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RIVER VALLEY TIMES

42ND YEAR • ISSUE 15 *Serving Rancho Murieta, Sloughouse, Wilton* AUGUST 7, 2026

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Pine Fire Behind Murieta Plaza Quickly Contained



Flames climb the steep, grass-covered slope on Gazebo Hill behind Murieta Plaza after the Pine Fire broke out Thursday evening, July 30. Photo courtesy of Nancy Clevenger

**By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter**

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - The Pine Fire, which broke out on Gazebo Hill behind Murieta Plaza on Thursday, July 30, burned about one-quarter acre before firefighters quickly extinguished it.

The fire was reported at 8:33 p.m.

with a dispatch location of Jackson Highway and Lone Pine Drive. The blaze spread uphill across the steep, grass-covered hillside behind Murieta Plaza. Firefighters accessed the blaze from Lone Pine Drive across the road from the Murieta Equestrian Center.

CAL FIRE Battalion Chief Josh Vickers said Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District and CAL

FIRE responded to the blaze, which burned about one-quarter acre of grass. Gazebo Hill is within CAL FIRE's State Responsibility Area.

"It was a quick, quick knockdown of the fire," Vickers said. "There is a suspicion of fireworks, but the cause remains undetermined and is being investigated by Cal Fire Prevention." *Continued on page 3*

**Zeta Restores
Broadband
Service, Refuses
to Pay Extortion
for Cyberattack**



Rancho Murieta-based Zeta Broadband restores service about 12 hours after a July 19 cyberattack. Courtesy photo

**By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter**

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Zeta Broadband restored internet service to its customers within about 12 hours after a massive cyberattack accompanied by an extortion demand knocked its California network offline July 19.

The Rancho Murieta-based internet provider refused to pay the demand and ultimately turned to a specialized cloud service to block the attack and restore service. Zeta described the incident as the largest cyberattack in the company's history.

Zeta was not the only internet provider targeted. President and CEO William Burnett told the River Valley Times that information available to the company indicates several regional providers were hit by the same campaign, including Greenfield Communications, whose outage had disrupted internet service in Rancho Murieta just one week earlier.

"I do not have first-hand access to Greenfield's technical data," Burnett said. "However, based on its public statements and information shared through industry contacts, Zeta and Greenfield were not the only regional providers targeted by this type of attack."

Burnett said the available information indicates the incidents were part of the same campaign. Both began on a Sunday, involved identical extortion communications and used large-scale, volumetric "carpet-bomb" distributed denial-of-service, or DDoS, attacks that spread malicious traffic across broad ranges of network addresses.

Burnett said he could not compare the technical details of the two companies' outages because he did not have access to Greenfield's technical data. What he could speak to, he said, was Zeta's response.

Zeta initially tried to filter the attack locally and *Continued on page 5*

Denim & Diamonds Draws Record Crowd



Women's Club President Bonnie Kirschman leads a line-dancing lesson during the Rancho Murieta Women's Club's Denim & Diamonds Ladies' Nite Out on July 22 at the Rancho Murieta Country Club.

**Story and photos
by Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter**

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Cowboy hats and boots, denim outfits, and plenty of sparkle set the tone as a record 139 women turned out for the Rancho Murieta Women's Club's

Denim & Diamonds Ladies' Nite Out on July 22.

The Murieta Room at the Rancho Murieta Country Club echoed with country music, line dancing and enough enthusiasm that many attendees urged organizers to make the event a regular tradition.

The club replaced its traditional

daytime luncheon with an evening event to attract women who work during the day and charged the same \$35 admission for members and nonmembers to encourage newcomers to experience the organization.

"We had one and a half times more non-members than members," *Continued on page 2*

Denim & Diamonds Draws Record Crowd

Continued from page 1

Women’s Club President Bonnie Kirschman said. The turnout more than doubled attendance at previous Ladies’ Nite Out events, which had never attracted more than about 70 participants.

When registrations reached 139, organizers had to rethink the layout of the Murieta Room, according to Kirschman. They moved the taco buffet into the country club’s boardroom, added as many dining tables as possible in the adjacent Terrace Lounge, and pushed all of the tables in the Murieta Room to the sides to create the largest possible dance area. Even so, the portable dance floor laid over the carpet wasn’t large enough to accommodate everyone, and many participants happily danced on the surrounding carpet.

The evening featured line dancing lessons, a taco bar buffet, a silent auction, a door prize and live entertainment.

Before the festivities got underway, Vice President Toni Anania invited members to volunteer or serve as models for the Women’s Club’s Sept. 23 Fall Fashion Show luncheon. Kirschman also encouraged attendees to mark their calendars for the club’s Dec. 2 Holiday Luncheon, which will feature High Voltage, a youth performance group from El Dorado Musical Theatre.

The silent auction featured decorative cowboy-hat centerpieces created by Vickie Joyner and Barbara Simas. The handcrafted centerpieces proved so popular that all but one sold, raising



Longtime Rancho Murieta entertainer Jerry Lopes belts out a song as women take to the dance floor.

additional funds for the club. Kirschman then awarded a gift certificate to the spa at the Rancho Murieta Inn as the evening’s grand door prize.

Kirschman next took the stage to teach two dances. She began with a four-wall dance, leading participants through grapevines, heel flicks, hitch steps and rocking-chair moves before putting the choreography to music. The group danced to “Heads Carolina, Tails California,” then learned a second routine featuring several cha-cha steps set to “Choosin’ Texas.”

After the lessons, Kirschman announced the taco buffet, inviting guests to the serving line table by table. As women filled their plates and settled in for dinner, longtime Rancho Murieta entertainer Jerry Lopes took the stage, opening with the country classic “All My Ex’s Live in Texas.” He followed



Women’s Club President Bonnie Kirschman, right, keeps demonstrating the line-dancing moves after stepping off the stage.

with a mix of country favorites and classic songs, providing live entertainment throughout the meal.

Lopes later switched from singer to DJ, keeping the energy high with line-dancing favorites. The dance floor quickly filled again, and when he played the “Cupid Shuffle,” one of the night’s largest groups of dancers rushed onto

the floor. So many women joined in that many spilled off the portable dance floor and continued dancing on the surrounding carpet.

Kirschman said the enthusiastic response exceeded organizers’ expectations.

“A lot of them were saying, ‘You need to do this every month,’” she said. “They all seemed to have a



Janet Caan, center, joins the line dancing as women fill the dance floor during Denim & Diamonds Ladies’ Nite Out.



Women of all ages take to the dance floor in cowboy boots, denim and their own interpretations of the evening’s Western theme.



Chrisy Cramer, left, checks out her door prize as Women’s Club Vice President Toni Anania holds the raffle bucket.

great time. I think we’ll be doing that one again.”

Participant Candy Hearn agreed.

“This was an event for all ages. Everyone seemed to be really enjoying themselves. The food, music and lessons added to the

fun,” she said. “Thanks to the Women’s Club for sponsoring the event. I would like to see more events like this in the future.”

See more photos at the-
rivervalleytimes.com. ★



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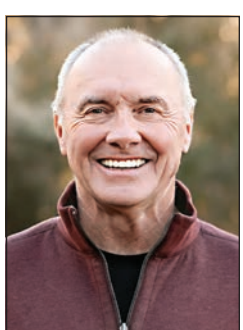
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when dedicated partners share a long-term commitment to the land.”

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - A critical stretch of the Cosumnes River – the only undammed river on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada – is now permanently protected and slated for ecological restoration. Sacramento Valley Conservancy and Westervelt Ecological Services are celebrating the acquisition of the 204-acre Johnson Cosumnes Mitigation Bank, which fills an important gap in river frontage within the more than 51,000-acre Cosumnes River Preserve near Galt and south of Elk Grove. The preserve contains some of the finest remaining floodplain and riparian habitat in California's Central Valley.

floodplain ecosystem. Planned restoration activities include lowering or removing select sections of agricultural berms to reconnect the river with its historic floodplain, creating pilot channels that support natural flow patterns, and establishing native vegetation across wetlands and riparian habitats.

improve habitat diversity, support native fish and wildlife, enhance water quality and strengthen the region's network of protected lands. Valley oak, cottonwood and willow will once again line meandering river channels, providing shade and habitat that benefit native fish, including juvenile Chinook salmon and Central Valley steelhead.

thermal refuge by increasing shade, restoring natural flow patterns and enhancing connections to cooler water. To reduce the risk of fish stranding, the project incorporates multiple interconnected channels that allow fish to move more freely between the restored floodplain and the Cosumnes River during changing water conditions.

and Sacramento Valley Conservancy is thrilled to partner with Westervelt to protect it in perpetuity," said Kelly Hopkins, executive director, Sacramento Valley Conservancy. "This acquisition represents another important step in our effort to connect and restore the remaining Valley oak riparian habitats that once covered much of California's Central Valley."

The partners remain committed to acquiring additional priority properties to expand protected lands and strengthen the ecological integrity of the Cosumnes River Preserve.

Continued from page 1

After the flames were extinguished, a CAL FIRE hand crew from the Ponderosa Fire Center in Cameron Park used hand tools to remove burnable vegetation down to bare soil around the perimeter of the burned area. Vickers said CAL FIRE will patrol the site for the next two to three days to watch for hot spots.

The initial dispatch included crews from Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District's Station 59 in Rancho Murieta, Station 58

in Sloughhouse, which also responded with a dozer. The Wilton Fire Protection District, and an engine and battalion chief from CAL FIRE's Sutter Hill Station. A CAL FIRE hand crew from the Ponderosa Fire Center in Cameron Park was dispatched later.

Resident Nancy Clevenger and her husband had just arrived at Bel Air Market when they heard what sounded like a firecracker. The couple went into the store to pick up a few items. When they came back outside a short

time later, they saw a line of flames racing uphill behind Murieta Plaza.

Clevenger said the flames then covered the hill in a U-shaped pattern, and they could see fire trucks on the top of the hill.

“It looked to us that they were just letting it burn because the wind was pushing it uphill,” she said. “Had the wind been going the other way, there goes the plaza. So, it was a fortunate situation.”

This story is at therivervalleytimes.com and on Facebook. ★



Firefighters from the CAL FIRE Ponderosa Fire Center in Cameron Park descend Gazebo Hill after constructing a fire line around the burned area to help prevent the fire from rekindling.
Photo by Gail Bullen

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MEMORIAL

SHELBY BREANNA WALDIE-BATES • 9/25/2000 - 7/22/2026

Shelby Breanna Waldie-Bates, beloved daughter, sister, wife, mother, and friend, passed away on July 22, 2026, in Lone, California, at the age of 25. Born on September 25, 2000, in West Monroe, Louisiana, Shelby lived a life defined by compassion, resilience, and unwavering devotion to her family.

Shelby graduated from Pleasant Grove High School and proudly served five years in the United States Army, stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, with deployments to Bahrain and South Korea. During her service, she met her soulmate, William Bates, whom she married in 2022. She retired with the rank of E4 Specialist in the Patriot Launching Station Enhanced Operator/Maintainer MOS, 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade.

Her lifelong love of animals was evident in everything she did — from raising Guide Dogs for the Blind in FFA, to riding and showing horses, to fostering shelter animals. Shelby recently graduated from Carrington College with a degree in Veterinary Technology

and thrived as a Veterinary Assistant at Blue Ravine Animal Hospital in Folsom.

Shelby's greatest joy was being a mother to her daughter, Adaline. She poured her heart sin to creating a life full of laughter, love, and cherished memories. Family was her anchor; she called and FaceTime often, sharing stories, checking in, and staying connected. She treasured Sunday dinners, skiing in Kirkwood, racing with her dad, and keeping family traditions alive.

Shelby is survived by her husband,

William Bates; daughter, Adaline; parents, Janet and Doug Waldie; brother, Shawn Waldie; brother in law, Cameron Petrovich; and her extended family and friends.

Her warm hugs, playful spirit, and infectious laughter will be deeply missed. We say goodbye to a remarkable woman whose kindness, joy, and love touched everyone around her.

Donations in her honor can be made to the family's GoFundMe page: www.gofund.me/makayla-past-23jul.

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New Plan Forecasts Watershed Climate Resilience

Regional Water Authority News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Regional Water Authority (RWA) and regional partners have completed the American, Bear and Cosumnes Watersheds Resilience Plan, a new climate resilience strategy that evaluates how climate change is expected to affect water supplies, flood risk, ecosystems, infrastructure and communities across one of California’s most important watershed systems.

Funded by the California Department of Water Resources through the State’s Watershed Resilience Pilot Program, the Sacramento region was selected as one of five pilot regions statewide to help develop watershed-scale climate resilience planning approaches that could inform future implementation efforts across California.

The plan examines the interconnected American, Bear and Cosumnes river



watersheds, which support more than 2 million people, provide approximately 8% of California’s developed water supply and contribute important flows to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The plan combines climate modeling, vulnerability analysis, equity assessment and stakeholder engagement to evaluate how climate change could reshape the region over the coming decades and identify actions that can help communities and ecosystems adapt.

Key findings for the Sacramento region include critical snowpack that feeds these watersheds could decline by approximately 60% by mid-century. Snowmelt is projected to occur two

to four weeks earlier. Extreme heat days over 95 degrees could increase by roughly 20 days annually. Wildfires are projected to become 17% more frequent. Extreme precipitation events could become 15% more intense. Peak flood flows could increase by approximately 19%.

The plan also finds that climate impacts will not be experienced equally. Lower-income communities, Tribal communities and outdoor workers may face greater exposure to extreme heat, flooding, wildfire smoke and economic disruption.

“The science is clear that climate change is already reshaping our watersheds,” said Jim Peifer, executive director of the Regional Water Authority.

“The question is no longer whether these impacts are coming, but how quickly the region can act to prepare. This plan gives the Sacramento region a shared framework to move from vulnerability assessment to implementation, and positions regional partners to move quickly as funding and project opportunities emerge.”

In addition to identifying climate vulnerabilities, the plan outlines 19 watershed adaptation strategies and 119 potential adaptation actions focused on reducing long-term risks associated with drought, flooding, wildfire and extreme heat.

The plan also establishes a decision-making framework intended to help agencies and partners evaluate and prioritize future resilience investments based on factors such as regional benefit, climate risk reduction, ecosystem improvements, equity considerations and implementation readiness.

Strategies identified in the plan include reducing wildfire risk and

improving forest health in the Sierra headwaters, strengthening flood protection for vulnerable communities, expanding groundwater recharge, protecting cold-water habitat for salmon and other native fish species, expanding flood forecasting and early warning systems, and advancing regional projects that provide multiple water supply, ecosystem and community resilience benefits.

“For more than two decades, DWR has encouraged Californians to connect across watersheds,” said Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources. “A warmer climate stresses resources from forests to aquifers. That makes the hard work of collaboration more important than ever. DWR’s \$2 million grant to the Regional Water Authority yielded a plan that tells a powerful story about future risks and marks a clear path to resilience. This plan positions the people of the American, Bear, and

Cosumnes watersheds to cope with a changed climate. It is an early example of the kind of work needed across the state, and it helps build DWR’s momentum to update the California Water Plan to deliver more precise, localized and action-oriented water supply strategies.”

The planning effort was led by the Regional Water Authority with support from Jacobs, Valley Vision, Khadam Consulting, the Water Forum, regional water agencies, local governments, Tribal representatives, community organizations and Watershed Network participants.

“The region already has many of the partnerships, technical tools and local initiatives needed to strengthen resilience,” Peifer said. “This plan helps align those efforts and creates a clearer path forward for coordinated regional action.”

The full American, Bear, and Cosumnes Watersheds Resilience Plan is available at rwawatershedsresilience.com/plan. ★

Zeta Restores Broadband Service, Refuses to Pay Extortion for Cyberattack

Continued from page 1
worked with its upstream providers. When those efforts proved insufficient, the company shifted to a specialized cloud-scrubbing service. At the same time, Zeta continued communicating with customers through mass email, Nextdoor and Facebook because the attack had knocked out its website and phone system.

“That combination of technical mitigation and continued customer communication remained our focus until service was restored,” Burnett said.

In a public account of the incident released July 31, Zeta said the attacker demanded payment in exchange for ending the disruption. Zeta refused, saying there was no assurance that paying would stop the attack or prevent future demands.

The company preserved the extortion communications and technical evidence and filed formal complaints with the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center.

Largest Cyberattack

According to Zeta’s public incident report, the attack reached hundreds of gigabits per second: many times the capacity of the upstream connections serving its network.

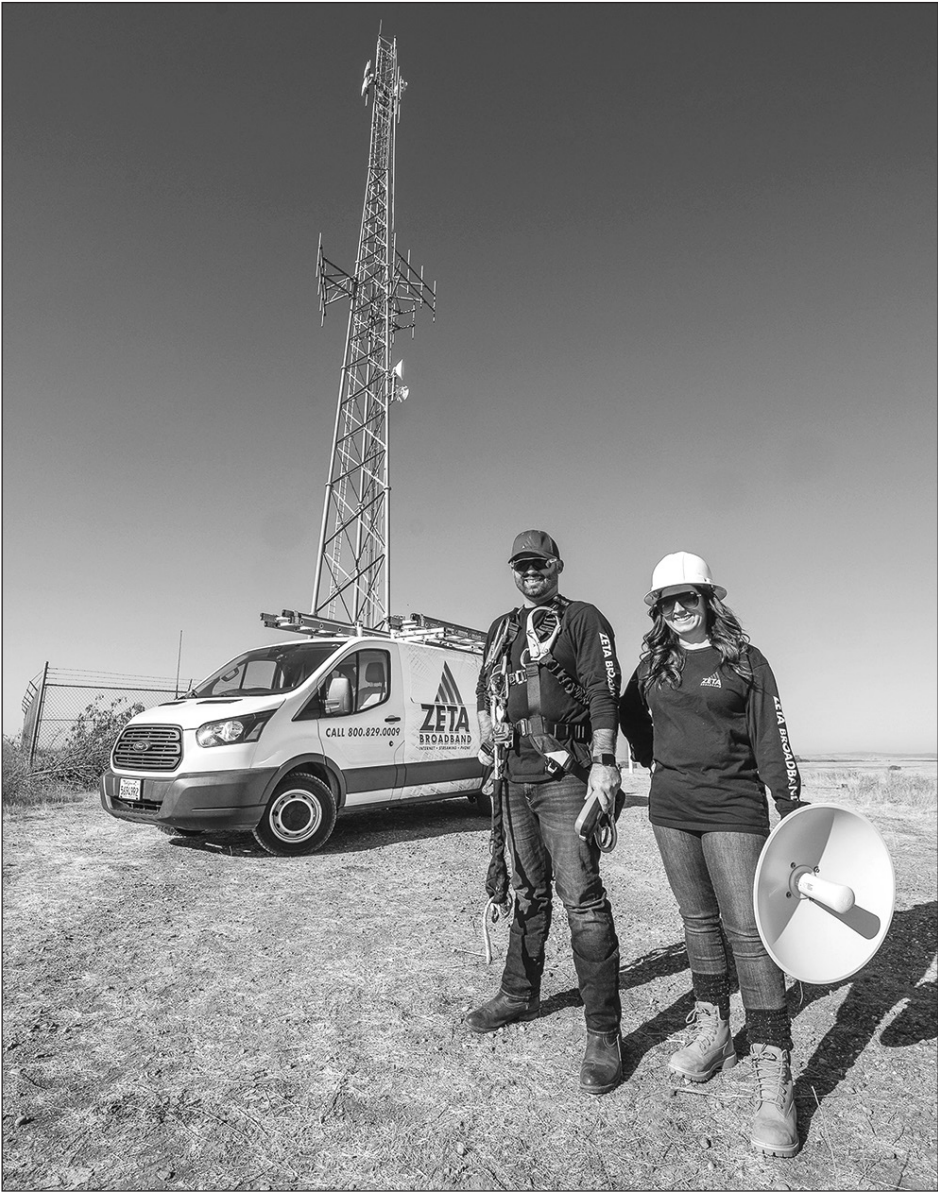
Unlike many denial-of-service attacks that focus on a single website, server or customer address, this attack distributed malicious traffic across Zeta’s public address space, affecting the company’s entire California network rather than a single community.

The first indication something was wrong was a cluster of seemingly unrelated alerts. Environmental probes and network sensors began dropping offline at nearly the same time.

Because those systems were unlikely to fail simultaneously – and another regional provider had been attacked exactly one week earlier – Zeta said it immediately suspected a DDoS attack.

As the network became saturated, Zeta’s website and hosted telephone system also became unreachable.

Burnett, who is a Rancho



Rancho Murieta residents William and Nicole Burnett are the owners of Zeta Broadband.
Courtesy photo

Murieta resident as well as Zeta’s president and CEO, told the River Valley Times that he understood what the outage meant for customers as soon as it became clear this was not an ordinary service interruption.

“As both a resident and the person responsible for the network, I understood what the outage meant for families and businesses that depend on us,” Burnett said. “Once our website and phone system also became unreachable, the priority was clear: determine what was happening, keep customers informed through whatever channels remained available, and restore service as quickly as possible.”

Four Employees Respond

Four Zeta employees responded to the attack, Burnett said.

Although the company’s website and telephone system were unavailable, its separately hosted email system remained operational, allowing Zeta to send mass email

notifications. The company also posted updates on Nextdoor and Facebook.

Zeta initially tried to mitigate the attack internally and then spent another three to four hours working with an upstream provider to filter the malicious traffic. Neither effort restored service.

“When those efforts were also unable to restore service, I was honestly beginning to feel defeated,” Burnett said.

At the same time, Burnett had contacted Cloudflare and other companies that specialize in protecting networks against large DDoS attacks.

The volume of malicious traffic was filling the internet connections leading to Zeta before it could reach equipment capable of filtering it, according to the company. That meant the attack had to be stopped farther upstream.

Cloud Protection

Zeta ultimately turned to Cloudflare, which routed the company’s internet traffic through a network

capable of absorbing the attack. Malicious traffic was filtered out and legitimate traffic sent on to Zeta.

Burnett said emergency onboarding with Cloudflare took approximately five hours. Customer service was restored at approximately 12:20 a.m. Monday.

The following morning brought another challenge as Zeta employees responded to emails, phone calls and social media posts received during the outage. Some customers, believing the problem was with their own equipment, had reset their routers and needed help from Zeta staff to get back online, Burnett said.

The attacker also changed tactics again Monday morning, but Zeta and Cloudflare adjusted their defenses. Service stabilized, and subsequent attacks were blocked without another widespread outage.

Customer Information Not Compromised

Zeta said it found no

“Once our website and phone system also became unreachable, the priority was clear: determine what was happening, keep customers informed through whatever channels remained available, and restore service as quickly as possible.”

– William Burnett, Zeta Broadband president and CEO

evidence that customer information, passwords, billing systems or internal company data had been accessed, changed or stolen.

The purpose of the attack was to make Zeta’s internet service unavailable and use that disruption as leverage to obtain payment, the company said.

Before the incident, Zeta believed its network tools, staff and resources available through upstream providers were sufficient for the DDoS attacks it had successfully handled in the past. But the July 19 attack was unprecedented in the company’s history, which dates to 2006.

The attack demonstrated that protection against an assault of this size needed to occur farther upstream, before malicious traffic could overwhelm the connections leading to Zeta.

New Protections Made Permanent

Zeta has now made specialized cloud scrubbing a permanent part of its network design so large attacks can be filtered before reaching the company.

Zeta also said it has strengthened monitoring and backup communications, established procedures to divert traffic more quickly and added systems designed to automatically detect and mitigate similar attacks.

Burnett said Zeta tried to keep customers informed throughout the incident even when it could not give them a definite restoration time. Updates were issued approximately every one to two hours when meaningful new information became available.

He said the company received considerable encouragement from customers during the response. “We are sincerely grateful to them – and to the

broader community – for their patience, understanding, and support during an extremely difficult time,” Burnett said.

For Rancho Murieta customers – including some who had recently switched to Zeta following the Greenfield outage the previous week – Burnett said he believes the company’s response speaks for itself.

“We restored service within approximately 12 hours and have since implemented additional protections designed to reduce the risk and impact of a similar attack,” he said.

Company History

Bill Burnett has been with Zeta Broadband LLC since its 2006 inception. The company’s goal was to provide reliable, high-speed internet service to communities overlooked by major providers. Burnett purchased the company in 2020 and formed Zeta Broadband Inc., building on its original mission while investing in network expansion, new technologies and improved customer service.

Today, the Rancho Murieta-based company serves residential and business customers across Northern California, as well as the Southern Tier of New York and northern Pennsylvania.

“Although we’ve grown considerably over the years, we’ve remained a locally owned company focused on supporting the communities we serve,” Burnett said. “What has never changed is our commitment to providing reliable internet service and treating our customers like neighbors. That philosophy continues to guide every decision we make.”

This story is at therivervalleytimes.com and on Facebook. ★

Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



Mentorship Counts

By V.G. Harris

How does it feel to score 175 points in an NBA game and lose?! Just ask the L.A. Clippers how it feels.

On Feb. 24, 2023, the Clippers ran into a juggernaut by the name of the Sacramento Kings and lost a double overtime game by the score of 176-175.

The Clippers shot a sterling 31 for 36 from the free throw line that night, but just two more made free throws would have won that game.

I was at that game and will never forget it. Domantas Sabonis held down the paint and contributed 20 points and 10 boards which is basically just a day at the office, but first-time all-star DeAaron Fox went off with 42 points and 12 assists to steal the show.

Well, DeAaron is gone and waiting in the wings is someone everyone is hoping will step in and fill those ever so large shoes. Yes, that would be Darius Acuff Jr., and the only question is, do the Kings have the organizational skills to bring this bright young player along at the right pace so as to give him the confidence needed to succeed at basketball’s highest level.

If we are to believe what we hear and read, Sacramento intends to put this 19-year-old into the starting lineup from the get-go and let the chips fall where they may.

I am not necessarily opposed to the idea of letting Darius run the point from the opening bell, but with conditions and maybe a caveat or two.

Any ball player with one year of college basketball under his belt will have some accelerated courses to take in earnest if success is to be expected.

First and foremost, comes mentorship and where is that going to come from, because the current coaching staff does not fill me with trust and admiration.

Coach Christie still has on his water wings, and for all the bravado of how the Kings are going to play defense, at this date I haven’t seen a blueprint that lends acumen in that direction.

Yes, I want this coaching staff to succeed, but I also want to see something tangible that shows the fans that this staff actually knows *how to coach!*

Just the basics sports fans, like team defense

and maybe a lesson or two in how to shoot free throws.

I am so tired of hearing that Zach Lavine and Domantas Sabonis can’t play defense when they are the two highest paid players on the team.

How did they ever get to be all stars and never play defense?

Of course they can play defense, but what ever happened to the concept of team defense that seems to be an unspoken term?

Back to basics gentlemen and start creating the identity you want. It is achievable and would be if you would stop listening to the collective NBA naysayers that would have you believe that Sacramento Kings have no chance of winning 30 games.

How is a coaching staff supposed to instill positive energy into a squad that has no expectation of winning games?

How about preaching your own version of winning games and then laying out the map as to how you get there.

The Wizard of Westwood and that would be John Wooden won 10 NCAA championships in 12 years and led his club to four 30-0 seasons before he retired.

We won’t be confusing Doug Christie with John Wooden and time soon, but is there something to learn here aside from the fact they both coached basketball teams in the state of California?

Yes, I believe it starts with celebrating the veteran talent you have on the current team today.

Stop with the negative about what you don’t like about Zach Lavine and Domantas Sabonis and start celebrating what they bring to the table.

A lot of youngsters need to immerse themselves in the etiquette of how to compete against other NBA teams, and both Sabonis and Lavine have more than just a tad of experience in that regard.

Double down on that, use their leadership to your advantage, and start preaching the mantra of what home court advantage is supposed to mean. Set the expectation of winning when a visitor enters Golden One Arena and heighten the expectation of *lighting the beam!*

The youngsters need mentors and we have some to celebrate!

All the best! ★

Tech Devices in California’s New Cars Create Thorny Political Issues



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

Automobiles have gradually evolved over the last two decades from mechanical devices into electronic platforms featuring computer screens and numerous other digital capabilities.

A few years ago, the California Air Resources Board began requiring automakers to install devices in vehicles to record and store operational data that the agency could access to determine how well emission reduction programs were working.

It was one aspect of the state’s announced goal of phasing out cars and trucks powered by gasoline and diesel fuel and replacing them with zero-emission vehicles.

The auto industry opposed the data collection mandate, arguing it would violate the privacy of vehicle owners. At one point the industry threatened to stop producing cars for California.

The agency insisted it would not collect data involuntarily. But its regulation fueled — pun intended — suspicions in some quarters that recording how and where cars were being used would allow them to be tracked, much as cellphone usage can be traced.

Or, some said, as gas and diesel use declined and gallonage taxes dropped, the

state could begin charging drivers by miles driven, based on their recorded data.

As the data collection mandate was being implemented, another aspect of the situation surfaced — fears that the tracking software to help motorists obtain help in emergencies, such as General Motors’ OnStar system, could be misused by abusive spouses to find and attack their mates.

Two years ago, the Legislature and Gov. Gavin Newsom enacted a law aimed at countering that potential abuse. Senate Bill 1394 required automakers to provide an internet process by which a “connected vehicle service” could be quickly terminated. Those seeking termination would have to prove they either owned the vehicle or possessed it via a divorce decree or domestic violence restraining order.

That was the relatively easy part of SB 1384.

The more contentious portion of the law required new cars to be equipped with a “mechanism that can be used by a driver who is inside a vehicle to immediately disable connected vehicle location access.” The mechanism had to be “prominently located, easy to use, not require access to an online application, not require a password or login information, and only allow re-enabling of the connected vehicle location access by a driver who is located inside the vehicle.”

The deadline for meeting that requirement was last week. The industry has insisted that was, from a practical standpoint, impossible to meet because it is a

complex engineering problem that involves dozens of different auto models, and automakers would have to maintain existing electronic tools, such as GPS navigation, and helpful services, such as OnStar.

Without a change in the mandate, the industry’s lobbyists warned, automakers could be compelled to suspend sales in the state, echoing a threat they made about the Air Resources Board’s data collection mandate earlier.

It was something of a political standoff until Senate Bill 719 emerged from backroom negotiations late last month. Just one day before the deadline, Newsom signed the bill that narrows the application of the requirement, eliminates the hard deadline for it and substitutes a series of deadlines tied to model years and “technological feasibility.”

Thus it is impossible to say for certain when, if ever, cars will be equipped with the ability to disconnect location tracking software.

These two instances imply that the conversion of the automobile from a mechanical device to an electronic one has created a bottomless well of potential issues involving privacy, governmental regulation and the politically heated topic of how California would change the way motorists are taxed once the gallonage taxes on fuels disappear, if they ever do.

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

When Should My Wife File for Spouse Benefits?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: My wife is 66 (born February 1960) and started taking Social Security retirement benefits just over one year ago at age 65. She was a stay-at-home Mom for most of her adult life. I turned 62 this past March and received my first SS payment recently for a May 2026 start. We are scheduled to meet with SSA in late July to initiate spousal benefits because my wife’s current benefits are less than 50% of mine. We also have an adult disabled son who receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security benefits (this split in benefit sources happened after my wife filed - that whole process was confusing and we don’t understand it). My question relates to spousal benefits (I was a career finance person but don’t completely understand these rules). We were going to file in July but is there any benefit to waiting until she turns 67? And will her 50% benefit be 50% of my lower benefit due to my filing at 62 or is that based on another amount? Signed: *Confused Finance Guy*

Dear Confused: First, be aware that your wife’s spousal benefit will be based on her age when she claims it, and half of your full retirement

age, or “FRA,” amount (although you claimed at 62, her benefit as your spouse will still be based on your FRA entitlement).

Because she claimed her SS retirement at 65, your wife will not get 50% of your FRA entitlement; rather she will get her own reduced SS retirement benefit (which was reduced by about 13% from her FRA entitlement) plus a “spousal boost.” The amount of that “boost” will be the difference between her own FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement, but that boost amount will also be reduced because she will be claiming in July before her FRA.

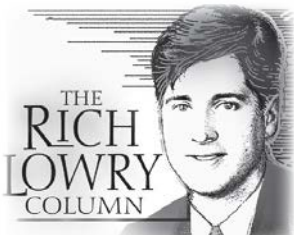
Your wife will reach her FRA in February 2027, so by claiming her spousal boost in July her boost amount will be reduced by about 5%, and the “boost” will be added to her already reduced SS retirement about. The result will be your wife’s benefit as your spouse will be less than 50% of your FRA entitlement. And, FYI, your wife will be automatically deemed to be filing for her spousal benefit (she will not be able to defer claiming it).

As your son is now collecting SS benefits based on your wife’s personal SS record, you should ask Social Security to switch him over to payments based on your record (because you have the higher SS benefit). FYI, because your son is now receiving SSI (Supplemental Security Income), the SSDI (SS disability) benefit he receives will offset by his SSI benefit, and the payment amount will consist of two sources - SSI and SSDI. Nevertheless,

he cannot get more than 50% of your SS retirement amount and will likely be affected by the Family Maximum which may further reduce his SSDI entitlement.

Your wife’s benefit as your spouse will also be affected by the “Family Maximum,” which limits how much can be paid on any one person’s SS record (on your SS record). That also means that your wife will not get a full 50% of your FRA entitlement; rather she will get less because the family maximum limits how much all your dependents can receive to somewhere between 50% and 88% of your FRA benefit amount (after subtracting your own SS entitlement). That also means that your son’s SS payment, as well as your wife’s SS payment as your spouse, will be reduced to less than 50% of your FRA entitlement. SSA will be able to guide you through the Family Maximum calculations for both your son and your wife when you meet.

To recap all of this: a) your wife will be automatically deemed to be filing for her spousal benefit; she cannot delay until her FRA. b) her amount as your spouse will be less than 50% of your SS FRA entitlement. And c) both your wife’s and your son’s SS benefit will likely be also affected by the Family Maximum and, thus, be less than half of your FRA entitlement. Nevertheless, it was likely the right decision to claim as you have, considering that your son and wife have been receiving SS benefits for some time now, and both will continue to receive more as your dependents. ★



Congress has been known to slip indefensible special-interest provisions into large must-pass bills when no one is looking. What it has never done before is use such sleight of hand to hand over control of the U.S. military to a foreign country. But that’s what we’re told is on the verge of happening on Capitol Hill.

The House just passed the National Defense Authorization Act, a sprawling \$1.15 trillion bill that supposedly includes a provision buried in it “merging” the U.S. and Israeli militaries.

This provision, known as Section 219, has united some of the most fervent anti-Israel conspiracy theorists on the right and the left in denouncing the alleged betrayal of America, from Marjorie Taylor Greene to AOC, from Tucker Carlson to Cenk Uygur.

AOC has warned that the provision “is an existential threat to American sovereignty and democracy.” Marjorie Taylor Greene has said anyone who voted for the bill “sold out the American people to a foreign country.” Tucker Carlson wants literal treason trials.

So what is the substance of Section 219? Legislation often has obfuscatory titles, but this provision is deemed, with admirable clarity, the United States-Israel Defense Technology Cooperation Initiative. It calls for the secretary of defense to designate “an executive agent”

The preposterous case against the new defense bill

to coordinate between the U.S. and Israel on “bilateral defense technology research, development, testing, evaluation, integration and industrial co-operation.” The Pentagon will come up with a plan for such cooperation and report back to Congress.

That’s it. There is nothing about merging the general staffs of the U.S. military and the IDF; nothing about creating a joint office where Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and his Israeli counterpart, Israel Katz, work together; nothing about giving Bibi Netanyahu partial control of CENTCOM.

That the United States would want a close working relationship with Israel on military technology is hardly surprising. Israel is one of the world’s most innovative societies and, given its precarious security environment, has become a leader in advanced defense technologies.

That a nefarious interpretation of the bill has gotten some traction underlines how any preposterous lie, so long as it’s about Israel, gets a hearing these days. Like many conspiracy theories, this one depends on a dark view of American society. We are allegedly so corrupt that we are handing control of our military to a foreign country without any senior military leaders or officials in an “America First” administration lodging a complaint. No wonder Tucker Carlson wants the kind of tribunals that attended the end of World War II.

At the first Nuremberg Trials, Wilhelm Keitel was found guilty of crimes against humanity

and hanged; at the second Nuremberg Trials, Mike Johnson will be found guilty of supporting mutually beneficial technology sharing between allies -- means of execution yet to be determined.

One perversity here is that Netanyahu conceives of the technological cooperation as a substitute for the U.S. military aid that he supports phasing out. In other words, enemies of Israel oppose U.S. military aid, and when a constructive plan is offered for how to go about ending it, they oppose that, too, as an Israeli plot.

Another perversity is that the U.S. should want a very close relationship with Israel on missile defense, an area where Israel excels and that, as we’ve seen in the Ukraine and Iran wars, is crucial to modern warfare. And yet, the same people who portray themselves as zealously protective of the U.S. national interest want us to turn our back on a source of technological advance.

Israel naturally fits in the Western alliance, but nations ultimately pursue their selfish interests. If we spurn the Jewish state out of irrational animus, it will inevitably look elsewhere and perhaps build a stronger relationship with China. Then we will surely be told by the critics now obsessed with ending the U.S.-Israel relationship that Israel has shown its true colors and deserves even more of our scorn.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Elk Grove High Class of 1981 Celebrates 45th

By Christina Wagner

ELK GROVE, CA (MPG) - