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Dixon Independent Voice

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JULY 10, 2026

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IN CELEBRATION AND GRATITUDE



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WHAT DID PRAYING MANTISES EVOLVE FROM?



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Dixon Lights It Up!



The evening concluded with a fireworks display at 9:15 p.m. Photo by Nicolas Brown

By Kendall Brown
DIXON, CA (MPG) - Residents gathered at Hall Park on July 4 for the City of Dixon's annual Independence Day celebration, marking both the nation's 250th anniversary and the local community's traditions with an afternoon and evening of family-friendly activities.



Activities began with recreation swim at the Pat Granucci Aquatics Center, 450 E. Mayes St., from 4 to 8 p.m. Pickleball players took to the courts in Hall Park from 5 to 8 p.m., while families gathered throughout the park in advance of the evening's entertainment. Photo by Nicolas Brown

The celebration ran from 4 to 9:15 p.m. at Hall Park, 450 Hall Park Drive, and featured recreational activities, live entertainment, food vendors and a fireworks display.

Mayor Steve Bird opened the event, welcoming attendees as the city joined communities across the country

in recognizing the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Activities began with recreation swim at the Pat Granucci Aquatics Center,

450 E. Mayes St., from 4 to 8 p.m. Pickleball players took to the courts in Hall Park from 5 to 8 p.m., while families gathered throughout the park in advance of the evening's

entertainment.

Beginning at 6 p.m., food trucks served a variety of meals and refreshments from the Aquatics Center parking lot. Live music followed from 6 to 9 p.m., with Smokehouse Reunion performing for attendees before the evening concluded with a fireworks show scheduled for 9:15 p.m.

To accommodate the celebration and fireworks preparations, the Hall Park Dog Park was closed from 7 a.m. July 4 through 7 a.m. July 5. City officials thanked residents for their cooperation and encouraged everyone to celebrate safely during the holiday.

This year's celebration
Continued on page 10

Caltrans Receives \$1.4 Million Grant to Improve Highway Safety

Caltrans News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Caltrans announced June 29, that it received approximately \$1.4 million in grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to help expand and improve traffic data collection that will improve safety on the state highway system.

Caltrans analyzes a wide variety of data sets to help evaluate road safety, including lane conditions, intersection and shoulder types, traffic controls, speed limits and traffic volumes. The fiscal year 2026 funding for the program will help streamline the collection and is provided by a grant from OTS through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"Strengthening California's roadway data helps us better understand crash patterns and make smarter safety investments. This grant will boost our ability to improve safety statewide and advance our goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries," said Caltrans Director Dina El-Tawansy.

The funds will support data collection of average annual daily traffic (AADT) on non-Federal Aid System (NFAS) roads, including rural roads, collector roads that connect to the state highway system, and urban local roads. The funding will also be used for inventory intersection types and designs on NFAS roads, as well as support statewide outreach and coordination with local and regional agencies, including Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), cities, counties, and tribal agencies.

Caltrans is aligning departmental operations with the Safe System approach, which identifies several interconnected elements to achieve a vision of zero fatalities and serious injuries - safe road users, safe roads, safe speeds, safe vehicles, and post-crash care.

As part of this commitment, Caltrans is prioritizing "safety first" in highway planning, operations, construction, and maintenance; focusing efforts on eliminating the most serious crashes; and working to eliminate disparities in road safety outcomes related to race, age, ability, and transportation mode by addressing historic and current barriers to transportation access and safety.

Safety is also one of
Continued on page 5

Friends of the Fair Award \$33,500 in Scholarships

Story and photos by Kathy Keatley Garvey

DIXON, CA (MPG) - The Friends of the Dixon May Fair has awarded nine college agricultural scholarships, totaling \$33,500, to Solano County high school alumni in its annual Donnie and Tootie Huffman Scholarship Program.

The highest award, the \$8000 Donnie Huffman Presidential Scholarship, went to Massimo Menicou of Vacaville, who just completed his second year of studies at the University of Nevada, Reno, where he is majoring in pre-veterinary science. Menicou, a 2024 graduate of Vacaville High School, previously received two other scholarships from the Friends of the Fair.

Scholarship committee chair Carrie Hamel of Dixon presented the awards at the organization's annual June barbecue



Emma Graham of Dixon, a 2026 graduate of Dixon High School, won the inaugural \$3500 Dale Fletcher Memorial Scholarship. She will be attending Chico State University in the fall, pursuing a degree in agribusiness management. The newly named scholarship memorializes a Dixon resident who died in January 2026 of a farming accident. Fletcher was a longtime volunteer in the livestock program at the Dixon May Fair and a longtime 4-H leader. With Graham are Carrie Hamel of Dixon, scholarship chair, and Gil Molina of Vacaville, president of the Friends.

and awards dinner, held at Friends' Plaza at the May Fair. She announced that since 2003, the Friends

have awarded a total of \$340,250 in scholarships to Solano County alumni majoring in an agricultural

field. Her comment drew widespread applause.

The scholarship program
Continued on page 3

In Celebration and Gratitude

Dixon News Briefs



Paul V. Scholl, Publisher of Messenger Publishing Group and President of Western Web, Inc.

By Paul V. Scholl, Publisher
Messenger Publishing Group

July 1st marked the celebration of Messenger Publishing Group reaching its 20-year anniversary of publishing local news, beginning with the American River Messenger in 2006. It all started in my garage and one converted bedroom into an office in my home in Roseville.

MPG is currently 18 publications strong, 15 of those would not exist if we hadn't rescued them from closure. The Sacramento region would be a local print news desert if these local newspapers hadn't been purchased as the years went on. Through all the tough times, good decisions and bad decisions, oppressive government regulations and overreach, MPG forged on. We did not surrender.

Over the years, many other publications ceased to exist or have been greatly diminished. At the same time, we re-organized and kept printing. MPG now consists of Carmichael Times, Citrus Heights Messenger, Rancho Cordova Grapevine Independent, Elk Grove Citizen, The Rio Linda News, The Galt Herald, Land Park News, East Sacramento News, Pocket News, River Valley Times, Gold River Messenger, American River Messenger, The Gridley Herald, Territorial Dispatch (Marysville/Yuba City), Colusa County Pioneer Review, Dixon Independent Voice, West

Sacramento News Ledger, Arden Arcade News. Along with our special publications, we publish 722 issues each year. And we don't work on Sundays.

In January of 2026, I purchased Western Web, Inc., a commercial printing company in Northern California to produce and print our publications. Our new printing team has been awesome, and the products now look fantastic. We also print dozens more local newspapers and publications that serve their communities throughout Northern California all the way up to the Oregon border.

We are growing. Leadership matters. Commitment matters. Foundational principles matter. We are founded on "God, Country, Family", the same foundation that our great nation is founded upon. We are leaders in local print news because we are dedicated to a higher power. We lift people up. We lift communities up.

My teams at Messenger Publishing Group and Western Web and I want to thank all those who support us through their advertising, subscriptions, readership, printing work and contributions. I want to thank my entire team for all their hard work, especially when deadlines loom. It takes great teamwork at both companies to produce great products.

We will continue to grow. We will continue to serve.

God Bless America,
Paul V. Scholl



Buckhorn Grill and Bar, in partnership with the Dixon Chamber of Commerce, is hosting its official grand opening from 2 to 3 p.m. July 10. Held at 1460 Ary Lane, the event will celebrate the business fully opening for business. Photo by Nicolas Brown

By MPG Staff

Four Star Farm Horse Camp

Four Star Farm is offering a beginner to intermediate horseback riding camp beginning in mid-June. The farm, 7445 Pitt School Road, will have activities such as horseback riding, art projects and horsemanship for children aged 6 to 13 years old. Listed sessions are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and include July 9 to 10 and August 3 to 7. Sessions cost \$695 per participant.

