

a 1.4-acre parcel directly north of the zoo.

Hollingsworth said expansion talks have been ongoing, driven by efforts to modernize facilities, improve animal care and meet Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) standards. He added the upgrades could also increase attendance and help maintain the zoo's role as a regional attraction.

Earlier efforts to relocate the zoo to Elk Grove were abandoned after several years of planning. The decision, announced in April 2025, was made due to economic challenges and rising construction costs.

By June 2025, the society shifted its focus to expanding within the existing Land Park site.

Prior to the MOU approval, Messenger Publishing Group spoke

with Kristina Rogers, a 23-year Land Park resident and president of the Land Park Neighborhood Association, who said the association is not opposed to the expansion but wants a more transparent and collaborative process with the city and the Sacramento Zoological Society moving forward.

"We really want to see it thrive and do well," Rogers said. "But if they're going to expand, it has to be in a thoughtful manner, and we want to get some details and collaborate with them."

At the April 28 meeting, residents voiced concerns about added traffic, limited parking and the need to preserve William Land Park's historic character. Rogers echoed those concerns, saying any plan should address those issues while protecting the neighborhood's identity.



At its April 28 meeting, the City Council approved a study of a possible Sacramento Zoo expansion to set the framework for a proposed 5.8-acre addition to the site.

"It's (Land Park) been around for over 100 years; it was not designed for the amount of traffic that we get now," Rogers said. "If the zoo is looking at expanding and bringing in more people, they're going to have to come up with a

way to manage that."

She suggested solutions including shuttle service similar to other zoos and said the expansion could be strengthened with sustainability features that better connect the zoo to the park and highlight local

wildlife, including a potential bat sanctuary.

Rogers added that ongoing community forums are important to allow neighborhood residents to provide input as plans develop and help to guide the expansion. ★



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Tower Bridge Scheduled for One-Way Traffic; Daytime Delays Expected

Caltrans News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Caltrans is alerting motorists that the Tower Bridge or State Route 275 (SR 275) continues a schedule for partial daytime closures for electrical and parts replacement. The bridge remains safe for travel.

This ongoing work is part of a \$3 million emergency project to make necessary upgrades to the electrical system at the bridge house.

For motorists and workers' safety, the bridge will be under daily one-way traffic control. Caltrans contractors will be building scaffolding and rigging lines, removing old parts and installing electrical lines.

The schedule goes as follows: partial closure and daily one-way intermittent traffic control 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. through November.

To avoid delays for motorists, bridge work will not be scheduled one hour prior to and one hour after River Cats and Athletics games at Sutter Health Park.

Weather conditions could delay or cancel scheduled work. Caltrans advises motorists to "Be Work Zone Alert."

Caltrans District 3 will issue construction updates on Twitter @CaltransDist3 and on Facebook at CaltransDistrict3. For real-time traffic, click on Caltrans' QuickMap quickmap.dot.ca.gov or download the QuickMap app on iTunes or Google Play. ★



Caltrans recently announced that motorists should expect partial daytime closures on the Tower Bridge (State Route 275) from now until November, with daily one-way intermittent traffic control in place from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Image courtesy of Caltrans

Art Fiesta Returns for 68th Year



"Sunset in Iceland" by Northern California artist Janelle Daigle was previously featured at Art Fiesta. Photos courtesy of Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Club



"Purple Reign" by Mary H. Russell was previously featured at Art Fiesta.

Continued from page 1

Country Village for more than 50 years and at The Pavilions for 13 years. This year marks the fourth year indoors at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center.

Every dollar raised goes directly into the nonprofit Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Foundation. Proceeds from the Art Fiesta help to fund Key Clubs (youth leadership programs) and Boys/Girls State, and

vital support services, most notably for the Kiwanis Family House, located near UC Davis Medical Center and Shriners Hospital in Sacramento.

Other beneficiaries include River City Food Closet, Stanford House, Opening Doors, Next Move Homeless Services, Sierra Arden Neighborhood Food Closet, Coats for Kids, Crisis Nursery, Wellspring Women's Center, Process Theatre,

Sacramento Children's Home and more.

"This event is a perfect blend of art, community and purpose," said Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis Club President Tom Fleishmann. "By simply showing up, you're making a difference, supporting students, uplifting local artists and helping families in need. Plus, it's a great way to kick off the summer with something truly meaningful and beautiful. The artwork

makes a wonderful addition to your home or as a valued gift."

Admission and parking are free for the event, which runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, June 6 and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 7 at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 6151 H St., Sacramento.

Food vendors will be on site both days. For more information, visit sacramento-suburbankiwanis.org. ★

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



How About Ja Morant?

As the June 23 NBA draft approaches, what realistic possibilities are the Sacramento Kings franchise confronted with?

Everyone already knows Sacramento dropped to the 7th overall pick, and although that was disappointing it was not the negative that many Kings fans envisioned it to be. At No. 7 this draft class will have a quality player for Sacramento to add to their roster.

The real question is, will it be a guard as everyone seems to believe it will be? Not necessarily and here is why.

For some time now talk throughout the NBA is the disposition of one Ja Morant. A highly talented point guard that can do it all, but in the past has shown flashes of true immaturity, to the point that the Memphis Grizzlies have all but given up on him.

Twice suspended for his penchant of displaying firearms on social media, Ja has had to learn the hard way. First, suspended for eight games and then again when he didn't learn his lesson for 25 games the second time.

Can Memphis problem child become something the Sacramento Kings have long been looking for? The possibility is real, and if that possibility becomes reality, this 2nd overall pick in the 2019 draft could become an instant game changer in the Kings lineup.

The question is, can Sacramento satisfy the appetite of the Grizzlies, and will the Sacramento fan base come to the realization that everyone deserves a second chance. Many will say he's already gotten that chance and blown it, but he's been with only one organization, and every once in a blue moon, the grass is really greener on the other side.

What a Ja Morant would mean to the Sacramento Kings is opening the floor like never before. Trying to stop his drives to the basket is like trying to rope a whirling dervish.

Morant is almost impossible to guard one-on-one, and that means when other teams double team him, someone is wide open.

Players like Zach Lavine, Keegan Murray and DeMar DeRozan should be licking their lips with the possibilities.

We haven't even talked about the future hall-of-famer Russell Westbrook who might

just be the mentor Ja Morant could benefit from.

There are few point guards in the NBA that can give DeAaron Fox a run for his money when it comes to pure speed, but Ja Morant is right there with him.

How would Domantas Sabonis benefit from this speedster one should ask? Another player with excellent mentoring skills, Domantas, is a nightly example of how to play the game, and if anything, I see his scoring average go up if Morant joins this team.

So. Is this pie in the sky or does this troubled 26-year-old stand a chance at joining the Kings organization? It's real if Scott Perry wants it to be real, and as they say, the proofs in the pudding.

Currently, the kings have an abundance of point guards, and with the exception of an aging Russell Westbrook, Sacramento does not have an NBA quality starting point guard.

That is not to disparage Nique Cliffor or Devin Carter who have shown flashes, but the Kings need a floor leader now, and not a point guard project.

Ja Morant, if through with his prior nonsense, could be the comeback player of the year, and be a reclamation project for the Kings that says, we finally got it right!

I don't expect every Kings fan to agree with my assessment, but I'm for accelerating what is being called a complete rebuild with a much faster version that doesn't send all of our players to parts unknown.

No question, Domantas Sabonis is high on Scott Perry's list as a candidate for trade options, and I do not want to see that happen.

Look instead to resigning Russell Westbrook for perhaps his last season is a stellar NBA career, and perhaps team him with the bad boy of the NBA in Ja Morant.

I have said many times before that this team is steeped in NBA talent, but questionable coaching and torrid injuries decimated the process last year.

Let's finally assess the talent we have and actually coach it. Maybe teach pros who to shoot free throws.

Like Rosy the Riveter said, we can do it!

All the best Kings fans and keep the faith! All the best! ★

Newsom's Tightfisted Final Budget Faces a Rough Reception in the Legislature



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

Since the turn of the century, California's state budget has been plagued by a boom-and-bust syndrome rooted in its lopsided revenue system and a lack of political discipline.

The budget became increasingly dependent on taxes paid by the state's most affluent residents, whose incomes increasingly came from investments rather than salaries.

Thus state revenues would often spike upwards, only to level off or decline. But governors and legislators would make new spending commitments during the spikes that would become liabilities during the downturns.

It was dubbed "volatility" and it reached an apex four years ago when Gov. Gavin Newsom declared that the state had a \$97.5 billion surplus, having decided that a post-pandemic revenue spike would be permanent.

His administration later acknowledged a \$165 billion error in a four-year revenue projection. But in the meantime he and the Legislature had raised spending, creating deficits that totaled \$125 billion over four years, according to the Legislative Analyst Office. The deficits were papered over with a series of short-term fixes, including loans and accounting gimmicks.

On Thursday, Newsom

unveiled a revised version of his final budget and, without saying so, indicated he had learned a hard lesson about managing volatility.

Although the state is seeing a new tax spike and his budget sees a \$16.5 billion increase in revenues over three years, Newsom's \$349.4 billion 2026-27 budget takes a cautious approach. He says it would not only erase the structural deficit of the past four years, but it would guarantee that his successor would have a balanced first year budget for 2027-28.

"We're cutting deficits but not cutting corners," Newsom said.

The \$246.6 billion general fund portion of the budget relies not only on new revenues, including a \$3.6 billion boost from several relatively minor tax increases, to be balanced, but it is indirectly helped by big reductions in federal aid for healthcare.

Newsom devoted the first minutes of his budget presentation to bragging about California's \$4-trillion-plus economy, saying "we simply have no peers." He also trolled those with "California derangement syndrome" and denounced President Donald Trump as corrupt and incompetent.

However Trump's tightened eligibility for federally subsidized healthcare that could affect hundreds of thousands of Californians also has the effect of reducing the state's healthcare spending, thus helping Newsom draft a balanced budget.

He could have backfilled the lost federal funds, but that probably would have required him to propose a major tax increase of some

kind, which, as a likely 2028 presidential candidate, he is unwilling to do.

However his attitude on healthcare and taxes places Newsom at odds with advocates for poor Californians who would be affected and their allies in the Legislature, many of whom want a tax increase.

Graham Knaus, CEO of the California State Association of Counties, immediately declared that "the governor is proposing to do to counties what he accuses the president of doing to California."

Chris Hoene, of the left-leaning California Budget & Policy Center, which has been beating the drums for tax increases, said, "The governor promoted California's economic dominance while, in the same breath, making it more difficult for Californians with low incomes to access healthcare by reinstating harmful Medi-Cal asset limits, expanding work requirements and increasing Medi-Cal premiums for certain immigrants."

With just a few months remaining in his governorship, Newsom's ability to bend the Legislature to his will is fading, so the question his new budget poses is whether legislators will go along. Or will they insist that the new holes in the state's safety net be plugged and support raising taxes to pay for it?

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

Social Security's "First Year Rule" and Withdrawing from SS



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I am 63 years old, and about to apply for my Social Security benefits. I am self-employed but only working part time. I know about Social Security's annual earnings limit but recently I learned I must also be concerned about a monthly earnings limit of \$2,040. My questions are:

1) How do I find out if I will be subject to a monthly earning limit of \$2,040 per month? I thought it was only evaluated annually.

2) If I choose to cancel Social Security within the first year or after, what are the penalties? Would I have to pay them back for the whole amount for the whole time that they paid me? Which makes no sense, since I have been paid into SS since I was 13 years old.

Can you help me understand this? **Signed: Claiming Early and Still Working**

Dear Claiming Early: It can get tricky if you are still working after claiming your Social Security before your SS full retirement age (FRA), especially during your first year collecting. I'm happy to answer your specific questions:

1. There is a special rule which applies during your first year collecting early Social

Security benefits (e.g., before your full retirement age or "FRA," which for you is age 67). What will happen is this: when the IRS provides SSA with your 2026 earnings (in 2027), SSA will review to see if your total 2026 net earnings from self-employment exceeded the 2026 annual limit of \$24,480. If not, no further action is necessary. But if you did exceed the full year 2026 earnings limit, SSA will contact you and ask you to provide them with details about your monthly 2026 net earnings.

If you have exceeded the monthly limit in any 2026 month after your SS benefit started, you will not be entitled to SS benefits for that month. Essentially, if you have exceeded the annual limit, you cannot exceed the monthly earnings limit in any remaining month during your first year of collecting. If you exceeded the annual limit, and also any monthly limit, SSA will send you an overpayment notice saying you must repay them for the benefits you were not entitled to receive because you exceeded the monthly earnings limit.

2. You can, within 12 months of applying for Social Security, ask SSA to withdraw your application for SS retirement benefits. They will do that for you, but you will also be required to repay them all SS benefits that they have already paid to (or for) you. This essentially would "wipe the slate clean" and enable your SS benefit to continue growing, allowing you to apply for a larger monthly benefit later. But if you wait longer than 12 months after you first

apply for SS benefits, you can no longer withdraw your application for Social Security. Thereafter, you would be subject to the annual earnings limit (the monthly earnings limit would no longer apply).

FYI, after you reach your FRA, there is no limit on your earnings, and you could choose to suspend your benefit payments and earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) to get a higher monthly benefit. Also at your FRA, if SSA withheld any of your benefits because you exceeded the earnings limit before reaching your FRA, you would get time credit for the number of months your benefits were withheld. Essentially, they would advance your benefit-start month by the number of months your benefits were withheld, yielding a slightly higher monthly amount after your FRA.

Finally, it's important to know that the contributions you made to Social Security from payroll taxes (FICA/SECA) over your lifetime are not what determines your monthly SS benefit amount. Your monthly SS benefit is based on two main factors: a) your average monthly earnings (indexed for inflation) for the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime as reported to the IRS, and b) the age at which you claim your SS benefits. Your contributions to Social Security while working only provide you with eligibility to collect SS benefits; the contributions aren't put into a separate account for you and are not used to calculate your monthly SS benefit. ★



Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson's Campaign Against the Supreme Court

ly, since time is of the essence. With the state's scheduled May 16 primaries rapidly approaching (now delayed), Louisiana wants to redraw its maps in keeping with the court's decision.

Jackson's dissent quotes a 2019 decision of the court in *Rucho v. Common Cause* for the proposition that courts should not "risk assuming political ... responsibility for a [partisan map-drawing] process that often produces ill will and distrust."

But this was a warning against courts involving themselves in minute questions of partisan gerrymandering. Here, the court has set out a bright-line principle that district lines can't be race-based, but otherwise said that the political authorities are welcome to gerrymander or not.

Jackson also slaps the court for creating "chaos in the State of Louisiana." This is quite rich given the history.

When Louisiana created a congressional map after the 2020 census with just one majority-minority district, it got sued for not sufficiently taking race into account; a judge ordered it to make a second minority district. When Louisiana complied by manufacturing a monstrosity of a district stretching 250 miles to randomly scoop up black voters, it got sued again -- this time, for taking race too much into account -- and the case made it to the Supreme Court.

It is a sign of how weak the Jackson dissent is that the other progressives haven't joined it, not even Sonia Sotomayor. It certainly would have been

much better if this case had been decided sooner, but Alito drops a suggestive footnote in his rejoinder to Jackson. He notes that the constitutional question was "argued and conferenced nearly seven months ago." This implies that the case was effectively decided right after oral arguments in October of last year, and that the dissenters slow-walked it.

Now, Jackson wants more delay -- it serves the partisan interests of Democrats to preserve unconstitutional race-based congressional districts as long as possible.

The reaction to Louisiana v. Callais has been so incandescent on the Left because it believes that unless black voters have black representatives, they are disenfranchised. But this is not how representative democracy works. Were white voters in Georgia disenfranchised in the 2022 Senate race when two African-American candidates, Democrat Raphael Warnock and Republican Herschel Walker, ran against each other? Were the voting rights of Christians in New York City crimped in 2025 because a Muslim man won the mayoral election?

All indications are that a commitment to some version of court-packing will be orthodoxy among 2028 Democratic presidential candidates. They will seek to make the highly isolated and wholly unpersuasive Justice Jackson part of a new court majority imposed by political fiat.

Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*.

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You've Voted! What's Next?

Sacramento County Voter Registration and Elections Office News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Voters can use the My Voter Portal (MVP) to check the status of their voted ballot. Visit: <https://myvoterportal.saccounty.gov/LookupVoter>.

Why Did I Receive a Notice About My Signature?

If we are unable to confirm that your signature on your pink Vote by Mail return envelope matches your signature on file, we will contact you to ensure your ballot is counted.

California law allows you the opportunity to correct your signature on your pink Vote by Mail return envelope up until two days before the election is certified.

To correct your signature, you may: print, complete, and return a Signature Verification Statement at VRE or any Vote Center; resolve your signature using My Voter Portal (MVP); or complete and return the letter we sent you using the postage-paid envelope.

Without your signature, your ballot will not be counted.

Where are the Election Results?

View the Election Results Schedule so you know when to expect the next update. View the schedule: elections.saccounty.gov/content/vre/us/en/election-information/june-2--2026-statewide-direct-primary-election--election-results.html#gsc.tab=0.

Curious about what we still have left? Check out the What's Left to Process page at elections.saccounty.gov/content/vre/us/en/election-information/what-is-left-to-count.html#gsc.tab=0 to see the work that continues.



After the polls close at 8 p.m. on Election Day, the work continues as we diligently process, verify and ensure all eligible ballots are counted. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County Voter Registration and Elections Office

left-to-count.html#gsc.tab=0 to see the work that continues.

What Happens After Election Day?

Did you know? Depending on the type of election, we have between 28 and 30 days to certify the election. After the polls close at 8 p.m. on Election Day, the work continues as we diligently process, verify and ensure all eligible ballots are counted. Accuracy takes time.

The Official Canvass: Division 15, Chapter 4.

In this phase we audit and account for all ballots that were issued, voted, and those that were not used. This phase includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

Reconcile the number of ballots counted, spoiled, canceled or invalidated due to identifying marks, over-votes, or as

otherwise provided by statute, with the number of votes recorded, including VBM and provisional ballots, by the vote counting system.

Process and count any valid VBM ballots not included in the semi-final election results. These VBM ballots are returned on Election Day to our office, at a Vote Center, to an Official Ballot Drop Box location or timely via USPS.

Receive, confirm, and process Signature Verification Statements.

Count any valid write-in votes. Duplicate any damaged ballots, if necessary.

Reporting final results to the governing board and the Secretary of State, as required.

Conduct the 1% Manual Tally: Division 15, Chapter 4, Article 5. The 1% manual tally process

validates the tabulation of ballots generated by the electronic voting equipment before certifying election results. Precincts utilized for the 1% manual tally are selected at random by the elections official. For each contest not included in the 1% manual tally, an additional voting precinct with that contest will be selected and tallied. Coming Soon.

Process Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) ballots: California Code of Regulation, Title 2, Division 7, Chapter 1, Article 3.5.

CVR extends the existing 15-day registration deadline in California to eligible voters, allowing them to register and vote provisionally 14 days prior to an election through Election Day. Voters that are not registered must be processed using CVR. **Certify the Election: Division**

15, Chapter 4, Article 6.; Division 17.

Once the Official Canvass is complete, we will sign a certificate to certify the election results.

Election materials shall be sealed and retained for 22 months from the date of the election for federal elections and six months from the date of the election for local elections.

Recounts: California Code of Regulation, Title 2, Division 7, Chapter 8.

After we certify the election results, any voter may request for a recount within five (5) calendar days. For more information about recounts, visit: elections.saccounty.gov/content/vre/us/en/recounts.html#gsc.tab=0.

For more information about the June 2, 2026, Statewide Direct Primary Election, visit: elections.saccounty.gov/#gsc.tab=0. ★

Remote Accessible Voting Available in Sacramento County

Sacramento County Voter Registration and Elections Office News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Voters can request and receive access to the Remote Accessible Vote by Mail (RAVBM) system. The County of Sacramento has selected Democracy Live to provide this service. The RAVBM system allows voters to download and mark their correct ballot privately and independently using their own assistive technology, print their marked ballot and mail it to the Elections Office to be counted.

Watch the video on the RAVBM system at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54-Xbg5Nbg4>.

All registered voters in Sacramento County are eligible to use this system

pursuant to California Elections Code section 3016.7.

When

Access the service anytime, day or night, starting 29 days before an election.

How

Go online and enter your information in My Voter Portal to obtain your correct ballot. Visit: myvoterportal.saccounty.gov/LookupVoter.

Voters can vote on any computer with internet access and a printer. Email vbms@saccounty.gov or call (916) 875-6155 for help with the RAVBM system.

Practice On Our Demo Site

Voters can now practice using a DEMO version of the RAVBM system. This DEMO site simulates the

RAVBM voting experience, allowing voters to learn how to navigate and use the system in preparation for a real election. Voters can select their language and font size preferences in the top right corner, read and watch instructions on how to mark a ballot, and practice marking and printing a DEMO ballot.

Note: This DEMO version of the RAVBM system is for demonstration purposes only and cannot be used to submit an Official Ballot.

Visit: sites.omniballot.us/06067/demo/app/home?pid=2.

Assistance for Voters with Disabilities

The County of Sacramento Voter Registration and Elections Department has a long-standing commitment to work with voters with

disabilities to help them exercise their right to vote. Voters are encouraged to contact the Voter Registration and Elections Office at 916-875-6451 or voterinfo@saccounty.gov with specific requests for assistance. ★



VOTE EARLY! AVOID LINES



June 2, 2026, Statewide Direct Primary Election

Vote Early and Vote by Mail

All voters will be mailed a ballot

- Ballots will begin to arrive the week of May 4

You can return your ballot

- By Mail
- At an Official Ballot Drop Box
- At a Vote Center (starting May 23)

You can find a full list of Official Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center locations in your County Voter Information Guide or online at www.elections.saccounty.gov



Vote Early! Vote by Mail.

My Voter Portal (MVP)

- Check your registration status
- View your political party preference
- Update your language preference if other than English
- Track your Vote by Mail status
- Access your Remote Accessible Vote by Mail Ballot
- Locate Official Ballot Drop Boxes or Vote Centers near you
- View your voting history



Scan the QR code or visit myvoterportal.saccounty.gov

Home & Garden

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**Local Grower
Shares Expert Tips
for Home Gardens**

Page 8

How to Start Growing Produce at Home

By Feature Impact

Growing your own produce is an all-around smart practice, from the money you'll save at the grocery store to the contributions you can make toward a cleaner planet.

Maintaining a garden takes some effort, but it's a project even a beginner can tackle with ease. Consider these tips to start growing your at-home garden:

1. Select a Perfect Spot. You'll want to place your garden in an area where you see it often so you're reminded to weed and care for it regularly. Find a flat area you can access easily, where erosion and other pitfalls (including hungry wildlife) won't be a problem.

2. Choose Between Ground and Containers. There are pros and cons to gardening in containers vs. the ground, and there's no universal right choice. Rather, the best garden depends on your goals

and preferences. A ground garden usually offers more space and may provide a better growth environment for roots. However, a container garden is often easier to maintain and may be all you need if you wish to grow just a few plants.

3. Understand the Importance of Quality Soil. You may think any dirt will do, but keep in mind the soil you plant in will be the primary source of nutrients for your produce. Not only that, but quality soil provides stability so plants can root firmly and grow healthy and sturdy to support their bounty. Quality soil also allows for ample drainage. Organic matter like compost, leaf mold or aged manure all help improve soil quality.

4. Keep Water Close. Lugging water can quickly eliminate the pleasure of tending your garden, so be sure you're situated near a hose. You'll know it's time to water when the soil is dry about an inch below the surface.



Starting with veggies you know you like is a smart starting point since you'll be pouring sweat equity into making them grow.

Photo courtesy of Unsplash

5. Plan for Plenty of Sun. A bright, sunny spot is a must, since most vegetables, herbs and fruits depend on six or more hours of sun every day. Remember the sun's path changes throughout the year, and as trees and foliage grow, they may produce more shade with each growing season.

6. Consider What You'll Grow. Starting with veggies you know you like is a smart starting point since you'll be pouring sweat equity into making them grow. Over time, you might add new varieties, but early on, keep your focus on foods you know you like so you can see a meaningful return

and avoid waste. You'll also need to consider what you can grow to maturity within your area's growing season. If necessary, you might want to start transplants you can nurture indoors before moving them outside when the temperatures allow.

7. Plant According to a Calendar. Knowing how long it takes different foods to mature will help you create a planting calendar. You don't want to harvest everything at once, and if you stagger planting and replant what you can, you'll have a garden that produces food for your family for a longer period of time. ★



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How to Help Tomatoes Thrive on Hot Days



On days with temperatures above 95, pollen in tomato flowers dries up and no fruit results. Pinch off spent flowers; the plant will grow new ones -- maybe during cooler weather. Kathy Morrison/SacramentoDigsGardening

By Debbie Arrington
Sacramento Digs Gardening

Tomato weather has arrived in Sacramento. With several days forecast in the upper 80s and even low 90s, expect your vines to soak up that heat and really grow.

But how hot is too hot? That's the tomato conundrum – tomatoes are temperature-sensitive.

Too cold, they won't thrive. (If afternoon highs linger below 70 degrees, they'll barely grow; that's why Sacramento tomatoes aren't planted in February.) Too hot, they won't set fruit. (And what's the point of all vines and no tomatoes?)

Tomatoes love heat and sun, but there's a limit. That dividing line is 95 degrees. When temperatures stay above 95 degrees (and we'll be there soon!), tomato flowers may drop off or refuse to set fruit. Leaves can fry and turn crispy. Ripening tomatoes may split or develop calluses.

Give your vines a hand – along with enough water and shade – to cope with the coming heat. This advice comes from UC Cooperative Extension master gardeners as well as longtime local tomato growers:

Water early and deep. Irrigate your tomatoes in the

morning, making sure water reaches down at least 6 inches into the soil. How do you know? Test the soil with a probe or long screwdriver; it should easily plunge into the soil. Or use a trowel, dig down and look.

During hot weather, water tomatoes two to three times a week. Tomatoes normally wilt during a hot afternoon; that's OK. But if they're wilted in the morning, water immediately. (Note: A few heirloom varieties, particularly of Russian origin, have a natural tendency to wilt all the time. But if you are growing one of these, you've probably noticed this already.)

Tomatoes planted in containers may need extra water every day during hot weather. Their potting soil tends to dry out faster.

Keep watering consistent and don't let soil dry out completely. That can lead to blossom end rot, the hard brown callus on the flower end of a tomato.

Watch for proper pollination. Tomatoes are wind pollinated; no bees necessary. But when temperatures reach 95 degrees (and stay hot), tomato pollen dries out and refuses to "stick." If your vines are producing plenty of blooms but not actually setting fruit, it may be temperature-related. Pinch off those barren blooms to prompt the plant to send out more

flowers. (Then, keep your fingers crossed that we'll have some cooler afternoons.)

Mulch is your friend. Make sure your vines have at least 2 to 4 inches around them to help keep roots cool and soil evenly moist. Straw, leaves or shredded bark make the best tomato mulch. Many gardeners prefer straw (not hay) because its light color reflects intense sun rays instead of absorbing that added heat. (Also, hay contains seeds that can sprout and suck nutrients out of soil; straw has no seed.)

Don't fertilize during a hot spell. Feeding tomatoes on 100-degree days just puts more stress on the plant.

Tomatoes love sun, but they can get sunburned. If leaves or developing fruit look bleached-out or burned, give your vine some afternoon shade. Erect a temporary shade structure by draping burlap or shade cloth over the tomato cage or trellis. This also helps prevent fruit from cracking.

If foliage turns brown, leave the dead leaves in place for now. They help protect the fruit from sunburn. After the heat has subsided, prune off the completely dead leaves so new foliage can grow.

For more from Sacramento Digs Gardening, visit @sac-digsgardening on Instagram.

Tips for Keeping Hardwood Floors Handsome

By Feature Impact

Consider these tips for keeping hardwoods in tip-top shape:

Guard Against Water

Water can penetrate deep into the wood, causing stains and ruining the outside finish. Use plastic trays under potted plants and pets' bowls. Wipe up spills and accidents immediately.

Use Area Rugs

If you have any heavy traffic areas – by the front door, hallways or around the kitchen table or couch, for example – use area rugs to protect against wear and tear. Area rugs are also an easy way to boost the style factor of your home.

Take Off Your Shoes

Encourage family members and guests to take off their shoes when they walk in. Shoes can bring in sand and dirt, so position area rugs at door

entryways to act as barriers.

Sweep or Vacuum Regularly

Dust and dirt can act as sandpaper, wreaking havoc on your floor's finish. A weekly sweep can help keep this at bay while enhancing your flooring's general appearance. If using your vacuum, be sure to use an attachment with soft brushes to guard from additional wear.

Clean Naturally

For a deep clean, ditch the harsh chemicals. Simply pour 1 cup of vinegar into a bucket with 1 gallon of water, mixing well. Use a soft mop and move in the direction of the floorboards. Go over with a clean, soft towel to dry excess water.

By following these simple steps, you and your family will be able to cherish your hardwood floors for many years to come.

Learn more at eLivingtoday.com. ★



With its rich tones and distinguished style, hardwood flooring can be a beautiful design element of your home. However, it's important to know the proper care procedures to maintain its condition for decades to come. Photo courtesy of Sunsplash

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What to Know Before You Remodel Your Home



Pay attention to recurring themes in your inspiration – such as cabinetry, flooring and fixture styles and colors – so it's easier to choose finishes when the time comes. Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

By Feature Impact

Planning a home remodel is as much about your vision as it is your preparation. With a thoughtful plan, you can refresh your living space, stay on budget and enjoy the process without feeling overwhelmed.

Consider these steps to get the process started:

Define Your Goals

Decide what you're looking to accomplish with your remodel, whether it's improved functionality, updated style, higher resale value or a combination. Make a simple list of "must-haves" and "nice-to-haves" so you can prioritize upgrades if costs start to climb too high.

Set a Realistic Budget

Determine how much you're comfortable spending then add a cushion of 10-20% for additional material costs and any surprises behind walls or under floors. Get rough price ranges for materials and labor, which allows you to adjust the scope of your project before the work begins, if neces-

sary, instead of mid-project.

Gather Ideas and Inspiration

Collect photos, paint colors and product ideas in a single place, such as a digital folder or photo album on your smartphone.

Pay attention to recurring themes in your inspiration – such as cabinetry, flooring and fixture styles and colors – so it's easier to choose finishes when the time comes.

Lay Out the Project Timeline

Think about the best time for your household to live through construction, especially if kitchens or bathrooms will be out of commission during the renovation. Talk with potential contractors about timing for each phase so you can plan for temporary living arrangements, if necessary.

Choose the Right Construction Crew

Interview a variety of potential contractors, being sure to ask for references and verify licenses and insurance. Once you've narrowed your list, request written estimates that

include labor and material costs, timelines and payment schedules so expectations are clear before choosing a service provider and signing an agreement.

Finalize Design Details and Materials

Make as many design decisions as possible before demolition, including choosing fixtures, appliances, flooring, tile, paint, hardware and other details. Ordering key items early can help avoid delays and keep the project on schedule once work begins.

Prep Your Home and Family

Before construction begins, clear areas where work will be completed of furniture and decor, covering anything that cannot be moved out of the room with plastic sheeting.

So everyone knows what to expect while your home is in transition, talk with family members about the impending noise and dust, and make necessary schedule changes to avoid interrupting work.

Visit eLivingtoday.com for more resources and home renovation guidance. ★

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Avoid a Summer Breakdown

Why Now is a Smart Time to Replace an Old HVAC System

By Feature Impact

With summer heat just around the corner, homeowners may not be aware that spring can be a perfect time to prepare for rising temperatures. An outdated heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system, for example, may not be up for the task of keeping a home cool.

In fact, it can end up costing homeowners more in the long term due to a gradual decline in efficiency and more frequent repairs. In addition to savings over time, there are multiple reasons to replace an aging system this spring.

In a recent survey, Carrier found more than one-quarter (26%) of homeowners don't know the age of their HVAC system, and a slight majority (54%) don't know the average lifespan of one. Those knowledge gaps can result in missed opportunities for long-term savings.

Aging Systems Can't Take the Heat

Many homeowners postpone purchasing a new HVAC system until their existing system fails or they find their aging system is struggling to maintain a consistent temperature. Often, upfront costs deter homeowners from purchasing a new system; however, 8 in 10 homeowners would consider a new heating and cooling system if it paid for itself in energy savings within 5-10 years. With a new energy-efficient system, those savings are possible.

A New HVAC System is a Critical Home Investment

Modern heating and cooling systems have uses beyond heating and cooling. They can improve air quality in the home by balancing humidity levels, reducing drafts and keeping a consistent climate throughout multiple rooms and stories. They also use less energy and run more quietly than older systems, making a home quieter and more cost-effective.

HVAC Basics Many Homeowners Miss

HVAC units often go unseen, yet a home's comfort depends on them running



Spring is an ideal time to invest in a new HVAC system, as contractors are generally more available to install a new system and homeowners can get ahead of the summer heat, ensuring they'll be cool all season long. Photo courtesy of Carrier

consistently. It's critical that homeowners schedule annual maintenance appointments to ensure their system is running as it should and they're aware of when it may be time to replace.

While it may seem more cost-effective to stick with an outdated system for one more season, an old system could end up prolonging issues and ultimately cost homeowners more in repairs.

Spring is an ideal time to invest in a new HVAC system, as contractors are generally more available to install a new system and

homeowners can get ahead of the summer heat, ensuring they'll be cool all season long.

Signs It's Time to Replace

Red flags that indicate it's time for a new HVAC system include: a system that's more than 10-15 years old, a system that needs noticeably more repairs, energy bills going up despite usage remaining the same, inconsistent temperatures, a system struggling to maintain the desired temperature or a system that's constantly running or seems less efficient than it used to.

Many companies offer specials during the spring and fall months, known as shoulder season.

For example, until May 31, Carrier is offering 0% APR for 60 months and up to \$2,100 in rebates so customers can get a jumpstart on a cool, comfortable home.

A new HVAC system means more than just cool temps this summer; it means added home value, cleaner air and peace of mind.

Learn more about available rebates, tax credits and financing plans at Carrier.com or by contacting a local expert. ★

Local Grower Shares Expert Tips for Home Gardens



Perennials are often inexpensive and return year after year for homeowners looking to add plants that are low maintenance yet high impact for their gardens.

Story and photos by Idaly Valencia

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - For many homeowners, spring is the season that sparks the urge to refresh a yard, add color to flower beds or finally start that vegetable garden they have been thinking about all winter.

According to Julia Oldfield, owner and grower at Big Oak Nursery (10071 Grant Line Road in Elk Grove), creating a beautiful garden does not have to mean complicated landscaping projects or high-maintenance plants. Often, she explained, a few thoughtful changes can make all the

difference.

Oldfield, whose family-owned nursery has deep roots in Elk Grove dating back to 1972, encourages resident gardeners to focus on plants that already thrive naturally in the region that benefit the local wildlife.

"Adding natives or drought-tolerant plants is a good way to start changing your garden and making it more eco-friendly to our pollinators and our friendly beneficials (insects)," Oldfield said.

One of the biggest tips she shares with beginners is to avoid filling a yard with only one type of plant. Instead,

Oldfield recommends adding a variety of flowers, shrubs and greenery to create a healthier environment for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

"I think the wider plant population you have in your yard, instead of having a whole bunch of the same, and having many different plants in your yard really helps our beneficials," she said.

For homeowners looking to add vibrant seasonal color without taking on a lot of maintenance, Oldfield recommends drought-tolerant blooms and pollinator-friendly plants. Flowers such as Gaillardia, blanket flower and Fuchsia can



Kangaroo Paw is an example of a drought-tolerant plant that can help bring a nice change to a homeowner's garden while using an eco-friendlier approach to growing.

provide visual appeal while also helping to attract those much-needed pollinators.

"Anything that is low maintenance and drought tolerant is easy, that's what I go for," said Oldfield.

While many gardeners focus on what to plant, Oldfield said one of the most common mistakes she sees actually involves watering.

"Definitely overwatering," she said.

According to Oldfield, plants such as trees thrive with deep, infrequent watering. Rather than lightly watering every day, she recommends allowing a hose to slowly drip into the soil overnight so the water can soak deeply before letting the area dry out.

One simple trick she also recommends is using a long screwdriver or chopstick to test the moisture level underground.

"You can kind of dig down in the soil without having to use a shovel," Oldfield said. "If the chopstick comes up wet, then you know it's still moist down there. If it's completely bone dry, then it's time to water again."

For newly planted trees, Oldfield added that gardeners

can use a creative irrigation method using a PVC pipe. By drilling holes into a three-foot section of pipe and placing it vertically into the soil near the tree, homeowners can direct water deeper underground where roots need it most.

When designing flower beds or container arrangements to make a garden more cohesive and visually appealing, Oldfield follows what she calls the "thriller, filler and spiller" method.

The "thriller" is the tall, eye-catching plant that creates height. The "filler" is a medium-sized plant that fills empty spaces, while the "spiller" trails outward or hangs over the edge of containers to soften the overall look.

This approach helps gardens feel balanced without requiring professional landscaping experience.

For residents gardening on a budget, Oldfield said there are still plenty of affordable ways to create an attractive outdoor space. Perennials are often inexpensive and return year after year, while vegetable gardening offers both beauty and practicality.

"A four-inch tomato plant is like \$3," she said. "It's a pretty inexpensive way to get your hands dirty and enjoy the



Big Oak Nursery owner and grower Julia Oldfield shares a variety of plants during an Elk Grove Garden Club meeting, offering tips and inspiration to help gardeners refresh and enhance their gardens.

fruits of your labor."

Beyond affordability, Oldfield said vegetable gardening can also feel especially rewarding for beginners.

"With a tomato, you're like, 'I did that. I got fruit!'" she said.

Even homeowners with limited outdoor space can still create thriving gardens. Oldfield said patios, porches and small yards can benefit from potted plants, hanging baskets and trellises that allow greenery to grow vertically instead of spreading outward.

Compact vegetable varieties designed specifically for small spaces are also becoming increasingly popular. One example Oldfield highlighted was the "patio tomato," a compact tomato plant that still produces full-sized fruit.

Herbs such as mint, oregano or thyme are another ideal option for smaller gardens because they require little room and can continue producing throughout the season with regular trimming.

To keep gardens visually appealing year-round, Oldfield encourages homeowners to think beyond spring blooms and plan for all four seasons.

"If you have a lot of spring blooms, then maybe you want something that's a summer bloomer or a fall bloomer or a winter bloomer," she said. "That adds interest in the off seasons."

At Big Oak Nursery, Oldfield said many of the plants are grown directly on-site rather than shipped in from other climates. Because the plants are already acclimated to Elk Grove's weather conditions, they are often better prepared for the region's hot summers and cooler winters. She noted that the nursery offers a variety of lower-cost plants for gardeners to grow.

The nursery also offers more than just plants, including eggs, honey, jam and locally raised beef.

"We're very local," Oldfield said. "Everyone we have working here is local and grew up here. We try to keep it Elk Grove-centered."

For homeowners looking to refresh their gardens this spring, Oldfield said the key is to start simple, experiment with different plants and create spaces that are both enjoyable and sustainable.

A How-To Guide for Deep Cleaning Your Grill

By Feature Impact

A clean grill can enhance the flavor of your food, making regular grill maintenance an essential part of your outdoor cooking routine.

Grills, especially those exposed to the elements, can accumulate dirt, rust and food residue that can affect performance and safety. Plus, residual char and grease can impart unwanted flavors and even lead to flare-ups.

Once you've gathered the right tools – a sturdy grill brush with stainless steel bristles, a scraper, a bucket of soapy water, microfiber cloths and grill cleaner or degreaser – consult this step-by-step guide to keep your grill in pristine condition, ensuring delicious meals every time.

1. Preheat the grill for 15 minutes to loosen any stuck-on residue then turn it off and let it cool slightly.

2. Ensure the gas supply is turned off before cleaning.

3. Remove the grates and scrub them thoroughly with a grill brush and warm, soapy water. Rinse and let dry.

4. Clean burners by wiping them with a damp cloth.

5. Scrape the inside of the grill to remove any debris and use a vacuum to collect loose dirt and ash.

6. Wipe down the exterior of the grill with a microfiber cloth and grill cleaner.

7. Reassemble the grill once all parts are dry and give it a final wipe down.

In between deep cleanings, remember to clean your grill grates immediately after cooking while they are still warm to remove food particles and grease. Find more tips for the grill and beyond at LivingToday.com.



Grills, especially those exposed to the elements, can accumulate dirt, rust and food residue that can affect performance and safety. Photo courtesy of Shutterstock



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Budget-Friendly Ideas to Boost Curb Appeal



A fresh coat of paint can instantly update your home's facade. Go bold or stick with a classic hue – it's all up to you. Photo courtesy of Unsplash

By Feature Impact

Your home's first big impression is its curb appeal, so if your place is in need of some sprucing up, you may wonder how you can make some updates without breaking the bank.

These 10 ideas are easy on budgets, but they can also make a big impact on your home's exterior image.

1. Paint your front door. As long as your front door is in good condition, there's no need to replace it completely. A fresh coat of paint can instantly update your home's facade. Go bold or stick with a classic hue – it's all up to you.

2. Dress up the windows. Add character and charm by enhancing your front windows. You might add wooden shutters, window-box planters or both. Also look at the trim around the windows. If it's chipped and peeling, adding a fresh coat of paint doesn't just look nice; it can protect your windows from damage, too.

3. Clean up flower beds. An unkempt flower bed can drag down an otherwise stunning home. Keep beds tidy and veg-

etation trimmed, even during the offseason. Watch for weeds and replenish mulch or rock ground cover as needed to keep the beds looking healthy and inviting.

4. Install new lighting. Replacing outdated light fixtures can give your exterior an instant upgrade. There's no right or wrong style; just choose a color and look that matches the rest of your design.

5. Replace worn welcome mats. A cheerful mat at your front door can be an inviting sight for visitors, but those mats inevitably wear with time, and what was once bright and charming becomes dingy and dull. A new mat can help bring back that cheery entry you once cherished.

6. Pressure wash the drive and walk. Over time, driveways and sidewalks collect an incredible amount of grime. Pressure washing not only eliminates the filth, but the clean surfaces also add to your home's visual appeal.

7. Add new vegetation. Landscaping is a relatively inexpensive way to introduce more personality to a yard. Aim for a mix of pretty and practical, such as some low flowering bush-

es and some trees or bushes that offer privacy and shade.

8. Keep up with basic maintenance. When your home is in poor repair, it shows. Pay attention to bent or rusting gutters, imperfections in the roof and other maintenance matters that aren't just aesthetic; left unrepaired, they can also result in major damage.

9. Pay attention to details. Functional items like the mailbox might not seem like much of a design element, but these small details can be a big distraction if they're not in good condition. Update or replace as needed to keep your aesthetic in sync.

10. Add seasonal decor. There's no need to go all out for every occasion, but some timely decorations that celebrate the holiday or season can make your entry fun and festive. Coordinate wreaths, planters, signs and other accent pieces for a cohesive look that says, "come on in."

Find more affordable ideas for upgrading your home and garden at elivingtoday.com. ★

Five Garage Safety Tips



Ensure any poisonous materials, such as paint, garden pesticides, cleaners and automotive fluids, are safely stored out of reach of pets and children that may have increased access to the garage during warmer months. Photo courtesy of Unsplash

By Feature Impact

When you throw open the windows, you'll likely be spending more time with the garage door open, too. Make access to your outdoor equipment safer with these tips to get your garage ready for the warmer months.

Organizing clutter is part of the process, but warmer weather can also serve as a reminder to make sure your garage equipment and features are secure and functioning properly.

1. Your garage floor tends to capture grime and grit from the outdoors, especially where your car sits. Take time to thoroughly sweep and mop, but also take stock of the floor's condition for any chips or other damage that may grow worse over time and pose a risk for tripping or other safety issues.

2. Check your garage door performance. Ensure doors are rolling smoothly with no hitches. If you do happen to notice any abnormalities, it's a good time to investigate. In some cases, a little grease or a minor

adjustment is all you need to get things back on track.

3. Don't forget to check your garage door sensors, too. Warmer weather means animals and children (and their toys) are more likely to find themselves in an automated door's path when it begins to lower. Ensure sensors are operating properly to prevent injury or property damage.

4. Verify all outlets, lights and other electrical features are in proper operating condition and all wires are intact and free of

damage or fraying.

5. Ensure any poisonous materials, such as paint, garden pesticides, cleaners and automotive fluids, are safely stored out of reach of pets and children that may have increased access to the garage during warmer months. Also check for spills or leaks of any potentially hazardous or flammable materials.

Taking time to safety-proof your garage can provide your family months of stress-free use. Find more tips for getting your garage in order at eLivingtoday.com. ★

Your Plants Can Tell You More Than Any Calendar Can



Red Norland potatoes, planted about 10 weeks ago, are indicating by their yellowing leaf color that harvest time is approaching. Kathy Morrison/Sacramento Digs Gardening

By Kathy Morrison Sacramento Digs Gardening

Some advice I received as a new parent (many years ago) has been remarkably useful with my garden as well:

“No one knows your own (child/garden) as well as you do.”

In other words, a person may be new to parenting, but no one has observed and responded to that particular baby quite as much and quite as closely as the parent has.

By the same token, a new gardener still has the best information on their own garden, even if it’s “I was given a second-hand planter, filled it with XYZ potting soil and Genovese basil seeds, and set it on the south-facing patio. I water it every other day.”

There’s knowledge already in that statement. But for gardening success, the knowl-

edge must grow, and that means paying attention to what’s going on. Even 5 minutes of observation every morning – to check whether those basil seeds are germinating, need more water, getting too much sun – builds a body of experience.

Experimenting builds the knowledge, too. Having grown Genovese basil, the gardener might try Purple Ruffles basil or Cardinal basil or African blue basil. Eventually, the gardener becomes an expert on their micro-micro-climate and crop. Such as “Basil does great in containers on the patio, but should be planted by early May.”

The next step is applying skepticism to planting charts and calendars (which are based on averages, after all) and responding to the plants themselves. This will be based on the earlier knowledge, plus experience with local weather and other conditions. “Hmm, the Genovese is flowering sooner

than usual. I wonder if it’s heat-stressed and needs a different location?”

A friend who is an expert at growing garlic recently noted that one of his two varieties is already near harvest time: The leaves are turning yellow and are starting to collapse. He’s not going to ignore that just because the calendar says it’s too early. (June typically is harvest time for garlic planted in October.) For whatever reason, that garlic wants to be ready now.

The Red Norland potatoes I planted the first week of March are another case in point. They are in two large cloth grow bags of identical color, with identical soil and the same watering schedule, and the bags are just a few feet apart in the backyard. Neither one has flowered. Yet plants in one of the bags are turning yellow, indicating potato harvest time is soon. The other has no yellow leaves. At all. But there’s no reason to wait

until the second bag is ready to harvest everything.

Tomatoes amaze me every year at how they respond to the weather and the slight changes in planting location. I typically start my plants from seed. One year Lemon Boy is the star, producing twice as many fruit as any of the others, and the next year it’s just OK. I don’t always know why, but I enjoy observing the season play out. And I make notes for next year.

As a side note, I recommend that gardeners – of edible plants, especially – keep a notebook or journal of some kind, to record events in the garden. Knowing next year that the Red Norlands were early in 2025 might convince me to plant them earlier or later, or plant another variety altogether. All part of being a gardener and citizen scientist!

For more, visit @sacdigs Gardening on Instagram.

What Locksmiths Say Homeowners Get Wrong About Security



Assess all home entry points, including secondary points like sliding doors, garage entries and basement doors. Photo courtesy of KeyMe Locksmiths

By Feature Impact

You have locks on your doors and windows, and you make sure they're secure before you leave the house or head to bed each night. You may even have a security system with an alarm or cameras to protect your home. Some locksmiths say that may not be enough.

Bryan McCabe, director of locksmith operations with KeyMe Locksmiths, the nation's leading provider of local locksmith services and No. 1 provider of key duplication kiosks, said homeowners should be mindful of common security vulnerabilities, many of which go unnoticed until it's too late.

A thief who wants to gain access to your home may do so by any means possible, including breaking windows or kicking in doors. However, those methods are loud and may attract attention. Instead, thieves will look to find the easiest house to enter. Consider these small changes you can make to deter thieves from your home.

Close the Garage

Leaving your garage door open may seem harmless, but it can signal easy access to thieves. An open garage suggests relaxed security habits and can make burglars assume doors

or windows might also be unlocked. Keeping it closed is a simple step that instantly makes your home more secure.

Make Your Home Look Lived-In

Burglars often target homes that appear empty. Dark houses – especially after nightfall – can stand out as easy opportunities. Leaving a light or two on helps create the impression someone is home. If you want to level up, use light timers or smart bulbs to automatically turn lights on and off, even when you're away.

Keep Your Home Visible from the Street

Thieves prefer to work unnoticed. Overgrown trees, tall bushes, or dense landscaping near entrances can provide cover for someone trying to break in. Trimming greenery and maintaining clear sightlines from the street makes your home less appealing and more exposed – exactly what burglars want to avoid.

Upgrade Entry Points to Improve Security

Some relatively minor updates can make a big impact toward protecting your home. Start by assessing all home entry points, including secondary points like sliding doors, garage entries and basement doors. In addition to checking door frames, homeowners should examine strike plates, hinge

security and whether existing locks are outdated.

Add Eyes to Your Front Door with a Doorbell Camera

Doorbell cameras are an affordable way to boost your home's security. Visible cameras can stop many would-be thieves as they don't want to be seen or recorded. Beyond deterrence, doorbell cameras let you see who's at your door, receive alerts and check on your home anytime, whether you're home or away.

Install Smart Locks for Control and Peace of Mind

Smart locks are another smart investment in home safety. They allow you to track who enters your home and when by assigning unique access codes. You can even lock (or unlock) the door remotely from your phone. With the ability to monitor, control and limit access, smart locks offer convenience and security. A local locksmith can help you choose the right option and handle installation, making the upgrade simple and stress-free.

Find more advice to help protect your home and belongings, and a locksmith or kiosk near you, by visiting key.me. ★

Refresh Your Home: A Room-by-Room Spring Cleaning Checklist



Washing windows inside and out is part of a whole-home cleaning plan. Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

By Feature Impact

After months of winter, spring cleaning isn't just about dusting and vacuuming; it's about inviting sunlight and fresh air into your space through the open windows and giving yourself a fresh start for the longer days ahead.

