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JULY 24, 2026

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Helping Children to Deal with Grief



Some children grieve through music, so the Dougy Center has a room of musical instruments.

Story and photos
by Stephen B. Clazie

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Olivia Chan loved unicorns. She loved life and enjoyed interacting with other children. She would have loved visiting The Olivia Chan Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded by her parents, Reina and Mel, along with their family, to create a safe environment where children and families feel supported and understood while navigating grief.

Olivia Chan Foundation’s T-shirts have Olivia’s memorable quote: “I wish I was a grownup, and I wish I was a unicorn.” If she was here now, she would be “Wishing for a House with Three Unicorns.”

Reina explained, “After discovering the Dougy Center, Mel and I flew to Portland, Oregon, to receive training. They’re an amazing organization and have been a tremendous source of support for us.”

Reina and Mel’s goal is to bring the Dougy Center model to Sacramento

by training team members and volunteers in its peer-support approach.

The Dougy Center, a nonprofit organization based in Portland, Oregon, offers support groups and services for grieving children, teens, young adults and their families. Its peer-support model was the first program of its kind in the United States. Today, the organization serves approximately 400 children and 250 adults from the Portland metropolitan area each month, free of charge.

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Families Mark Women's Empowerment's 25th



Dozens of graduates from Sacramento nonprofit Women's Empowerment gathered at William Land Park in June to celebrate the nonprofit's 25th anniversary. Photo courtesy of Women's Empowerment

Women's Empowerment
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Amidst the smell of barbecue and the squeals of children laughing, dozens of Sacramento women who have risen from homelessness gathered with their children and reunited with classmates at William Land Park on June 27 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Sacramento nonprofit Women's Empowerment.

The celebration included a barbecue lunch, face painting and yard games for children.

Since 2001, more than 2,000 women and their 4,000 children have graduated from the comprehensive program designed specifically to help women break the generational cycle of homelessness for themselves and their children.

The initial nine-week employment-readiness and empowerment program includes transportation

assistance, onsite childcare, classes, and one-on-one work with a social worker, housing navigator, job developer and more.

Each woman who graduates from the initial program can return for services at any point, including paid job training and transitional housing. Women's Empowerment is funded through private donations from the community and grants. To learn more and make a donation: womens-empowerment.org. ★

Engaging with City Meetings Easier with New Hub



The Public Participation Hub was developed with accessibility as a priority. Photo courtesy of City of Sacramento

City of Sacramento
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Participating in Sacramento City Council and City Commission meetings is now easier with the launch of the city's new Public Participation Hub, a centralized online resource that gives residents multiple ways to stay informed and participate in local government.

The new hub brings together meeting agendas, livestreams, written public comments, speaker requests and accessibility resources into one easy-to-use platform. Whether residents want to attend a meeting in person, watch online or provide feedback from home, the hub offers a single destination to connect with city government.

“The Public Participation Hub reflects our commitment to making local government more accessible, transparent and easier to navigate,” Assistant City Clerk Wendy Klock-Johnson said. “Whether someone is attending their first meeting or has participated for years, these new tools make it easier for every resident to engage in the decisions that shape our community.”

The Public Participation Hub is available at publiccomment.cityofsacramento.gov.

More Ways to Participate

Residents can:

Watch City Council and City Commission meetings live or on demand.

Submit written comments on agenda items online.

Request to speak using a digital speaker slip.

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Learn about participation options before attending a meeting.

Meeting agendas include links for submitting written comments beginning when an agenda is published. Comments remain open

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Community Invited to Celebrate California Admission Day



Commemorate this special date for the Golden State with free cake and ice cream! Photo courtesy of the California State Capitol Volunteer Association

California State Capitol Volunteer Association News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Visitors to the California State Capitol in downtown Sacramento on California Admission Day, Wednesday, Sept. 9, are in for a special treat. The California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association invites the community to celebrate California's 176th birthday, which is known as Admission Day. California entered the Union on Sept. 9, 1850, and became the 31st state.

The community is invited to commemorate this special date for the Golden State with free cake and ice cream (while supplies last), served by volunteers dressed in historic attire.

Attendees will also enjoy entertaining

live music performed by the Capitol's ukelele group playing songs from the 1850s. The fun, free and family-friendly event runs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and takes place on the west steps of the State Capitol Building.

The California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association (CSCMVA) is a volunteer cooperating association partnering with the California State Parks to promote educational and interpretive activities at the California State Capitol Museum. Information about volunteering is available at www.capitolmuseum.ca.gov/about/volunteer.

And, for more information about the California State Capitol Museum, call 916-324-0333 or visit capitolmuseum.ca.gov. ★

Wheelchairs, Medical Equipment for Veterans

By Abbey Wicks

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Veterans of All Wars in West Sacramento have a growing supply of medical equipment including wheelchairs, crutches and walkers available to veterans and their families across the greater Sacramento region.

The nonprofit specializes in getting medical equipment to veterans in need. The club is not affiliated with Veterans of Foreign Wars, according to Carl Zagar, treasurer. The group offers services to any veterans, not just those who served in combat.

Their stock of medical equipment is piling up in their West Sacramento storage facility, Zagar said. The club's current supply also includes a limited number of electric carts.

Interested individuals can contact Zegar at zegarcarl@gmail.com and indicate what type of equipment they are interested in. Equipment can be picked up from the group's West Sacramento location; deliveries are possible if necessary.

Donations of medical



Veterans of All Wars have a growing supply of medical equipment available for veterans in the greater Sacramento region. Photo courtesy of Carl Zagar

equipment are accepted year-round. Monetary donations to the Veterans of All Wars can be mailed to PO Box 53, West Sacramento, CA 95691. ★

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Strauss Festival Presents ‘Vienna Once More’

By Beth Hedlund and Margie Jones
Strauss Board Co-Chairs

ELK GROVE, CA (MPG) - The Strauss festival returns to its roots in Vienna with the 2026 theme “Vienna Once More.” A young couple meets in Vienna during Oktoberfest, falls in love and marries. The stage transforms in the second act to a Christmas Market where the couple returns to Vienna, this time with their family in tow, to share the magic of Vienna with their children.

Classical Strauss music will be played by the 40-piece Camellia Symphony Orchestra and showcased in a variety of dances: polka, quadrille and waltz. Gorgeous costumes and amazing stage settings bring the story all together for guests to enjoy. A volunteer cast of 80 features dancers ages 4 to 78 for four nights, July 23 to 26, in Elk Grove Park at 9950 Elk Grove-Florin Road.

Cast members include the Little’s, Beginning Polka, Polka, Quadrille and Waltz groups, each with their own unique style of dance. Strauss’ famous ending waltz of the performance, The Blue Danube, will round out the show with a spectacular display of fireworks at the show’s conclusion each evening! It is exciting to have a number of first-time dancers to Strauss, as well as the veteran dancers that have been with Strauss for 20-plus years. Such an incredible legacy of volunteers and fans the Strauss festival has developed over the past almost four decades!!



The annual Strauss Festival theme this year is “Vienna Once More,” bringing back to Elk Grove Park’s outdoor amphitheater from July 23 to 26 a free performance of classical Strauss music showcased in a variety of dances including polka, quadrille and waltz. Photo courtesy of Strauss Festival

Plan to have refreshments at the Park as there will be food trucks: The Greek, Cowtown Creamery, Costa’s, Carpenter Coffee, Kona Ice, The Fry Boys, Francisco Serona Taco, and hot dogs by Elk Grove Rotary, just to name a few.

A variety of Bogle wines will be available for purchase, as well as a variety of beers and sparkling wines. Check out the Strauss Merchandise Booth for 2026 Strauss shirts, stickers, mini flashlights and other Strauss merchandise. The Strauss History Booth will be open and have on display previous festival posters and memorabilia from the last 37+ years.

There are a number of seating options; blanket seating, bleachers seating and seating for those who need ADA accommodations. Blanket seating includes an area for your blanket and/or chairs which can be put down beginning at 10 a.m. on the morning of the show you wish to see. The bleacher



The 37th Strauss Festival “Vienna Once More” runs for four nights, July 23 to 26, with the promenade of dancers beginning at 7:30 p.m. At 8:15 p.m., the show begins and concludes each evening around 10 p.m. Courtesy photo

seating is available on a first-come basis. ADA seating is available and needs to be reserved ahead of time with a limited number of seats available for each performance. (For complete details on seating options, see www.strauss-festival.com, email info@straussfestival.com or call 916-714-2527.

“Vienna Once More”

runs for four nights, July 23 to 26 with the promenade of dancers beginning at 7:30 p.m. At 8:15 p.m., the show begins and concludes each evening around 10 p.m.

For the 37th year, Strauss continues to honor the wishes of Iris Zimbelman, that the Strauss Festival should be free to all who wish to attend. Even if it

is hot during the day, by the time the show begins at 8:15 p.m., it is beautiful in the park. In fact, we encourage patrons to bring a sweater as the Delta Breeze tends to kick up in the evening!

Note that there is a small parking charge of \$10 per car at the park which goes directly to the Strauss Festival.

Join us for a nostalgic evening with this 37th year of an enchanting, full stage production, “Vienna Once More.” The Strauss Festival is an Elk Grove “Gem” of which we are extremely proud!

Share the Joy of Reading at the Strauss Festival Book Drive

The Strauss Festival of Elk Grove is inviting the community to help spread the love of reading through a special Book Drive benefiting Elk Grove Reads, a free bookstore operated out of the Elk Grove Food Bank.

Festival guests are encouraged to bring new or gently used books to the festival each evening, July 23 to 26. Every book donated earns an entry into that night’s raffle for exclusive Strauss Festival merchandise.

Winners will be drawn nightly, giving attendees multiple chances to take home fun festival prizes while supporting two outstanding local organizations.

Your book donations will help provide reading opportunities for children and families throughout our community while also supporting EG Reads and the Elk Grove Food Bank’s efforts to serve those in need.

Whether it’s a favorite children’s story, an inspiring novel, or an educational book in great condition, your donation can make a lasting difference. Join us at the Strauss Festival and help turn the page toward a brighter future; one book at a time!

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Water District Opens Vacant Buildings for Rare Firefighter Training Before Demolition



Metro Fire's partnership with SSWD is one of the most critical relationships, working together to protect the community.

Sacramento Suburban Water District News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Before demolishing two vacant District-owned buildings, Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) partnered with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Metro Fire) to transform the site into a unique hands-on training environment for firefighters.

The buildings provided Metro Fire crews with the opportunity to practice critical emergency response skills in actual structures. Over multiple training sessions, firefighters conducted search-and-rescue operations in smoke-filled conditions, practiced forcible entry through security bars, performed rooftop ventilation cuts, established water supplies from nearby fire hydrants and simulated fire

suppression under realistic conditions.

Metro Fire first approached SSWD in March, seeking permission to use the boarded-up site for non-destructive structure-fire drills. SSWD agreed and coordinated site access, hydrant availability, security and staff support. Metro Fire conducted an initial multi-company drill in April. Both agencies then began planning more advanced, destructive training once asbestos abatement was complete and the buildings were cleared for use.

“Our partnership with Metro Fire is one of our critical relationships,” said SSWD General Manager Dan York. “SSWD works with Metro Fire to maintain and provide water service to over 6,500 fire hydrants throughout our district. Being able to utilize these buildings to help in their training is

another way we are working together to protect our community.”

By making the property available to Metro Fire, SSWD helped firefighters gain experience in real-world incidents and put a public asset to productive community use.

“Training in acquired structures gives our firefighters the opportunity to practice in conditions that closely resemble actual emergencies,” said Metro Fire Public Information Officer Captain Mark Nunez. “Every realistic training opportunity helps crews sharpen the skills they’ll rely on when someone calls 911.”

Fire crews practiced search-and-rescue operations in smoke-filled conditions, forcible entry through security bars, roof operations, including vertical ventilation cuts, door breaches and extinguishing fires under simulated fire



Fire crews practiced search-and-rescue operations in smoke-filled conditions, forcible entry through security bars, roof operations, including vertical ventilation cuts, door breaches and extinguishing fires under simulated fire conditions. Photos courtesy of Mer Carty/Sacramento Suburban Water District

conditions. The training provided fire crews with a rare opportunity to practice these realistic skills and techniques under conditions similar to those when a building is on fire.

SSWD’s partnership with Metro Fire demonstrates how local public agencies work closely to strengthen emergency preparedness and protect the communities they serve, and how even an old, used asset can be put to productive use before demolition. ★



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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

A Stellar Summer League

By V.G. Harris

Well, Kings fans, the 2026 NBA summer league is officially over, and the No. 1 draft choice of the Golden State Warriors, Yaxel Lendeborg, shined as he led the Warriors to the 2026 championship over the Memphis Grizzlies.

Lendeborg was only the second player to ever play in an NCAA championship and an NBA summer league championship in the same year. The other player? None other than Davion Mitchell in 2021.

Still a sore spot with me, trading Davion away for basically nothing will go down as one of the dumbest moves the Sacramento Kings have ever made.

But on to the more positive parts of this year’s summer league.

The Sacramento Kings got what they were hoping for and so did the Kings faithful. Coming out of the gate strong in the friendly confines of Golden One Arena, Sacramento treated their fans to back-to-back victories and showcased their No. 1 draft choice Daius Acuff jr.

Darius did not disappoint, averaging 19 points and 4.6 assists throughout, and although his field goal percentage of 35% was less than desirable, Darius comported himself admirably, and considering the hype and his age, I give Darius a B++ for his summer league effort.

At only 19 years of age, Darius showed up and gave the Sacramento fans plenty to cheer for, and without a doubt Golden One will be filled to the brim with the start of the preseason to see what this young baller can bring to this young team.

Not to be overlooked are three players that stood out and surprised many fans. Drafted late in the first round, Emanuel Sharp showed Kings fans why GM Scott Perry traded down to snatch this young guard who shined in every aspect on both ends of the floor.

Sharp scored 15.7 points per contest, boasting 2.6 steals and three rebounds, while looking more like an NBA veteran than the rookie he is. Look for Sharp to make a significant contribution to the full squad in the upcoming season.

Likewise, newcomer Jonathan Mogbo made a splash as he seemed to be all over the court and gave the Kings a much-needed defensive

effort in the paint. At six-foot-nine and 225 pounds, Mogbo is a great complement to crowd favorite Dylan Cardwell, and suddenly an area of great concern appears to be getting noticeably better.

The Kings are looking balanced for the first time in memory, as their once weak backcourt is showing up and giving fans a real reason for optimism.

One player that every Kings fan should be watching with real excitement is rookie Marquel Sutton who at six-foot-nine and 225 pounds came out of nowhere to literally steal the show. Marquel showed an aptitude for not only rebounding and low post scoring but had no problems hoisting the threes with regularity.

Will Dylan take a big step forward this year and not only help Domantas Sabonis on the boards but add to the scoring column as well?

Dylan has had his troubles scoring down low and hasn’t much of a midrange game, but can he improve in this area and learn to shoot free throws? He needs to, and as much as he represents a crowd favorite, he has the ability to energize the team as well with his tenacious defense and crowd-pleasing enthusiasm.

Fans buy tickets to see players like Cardwell perform, but the name of the game is “getting better.”

The same is true for Keegan Murray who is about to embark on his fifth NBA season, and after a tepid season last year when he was rarely on the court due to injuries, Keegan needs to find his stroke and become the player the Kings have always believed he can be.

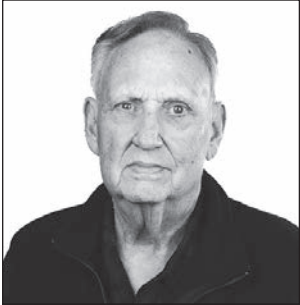
Everyone is rooting for Keegan, but 2026-27 becomes a critical time for Keegan to demonstrate why he was a first round draft pick, and another season like the last one will likely end his time in Sacramento.

Have heart Kings fans and get ready to do some significant hand clapping because there is reason to celebrate and we’re just getting started.

What will a healthy Sacramento Kings team look like and can some of the young veterans up their game. That’s why we buy tickets, and although the pundits are already predicting a less than stellar year for Sacramento, I remain the eternal optimist.

All the best! ★

Does Crowning California’s Governor the Education Czar Mean Academic Results Will Improve?



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

In late June, after only a few minutes of discussion, both houses of the Legislature completely overhauled how California manages the nation’s largest public school system and its nearly 6 million students.

The votes for Assembly Bill 181 — 21-4 in the Senate and 52-4 in the Assembly — reflected a bipartisan consensus, rare for major issues, that the system has been failing California’s children. The votes were based on an implicit, perhaps even desperate, hope that streamlining administration might raise the state’s mediocre levels of academic achievement.

The measure demotes the elected state superintendent of schools from the head of the state Department of Education to a member of the state school board and replaces the superintendent with an “education commissioner” appointed by the governor.

Assemblywoman Darshana Patel, a San Diego Democrat, research scientist and local school board member, cogently expressed that hope during the Assembly’s brief floor debate.

“We can’t keep doing the same thing and expect different outcomes for our students, our schools and our communities. They are the ones who are the real victims of this misalignment of our systems and structures,” she said,

adding, “The proposal before you today would promote a more coherent policy making. The change will allow policy makers and the public to hold the governor accountable for educational outcomes.”

The last sentence of her remarks is the key element. While the governor has always been an important member of California’s complex education leadership structure, the multitude of other participants has made it easy to pass the buck when academic test results and other measures expose academic shortcomings.

Suddenly undoing many decades of managerial status quo, as first proposed in Gov. Gavin Newsom’s state of the state address last January, is a remarkable feat unto itself. Doing so over the opposition of the California Teachers Association elevates it to a minor political miracle.

“The proposal would divert attention away from the real needs of students and schools by introducing a significant governance change that is both unnecessary and counterproductive,” the powerful union wrote in a statement before AB 181’s approval. “This proposal does nothing to improve student outcomes or strengthen public education.”

For decades, the teachers association and other education unions have easily gotten their favored candidates for state superintendent elected. And those chosen officials have faithfully echoed the unions’ position that the key to increasing outcomes is allocating more money.

School funding has increased sharply since the turn of the century, but test scores have not followed suit. Some categories, such as elementary school reading levels, remain embarrassingly low.

The first hint that change was on the table came late last year, when Policy Analysis for California Education, a consortium of education faculty at five major universities, issued a lengthy critique of the current system. The report said California’s complicated mélange of state and local authority “often results in overlapping responsibilities, fragmented authority, and challenges in ensuring streamlined decision-making.”

By design, the consortium’s recommendations closely resembled Newsom’s proposal and the final legislation.

The obvious question is if streamlining education governance and making the governor accountable, at least on paper, for academic outcomes will merely rearrange chairs on a sinking ship, or actually generate more achievement for the \$25,000-plus that the new state budget will be spending on each public school student.

California’s education establishment has been reluctant to change its mantra that more money is needed to boost results and equally reluctant to embrace improvements in instructional techniques, such as using phonics to upgrade elementary reading ability.

The onus will be on Newsom’s successor, most likely Xavier Becerra, to become the new schools sheriff in town.

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

Can my spouse file at 63 and then get half of mine when I later claim?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: My spouse is 63 and I am 65. I am planning to take my Social Security benefits at age 70. Can my lower earning spouse take his own benefits now, and then - when I take my full benefits at age 70, can he then file for 50% of mine instead of the lower benefit he is getting because he claimed at age 63? **Signed: Higher Earning Spouse**

Dear Higher Earning Spouse: Yes, your lower-earning spouse can take his benefits based on his personal lifetime earnings record at any time (i.e., age 63) and, when you later claim your own SS at 70, your spouse will be evaluated to determine whether he is eligible for a “spousal boost” based on your Social Security record. But to be sure you are clear, if you claim at age 70, your spouse will not get 50% of your age 70 benefit amount.

Spousal benefits are always determined by comparing each partners’

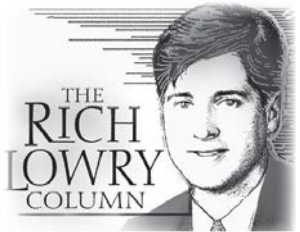
full retirement age (FRA) entitlement and, if your spouse’s FRA entitlement is less than half of your FRA entitlement, your spouse will get a “spousal boost” to bring his monthly SS retirement payment up to what he is entitled to as your spouse. The amount of the “spousal boost” would be the difference between his FRA entitlement and 50% of your FRA entitlement, which would be added to his own (age 63) SS retirement amount. And that means that his total benefit amount would be less than half of your age 70 amount (less also than 50% of your FRA amount, because he claimed at age 63).

One caution for your spouse to be aware of: if he is still working and claims at age 63, he will be subject to Social Security’s Annual Earnings Test (AET), which limits how much he can earn before SS takes away some benefits. The earnings limit for 2026 is \$24,480 (changes annually) and if that is exceeded, SS will take back \$1 of benefits for every \$2 he is over the limit. FYI, Social Security will “take back” by withholding future benefit payments, so he will not get his benefits for some months if he exceeds the annual earnings limit. And if the

annual earnings limit is significantly exceeded, your spouse could even be temporarily ineligible to receive SS benefits (until he either earns less or reaches his full retirement age (the earnings limit goes away when FRA is reached)).

The only way your spouse can avoid both a reduced personal benefit and the annual earnings test limitation is to wait until his own full retirement age to claim Social Security. However, if he’s not working full time and needs the Social Security money sooner, then claiming at age 63 may be a good choice. In any case, he won’t get half of your age 70 amount.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. ★



An early period of World War II was known as “the phony war.” What we may be witnessing now in the U.S.-Iran war is the end of a “phony peace.”

The nearly five-month-long conflict has featured a couple of sham cease-fires, each marked by supposed Iranian pledges to reopen the Strait of Hormuz that came to nothing.

With the Iranians firing on shipping in the Strait again, Trump has declared the so-called memorandum of understanding signed about a month ago to be a dead letter. After lifting sanctions on Iranian oil and ending the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports, Trump has reinstituted both. He maintains that the U.S. will control the strait and, at some point, charge a 20% fee on all shipping for our trouble (a bad idea that Trump appears already to have abandoned).

It was clear a couple of days into the war that the Strait of Hormuz had become the key strategic variable and that President Trump wouldn’t easily be able to walk away from the conflict without reopening the strait again.

The MOU was an illusory means of achieving this goal via diplomacy. The problem is that we thought -- or wanted to believe -- that the agreement said the Iranians would allow unobstruct-

Another Sham Deal with Iran Comes Undone

ed passage again, while the Iranians thought -- or wanted to believe -- that it said they would control the strait. That the MOU was subject to these starkly divergent understandings made it a memorandum of obfuscation.

The Iranians, of course, aren’t operating in good faith, but it is a point in their favor that the MOU didn’t simply say, “There shall be freedom of navigation in the strait.” Instead, it talked of how the Iranians would “make arrangements” for ensuring “the safe passage of commercial vessels, with no charge for 60 days only.” In other words, the Iranians held the whip hand in the strait and could charge a fee for transit after a two-month interval. Furthermore, Iran would conduct dialogue with Oman “to define the future administration and maritime services in the Strait of Hormuz.”

Amazingly enough, then, a war that had started with optimistic talk of toppling the Iranian regime was ending with an agreement allowing the Iranians to figure out how to run a waterway vital to the international economy that they hadn’t controlled at the outset of the conflict.

Is it any wonder that the Iranians, who must have been stunned at the success of their gambit in the strait, have been pressing their luck? It must have emboldened them even more to hear Trump say that he was so eager for the MOU be-

cause the economic costs of Iranian disruption of the strait threatened to make him a new Herbert Hoover.

Effectively turning over the control of the strait to the Iranians -- coupled with the inconclusive U.S. war against the Houthis to try to eliminate their threat to shipping in the Red Sea -- would have been a black mark on the Trump administration’s record regarding a long-standing tenet of American grand strategy.

Freedom of navigation has always been considered essential to U.S. national security and a linchpin of global commerce. Trump is right to want to take back the Strait. The question, though, is whether he will be willing to apply enough force and have the staying power to bring a battle for the strait to a successful conclusion. The domestic politics are difficult, given that the American public is not supportive of the war and has now been repeatedly told that it is about to end with a brilliant diplomatic deal.

While we have an enormous firepower advantage, the Iranians have proven that they can disrupt the Strait with threats and a few projectiles. They aren’t going to give up their strategic windfall easily, as two bogus but highly touted peace deals now demonstrate.

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



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ABOUT TOWN

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 scrap-books, news articles, photos and more. Through October.
Details at sachistorymuseum.org.

California Automobile Museum
– Route 66: California Dreamin’: a colorful collection of rare and gorgeous vehicles celebrating the Mother Road

through the lens of 100 years of history.

Sunday Drives: 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 first-hand down the streets of downtown Sacramento.
Details at calautomuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum – Golden Hour Express Train, Wednesday evenings through Aug. 19. Depart from historic Old Sacramento for a scenic, hour-long round-trip journey along the Sacramento River. Relax in the comfort of our first-class, air-conditioned cars or take in the sunset from an open-air gondola; the choice is yours.

With sweeping riverside views, refreshing beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), and a vibrant social atmosphere, it’s the perfect way to toast the evening. Each ticket includes two drink tokens to enjoy during the ride.

The Chinese Railroad Workers’

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

Details at californiarailroad.museum.

Crocker Art Museum – Suzanne Adan, “I’m No Spring Chicken,” through Oct. 11. Adan (born 1946) creates personal universes that combine fantasy, popular culture and autobiography. Approximately 100 of these compelling works, in a variety of media, are included in Suzanne Adan: I’m No Spring Chicken, a retrospective assembled in her 80th year.

A native Californian, Adan was born in Woodland and raised in nearby Yolo. She earned her BA and MA from Sacramento State College in 1969 and 1971, respectively. It was there that she met her husband, sculptor Michael Stevens, and became influenced by instructor Jim Nutt, a member of Chicago’s Hairy Who.

Details at crockerart.org.

SMUD Museum of Science and

Curiosity Laser Concert Series – Bad Bunny (18+ event), Aug. 7-8; Grateful Dead, Sept. 18-19. 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
Greenhaven-Pocket Farmers Market, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays through November: ghpfarmersmarket.com.
Sunday Morning Breakfast, 8:30-11 a.m.; \$15.
Martial Arts, 5 to 6 p.m. Mondays.
Sactown Swings: lessons, 7:15 p.m. Wednesdays, social dance, 8-10 p.m.
Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.com for weekly menu.
Yoga, noon Mondays and 3:30 p.m. Wednesdays.
Karaoke, 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays.
Soulful Fridays, 6 to 10 p.m. ★

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California Museum Welcomes
Clancey as Executive Director

Sacramento International Airport Seeks Public
Input to Shape Next 20 Years of Growth

The California
Museum News
Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California Museum is pleased to announce the appointment of Erin Clancey as the Museum’s new executive director. Clancey, a visionary museum executive with over 25 years of experience shaping major cultural institutions, will assume the role in September 2026. She will be succeeding Amanda Meeker, who recently retired from her 28-year career at the California Museum.

“Erin brings an exceptional depth of knowledge and a genuine passion for making history, art and cultural experiences accessible to all,” said California Museum Board of Trustees Chair, Anne Marie Petrie. “California’s story is unlike any other; it’s one of remarkable diversity, innovation and influence. It deserves someone who understands how to bring that story to life for every visitor, and Erin is that person. We are thrilled to welcome her home to California and confident she is the right person to shape the Museum’s future.”

“I am honored and thrilled for the opportunity



A Davis native, Erin Clancey will be returning home after building a distinguished career in curatorial and exhibitions leadership at institutions across the country. Photo courtesy of The California Museum

to lead the California Museum at such an important moment in its evolution,” said Clancey. “The Museum is in an extraordinary position to continue telling meaningful stories about the people, ideas and movements that have shaped our state. I look forward to working with its talented staff, board, partners and communities across California to broaden access and steward the Museum into its next chapter.”

A Davis native, Clancey will be returning home after building a distinguished career in curatorial and exhibitions leadership at institutions across

the country. Erin currently serves as Associate Vice President of Collections & Exhibits at The National WWII Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she has been based since 2017.

During her tenure, she has led a multidisciplinary team across seven divisions including exhibitions, collections, archives and digital assets and guided the interpretation of collections through tours, programs and exhibitions. Under her leadership, the museum launched a comprehensive digital collections platform that made the museum’s holdings publicly accessible for the first time.

Before joining the World War II Museum, Clancey served as the Chief Curator at the Skirball Cultural Center & Museum in Los Angeles, where she oversaw a collection of more than 85,000 artifacts and led the conception and production of exhibitions spanning ancient history, the Civil Rights movement and contemporary art.

She managed a multidisciplinary team of curators, registrars, exhibit designers and gallery educators and built lasting relationships with cultural institutions, scholars, donors and artists across the country. ★



Sacramento International Airport invites travelers, residents and community members to share their priorities for the airport’s future through a public survey. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento International Airport (SMF) has launched a public survey as part of its Airport Master Plan update, inviting travelers, residents and community members to share their priorities for the airport’s future.

The Airport Master Plan is a comprehensive, long-range planning document that guides development and improvements over a 20-year horizon. The plan evaluates existing facilities, forecasts future passenger and aircraft activity, identifies

infrastructure needs and outlines a recommended development strategy shaped in part by input from the public.

“This master plan is about more than buildings and runways. It is about understanding what our community needs from its airport for decades to come,” said Director of Airports for Sacramento County, Cindy Nichol. “We are asking the people who fly through SMF and live in this region to tell us what matters most to them.”

The public survey is now open and takes only a few minutes to complete. Residents and

travelers are encouraged to share feedback on topics including flight options, terminal amenities, parking and accessibility. You can access the survey on the Sacramento County website.

Public participation is a key component of the master plan. Input gathered through the survey and community outreach will help inform facility recommendations, capital improvement priorities and the airport’s long-term development strategy.

The survey will remain open through Aug. 14. For more about the plan, visit the Department of Airports website. ★

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Local Museums Offer Ways to Enrich the Lazy Days of Summer with Plenty of Must-See and Must-Do Experiences

Sacramento Area Museums News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Greater Sacramento region is rich with museums and popular destinations that offer plenty of must-see and must-do experiences to explore before summertime makes way for a busy fall season. The community is encouraged to show support for local museums by making plans to visit favorite locations (or discovering new ones).

The California Automobile Museum is revving up summertime evenings by participating in the monthly Third Thursday program happening throughout the Old Sacramento Waterfront. Guests will get an exclusive chance to explore the “Route 66: California Dreamin” exhibit by the light of the neon moon, celebrating the Mother Road through the lens of 100 years of history, plus admissions are half-off. In addition, there will be special activities for kids and adults 21 plus can tap into an exclusive drink selection for sale (with one free drink ticket per entry.) For more details, visit www.calautomuseum.org/thirdthursdays.

Make plans to experience “Reflecting on the Land,” a powerful new exhibit making its debut Aug. 21 at the California Museum. Highlighting the voices, knowledge and visions of California's Indigenous peoples, the exhibit will challenge visitors to reckon with the stories that have shaped our understanding of this land, and those that have been left out. From the landscapes of 250 years ago to hard-won victories like the restoration of the Klamath River, the exhibit traces the living legacy of more than 200 tribes across the state and looks ahead to radical, hopeful visions of what sovereignty and self-determination can look like on this land. Thought-provoking, timely and deeply rooted in community, this is an exhibit for anyone ready to engage with California's past, present and future on its own terms. “Reflecting on the Land”



An incredible “Play Ball! Sacramento in the National Pastime” exhibit is on display now at the Sacramento History Museum and is filled with historical baseball uniforms, bats, balls and gloves from different time periods and more! Photo courtesy of the Sacramento History Museum

was developed by Exhibit Envoy in partnership with California Humanities, and tours through Exhibit Envoy thanks to generous funding from the 11th Hour Project, By the People: Conversations Beyond 250 and the Weingart Foundation. Additional details will be posted Aug. 6 at www.californiamuseum.org/exhibitions/temporary/

The California State Railroad Museum & Foundation is fun for all ages and is a great – and fully air-conditioned – place to see an impressive collection of rail equipment, historic locomotives, compelling exhibits, toy trains and more. Plus, a tried-and-true summertime favorite experience is a weekend excursion train ride pulled by an authentic, historic locomotive – either Granite Rock 10 steam locomotive or a historic diesel engine (motive power subject to change without notice.) The memorable experience offers guests the chance to enjoy train travel from an earlier era. For more details about the Museum Mixer, weekend excursion train rides and visiting the museum, visit www.californiarailroad.museum.

At the Crocker Art Museum the community is encouraged to experience the final Summer Family Friday of the season on Aug. 7 from 10:15 a.m. to 2 p.m. This fun-filled morning includes an art and performance extravaganza geared for kids ages 3-12, and the adults who tag along with them. Activities include hands-on art making, sensory activities and special shows from local musicians and a performing arts group. More details are available at www.crockerart.org/events/4722/summer-family-friday-4722. Plus, iconic rom coms will be screened in the Crocker's outdoor courtyard against the Teel Family Pavilion's iconic architecture on Aug. 20; closing the summer series are “Dirty Dancing” and “Clueless.” For more, visit www.crockerart.org/events/series/movies-off-the-wall.

Get ready to savor a lively night at Fairytale Town during a special, end-of-summer Tales and Ales Brewfest on Aug. 22. Local craft breweries from throughout Sacramento

and Northern California will be in the park pouring unlimited tastes while live musicians perform on the Mother Goose Stage. Plus, children will enjoy complimentary root beer floats and hands-on activities in Mr. McGregor’s Garden. Local food trucks will be on-site with food and beverages available for sale and there will be a raffle with exciting prizes. Tales & Ales is an all-ages fundraiser with proceeds supporting Fairytale Town’s education programs and park improvements. For more information visit www.fairytaletown.org/calendar/tales-ales-brewfest-2/

The SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity offers an opportunity to experience favorite musical artists like never before. The UC Davis Multiverse Theater at MOSAC is thrilled to present a music laser series to the planetarium – including a Bad Bunny Laser Concert on August 7-8. The immersive music experience, paired with spectacular full-dome lasers, is the best way to listen to favorite artists outside of a live performance. With

a robust library of classic rock, pop music and family-friendly favorites playing over our 25,000-watt Dolby 5.1 surround sound system, the laser shows provide a whole new music experience. Make plans to visit and explore the full schedule of events at www.visitmosac.org.