For more information, visit fourstarfarm.com or call 707-312-1119.

Downtown Dixon Farmer's Market

Downtown Dixon Business Association's (DDBA) is hosting the Downtown Dixon Weekly Farmer's Market, held every Wednesday from 5 to 7 p.m. through Oct. 28. Hosted at Pardi Plaza, 132 E. A St, the event, sponsored by the City of Dixon, features organic fruits and vegetables, fresh-baked breads, hot food vendors, live music and opportunities to meet local farmers.

For more information, visit downtondixonca.com/events or email dixondowntonba@yahoo.com.

Chamber Networking Lunch

The Dixon Chamber of Commerce is hosting a networking event from noon to 1:30 p.m. July 16. This free in-person event, held at Farmstead at Dixon, 350 Gateway Drive, allows local professionals to connect. Offering a diverse range of potential connections, attendees are encouraged to bring business cards. Lunch is provided.

For more information, visit dixonchamber.org or call 707-678-2650.

Popsicles in the Park

Dixon Grown is hosting the Popsicles in the Park series throughout July, offering community members the opportunity to meet local elected officials and city staff while enjoying complimentary frozen treats. Events are scheduled at parks throughout the month, including Northwest Park, 1100 Parkgreen Drive, at 6 p.m. July 9, Pardi Plaza, 132 E. A St., at noon July 11, Hall Park Amphitheatre at 6 p.m. July 13, Bowen Park, Pitt School rd. and Sunflower Way, at 6 p.m. July 23 and Veterans Park, 1300 Valley Glen Drive, at 6 p.m. July 29.

For more information, visit dixongrown.com/Popsicles-in-the-Park/ or email news@cityofdixonca.gov.

Dixon Toy Show

The Collectible Show, a vintage toy and collectibles shop in Roseville, CA, is hosting the Dixon Toy Show from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. July 25. Held at the Dixon May Fair grounds, 655 S. First St., the event will feature approximately 50 vendors specializing in vintage toys. Admission

is free for children, early bird admission, from 9 to 11 a.m., is \$15 with general admission being \$5.

For more information, visit dixonmayfair.com/event/dixon-toy-show/ or call 707-678-5529.

Lunch Bunch at Pedro's Cocina

Dixon Chamber of Commerce is hosting a lunch bunch networking event from noon to 1:30 p.m. July 21. Held at Pedro's Cocina, 1425 Market Lane, the free event offers guests a no-host lunch and networking opportunities.

For more information, visit dixonchamber.org, or call 707-678-2650.

Junior Lifeguard Camp

City of Dixon is hosting a children's lifeguard camp from July 20 to 24. Held at Pat Granucci Aquatic Center, 450 E. Mayes St., the camp offers lessons on water rescues, CPR and basic first aid skills for swimmers 10 to 14 years old. While helpful, the course offers no certification. Swimming requirements apply. Sessions will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fridays. The last day to register is July 13 and participation costs \$181 per attendee.

For more information, visit cityofdixonca.gov/departments/Recreation or call 707-343-8162.

Dixon Teen Center Hiring

Dixon Teen Center is looking to hire a Teen Center Coordinator. The requirements of the position include excellent people skills, especially with teens, coordination experience, and availability every Friday and Saturday from 4 to 8 p.m.

For more information or to apply, visit Dixon Teen Center on Facebook or call either 707-695-2724 or 707-344-3544.

Toastmasters Open House

Dixon Toastmasters are hosting a series of meetings open to the public from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. every second and fourth Tuesday. Held in-person at Mountain Mike's Pizza, 1700 N. First St., the meeting will have a simultaneous virtual option, allowing attendees to participate over Zoom.

For more information or to receive the Zoom link, visit Dixon 6870 Toastmasters Club on Facebook, call 916-801-6234 or email toastmaster.lou@gmail.com

Buckhorn Grill and Bar Grand Opening

Buckhorn Grill and Bar, in partnership with the Dixon Chamber of Commerce, is hosting its official grand opening from 2 to 3 p.m. July 10. Held at 1460 Ary Lane, the event will celebrate the business fully opening for business.

For more information, visit Dixon Chamber of Commerce on Facebook or call 707-678-2650. ★

MEMORIAL

RUTH M. STRONG • 07/22/1937 - 06/28/2026

Ruth M. Strong, 88, of Montoursville, Pennsylvania passed away peacefully on Sunday, June 28, 2026. Ruth was a resident of Dixon, CA, and a member of St. Peter The Apostle Catholic Church with her husband Wade from 1969 through 2005.

Born July 22, 1937, in Williamsport, she was the daughter of the late William M. and Ruth E. (Bower) Stone.

Ruth graduated from Williamsport High School in 1955, where she and the love of her life, Wade M. Strong, first sat together in history class and went on to make history together. Following high school, Ruth earned her nursing degree from Temple School of Nursing in Philadelphia.

On August 19, 1961, she married Wade, beginning a remarkable partnership that spanned nearly 65 years. The newlyweds first relocated so Wade could complete his education before settling in California, where they built their life together and remained for more than 40 years. Ruth dedicated her career to nursing, retiring in 1999 after many years of compassionate service. In 2005, she and Wade returned home to Montoursville, where they happily spent the next 20 years surrounded by family, friends, and familiar roots. She loved hosting gatherings of all kinds, especially Christmas parties and family celebrations, where her home was always filled with warmth, laughter, and togetherness.

Ruth and Wade were blessed with a beloved son, Steven W. Strong, daughter-in-law, Laurie, and later found immense joy in their grandsons, Wade and Connor Strong. They enjoyed playing cards. Ruth and Wade loved welcoming family members to California, often serving as enthusiastic tour guides and sharing the beauty of their Northern California home. In retirement, they continued their adventures



together with friends, Bud, Fran, Erdean and Fred, traveling throughout the country and enjoying cruises that created many cherished memories. After returning to Pennsylvania, Ruth devoted her time to serving others through volunteer work with Sister Henry's Soup Kitchen and was a faithful member of St. Boniface Catholic

Church. Ruth also enjoyed trying her luck at the slot machines. Whether she won a jackpot or simply filled a bucket with nickels, she celebrated every victory as though it were a million-dollar prize. In addition to her husband, Wade, and their son, Steven (Laurie) and grandsons, Wade and Connor, she is survived by her sister, Judy Smith Lupole, of Williamsport, and her brother, Bill Stone (Marlin), of Florida. She was preceded in death by her parents, a sister, Patricia Grove, and a brother-in-law, Larry Lupole.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Jude's Children Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

Online condolences may be made on Ruth's memorial page at www.SandersMortuary.com

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Friends of the Fair Award \$33,500 in Scholarships



The Friends of the Dixon May Fair awarded nine college agricultural scholarships totaling \$33,500 in its annual Donnie and Tootie Huffman Scholarship Program. From left are Carrie Hamel of Dixon, scholarship chair; scholarship recipients Payton King of Fairfield, Reagan Castelli of Dixon, Emma Graham of Dixon, Massimo Menicou of Vacaville, Bridget de Flores of Rio Vista, Cody Barr of Dixon, Elena Mendonso of Vacaville, and Friends of the Fair president Gil Molina of Vacaville. Not pictured are scholarship recipients Sam Esperson of Rio Vista and Vincent Perry of Vacaville.

Continued from page 1
 memorializes two Vacaville residents, Donnie Huffman, the founding president of the Friends of the Fair, and his wife Claudia "Tootie" Huffman, founding treasurer. Donnie died June 17, 2023, at age 83, and Tootie on March 29 of this year at age 84.

The 2026 recipients include three from Vacaville; three from Dixon; two from Rio Vista, and one from Fairfield. The scholarship program has two categories: the four-year university level, and two-year community college level.

In addition to Menicou, other recipients in the four-year university category are:

Elena Mendonso of Vacaville, a 2024 graduate of Vacaville Christian High School, won the \$5000 JoAn Giannoni Scholarship. She just completed her second year at Chico State University and plans to become a veterinarian. The Giannoni Scholarship honors a Dixon resident who is a founding member and former longtime treasurer of the Friends.

Sam Esperson of Rio Vista won the \$4000 Ester Armstrong Memorial Scholarship. He just completed his fourth year at California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, where he is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural systems management. Esperson is a 2022 graduate of Rio Vista High School and a two-time recipient of the Donnie Huffman Presidential Scholarship. The scholarship memorializes a former interim chief executive officer of the Dixon May Fair (2006-2009). Armstrong, a resident of Rocklin, died in 2009 of cancer.

Cody Barr of Dixon won the \$3500 Joe Gates Memorial Scholarship. A 2025 graduate of Dixon High School, he is attending Utah State, pursuing a bachelor's degree in agriculture business management. He is a previous recipient of a Friends' scholarship. Gates, a longtime Dixon May Fair and Solano County Fair auctioneer and a resident of Rio Vista, died in February 2023 of COVID.

Emma Graham of Dixon, a



Cody Barr (center) of Dixon, a student at Utah State University, received the \$3500 Joe Gates Memorial Scholarship from the Friends of the Dixon May Fair. With him are Carrie Hamel of Dixon, scholarship chair, and Gil Molina of Vacaville, president of the Friends.

2026 graduate of Dixon High School, won the inaugural \$3500 Dale Fletcher Memorial Scholarship. She will be attending Chico State University in the fall, pursuing a degree in agribusiness management. The newly named scholarship memorializes a Dixon resident who died in January 2026 of a farming accident. Fletcher was a longtime volunteer in the livestock program at the Dixon May Fair and a longtime 4-H leader.

Payton King of Fairfield won a \$3500 Donnie and Tootie Huffman Scholarship. She is currently attending the University of Minnesota, Crookston, pursuing a degree in animal science. A 2025 graduate of Rodriguez High School. She is a previous scholarship recipient.

Bridget de Flores of Rio Vista, a 2023 graduate of Rio Vista High School, won a \$3500 Donnie Tootie Huffman Scholarship. She is attending Texas A&M University, pursuing a bachelor's degree in agricultural education. She is a previous recipient.

In the community college category, Reagan Castelli of Dixon won the top award, the \$1500 Jack Hopkins Memorial Scholarship. She attends Butte College, majoring in agriculture science, with plans to become an ag teacher. She is a 2025 graduate of Dixon High School. Hopkins (1922-2009), a fruit rancher and lifelong resident of Fairfield and Suisun, was a strong supporter of the Junior

Livestock Auctions at the Dixon May Fair and Solano County Fair.

Vincent Perry of Vacaville won a \$1000 Donnie and Tootie Huffman scholarship. He attends Butte College, majoring in ag business. He is a 2025 graduate of Vacaville High School. He is a previous recipient.

Tribute to the Founders

Sarah Vasquez Lincoln and Kristy Vasquez of Vacaville, granddaughters of the late Donnie and Tootie Huffman and daughters of Solano County Supervisor John Vasquez, provided a legacy tribute to the founders. They were joined on stage by daughters, Kensley Lincoln, 7, and Amelia Vasquez-Fuller, 7.

"With grateful hearts, we pause to honor the lives and legacy of our grandparents, whose vision, dedication, and generosity helped establish Friends of the Dixon May Fair," Lincoln read. "Although our grandfather passed away in 2023 and our grandmother joined him this past March of 2026, their impact continues to be felt throughout our community and fairgrounds, which some would call their second home."

"What began as a dream to support local youth, agriculture, and the fair grew into something far greater than anyone could have imagined. Through Friends of the Dixon May Fair, they created opportunities for countless young people to learn, grow, compete, and develop lifelong skills. Their passion for agriculture and

their belief in investing in future generations helped strengthen the local agricultural clubs, support fair projects, and improve the fairgrounds for everyone."

They emphasized that "their success was never accomplished alone. We extend our deepest appreciation to every volunteer, fair employee, board member, donor, sponsor, supporter, exhibitor, parent, mentor, family member and community who contributed their time, support, and resources throughout the many years and multiple fairs. Your commitment and hard work helped transform their vision into a lasting organization that has touched so many lives. Together, we built a tradition of honor, service, opportunity, and community pride that continues to honor their legacy and thrive each and every fair."

"Let's be honest: a true measure of a legacy is not only what was created, but what continues after those who started it are gone. As the next generation, we are honored to carry forward the values our grandparents instilled—hard work, dedication, generosity, and a deep commitment to agriculture and youth development. We recognize the responsibility that comes with preserving what they built, and we are committed to ensuring that Friends of the Dixon May Fair continues to serve and support future generations for many years to come."

In closing, Lincoln commented

that "as we look toward the future, we do so with gratitude for the foundation they laid and for the many people who have helped along the way. Their spirit lives on in every young person encouraged, every agricultural project supported, every improvement made to the fairgrounds, and every community member who believes in the mission they began."

"Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey," Lincoln said. "We invite you to join us as we continue their legacy, honor their memory, and work together to ensure that Friends of the Dixon May Fair remains a source of opportunity, growth, and community pride year after year. Their work may have started with them, but their legacy belongs to all of us. Thank you from heaven above and the hearts of the Vasquez, Fuller and Lincoln families."

President Gil Molina

The Friends, an all-volunteer, service-oriented organization, is headed by President Gilbert "Gil" Molina of Vacaville. The organization raises funds through the sale of beverages at the four-day fair, and donates the proceeds for building and grounds improvements, college scholarships and exhibitor awards.

Applicants are scored on personal, civic and academic experience; academic standing; personal commitment and established goals; leadership potential; and civic accomplishments. Most applicants have experience in 4-H, FFA or Grange — criteria desired but it is not mandated, Hamel said.

Continuing scholarship winners may apply up to four times, Hamel said. Scholarship checks can be used only for tuition, fees, books, materials and supplies, housing, and meals purchased on campus.

The deadline to apply for the annual scholarship is March 1. The application form can be downloaded from the Friends of the Fair Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FriendsoftheDixonMayFair.

The scholarship committee, chaired by Hamel, also includes Linda Molina, Kathy Keatley Garvey, and Kristy Vasquez all of Vacaville, and Sue Miracle and Michelle Robinson of Dixon. ★

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Sacramento County Mixed Team Championship Crowns 2026 Winners

Sacramento Golf Council News Release

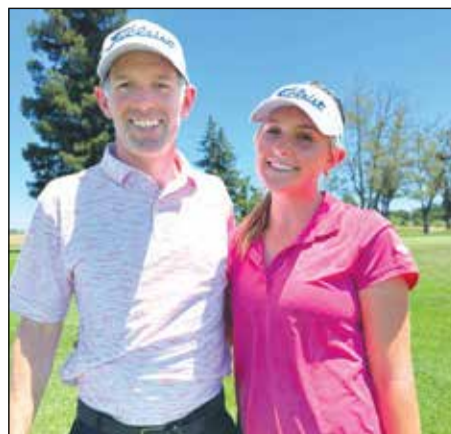
SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The 2026 Sacramento County Mixed Team Championship was held Sunday, June 21 at Mather Golf Course under sunny skies and ideal playing conditions. The tournament featured coed two-player teams competing in the Chapman format.