It's also a perfect opportunity to clear out the old and make room for new experiences, memories and energy. Whether you're tackling deep cleaning for the first time or you have seasonal rituals for tidying up your home, this room-by-room guide can help you plan and conquer seasonal chores.

Whole Home

- Declutter spaces: Donate, recycle or discard what you don't need
- Wash windows inside and out
- Dust baseboards, walls, vents and ceiling fans
- Wipe down doors, knobs and light switches
- Vacuum and clean under and behind furniture

- Clean curtains and blinds
- Store seasonal items like winter clothing and decor
- Replace air filters
- Shampoo carpet

Kitchen

- Empty and wipe down refrigerator and freezer
- Clean oven, stovetop and microwave
- Scrub countertops and backsplashes
- Clean out the garbage disposal
- Sweep and mop floors
- Organize the pantry and throw away any expired items

Bathrooms

- Scrub grout and tile
- Clean mirrors and glass surfaces
- Deep clean toilets
- Wipe down cabinets and bathroom fixtures
- Wash rugs, floor mats and the shower curtain and liner
- Empty trash and clean the bin

Bedrooms and Other Living Areas

- Wash bedding, pillows and linens
- Organize closets and drawers
- Vacuum chair, couches and mattresses as well as under cushions
- Dust shelves and decor
- Clean light fixtures and lampshades

Outdoor Areas

- Power wash patios, sidewalks and driveways
- Wipe down outdoor furniture and replace textiles like pillows, cushions and umbrellas
- Clear debris from garden beds
- Prune shrubs, plants and trees
- Organize garages and sheds
- Reconnect hoses and sprinklers
- Prep lawn equipment such as mowers, weed eaters and blowers
- For more spring cleaning tips and tricks, visit eLivingtoday.com.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MOSQUITOES!

Inspect your yard using the following checklist and look for these mosquito breeding sources. If you suspect that mosquitoes are present, please contact us at (800) 429-1022 to schedule a residential inspection.

USE THIS CHECKLIST TO PREVENT MOSQUITO BREEDING AROUND YOUR HOME

- Remove plant saucers and other containers that hold water below plants
- Redirect sprinklers so containers are not filled
- Remove or modify plants that hold water for more than 2 days, including rooting plants
- Refill and scrub out pet water dishes, bird baths, and fountains every 3 days
- Remove miscellaneous items that could hold water for longer than 3 days
- Cover bins and buckets with fitted lids or flip them over when unused
- Fill in tops of potted plants with sand
- Keep recyclables in containers that drain
- Add screens or mesh to rain barrels
- Remove old tires from yard
- Completely drain and scrub unused outdoor spas and tubs
- Keep lawn drains free from clogs and standing water



Plant Saucers



Rain Containers



Downspouts



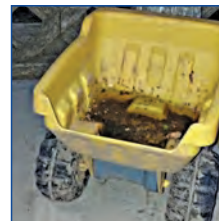
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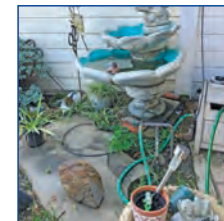
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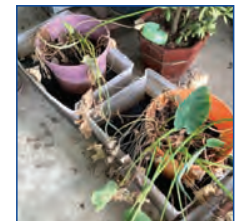
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City Expands Automated Parking Enforcement to Protect Bike Lanes, Improve Safety

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento will expand its automated parking enforcement program by deploying AI-assisted technology on three parking enforcement vehicles to identify vehicles illegally blocking bike lanes, with a focus on school zones citywide.

As of May 13, the city will launch a 60-day warning period for drivers illegally stopping or parking in bike lanes. Live citations will begin July 13.

"This program is about safety," said Megan Carter, the city's traffic engineer.

"Vehicles blocking bike lanes force people into traffic, reduce visibility and create unnecessary risks near schools, transit stops and busy corridors. The warning period gives drivers time to adjust before live enforcement begins," Carter added.

The expansion builds on Sacramento's automated bike lane and bus stop enforcement programs launched with Sacramento Regional Transit in 2025, including the nation's first bus-mounted automated bike lane enforcement system. Parking enforcement officers are also currently able to issue citations when they encounter vehicles blocking bike lanes during regular patrols.

This program is made possible by Assembly Bill 361 (AB 361), which authorizes California cities to use forward-facing cameras for enforcing parking



The city recently announced the deployment of AI-assisted technology on three parking enforcement vehicles to identify drivers illegally blocking bike lanes, particularly in school zones. A 60-day warning period began May 13, with citations set to start July 13. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

violations in bike lanes and transit zones; a vital legislative step toward making streets safer for everyone.

Since launching in 2025, the automated enforcement programs have issued 32,478 bus stop violation citations between Feb. 18, 2025, and May 12 and 25,312 bike lane violation citations between June 14, 2025, and May 12.

City officials said adding the technology to city parking enforcement vehicles will allow enforcement staff to more proactively identify bike lane violations in high-priority areas.

Drivers who stop or park in bike lanes will be subject to a \$150 citation once live enforcement begins July 13. The increased citation amount, approved by the Sacramento City Council as part of the city's updated fees and charges schedule, also applies to violations involving red curbs and bus zones.

During the initial 60-day rollout period beginning

May 13, violators will receive warnings instead of citations as the city conducts public outreach and education about the new program.

Prior to implementing this technology, the city regularly received complaints regarding unsafe stopping and parking activity around Natomas schools, but enforcement was often limited by staffing capacity, timing and the volume of violations occurring during peak school travel periods.

The system uses cameras and AI-assisted technology to detect vehicles illegally stopped or parked in bike lanes while officers travel their normal routes. All potential violations are reviewed before warnings or citations are issued.

Drivers who believe a citation was issued in error will have the opportunity to contest the citation through the city's standard parking citation review process. ★

Local 'Blue Star Museums' Offer Free Admission to Military Personnel and Families



Active-duty military personnel and their families receive free admission to the California Automobile Museum and seven other museums through Labor Day. Photo courtesy of California Automobile Museum

Sacramento Area Museums News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Eight Sacramento-area museums are participating in Blue Star Museums to offer free admission to the nation's active-duty military personnel and their families, including National Guard and Reserve, from Armed Forces Day on May 16 through Labor Day on Sept. 7, 2026.

A partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families in collaboration with the Department of Defense and museums across America, the local museums participating in the 2026 Blue Star Museums program include

the following: Aerospace Museum of California, California Automobile Museum, California Museum, Crocker Art Museum, Fairytale Town, Sacramento Children's Museum, Sacramento History Museum and SMUD Museum of Science & Curiosity (MOSAC).

The free admission program is available for those currently serving in the United States Military: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, including Reservists, National Guardsman (regardless of status), U.S. Public Health Commissioned Corps, NOAA Commissioned Corps, and up to five family members. Qualified members must show a Geneva Convention

common access card (CAC), DD Form 1173 ID card (dependent ID), or a DD Form 1173-1 ID card for complimentary entrance into a participating Blue Star Museum.

Before planning a visit, guests are encouraged to contact the individual museums for hours of operation and note some are normally closed on Mondays and in observance of holidays such as Memorial Day and Labor Day.

For more information or a complete list of participating Blue Star museums, please visit arts.gov/initiatives/blue-star-museums.

For more about upcoming activities offered by Sacramento area museums, visit SacMuseums.org. ★



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ABOUT TOWN

Concerts in the Park

Free Friday night concerts at Cesar Chavez Park, 910 I St. Lineup: May 22, In Color; May 29, Tarnish; June 5, Souls of Mischief; June 12, The Temper Trap; June 19, Kid Ink; June 26, Arden Park Roots.

Sacramento Suburban Kiwanis 68th Art Fiesta June 6-7

Jewelry, painting, photography, pottery, metal work, woodwork, glass and fine textiles are just some of the media you'll find on display.

This is a juried art show, not a craft fair. Come meet the artists, browse fine pieces, and purchase quality art for yourself, family and friends as long-valued gifts for all special occasions.

Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 6151 H St. Details at sacramentosuburbankiwanis.org/kiwanis-art-fiesta.

Area Museum Experiences

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

Aerospace Museum of California

As a proud partner of Blue Star Museums, active military members along with five additional guests can

enjoy free admission through Labor Day (Sept. 7). Details at aerospaceca.org.

Sacramento History Museum – “Play Ball! Sacramento in the National Pastime.” The exhibition is filled with historical baseball uniforms, bats, balls, and gloves from different time periods, along with programs, tickets, awards and trophies, an Edmonds field base, home plate and ticket box, along with scrapbooks, news articles, photos and more. Through October. Details at sachistorymuseum.org.

California Automobile Museum – Veterans’ Memorial Day Car Show, May 25. Join us for a day of classic cars, camaraderie, and honoring our veterans and military personnel who died in service to their country.

Sunday Drives: The third Sunday of every month, enjoy a free ride (with paid museum admission) in one of the museum’s many beautiful cars from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

There’s no better way to enjoy history than to experience it firsthand down the streets of downtown Sacramento. Details at calautomuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum – The Chinese Railroad Workers’

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

Crocker Art Museum – “Rebels with La Causa: Royal Chicano Air Force Art and Activism, 1970-1990,” through June, explores the expansive production and creative impact of the Royal Chicano Air Force (RCAF), one of the Chicano Movement’s most prolific and impactful artist collectives.

Beginning in 1970 at Sacramento State, the group produced individual artworks and group murals, as well as posters for educational, cultural, and political activities. The RCAF’s transformation into a broader collective not only initiated an explosion of Chicano art exhibitions, literary events, performances, and community celebrations, but expanded civic and political engagement.

While RCAF posters served as announcements for these wide-ranging activities, their multicultural aesthetics, subject matter, and strategic humor redefined Chicana/o art, as well as the history

of art and activism in the United States. Details at crockerart.org.

SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity Laser Concert Series – K-Pop Demon Hunters, Fridays and Saturdays in May. Lady Gaga, June 5-6. Beastie Boys, July 10-11. This immersive music experience, paired with spectacular full-dome lasers, is the best way to listen to your favorite artists outside of a live performance. Details at visitmosac.org.

Elks Lodge 6 Calendar of Events

Sacramento Historical Society Presentation: “Sacramento’s Elks Tower: A Downtown Architectural Landmark,” 6:30 pm. Tuesday, May 26. Presented by Peter Dannenfelser.

Classic Car Show, Saturday, July 18. Yoga, Monday 12 p.m., Wednesday 3:30 p.m. Lodge members free.

Karaoke Nights, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7 p.m.

Martial Arts, Monday 5 p.m.

Pickleball, Monday, Wednesday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; Thursday, 4:30-7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 4-7 p.m.

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

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A Battle Beyond the Bite

Lyme Disease Awareness Month Sparks Advocacy and Awareness

By Ornella Rossi

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - As the months of unanswering symptoms stretched into years, Lyme Fight Foundation founder and CEO Melissa Moya began to wonder whether anyone would ever believe her.

Doctors tested her for breast cancer, multiple sclerosis, brain tumors and heart disease. She endured MRIs, spinal taps, heart procedures and endless specialist appointments while debilitating pain, fatigue and neurological symptoms worsened. At one point, she said, a doctor suggested the illness was “all in my head.”

Then, in November 2019, after years without answers, Moya finally received the diagnosis that would change her life: Lyme disease.

“I spent the rest of the day crying in bed praying he was wrong,” Moya said. “For some reason I had been ready for MS, not Lyme. I knew nothing about Lyme.”

Now, during Lyme Disease Awareness Month, Moya is using her experience to help others navigate what she calls an often invisible and misunderstood illness.

Founded as a response to her own medical journey, the Lyme Fight Foundation works to provide education, awareness and support for Lyme disease patients and families. The organization also advocates for prevention, education and improved medical coverage for treatment.

“Lyme Fight Foundation is my silver lining, a mission born from my pain,” Moya said. “We exist to raise awareness, promote prevention, education and support those navigating this cruel disease.”

Lyme disease is a tick-borne



Treatment brought a new set of challenges. Moya said Lyme care is often not covered by insurance, leaving many patients responsible for enormous out-of-pocket costs. Photo courtesy of Melissa Moya

illness caused by bacteria transmitted through infected tick bites. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 476,000 Americans are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease each year. Symptoms can include persistent fatigue, joint pain, neurological issues, dizziness, heart complications and cognitive difficulties.

Moya said misconceptions about Lyme disease remain one of the greatest barriers patients face.

“There are many misconceptions surrounding Lyme disease,” she said. “People think Lyme disease does not exist in California, that everyone develops a bulls-eye rash or that it can always be cured with just 10 days of antibiotics.”

Moya said many patients struggle for years before receiving a diagnosis because Lyme disease can mimic dozens of other conditions. Early testing may also fail to detect infection.



“Lyme disease is a master of disguise,” she said. “Current testing misses up to 60% of acute cases.”

For Moya, the search for answers became physically and emotionally exhausting. She recalled spending years undergoing invasive procedures while balancing motherhood and chronic pain. One of the most difficult experiences, she said, came after a spinal tap caused a spinal fluid leak that left her bedridden with severe headaches.

“There really is no win,” she said. “You lose if they finally determine you have something wrong, and you lose if yet again there are no answers.”

Treatment brought a new set of challenges. Moya said Lyme care is often not covered by insurance, leaving many patients responsible for enormous out-of-pocket costs. She said doctor visits can cost hundreds of dollars per hour, while specialized testing and IV therapies add thousands more.

“I’ve spent well over \$100,000 on treatment,” she said. “Lyme treatment is brutal, mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.”

Despite the hardships, Moya said the experience reshaped her understanding of resilience and purpose.

“It has taught me that I am stronger than I ever thought

I could be,” she said. “Life is shorter than I ever really thought it could be.”

That perspective inspired her to create the foundation and become an advocate for others facing similar battles.

The organization offers educational resources, tick-testing information, support programs and care packages for Lyme patients. It also encourages prevention, especially as summer approaches and outdoor activity increases.

Moya advises people spending time outdoors to wear light-colored clothing, use tick repellents, avoid tall grass and conduct thorough tick checks after being outside. She also recommends saving removed ticks in a sealed container for possible testing.

“Awareness can make all the difference,” Moya said.

Throughout May, the foundation is encouraging community members to participate in awareness efforts by wearing green ribbons, sharing prevention information and supporting Lyme patients and families. The organization is also partnering with the American River Parkway Foundation for parkway cleanup events in Fair Oaks later this year.

For Moya, the mission remains deeply personal.

“The greatest threat Lyme patients face isn’t just the disease, it’s the despair,” she said. “No one should go through this alone.”

Even as she continues treatment, Moya said she hopes her story encourages others to keep searching for answers and reminds the public that Lyme disease is far more serious than many realize.

“We all hope and pray one day we reach remission,” Moya said. “Until then, we keep fighting.” ★

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Methodist Hospital Recognized for Excellence in Patient Safety

Dignity Health News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)

- Dignity Health Methodist Hospital of Sacramento, a member of CommonSpirit, earned a fourth-consecutive "A" Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit watchdog focused on patient safety. Leapfrog assigns an "A", "B", "C", "D" or "F" grade to general hospitals across the country using evidence-based measures of patient safety focused exclusively on errors, accidents, injuries and infections. Of all U.S. healthcare systems, CommonSpirit has the largest number of hospitals with "Straight A" designations, a testament to their consistent commitment to patient safety and quality care.

"Earning an 'A' from The Leapfrog Group for the fourth consecutive time reflects the strong commitment our teams bring to patient safety every day," said Phyllis Baltz, president and CEO of Dignity Health Methodist Hospital of Sacramento. "This recognition speaks to their focus, accountability and dedication to delivering safe, high-quality care to our patients and community."

"An 'A' Grade is a strong sign that Dignity Health Methodist Hospital of Sacramento is



Dignity Health Methodist Hospital of Sacramento, a member of CommonSpirit, earned a fourth-consecutive "A" Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit watchdog focused on patient safety. Photo courtesy of Dignity Health

deeply committed to protecting patients from harm," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "We commend the leadership, Board, clinicians, staff and volunteers for the role each played in earning this distinction."

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade stands as the only hospital ratings program focused

solely on preventable medical errors, infections and injuries that kill more than 500 patients a day in the United States. This program is peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public. Grades are updated twice annually, in the fall and spring.

To explore Methodist Hospital of Sacramento's full grade

details and to find valuable tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit HospitalSafetyGrade.org. Connect with The Leapfrog Group on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram and stay informed through The Leapfrog Group newsletter.

About Dignity Health California

Dignity Health California is a

nonprofit network of over 9000 physicians, more than 35,000 employees, 29 acute care hospitals, and 200-plus care-centers, including community hospitals, urgent care, surgery and imaging centers, home health, and primary care clinics. Dignity Health California provides award-winning care to communities in five primary markets across the state: North State, Sacramento, Central Valley, Central Coast and Southern California.

Dignity Health is a member of CommonSpirit Health, one of the nation's largest nonprofit Catholic healthcare organizations, dedicated to providing compassionate, high-quality, and affordable patient-centered care with special attention to the poor and underserved. Learn more at DignityHealth.org and CommonSpirit.org.

About The Leapfrog Group

Founded in 2000 by large employers and other purchasers, The Leapfrog Group is a national nonprofit organization driving a movement for giant leaps for patient safety. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, Leapfrog's other main initiative, assigns letter grades to hospitals based on their record of patient safety, helping consumers protect themselves and their families from errors, injuries, accidents and infections. ★

Sacramento County Employee Honored with Statewide Award

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County is celebrating a major achievement by one of its own. Emily Wight, a human services program planner with the Public Administrator, Guardian, Conservator (PAPGPC) office, has been recognized with a prestigious statewide honor for her dedication to public service.

Wight received the President's Award of Excellence from the California State Association of Public Administrators, Guardians and Conservators — an award presented annually to just one member out of more than 950 across California. The recognition highlights exceptional commitment to serving vulnerable populations and advancing the field.

"For me, to be recognized by my peers is perhaps the biggest achievement of my 20-year career thus far. I am proud to bring this award to the Sacramento County PAPGPC office as this reflects not only on me, but my office, my department and all of Sacramento County as I would not be where I am in my career without them," Wight said.

Over the years, Wight has held a variety of roles, beginning as a deputy handling Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) mental health conservatorships. She later worked in LPS



Emily Wight, a human services program planner with the Public Administrator, Guardian, Conservator (PAPGPC) office, has been recognized with a prestigious statewide honor for her dedication to public service. Photo courtesy of the California Association of PAPGPC

investigations, was promoted to supervising deputy overseeing multiple units, and in 2021 stepped into a new

challenge supporting the public administrator unit, managing decedent estates. In 2023, she advanced to program planner, where she now focuses on policy development, implementation and staff training.

"My favorite part of the job is helping people," Wight said. "I have enjoyed helping conservatees — some of Sacramento County's most vulnerable and underserved population — advocating for them to receive appropriate care and treatment, administering decedent estates, and making sure that individuals who pass away in Sacramento County with no will or no known next of kin have last rites and their disposition is handled with dignity and respect. Now I enjoy supporting our team by researching and developing policy and procedures as well as training staff including PAPGPC across the state."

The work of PAPGPC is often behind the scenes but critically important to the community.

"PAPGPC is a very unique role," she said. "In Sacramento County we are a small but very mighty office that helps adults with severe and persistent mental health conditions, older adults with major neurocognitive disorders and decedent estates. Oftentimes we are the unsung heroes in the background working hard to care for conservatees and decedent estates where there is no one else to advocate or step up to do the right thing." ★

May is CalFresh Awareness Month



CalFresh benefits can be used to purchase a wide range of everyday grocery items, including fruits and vegetables, breads and cereals, and dairy and meat products. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - During the month of May, Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance is participating in CalFresh Awareness Month, launching a weekly video series to help residents better understand available food resources and how to access them.

Throughout the month, new videos will be shared weekly, offering helpful information about CalFresh and the many ways it supports individuals and families across the region.

Food plays a vital role in daily life, bringing comfort, stability and connection. CalFresh helps make that possible by providing monthly food benefits to eligible households. Known federally as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), CalFresh helps Californians purchase the groceries they need to stay healthy and nourished.

Between 2024 and 2025, approximately 5.5 million Californians received CalFresh benefits. Locally, about 270,000 residents in Sacramento County rely on the program to help feed themselves and their families.

CalFresh benefits can be used to purchase a wide range of everyday grocery items, including fruits and vegetables, breads and cereals, and dairy and meat products. Benefits may also be used to buy seeds and plants for growing food at home, which can make a meaningful difference, especially as grocery costs continue to rise.

Applying for CalFresh in Sacramento County is designed to be simple and accessible. Residents can apply online, by phone, mail, fax or in person. The Department of Human Assistance also offers phone support for those who need assistance or have questions about the application process.

For individuals or families struggling to afford groceries, CalFresh may be able to help. Access to support often begins with information, and sometimes, taking the first step can make a lasting impact.

This CalFresh Awareness Month, Sacramento County encourages residents to learn more, explore their options and share this information with others who may benefit.

To learn more or apply, visit BenefitsCal.com or call the Department of Human Assistance at 1-800-560-0976. ★

County Seeks Input on Jail System Master Plan



Sacramento County is inviting residents and community stakeholders to share their perspectives through a newly launched survey as part of the county's ongoing Jail System Master Planning process. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County is inviting residents and community stakeholders to share their perspectives through a newly launched survey as part of the county's ongoing Jail System Master Planning process.

The survey is open to anyone connected to Sacramento County, including residents, employees, business owners, service providers, advocates and people with lived experience in the justice system.

The survey focuses on gathering feedback about priorities and key considerations related to jail facilities. Responses will be compiled and shared in summary form with consulting teams supporting the planning effort.

The survey will remain open through May 31.

As part of its outreach efforts, the county recently hosted a public webinar on April 23 where officials provided updates on the planning process and answered community questions. A recording of the webinar is available for those who were unable to attend or wish to review the discussion at www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEddne1wAL4.

Additional information about the Jail System Master Planning effort can also be found on the Public Safety and Justice Agency's Reports and Resources webpage.

Those interested in staying informed about future engagement opportunities can sign up for updates online at sacounty.gov.

For questions or more information, individuals may contact the Public Safety and Justice Agency at PSJA@SacCounty.gov. ★

UC Davis Men's Golf Trio Earns All-Big West Recognition

UC Davis Athletics
News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - Three UC Davis men's golfers earned 2025-26 All-Big West recognition, the conference announced May 12. Sophomore Lequan Wang was named to the All-Big West Second Team, while juniors Curtis Da Silva and Ryan Firpo each received Honorable Mention.

Wang, a sophomore from San Mateo, CA, posted the lowest scoring average among the Aggies (71.7) across 32 rounds and closed the regular season ranked No. 362 nationally per Clippd, the highest mark on the UC Davis roster. The Aragon High School graduate recorded two top three individual finishes, taking third at the Bridgestone Collegiate Invitational at 15-under 201 (with 19 birdies, second-most in the tournament) and third at the home El Macero Classic at 4-under 212.

Wang closed fall play with a tie for fourth at the Marquette Intercollegiate after a 3-under second-round 69 and opened The Prestige in a tie for second after a 3-under 68 before the third round was canceled by high winds. He played in all 11 stroke-play events for the Aggies during the regular season after earning All-Big West Honorable Mention as a freshman in 2024-25.

Da Silva, a junior from Monterey CA, earned Honorable Mention after competing in all 11 stroke-play events and posting a 72.9 scoring average across



Sophomore Lequan Wang and juniors Curtis Da Silva and Ryan Firpo have recently earned All-Big West recognition. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

32 rounds. The Robert Louis Stevenson School graduate opened the season with his first career top 10 by finishing 10th at the Ram Masters Invitational at even-par 210, including a 4-under second-round 66 at Fort Collins Country Club. Da Silva fired 70-68-69 at the Amer Ari Invitational at Mauna Lani Resort to take a tie for 38th at 9-under 207 (the only Aggie under par for the event, with three sub-par rounds) and closed the regular season with a 14th-place finish at 1-under 215 at the 2026 Big West Men's Golf Championship at La Quinta Country Club, one of just

two Aggies under par at the conference event. He also led UC Davis on Day 1 of The Goodwin at Stanford with a 1-under 69.

Firpo, a junior from Davis, CA, received Honorable Mention in his first season at his hometown school. The Davis Senior High School graduate transferred to UC Davis from Fresno State, where he was named the 2023-24 Mountain West Freshman of the Year as a Bulldog. Firpo led the Aggies at the home El Macero Classic with a tie for 30th at 7-over 223, the same event at which he posted a sixth-place finish as a Fresno State freshman in 2024. He paced UC

Davis at the Windon Memorial Classic with a tie for 55th and an even-par 72 in the final round, opened the spring with a 6-under 66 in round one of the Amer Ari Invitational, and closed at a tie for 35th at the R.E. Lamkin Invitational with a final-round 72 across 10 starts and 28 rounds.

Long Beach State's Alejandro de Castro Piera was named the conference's Golfer of the Year and Cal Poly freshman Rafael Bobo-Lloret was tabbed Freshman of the Year. Long Beach State's Rob Murray earned Coach of the Year honors after leading the 49ers

to a record-setting Big West Championship at La Quinta Country Club. Long Beach State placed five golfers on the All-Big West First Team, joined by UC San Diego's Davis McDowell.

The trio of selections capped a 2025-26 campaign that featured the program's first individual victory since 2023, sophomore Louis Grizot's Silver Title at the Gene Miranda Falcon Invitational, and a 3.43 team GPA in the Winter 2026 academic quarter that set a UC Davis men's golf program record and stood as the highest among all UC Davis men's programs. ★

Beavers Run Out of Gas, Fall to Feather River



The 2026 season has come to a close as the American River College baseball team lost in the regional championship game to Feather River 19-8 on May 3 in Quincy. Photo courtesy of American River College

American River College
News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The 2026 season has come to a close as the

American River College baseball team lost in the regional championship game to Feather River 19-8 on May 3 in Quincy. After putting a thumping on the Golden Eagles in the first game, then falling 4-2

in the second game, everything was on the line that morning.

The game was moved up to 10 a.m. to try and beat an incoming thunderstorm. After the Beavers failed to score in the top of the first, Feather River wasted no time jumping on freshman RHP Ayden Dringenberg (Oakmont), who had thrown three innings on Friday to secure the win over Monterey Peninsula College. The Golden Eagles got three runs in the first inning, then one in the second.

The Beavers came back with three runs in the third inning, with 2B Lance Sabatke (River City) driving in a run with a single to center. But the ARC pitchers just couldn't keep Feather River off the board, as the Golden Eagles scored in six of their eight innings at bat, with all but the second inning being multiple run innings. After ARC closed the gap to 4-3, FRC scored four in the third and two in the fourth to go up 10-3.

The Beavers answered back with a run thanks to an RBI double by Sabatke. RHP Nathan Gahn (Bear Creek) held Feather River scoreless in the fifth and the Beavers got two runs in the top of the

sixth to make the score 10-6. But Feather River just kept adding on and got the two runs back in the bottom of the sixth. In the seventh ARC clawed back, scoring a pair of runs to make the score 12-8 thanks to a sacrifice fly by 3B Luke Haney (Oak Ridge) and an RBI single by SS Bryce Sabatke (River City). The Beavers threatened in the eighth with runners at first and second with one out but 1B Jose Vega (Highlands) hit into an inning ending double play to squash the threat. It was one of two double plays the Beavers hit into on the day. With the game still within reach going into the bottom of the eighth Feather River put the game away for good, scoring seven runs to make the final score 19-8.

The American River College baseball staff would like to thank everyone who supported the team this season and we are looking forward to January and the start of the 2027 season. And a big congratulations to the players on the 2026 team for a fine season, and to the sophomores who will be moving on...thank you for your dedication and hard work. Once a Beaver, always a Beaver! ★

Murillo Sixth Addition to Men's Soccer Roster

Sacramento State
Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Sacramento State head men's soccer coach Michael Linenberger added a sixth commitment for the 2026 campaign, welcoming local product James Murillo to the roster in time for the upcoming campaign.

"We are excited to add James to our roster," Linenberger said. "We work hard to keep good local talent at home, and James has had a lot of college success already. We expect him to challenge for a starting role in our back line this coming fall."

A native of Elk Grove, CA, Murillo joins the Hornets' sideline after prepping at Elk Grove HS and spending last season at nearby Folsom Lake

College as a center back for the Falcons. In his first collegiate campaign, he was named the team's Defensive Player of the Year, added Big 8 Conference First Team honors, and was selected to the California Community College Athletic Association's all-regional squad.

He appeared in 21 matches as a sophomore at Folsom Lake, helping lead the Falcons to a conference title with an 8-1-1 record (13-6-2 overall) and adding his first career goal — and game-winning score — in a 1-0 victory over Cosumnes River College on Oct. 7. That helped his case for Big 8 Conference Player of the Month honors.

As a true freshman in 2024, he started 17 matches and appeared in 1,453 minutes at Jessup

University, attempting one shot.

Prior to his time at Jessup, Murillo competed with Sacramento United SC from the U9 all the way up to the U19 level, earning a selection to the MLS NEXT All-Star game. He also competed with the Sacramento Gold semi-pro club in the NPSL and with FC Folsom in the UPSL, helping the latter to a spot in the national finals.

Murillo is the latest addition to the Sacramento State roster for 2026, joining previous commitments from defender Mateus Romualdo (Snow College), midfielder Henry Hedden (Monte Vista HS), goalkeeper AJ Bengds (UNC Asheville), forward Jakub Kozlowski (Palomar College) and defender Cameron Martino (Clovis East HS). ★

Weiss Takes Home Senior Championship



Senior Champion Jeff Weiss. Courtesy photo



Legends Championship winner Herb Jensen. Courtesy photo



Super Senior Championship winner Mark Morgan. Courtesy photo

Sacramento Golf Council
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Golf Council hosted the 53rd Sacramento County Men's Senior, Super Senior and Legends Championships at Ancil Hoffman Golf Course, Carmichael May 5-6.

The Senior Championship (ages 55-64) was won by Jeff Weiss in a four-hole playoff over Bob Niger. Both scored 141.

The Super Senior Championship (ages 65-74) was won by Mark Morgan with a score of 70-64.

The Legends Championship (ages 75 plus), Herb Jensen won with a consistent score of 72-72.

Jim Shields was the Golf Council Tournament Director. The event showcased the top senior golf talent from across the region and was sponsored by Eskaton Village Carmichael. ★