Always free and open weekdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Museum of Medical History is also open on Second Saturdays (for the same time hours), monthly through September. Guests will journey through time and learn about medical treatment during California's Gold Rush, the flu pandemic of 1918, Prohibition-era medicine, Polio and its groundbreaking vaccine, modern advances in cardiology, radiology, surgery and so much more. Reservations are not required, and physician docents will be onsite giving tours and interpretation of the hundreds of artifacts in the Museum's collection. For more information visit www.museumofmedicalhistory.org.

Baseball and summertime go hand-in-glove especially at the Sacramento History Museum. An incredible “Play Ball! Sacramento in the National Pastime” exhibit is on display now and 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. “Play Ball!” tells the fascinating and fun story of Sacramento’s 175-year baseball history, stretching from the early days of the Gold Rush to the latest inning at Sutter Health Park just across the Sacramento River. For more details about the exhibit and Baseball Talk activation, visit <https://sachistorymuseum.org/>

For more information about upcoming activities offered by Sacramento area museums, like them on Facebook, follow on Instagram @SacMuseums or visit www.SacMuseums.org. ★

EMD and Food Safety Take Center Stage at State Fair



Food safety inspections help reduce the risk of foodborne illness by ensuring vendors follow safe food handling practices. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Environmental Management Department (EMD) is conducting food safety inspections throughout the California State Fair to help ensure the fair's more than 150 food vendors are serving food safely.

From corn dogs and funnel cakes to barbecue, fresh lemonade and specialty desserts, every temporary food facility at the fair must meet the same food safety standards as restaurants operating year-round in Sacramento County.

“Fairgoers should be able to enjoy their favorite foods with confidence,” said Rolando Villareal, Environmental Health Division Chief. “Our inspectors work closely with vendors before and throughout the fair to verify safe food handling practices, proper cooking and holding temperatures and compliance with California's food safety regulations.”

Wondering how Sacramento County keeps food served at the California State Fair safe? Inspectors verify that vendors are keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold, preparing food safely and in compliance with California Retail Food Code,

washing hands properly, using food from approved sources and maintaining safe water supplies and proper wastewater disposal.

Environmental health inspectors conduct routine and unannounced inspections throughout the California State Fair. They also investigate food-related complaints and provide education to vendors to help maintain safe food handling practices.

EMD inspectors work directly with vendors to correct violations. Depending on the severity of the issue, inspectors may require immediate corrective action or temporarily suspend food service

until the violation is resolved to protect public health.

Food safety inspections help reduce the risk of foodborne illness by ensuring vendors follow safe food handling practices. Regular inspections help protect the hundreds of thousands of visitors who attend the California State Fair each year.

The 2026 California State Fair opened July 17 and runs through Aug. 2 at Cal Expo. EMD inspectors will remain on-site throughout the event to help protect public health and ensure food vendors continue meeting California food safety standards. ★

City of Sacramento Police Department News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On Tuesday, July 14, just before 12:30 a.m., Sacramento Police Department officers responded to reports of an assault with a weapon in the 3500 block of 5th Avenue.

Responding officers located an adult male victim with at least one stab wound. Despite lifesaving measures, the victim was pronounced deceased on scene. An adult male suspect was detained on scene.

Due to the circumstances, Homicide Detectives and Crime Scene Investigators responded to take over the investigation. They processed the scene, collected evidence and interviewed witnesses. The circumstances of the incident remain under investigation.

The suspect, 21-year-old Maximus Morgan of Sacramento, was arrested and booked into the Sacramento County Main Jail on homicide related charges.

The Sacramento County Coroner’s Office will

release the identity of the deceased after next-of-kin have been notified.

The Sacramento Police Department encourages any witnesses with information regarding this investigation to contact the dispatch center at 916-808-5471 or Sacramento Valley Crime Stoppers at 916-443-HELP (4357).

Callers can remain anonymous and may be eligible for a reward up to \$1,000. Anonymous tips can also be submitted using the free “P3 Tips” smartphone app. ★

Helping Children to Deal with Grief

Continued from page 1

Founded in 1982 in memory of Dougy Turno, who died of a brain tumor at age 13, the center has supported more than 20,000 children and family members. The original facility was a large historic home known as the Dougy House. After it was destroyed by fire, a new building was constructed specifically for the organization’s needs, with individual rooms designed to support grieving children in different age groups.

The Olivia Chan Foundation also hopes to establish its own grief center. Mel said it would be “a physical place that children and families can visit, where we can implement all these programs free of charge for the community.”

Between Sacramento and Portland, there are three prominent unicorns. Those three unicorns represent three different stories of love, memory and healing.

The foundation’s official mascot is a unicorn, inspired by Olivia’s favorite unicorn, Lucky, which is featured on the front of the foundation’s T-shirts.

About 90 miles south of the Dougy Center, in the town of Albany, is a marvelous place that captures the spirit, imagination and vitality Olivia possessed: the Albany Historic Carousel & Museum on First Avenue West.

The museum was fortunate to receive a donated 1909 Dentzel Carousel Company mechanism. The original plan had been to purchase a new mechanism capable of holding 32 animals. However, Bill Dentzel, the great-grandson of Gustav Dentzel, founder of the Dentzel Carousel Company, learned of the project and arranged for the antique mechanism to be donated.

The Albany Carousel owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to both Bill Dentzel and the National Carousel Association, which owned the mechanism before donating it through Dentzel.

Restoring the classic mechanism took more than 10 years. Every wooden gear tooth, every mirror panel and every motor that powers the carousel platform was meticulously restored. Lead engineer Carl Baker and a dedicated crew of volunteers transformed what once looked like, “Oh my word, what have we gotten ourselves



The Dougy Center has a number of individual rooms designed to support grieving children in different age groups.

into?” into the magnificent carousel visitors enjoy today.

When completed, the carousel will feature 52 hand-carved animals. As a menagerie-style carousel, it includes an extraordinary variety of figures, from a seven-foot-tall giraffe to dogs, cats, zebras, dragons and yes, even lions, tigers and bears.

The animals are arranged in three rows. The outside row features large standing animals, while the middle and inside rows feature medium-size and smaller “jumping” animals. The carousel will also include two replacement animals for each row, along with five seasonal animals, bringing the total collection to 63.

Among those animals are two beautiful unicorns: creatures Olivia undoubtedly would have treasured.

Kitty the Unicorn Brings a Lasting Memorial to the Albany Historic Carousel

This spring, a new carousel figure, Kitty the Unicorn, joined the Albany Historic Carousel and Museum after more than 14 years of volunteer craftsmanship and a heartfelt family tribute.

The traditional European-style unicorn was created in memory of Katherine “Kitty” (Wright) Doherty, who died in March 2007 after an 11-year battle with cancer. Known for her love of animals, Kitty inspired her family to sponsor a carousel figure in her honor, ensuring that her memory would live on in a place

dedicated to joy, imagination and community.

The idea for the memorial began when Kitty’s mother visited the carousel workshop and was captivated by the hand-carved animals being created by volunteers. She suggested sponsoring a unicorn to honor her daughter. The family agreed it would be a meaningful use of the money they had originally collected to send Kitty, her husband, and their two daughters on a Disneyland vacation planned for June 2008.

A small group of dedicated volunteer carvers spent years in the carousel’s basement workshop carefully shaping the unicorn by hand. Along the way, they incorporated numerous personal touches celebrating Kitty’s life and the people who loved her.

Kitty the Unicorn officially joined the carousel on March 28, 2026. Before taking its place among the carousel’s other hand-carved figures, the unicorn received three protective clear coats applied over the course of a week to preserve its vibrant finish for generations to come.

Like all of the carousel’s animals, Kitty was finished using a stipple-painting technique, in which paint is carefully dabbed onto the surface with cloth rather than brushed on. The painstaking process creates the soft texture and brilliant colors that have become a hallmark of the carousel’s figures.

During the finishing work, Kitty’s intricately

braided mane and detailed carvings were already drawing admiration from visitors and volunteers alike.

Kitty’s favorite color, purple, is reflected in the unicorn’s richly decorated saddle, which features 10 symbolic medallions carved by her stepmother, Marge Wright. Each medallion represents a member of Kitty’s family or an important part of her life: a four-leaf clover commemorates her St. Patrick’s Day birthday; a fish honors her father, Ed Wright; a heart represents her mother, Judy Allen; a fairy was chosen by her sister, Mary Jo Brock; an anchor symbolizes her foster brother, Larry Jackson; a dragon was selected by her husband, Kelly Doherty; a lucky horseshoe was chosen by her older daughter, Ashley Hogan; and an everlasting rose by her younger daughter, Alysia Rodgers.

The remaining medallions feature a pink breast cancer awareness ribbon and a teddy bear.

Adding another deeply personal touch, Kitty’s beloved cat, Exotica, is perched on the unicorn’s hindquarters, ensuring that one of her favorite companions will forever accompany her on the carousel.

After more than a decade of dedication by volunteer artisans and the loving support of her family, Kitty the Unicorn stands as both a remarkable work of craftsmanship and a lasting tribute to a woman whose



Dougy Turno was a 9-year-old boy who was diagnosed with a brain tumor. He knew that he was dying and often spoke about death with the other hospitalized children. Watching Doug talk with them, Bev Chappell saw that kids speak the same language and can help each other to understand death.

love of animals continues to bring smiles to children and adults alike.

The second beautiful unicorn in Albany that Olivia undoubtedly would have treasured was Marcy.

On page 115 of Jennifer Moody’s book “The Miracle on First Avenue” is the following story about Marcy:

In a moment of harmonious happenstance, the very first person to ride Marcy the Unicorn was sixteen-year-old Hayden Mickelberry, the niece of Marcella, the young woman for whom Marcy was named. Bill and Nancy Mickelberry adopted the unicorn in memory of their daughter, Marcella, whom they lost at age sixteen. The graceful fairytale creature is a tribute to the love shared by everyone in the family.

Active in the Greater Albany Rotary Club, Bill heard about the carousel project and was among the first people to get involved – eventually becoming a carver there. He and Nancy adopted the unicorn as a 50th wedding anniversary gift to each other. Bill helped carve Marcy, while Nancy painted the carousel adornments.

Riders who choose a magical trip on Marcy as she bounds around the middle row will see Marcella represented as a blue-winged fairy in a blue dress flying alongside Marcy’s neck. She holds a red rose and ribbons printed with the name Marcy. The roses the family likes to grow crown

Marcy’s head and decorate the base of her tail.

The family’s United Kingdom background is represented in the pattern on the saddle. The names of the Mickelberry children and grandchildren can be found along the edge of the blanket and on gold medallions hanging from it.

Bill and Nancy honored their golden anniversary with a large medallion around Marcy’s neck marked with “W” and “N” for William and Nancy and “50” to celebrate their marriage. On the crest are captain’s wings honoring Bill’s service in the Navy and a treble clef honoring Nancy’s participation in the Sweet Adelines singing group.

Reina and Mel’s dream is to build an Olivia Chan House in Sacramento to expand the work of the Dougy Center. Olivia would be extremely proud that her family is “creating a safe environment where children and families feel supported and understood while navigating grief.”

Olivia had a favorite unicorn named Lucky, who is depicted in the foundation’s symbol. Reina and Mel need the community’s support to make their dream of building an Olivia Chan House in Sacramento a reality.

Olivia once said, “I wish I was an adult, and I wish I was a unicorn.” If Olivia had another wish, it would be that every child entering the Olivia Chan House would be greeted by pictures of three unicorns: Lucky, Kitty and Marcy. ★

Engaging with City Meetings Easier with New Hub

Continued from Page 1

through the close of the meeting and are connected directly to individual agenda items, making it easier for residents to provide feedback on issues that matter most.

For City Council meetings, residents who cannot attend in person may also participate by phone. Phone participation is

not available for City Commission meetings.

Watch Meetings from Anywhere

City Council and City Commission meetings are streamed live and archived on the city’s official YouTube channel, giving residents the flexibility to watch meetings live or at a later time.

Livestreams include AI-generated closed captions in English and Spanish.

Recorded meetings also support YouTube’s translation tools, allowing captions to be viewed in more than 100 languages.

AI-generated captions and translations are provided to improve accessibility and may contain

errors. Official meeting records remain the authoritative source.

Help at City Hall

Residents attending City Council meetings in person will also notice LEX (Lobby Experience eXpert), a new service designed to help visitors navigate the public participation process.

LEX staff are available in the City Hall lobby during council meetings to answer questions, assist with digital speaker slips, explain participation options and help residents access meeting resources.

Designed for Accessibility

The Public Participation Hub was developed with accessibility as a priority. Features include an ADA-accessible digital speaker slip, AI-generated

live captions and multilingual caption translation tools to help reduce barriers for community members participating in local government.

The new hub builds on the city’s commitment to transparency and meaningful public engagement while expanding access beyond state requirements.

Residents can explore the Public Participation Hub and choose the participation option that works best for them. ★

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Sarah Puddicombe Elevated to Head Rowing Coach

Sacramento State Athletics Sports News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento State Director of Athletics Mark Orr announced July 13 that Sarah Puddicombe has been elevated to head coach of the Hornets’ rowing program. She becomes the fifth head coach in the team’s history (1995-pres.).

Puddicombe assumes leadership of the program after longtime head coach Mike Connors announced his retirement in June.

A two-time first team All-American, and NCAA national champion as both a coach and student-athlete, Puddicombe has spent the past three seasons (2024-26) as assistant coach with the Hornets and also had an earlier stint as a Sacramento State assistant from 2005-07.

Puddicombe brings continuity, experience and a deep understanding of the Hornets’ culture. During her tenure at Sacramento State, she has her fingerprints all over the program, which includes coaching the novice squad, recruiting, running practices, developing race strategies and lineups, academics, travel, administrative duties and much more.

“We are thrilled to name Sarah Puddicombe as the next head coach of our rowing program,” Orr said. “She is an outstanding leader with deep ties to Sacramento State, a championship pedigree and a genuine passion for developing student-athletes. She understands the tradition that has been built here, has earned the respect of our team and the rowing community and is the right person to lead our program into its next chapter. We are excited to see her continue the program’s tradition of excellence both on the water and in the classroom.”

A local product from Orangevale, CA, Puddicombe has 23 years of coaching experience. Prior to her second stint with the Hornets, she spent seven years as the head coach of Capital Crew - the Sacramento State Aquatic Center’s youth rowing program for high school students (2016-23). In addition, she had collegiate coaching stops at Cal (2008-16), UC Davis (2007-08)



Puddicombe assumes leadership of the program after longtime head coach Mike Connors announced his retirement last month. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Athletics

and Sacramento State (2005-07).

“First and foremost, I want to congratulate Mike Connors on a wonderful career and his continued dedication to this team over the past the 24 years at Sacramento State,” Puddicombe said. “Coaching has never been just a job for me - it has been my life’s passion. The opportunity to become a head coach represents the chance to bring together everything I have learned over two decades of developing student-athletes and building successful teams.”

“I am excited to build off a program defined by excellence, integrity and unity, where student-athletes are inspired to exceed expectations and leave a legacy that extends far beyond the finish line. Thank you to Mark Orr and the hiring committee for trusting me to lead this program that will compete for championships while fostering a lifelong love of the sport and the University.”

Puddicombe competed four years at UC Davis (1999-02) where she was a two-time All-American coxswain, three-time team captain and helped the Aggies to a 2002 NCAA Div. II national championship.

She would later add another national championship at Cal, where she helped coach the Bears to a 2016 title. During her time at Cal, the team also had eight consecutive top three finishes at the NCAA Championships and seven Pac-12 Conference team titles. That included a run of five straight Pac-12 titles from 2009-13.

Puddicombe was promoted to associate head coach at Cal in 2012, and was responsible for signing 67 student-athletes to National Letters of Intent from 2008-14. She coached four individual boats to top four finishes at the NCAA Championships (including a gold in 2014 and 2016) and five individual boat Pac-12 titles.

During her seven-year stint at Capital Crew, a total of 72 of her 105 seniors were recruited to row in college. In addition, she qualified boats to the US Rowing Youth National Championships every full season of her tenure, which included winning a national championship in the Junior 4+ in 2017 and the Junior pair in 2022.

Other coaching stops included serving as a volunteer coach at the Under-23 National Team Camp in 2008 and 2010. She also worked as a Jr. Pre-Elite Rowing Coach from 2004-06, and made her coaching debut with Capital Crew from 2004-05.

Puddicombe graduated in 2002 from UC Davis with a degree in wildlife, fish and conservation biology. She would later add a master’s degree in 2009 from the University of Phoenix.

Rex Connors Earns Third Straight Buck Buchanan Award Preseason Watch List

UC Davis Athletics News Release

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - Senior defensive back Rex Connors has been named to the 2026 Buck Buchanan Award Preseason Watch List, Stats Perform announced on the morning of July 14. The Buck Buchanan Award recognizes the top defensive player in NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) football, with this year's preseason watch list highlighting many of the nation's top defensive standouts entering the 2026 season.

Connors earns preseason recognition for the third consecutive year after establishing himself as one of the premier defensive backs in the FCS.

A team captain in 2025, Connors appeared in four games before suffering a season-ending injury but still delivered standout performances. He recorded a season-high 15 tackles against Utah Tech, earning both Stats Perform FCS National Honorable Mention Defensive Player of the Week and Big Sky Defensive Player of the Week honors following the victory.

Connors also reached one of the most significant milestones in program history during the 2025 season, becoming UC Davis’ all-time leading tackler with the



Connors earns preseason recognition for the third consecutive year after establishing himself as one of the premier defensive backs in the FCS. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Athletics

313th tackle of his career against Washington.

Entering his final collegiate season, Connors returns as the leader of an experienced Aggie defense and once again stands among the top candidates for one of the FCS’s highest individual honors.

UC Davis opens the 2026 season on Aug. 29 at Portland State.

Single game tickets are on sale now. Secure your seats for any of UC Davis’ six home games today. Mini Plans offer a great way to save by bundling multiple games. Choose from two different options

and select the games that fit your schedule.

Both Mini Plan options include the Montana game and allow fans to add one or two additional home games at a discounted rate compared to purchasing single-game tickets. All Mini Plan seats are

located in Sections 119 or 125 on the west side of UC Davis Health Stadium.

Season tickets start at just \$100 for new alumni (2017–26 UC Davis graduates) and \$140 for the general public. Season ticket holders also receive a variety of exclusive benefits, including priority access to postseason tickets, select away games and parking.

Additional benefits include a dedicated Aggie Ticket Representative, flexible payment plan options and invitations to exclusive season ticket holder events. Purchase your season tickets today. For more information, email the Aggie Ticket Office at aggietickets@ucdavis.edu or call 530-752-2471.

Group ticket discounts begin with just 10 tickets and provide the perfect opportunity for company outings, family gatherings, birthday celebrations and more.

Create a memorable birthday experience with a player high-five tunnel or reserve a turnkey tailgate space for your group before kickoff. Call the Aggie Ticket Office at 530-752-2471 to customize an unforgettable game-day experience.

For more information about purchasing tailgating or parking for the 2026 season, contact Jordan Kurtz at 530-304-1433 or jkurtz@ucdavis.edu.

Applications Open for Republic FC and Wilton Rancheria Indigenous Future Leaders Scholarship

Republic FC Sports News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On July 13, Republic FC announced its second-annual Indigenous Future Leaders Scholarship, in partnership with Wilton Rancheria, for a local student. Applications are now open and must be submitted by July 31 at 11:59 p.m. Students can find more information and apply at SacRepublicFC.com/Scholarship.

Republic FC Rising Scholars powered by the PG&E Corporation Foundation offers multiple scholarships throughout the year to support students from underrepresented communities as they continue their academic journeys.

“We believe that every student deserves the opportunity to pursue their dreams while staying connected to the communities that shape who they are,” said Republic FC Vice President of Business Operations and Community Investment Scott Moak. “We’re proud to continue to recognize and invest in Native American students whose



Applications are now open and must be submitted by July 31 at 11:59 p.m. Photo courtesy of Republic FC

leadership will help strengthen our region for generations to come.”

Applicants are required to be residents of the six-county Sacramento region and of Native American heritage. In addition, they must be a high school senior who will pursue higher level education at a

four-year college/university or California community college or are currently enrolled at a California community college or university with a minimum of six units. A committee of Republic FC representatives and Native American leaders, including last year’s scholarship recipient,

will review applications and select a winner.

“Wilton Rancheria is proud to invest in our youth and create opportunities for future generations to thrive. This scholarship reflects our commitment to continuing that legacy,” said Wilton Rancheria Chairman Jesus Tarango. “Together with Republic FC, we are investing in the next generation of students who will carry their communities forward with pride and use their education to make a lasting impact.”

The winner will be recognized on Aug. 15 at Heart Health Park during Republic FC’s Native American Heritage Night and will receive the \$2,000 prize as well as a VIP experience and presentation of the scholarship during halftime.

The match will also feature an exclusive scarf giveaway at entry, a Makers Market with works from Native American artists, special food options, on-field recognitions and more. Kickoff is slated for 8 p.m. and tickets are available now at SacRepublicFC.com.