Morgan and Eric Pittman claimed Low Net honors over the field with a score of 65.5.

Taylor and Quinn Baker took home Low Gross honors over the field with a round of 69.



Morgan and Eric Pittman claimed low net honors. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council



Taylor and Quinn Baker took home low gross honors. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council

In the A Flight, Kate and Daven Phelan earned first place with a net score of 67.5.

In the Flight, Tracy Callahan and Scott Pierson captured first with a net score of 67.

The event was contested in the Chapman format, where each player tees off, partners then hit each other's drives, and one ball is selected to complete the hole using alternate shots.

The championship was conducted by the Sacramento Golf Council, with Patty Mitchell serving as Tournament Chairman. Stretch Zone sponsored the tournament. ★

Nicole Tanoue Wins the 91st Sacramento City Amateur Women's Golf Championship



The Handicap Championship winner, Ramona Marshall, scored a net 146. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Golf Council



Nicole Tanoue secured the title with an outstanding gross score of 66/73/139. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Golf Council



Lynne Cowan captured the Senior Championship (ages 50-plus) title with a gross score of 144. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Golf Council

Sacramento Golf Council News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The 91st Sacramento City Amateur Women's Golf Championship was held June 27-28

at Bing Maloney Golf Course, drawing top amateur women golfers from across the region.

In the Championship Division, Nicole Tanoue secured the title with an outstanding gross score of 66/73/139. In the

first round she had a hole-in-hole on hole No. 3.

The Handicap Championship winner, Ramona Marshall, scored a net 146.

Lynne Cowan captured the Senior Championship (ages 50-plus) title with a

gross score of 144.

The tournament was conducted by the Sacramento Golf Council, with Sean Wong serving as Tournament Chairman. The Beth Hightower perpetual trophy was first awarded in 1935 to Barbara Ransom. ★

Pierre Reedy Announces Retirement



Sacramento Republic FC announced on June 29 that midfielder Pierre Reedy has elected to retire from professional soccer. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Republic FC

Sacramento Republic FC News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento Republic FC announced on June 29 that midfielder Pierre Reedy has elected to retire from professional soccer. In conjunction with his retirement, Reedy has been released from the remainder of his contract with Republic FC by mutual consent of the club and player.

Reedy notes in his farewell, "The boots may be hung up, but the friendships, lessons, and memories will stay with me forever. Thank you to everyone who's been a part of my journey. Here's to the next chapter."

"We want to congratulate Pierre on a distinguished professional career and thank him for his contributions to our club this season. He has approached every day with professionalism and standout character, and we are grateful that he will forever be a part of the Indomitable Family," said Republic FC President and General Manager Tim Holt. "Pierre has an enormously bright post-playing career ahead of him and we'll be cheering him on as he begins this next chapter of his life."

Reedy joined Republic FC in December 2025 after two seasons with USL League One club Spokane Velocity, where he

helped the expansion team reach back-to-back appearances in the league Final. Across all competitions, he recorded 35 appearances, four goals and five assists for Spokane. He also previously featured in USL Championship for Charleston Battery in 2023 and helped the Eastern Conference team close out the year in strong form to claim its first-ever Eastern Conference Championship.

Reedy's career also includes stints with Real Salt Lake (MLS), Real Monarchs (MLS NEXT Pro) and Dundee FC (Scottish Championship). Across all competitions, he has recorded 75 appearances, four goals and six assists in his professional career. After missing much of the season due to a preseason injury, he made his Republic FC debut on June 6 and helped the club claim two points in USL Cup.

After coming up through the New York Red Bulls Academy, Reedy became a three-year captain at Penn State, where he earned five All-American selections. In 2021, he was awarded the Big Ten Medal of Honor, one of the most prestigious student-athlete awards in the country. While in college, he also featured for USL League Two side Reading United FC and helped them reach the 2018 National Championship Final. ★

Women's Basketball Welcomes Erica Adams

UC Davis Athletics News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - As UC Davis women's basketball prepares for its transition to the Mountain West Conference, head coach Jennifer Gross has strengthened her staff with the hiring of former Division I student-athlete Erica Adams as an assistant coach.

"We're thrilled to welcome Erica to our Aggie family!" said head coach Jennifer Gross. "From the moment we began getting to know her, it was clear that she would be a perfect fit for our staff and culture. Erica's positivity, enthusiasm and authentic approach to building relationships make her a tremendous addition to our program. She has a natural gift for connecting with people, and we're excited for the impact she'll have on our student-athletes, alumni and the entire UC Davis community."

A Bay Area native from Oakland, Adams is already familiar with the Aggies after competing against UC Davis during her collegiate career at CSUN from 2023-25. As a senior, she appeared in two contests against the Aggies while also earning numerous academic honors, including recognition on the 2024 Dean's List, selection to the 2024-25 Big West Academic All-Conference Team, placement on the Big West Commissioner's Honor Roll with Highest Honors, and serving as CSUN's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee



Former Division I student-athlete Erica Adams has been hired to join the UC Davis women's basketball team as assistant coach. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

(SAAC) Co-President. Adams graduated in 2025 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

Prior to joining the Matadors, Adams spent three seasons at Pacific. As a freshman in 2020-21, she earned All-West Coast Conference Freshman Team honors after leading the Tigers with a 50 percent three-point field goal percentage.

Following graduation, Adams began her coaching career as a graduate assistant at Concordia University Irvine while pursuing a master's degree in organizational leadership. In her lone season with the Golden Eagles, she helped guide the program to a 14-14 record and a berth in the PacWest Conference Championships.

Before her collegiate career, Adams was a standout student-athlete at California High School in San Ramon. She earned All-League honors in each of her four seasons and was named East Bay Athletic

League MVP in 2020 after helping lead the program to its first league championship. Off the court, Adams gained early coaching experience working with her high school's girls basketball summer league, where she developed a passion for mentorship and leadership.

"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to join head coach Jennifer Gross and the UC Davis women's basketball program," Adams said. "My experiences as a Division I student-athlete and collegiate coach have cultivated a deep passion for mentoring and empowering young women through the game of basketball. Coach Gross has built a championship culture rooted in joy, excellence and meaningful relationships, and I am honored to be part of it. I am excited to get to work, invest in our student-athletes and help continue the tradition of success at UC Davis." ★


Caltrans Receives \$1.4 Million Grant to Improve Highway Safety

Continued from page 1

the key pillars of the Caltrans 2024–2028 Strategic Plan. Caltrans is committed to maintaining and improving the state’s transportation network to make it safer, more

reliable and climate resilient.

For more information about transportation and other infrastructure projects funded with state and federal investments, visit build.ca.gov. ★



★ CALIFORNIA ★

POLICY AND ETHICS

BY JOSH F.W. COOK

New Tech Reactors, Big Stakes: Why California Can’t Afford to Sit Out Nuclear

By Josh Cook

If California is serious about reaching its clean energy goals, nuclear power must be part of the solution. While solar and wind are crucial, they alone cannot keep up with the rapidly growing energy needs driven by electrification, artificial intelligence, and data centers. Nuclear energy can fill this gap.

Today’s small modular reactors are far safer and cleaner than older nuclear plants. They feature passive safety systems, require less land, and are built in factories, making them faster and cheaper to deploy.

Utah has already shown that this is possible. In February, the U.S. military delivered a five-megawatt Valar Atomics reactor to Hill Air Force Base in Emery County. The reactor achieved criticality in June and is expected to generate power by July 4. Meanwhile, Holtec International and Hi Tech Solutions plan to build up to ten small modular reactors at a new nuclear campus in Brigham City. These are not just experiments—Utah is providing a real-world example of how a state can go from announcement to op-

erational reactor in months rather than decades.

The benefits extend far beyond electricity. Clean, reliable energy makes large-scale desalination affordable, turning nuclear power into a solution for water security as well as clean energy. As drought and water quality issues grow across the West, pairing reactors with desalination and water treatment could be a game changer. But here we sit, California still bans construction of new nuclear plants, a policy dating to the 1970s that no longer matches the technology or the moment; the rest of the world kept moving forward.

While we debate (and pay double for electricity), Utah and Nevada are building. The jobs, the manufacturing base, the water solutions, and the energy security that come with small modular reactors will land wherever the plants are built. Think about it - cleaning up environmental hazards and historic screw-ups always requires energy. If California doesn’t lift its ban and start permitting now, we won’t be leading the clean energy transition. We’ll be watching our neighbors lead it for us (and we pay double for electricity). ★

Drones Aid in Fourth of July Fireworks Crackdown

Dixon Police Department News Release

DIXON, CA (MPG) - July 4, Dixon Police Department deployed its Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS), commonly known as a drone, as part of its Fourth of July fireworks enforcement.

The drone team’s primary focus was identifying the people and residences using illegal fireworks and promptly directing patrol officers to respond, confiscate fireworks and issue citations. Under the City’s updated fireworks ordinance, each violation carries a \$1,000 fine, and each firework set off in violation is a separate violation.

Property owners and hosts are also responsible. If illegal fireworks were used on property you own or control, or a party or gathering you were responsible for, you can be cited under the City’s social host ordinance even if you did not

light them yourself.

The drone recorded and documented every violation it observed. If officers were unable to respond to a location during the busiest hours, the documented violation was recorded, and the responsible party will receive a citation the following week. Even if officers didn’t catch you that night, you may still receive a \$1,000 citation.

The Fourth of July is the busiest day of the year for our officers. In addition to the fireworks detail, on-duty staff responded to calls for service across the city, including collisions, driving under the influence, domestic violence and mental health crises. The department also provided public safety for the City’s Independence Day fireworks display at Hall Park.

To report illegal fireworks, call the non-emergency line at 707-678-7080. For emergencies, call 9-1-1. ★



Riley Reviews

“PEACOCK” DELIVERS NEW SHOWS IN SUMMER FOLLOWED BY FALL SEASON

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

“PEACOCK” SUMMER AND FALL PROGRAMMING

Though part of the NBC-Universal universe, Peacock has its own original programming and gets a head start before the fall season with new summer programs. “The Wolves of Real Estate: The Alexander Brothers” is a three-part documentary investigation.

The series looks at how three successful brothers ascended into the elite world of luxury real estate and private security in Miami and New York, all while harboring an extremely dark secret.

The series tracks the rise and fall of real estate moguls Oren, Tal, and Alon Alexander, who exploited their wealth and influence to prey on women and perpetrate a sex trafficking and assault scheme.

Their crimes only came to light when dozens of women came forward, leading to one of the biggest trials of the decade that culminated in federal convictions of the party boys who drugged and raped women.

The psychological thriller “Strung” is a movie featuring Chloe Bailey’s Laila as a violinist taking a high-paying tutoring job for the gifted daughter of an enigmatic family, only to find herself embroiled in a web of family secrets, danger, and psychological torment.

As Laila becomes entangled in the opulent world of the Los Angeles family, unsettling secrets begin to surface, forcing her to question her safety, her dreams, and even her sanity.

In “The Five Star Weekend,” Jennifer Garner’s Hollis Shaw is a famed cook and best-selling author known for her delicious recipes who suffers the unexpected passing of her husband.

Unable to move forward, the death starts to expose the cracks in Hollis’s picture-perfect life – her complicated relationship with her daughter and her growing pursuit of validation from her fans.

Trying to overcome grief and find herself again, Hollis gets the idea of hosting a weekend away at her house on Nantucket with friends from different stages in her life.

Set against a coastal backdrop, the friends will mature in ways they could never imagine as boundaries are pushed and secrets are exposed. The cast includes Regina Hall, Chloe Sevigny, and Timothy Olyphant.

Looking ahead to the fall season with a premiere date in October, “Crystal Lake” is a slasher series developed by Brad Caleb Kane that is based on the “Friday the 13th” film franchise.

It is a prequel to the 1980 film and stars Linda Cardellini in the leading role of Pamela Voorhees, with Callum Vinson as a young Jason Voorhees. ★

The series takes the viewers back to the titular Crystal Lake, where a young boy named Jason Voorhees tragically drowned at summer camp. Cardellini’s Pamela, the mother to Jason, was portrayed by Betsy Palmer in the original 1980 film.

“Friday the 13th” proved to be wildly successful with 12 films, the last one coming in 2009. Jason, of course, was the franchise’s eventual killer, and his hockey mask became one of the most recognizable images in horror films and popular culture.

As a prelude to the original film, “Crystal Lake” has a fresh story to tell, and apparently from the point of the view of the creator, it will be psychological thriller with the DNA of a slasher with probably a lot of ingenious bloody sequences and deaths.

Arriving in November, “The Good Daughter” is a suspenseful thriller wrapped in a deeply emotional story about love, family, and resilience. Sisters Charlotte (Meghann Fahy) and Samatha (Rose Byrne) have spent the last 28 years trying to piece together lives fractured by a single night of violence.

When another attack splinters the small town of Pikeville, Georgia, Charlotte, now a lawyer like her father, is the first witness on the scene and she’s forced to confront her own demons as the case twists through one shocking revelation after another.

Samantha moved to New York to become a corporate lawyer, and then as the new case unfolds, she returns to her hometown as both sisters are pulled back into a web of suppressed memories and secrets.

Also scheduled for November is the series “Dig,” a comedy created by Michael Schur and Amy Poehler and based on the 2023 novel “Excavations” by Kate Myers, who will be an executive producer.

A team of dedicated archaeologists (and less-dedicated college students) spend their summer working on an excavation site in Greece. Their discovery of a rare artifact sends them on the adventure of a lifetime.

When the crew, which includes Poehler and Hugh Laurie as a British professor who loves archeology, uncovers a long-buried secret with the potential to rewrite history, they find themselves at the center of a high-stakes international conspiracy.

At an undetermined time, “Ted: The Animated Series” will be a sequel to the beloved “Ted” films, where Seth MacFarlane reprises his role of the foul-mouthed voice of Ted, the childhood stuffed bear toy of Mark Wahlberg’s John.

Twelve years after the last movie, John and his thunder-buddy Ted are neighbors, both with families of their own and dead-end jobs. These two lovable stoners enable each other’s bad ideas about marriage, parenting, and the challenges of adult life. ★

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What did Praying Mantises Evolve From?

- Tara, 12, Texas



Today’s praying mantises mostly sit upright. They ambush their prey and grab them with raptor-like forelegs. But some mantises (metallic genus, right) still have flattened bodies and roach-like hunting behaviors. ©Larry Clark CC BY-NC, ©dazaoaaaa CC BY-NC





This family tree, or cladogram, shows that mantises and roaches are related. They’re sister groups.

Dear Tara,

When you think of the Jurassic period, you might think of dinosaurs. But all kinds of insects roamed the Earth back then. That includes the ancient relatives of praying mantises.

Some mantises died and fossilized into rock or amber. That preserved them for hundreds of millions of years. Now those fossils help us learn about ancient and modern insects.

That’s what my friend Elizabeth Murray told me. She’s an insect scientist at Washington State University.

She said that scientists also study insect DNA. That gives us clues about how insects changed over time. It helps us map what ancestors different insects have in common.

It turns out mantises share a common ancestor with cockroaches.

“We have evidence that’s come together and shown that cockroaches and mantises are most closely related,” Murray said. “They had a common ancestor. It maybe even looked like a mix of both insects.”

Mantises and roaches have one big trait in common. They build tough egg cases—called oothecae.

To form that egg case, they first make a frothy goo. They lay eggs with a

short egg-laying organ, or ovipositor. They secrete the goo at the same time. Then, the goo hardens. It protects the tiny eggs from danger—like parasites, predators or weather. Some roaches carry their egg cases around to keep them extra safe.

Over millions of years, new traits like egg cases helped different insects survive. They passed those traits on to their babies. A shared trait from a common ancestor is called a synapomorphy.

Mapping shared traits helps scientists build insect family trees. That’s how they figured out that mantises and roaches form a group called Dictyoptera.

Their common ancestor was a roach-like insect. Scientists think it had a long ovipositor and laid individual eggs. It probably didn’t make hard

egg cases.

That adaptation would come later. Over millions of years, roaches and mantises became more and more different from their shared ancestor and each other.

That’s what happened with termites, too. They also belong in Dictyoptera. They’re a kind of specialized, social cockroach. They’ve changed so much that they mostly don’t make egg cases anymore. Just one living termite species still does that.

Figuring out evolutionary relationships based on traits is called cladistics. Keep asking questions, and someday you ter-might become an expert in insect family trees.

Sincerely,
Dr. Universe

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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



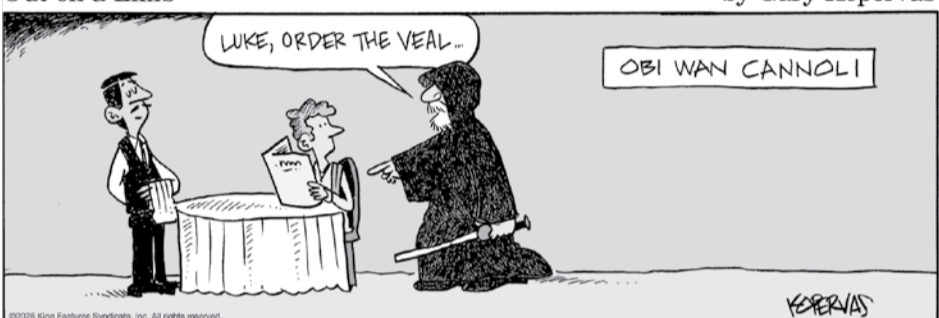
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Pocket is missing; 2. Ear is different; 3. Handle is smaller; 4. Leg is moved; 5. Bush is smaller; 6. Blanket is added to pot; 7. Leg is smaller; 8. Blanket is smaller.

GRIN AND BEAR IT



Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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T	O	N	S	A	P	T	L	E	F	T	S		

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CLUES

- ACROSS
- Anti-seniors sentiment
 - Ingested
 - "Lights out" tune
 - "Sweet" villa (2025)
 - Leo, in Moscow
 - Mood disorder
 - Blooming bulb
 - "It happened on how many nights?" (1934)
 - Follow up on (2 words)
 - "Sleepless where?" (1993)
 - "Certain London Hill (1999)
 - "___ Te Ching"
 - Future J.D.'s hurdle, acr.
 - Chips accompaniment
 - Tibetan monk
 - Celebrity
 - Please do not delay, acr.
 - S.A.T. section
 - Polynesian island country
 - Scarlet O'Hara's home
 - Singing femme fatale
 - Rig or truck
 - Artist's support
 - Italian money, 1861-2002
 - Petri dish gel
 - Like a longer route?
 - Scotia
 - RNs' org.
 - Morally reprehensible
 - Ensign, for short
 - "Not a wedding (1994)
 - "They were reaping benefits (2011)
 - Silly
 - Gone by
 - Generational divide
 - Oodles
 - Each one for himself?
 - Ouzo flavor
 - A whole lot
 - Pertinent
 - Not rights
- DOWN
- Without further ___ pl.
 - Departed
 - Hip bones
 - *Actor Foley of #13
 - Kind of block
 - Healing gel producing plant
 - *How many days to lose a guy? (2003)
 - 0 and 2, e.g.
 - Diplomat's forte
 - ___perspirant
 - One quark plus one antiquark
 - Spilled the beans
 - Dull surfaces
 - Fertile topsoil, pl.
 - Boat propeller
 - Army bathroom
 - "Fifty of these, to jog her memory (2004)
 - Newton of science
 - Dissect
 - *AOL delivery (1998)
 - Org. with a mission
 - Last letter, to Homer
 - *Pretty one (1990)
 - Nigerian money

CROSSWORD													
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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



Darius Acuff Debut

By V.G. Harris

A new era has begun, and Darius Acuff Jr. will be a focal point in that new era.

Beginning with a rousing 79-76 victory on the Fourth of July over the visiting Nets, Darius Acuff Jr. received by far the most rousing applause from a frenetic Golden One crowd poised to see what the future will look like.

A lot of pressure on young Darius produced a shot that wasn't falling, and after one quarter Acuff missed all but one shot from the field and contributed a paltry three points.

But this crowd was inspired, and as it turns out, so was Darius. Putting doubters to rest, Darius showcased excellent ball handling skills throughout and exhibited court management like a veteran.

What impressed me the most as I sat and watched the Kings No. 1 draft choice in action, was his determination to get the job done, and seemingly no number of missed shots was going to deter him.

Playing alongside older and more experienced players, this young 19-year-old looked like a much older player as he simply put his head down and refused to quit.

The Nets led this game nearly the entire way, but with less than three minutes to play, Acuff sank his first NBA 3-pointer, and would prove to be the margin of victory.

Last year's No. 1 draft choice Nique Clifford made the deciding bucket with a "nothing but net" three-pointer on an assist from Acuff, but without a doubt Darius had made his presence felt, and his first NBA action ended with a win.

Criticized to some degree for his lack of defense coming in, Acuff showed a natural ability and even looked comfortable on the defensive end of the court.

Overall, the Kings fans were treated to an NBA debut that few will forget, and in spite of not having his best shooting night, Acuff finished the contest with a game high 25 points.

Not to be lost in all of this drama was the electric play of Dylan Cardwell, who picked up where he left off from last year, and kept the Kings in the game with his high intensity

play. Without question, Cardwell is an intrinsic key into the success of this year's team, and his joy for the game is contagious and enthusiastic.

Stepping from the shadows was the almost forgotten man, 45th in the draft Emanuel Sharp, who added a well received 13 points and played a brand of defense the Sacramento Kings have been hoping to see for ages.

Defense seemed to come naturally for young Sharp, and he seemed to be everywhere at once. At 6-foot-3 and 210 pounds., Emanuel looked every bit of the NBA ready guard he appears to be, and what a welcome sight that is for a team that has struggled with defense like few other teams.

Although Alex Karaban did not see action due to a rolled ankle, both Acuff and Sharp carried the day and opened more than a few eyes, as the Kings did something that the Sacramento fans saw little of a year ago. They actually closed out a game.

The second game of summer league saw the Kings face their archrival, the Golden State Warriors, and although Darius Acuff was given the night off, once again Emanuel Sharp came to play, and just as the Kings had done the night before, they came from behind to post a solid 91-85 victory.

The final game at Golden One will take place on Monday night, and I expect to see Darius Acuff back in action. Look for attendance to be good as Kings fans are feeling the crescendo that is taking place with a bevy of rookies that are vying for a spot of the big squad.

It's hard to wish for more positivity than this young squad has presented to the Sacramento faithful in the first two games, but if you haven't been paying close attention so far, it's not too soon to get excited.

These guys don't like to lose, and that kind of energy is contagious.

Now surround them with the likes of Domantas Sabonis, Keegan Murray and Zach Lavine, and watch the temperature go up.

The real question is how many times will this new unit light the beam this year?

Stay tuned Kings fans, because the fun is just getting started!

All the best!

★

California Voters will Decide 14 Ballot Measures, Billionaire Tax Included. There Could've Been More



By Dan Walters,
CALMatters.org

When California voters in 1978 passed Proposition 13, the iconic property tax limitation, they simultaneously rejected Proposition 8, which had been placed on the ballot by the Legislature as an alternate tax relief measure. While Prop. 13 flatly limited property taxes, Prop. 8 merely empowered the Legislature to lower property taxes on owner-occupied homes.

It may have been the first use of a campaign tactic that later became known as a "countermeasure." Rather than just oppose a measure, a rival interest group could place its own measure on the ballot, thus muddying the waters. Voters would either choose between the two or be confused enough to reject both.

A classic example occurred in 2022 when California's casino-owning Indian tribes proposed a measure to give them a virtual monopoly on sports wagering and digital sports betting companies countered with a measure of their own. Hundreds of millions of dollars were raised for the rival measures and voters rejected both, thus preserving the state's ban on sports wagering.

It also exemplified another aspect of ballot measure politics: the tendency of competing interests

take their issues to the ballot when the Legislature could not resolve them.

Over time, both trends had made the ballot measure process — rather than legislation — California's dominant method of resolving big issues.

Legislative leaders disliked being forced into a reactive role. Thus, in 2016, the Legislature changed the rules of the ballot measure game to reassert its place. It decreed that even after they had qualified for the ballot, sponsors of initiative measures could remove them up to a deadline.

Sponsors of rival qualified measures could negotiate compromises with input from legislative leaders, have them written into law and avoid very expensive pro and con campaigns.

The 14 measures that will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot were going to be as many as 20 before last-minute compromises settled three dueling measure conflicts. One pitted personal injury lawyers against ride-share companies, a second involved hospital executives and a health care union, and the third dealt with vote minimums for local taxes.

Whether the compromises make policy sense or not, contending parties got enough out of them to warrant dropping their ballot measures.

However, the most prominent ballot measure conflict — over whether California should impose a 5% wealth tax on billionaires — defied resolution. The measure, sponsored by the SEIU healthcare workers union, will be Proposition 40 and will compete with two countermeasures sponsored by billionaire Sergey

Brin and other Prop. 40 foes, Proposition 41 and Proposition 42.

They could, if passed with higher vote counts, kneecap the wealth tax.

At one point the wealth tax advocates offered to reduce its bite to 2% as a compromise, but made no headway with opponents, most prominently Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Another tax measure, sponsored by the California Teachers Association, would make permanent a temporary surtax on high-income taxpayers first enacted in 2012 — but it could get caught in the shootout over Prop. 40. Democratic legislative leaders gave it some protection with a last-minute decree that it would be appear on the ballot as Proposition 3. Thus voters will deal with it before confronting Props. 40, 41 and 42 much further down the ballot.

Given its high stakes and the attention it is getting in national media, the wealth tax is destined to be not only the single most controversial ballot measure this year but probably have the most expensive dueling campaigns, possibly setting a record.

At a webinar on Tuesday covering the array of ballot measures voters will face in November, campaign consultant Tino Rossi said "the pace car (for spending) is the billionaire tax."

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

Social Security Matters

Why Doesn't My Social Security Record Show All My Military Earnings?



By Russell Gloor,
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: When I look at my earnings on my Social Security account, I see that in 1955 and 1956 have no earnings. I was in the U.S. Navy as a first officer and have my DD-214 paperwork which shows my military service from Oct. 1954-Oct. 1958. My Social Security earnings record shows that I had earnings in 1954, 1957, and 1958 but doesn't show that I was paid in 1955 or 1956. Shouldn't I have received Social Security credit for all my service years? **Signed: An Older Veteran**

Dear Older Veteran: First, I want to thank you for your military service. Whether your earnings while in the military would provide you with any additional Social Security benefit depends on your career earnings after leaving military service. Here's why:

Your monthly Social Security (SS) benefit is based upon the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime (with earlier years adjusted for inflation). From those highest earning 35 years, SS develops your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings (your lifetime

"AIME") which is the basis of the SS benefit you get if you claim for benefits to start at your full retirement age (FRA). So, if - after you completed your military service - you had at least 35 years of other employment where you earned more money than you did while serving, then your military pay won't affect your Social Security benefit.

FYI, Social Security payroll tax has been withheld from military pay since 1957, which is why your SS earnings record shows your military pay only for 1957 and 1958. Your SS record wouldn't show military pay prior to 1957 because you didn't contribute to SS from your military pay during those years. The earnings you see in your SS earnings record for 1954 are likely from non-military employment prior to starting active duty in October 1954.

SS does provide older veterans with "special extra credits for military service," but those credits are only a supplemental earnings amount added to your military pay record during the years you served. It is not a bonus amount added to your monthly Social Security payment; rather it is only an amount added to your military pay record used when calculating your Social Security benefit. For those who served prior to 1957, Social Security would have no record of your military earnings during those early service years. But when you claimed Social Security later in life, they would have asked if you served in

the military and given you "special extra credit" in the form of presumed earnings for your service years. They likely asked for a copy of your DD-214 and would have added \$160 to your military earnings record for each active-duty month from October 1954 through December 1956, and additional earnings credits for 1957 and 1958.

But that doesn't mean you get a special Social Security bonus for your military service. If you have at least 35 years of civilian employment after serving in the Navy, your service years would only affect your SS benefit if those military service years were among the highest paying 35 years over your entire lifetime. Click here to read more on this topic. And, again, please accept our appreciation for your service to our country.

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Trump's Three Retreats

Last month, the Department of Justice settled Donald Trump's \$10 billion suit against the IRS over the leak of his tax returns. The department agreed to create a \$1.8 billion fund for the compensation of victims of Democratic lawfare, a slush fund for his allies, presumably including Jan. 6 rioters. Faced with adverse legal rulings and opposition in the Senate, the administration abandoned the scheme that it had initially touted as a means to "right the wrongs that were previously done while ensuring this never happens again."

Then, of course, Trump signed a ceasefire with Iran that wasn't close to the "unconditional surrender" that he had once demanded. The 14-point agreement included more U.S. than Iranian concessions, and Trump admitted that the Iranian closure of the Strait of Hormuz had forced his hand.

TITLE: None of these were incidental initiatives. They all involved core commitments of this president -- to mass deportation, to turning on its head the lawfare campaign against him and to denying the Iranian regime a nuclear weapon.

They were also overreaches that displayed a heedlessness born of hubris. Trump had already driven down overall migration when he surged into Minneapolis; already pardoned the Jan. 6 rioters when his DOJ created the weaponization fund; and already struck a punishing blow against the Iranian nuclear program via Midnight Hammer when he launched Operation Epic Fury.

Trump isn't one for incremental progress toward an objective. He prefers the grand gesture and big gamble. He's drawn to the bridge too far when a drive a couple of blocks down the street would do just fine.

The worry about Trump was that he'd be unconstrained in his second term, and indeed, he's fashioned a team that is loath to tell him "no." But he's subject to checks from the other branches of government and, even more, from routine political pressures.

There was nothing that formally compelled him to remove DHS forces from Minneapolis or to relieve the military pressure on Iran, both of which were within his legitimate powers. It was the poor polling and the potential damage to Republican prospects in the midterms that obliged Trump to declare victory and go home.

The president may enjoy thinking of how he can do things that a Roman emperor never would have imagined, yet Marcus Aurelius wasn't hypersensitive to how stories were playing in the mass media, or to the latest public-opinion surveys.

As the creature of a democratic republic, Trump inherently is mindful of those considerations, which is one reason that it's been a year of retreats. Trump, surely, doesn't think of it that way. As Gen. Oliver Smith put it during the Korean War, he's merely attacking in a different direction -- although not the one he'd intended.

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

Dixon Lights It Up!

Continued from page 1
 coincided with America250, the nationwide commemoration of the country's heritage. According to America250.org, the anniversary marks 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence and provides an opportunity to reflect on the nation's history, recognize the contributions of Americans and consider the country's future.

Dixon's own history reflects many of those contributions.

According to the Dixon Historical Society, the Dixon May Fair began in 1875 and remains the longest-running parade in California. In 1911, members of the Dixon Women's



Live music played from 6 to 9 p.m., with Smokehouse Reunion performing for attendees. Photo by Nicolas Brown

Improvement Club advocated establishing a public library. Their efforts helped secure a \$10,000 Carnegie grant, while

Carolyn Schulze donated the land that included the Women's Improvement Club Park. The library was constructed between

1911 and 1912, making Dixon the first city in Solano County to establish its own public library. The community also played

a role in the development of the California Pacific Railroad, which helped transform transportation throughout the region by improving the movement of passengers and agricultural products, including crops, livestock and meat.

The annual Fourth of July celebration continued a long-standing community tradition by bringing residents together for recreation, music and fireworks while recognizing both the nation's milestone anniversary and Dixon's place in California history.

For more information, visit City of Dixon, CA on Facebook or call 707-678-7000. ★

Israel 'Joe' Guzman Named 2026 Solano County American Dream Recipient

Office of Mike Thompson
 News Release

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG)

- June 28, Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-04) recognized Israel "Joe" Guzman as the 2026 American Dream Award recipient for Solano County. Thompson presents the American Dream Award to residents of California's Fourth District who have come to the United States and made outstanding contributions to our communities.

"Immigrants are our neighbors and colleagues, soldiers and first responders, doctors and lawyers, farmers, entrepreneurs, teachers and so much more. Our nation would not be the powerhouse of the world without their contributions to our

country's history, culture and economy. This is evidenced by Mr. Guzman's work in our community," said Thompson. "Through Mr. Guzman's work as an entrepreneur, he has contributed meaningfully to making our community a better place. I am honored to recognize him as this year's Solano County American Dream Award recipient."

Guzman was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. He attended high school in Dixon, where he was part of the migrant camp program. Mr. Guzman's family traveled seasonally to the United States during the farming and harvesting seasons, giving him firsthand experience with the dedication and sacrifice required



June 28, Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-04) recognized Israel "Joe" Guzman (center) as the 2026 American Dream Award recipient for Solano County. Photo courtesy of Office of Mike Thompson

of migrant agricultural workers.

Guzman is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Alliance Tank Lines, a premier fuel-hauling

company headquartered in Dixon. Since establishing the company in 2002, Guzman has built Alliance Tank Lines into a respected transportation business known for its commitment to safety, reliability and service. From humble beginnings to leading a successful trucking company, Guzman's journey exemplifies determination, entrepreneurial spirit and a

deep appreciation for family, community and hard work.

Guzman has consistently demonstrated his commitment to our community through generous donations and sponsorships supporting local youth sports. He has also contributed to charitable efforts through his involvement with the J.A. Taylor Foundation, which

provides education and development opportunities for youth. Guzman is a leader in our community, known for his kindness, generosity and strong work ethic. Guzman is always willing to lend a helping hand to those in need and takes pride in mentoring others, sharing his knowledge and experience.

Congressman Mike Thompson's American Dream Award honors immigrants who have excelled professionally in entrepreneurship and innovation, in the arts and culture, or in community service.

The full list of 2026 American Dream Award recipients for California's Fourth District includes Dirk Slooten (Lake County), Bernie Narvaez (Napa County), Israel "Joe" Guzman (Solano County), Grace Cheung-Schulman (Sonoma County) and Sylvina Frausto (Yolo County). ★

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Commentary: Regulatory Costs Put Napa County Wine Future at Risk

A recent study put a price tag on the cost to Napa County winegrape growers of complying with government regulations, with growers saying the costs are pushing them to the brink. The study, titled "Regulatory Cost of Production in Napa County Vineyards," found that the cost of regulatory compliance last year for winegrape growers in the region was between 8% and 12% of production costs. "At first glance, these numbers might not seem catastrophic when expressed as a percentage," sixth generation Napa County winegrape grower Johnnie White said in an Ag Alert® commentary. "But percentages obscure reality. Napa Valley winegrape growers are already operating within increasingly narrow margins. Wine consumption has declined, inventories remain high, prices are under pressure, and contracts are harder to secure. In that context, an additional 8% to 12% in fixed costs can determine whether a vineyard survives another season."

Fourth of July Cookout Costs Reflect Inflation

Californians celebrating the Fourth of July holiday will continue to see higher prices at the grocery store, the California Farm Bureau has found. A classic Independence Day cookout for 10 people will cost \$91.80, or about \$9.18 per person, well above the national average of \$73.82, or about \$7.38 per person, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation's 2026 Summer Cookout Cost Survey. For Californians, this year's cost is an increase of \$1.74, or 2%, from 2025, while nationally the cost went up \$2.90, or 4%. The basket includes summer cookout staples such as cheeseburgers, chicken breasts, pork chops, potato chips, pork and beans, fresh strawberries, homemade potato salad ingredients, fresh-squeezed lemonade

ingredients, chocolate chip cookies and ice cream. While this year's total is the highest since AFBF began conducting the summer cookout survey in 2016, the increase closely reflects broader inflation. The cost of the cookout basket rose about 4%, while overall inflation in the United States increased 4.2% over the 12 months ending in May. That means families are seeing higher prices at the grocery store, but this year's cookout cost is generally moving in line with the broader economy. In other words, while families pay more at checkout, the purchasing-power cost of the basket is nearly flat from last year.

H-2A Temporary Farmworkers Program Usage Continues To Accelerate

The number of foreign guestworkers coming to work on U.S. farms has increased significantly this year, according to federal data. H-2A temporary agricultural employment position certifications have grown by more than 25% since fiscal year 2021, rising from 317,619 to 398,258 in fiscal year 2025. Fiscal year 2026 is on pace to set a new program record, with more than a quarter of a million positions already certified in the first half of the current fiscal year—outpacing the first half of fiscal year 2025 by 17% and the first half of fiscal year 2024 by more than 19%. Florida, Georgia and Washington lead the country in certifications, combining for more than a quarter of all positions certified in the first half of fiscal year 2026. Notably, Washington has overtaken California for third place in certifications for the first half of the year, a reversal of the states' standing in recent full-year totals. California's relative H-2A use has declined for three consecutive years, a trend that may reflect that state's evolving regulatory environment and shifts in agricultural production mix, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation. ★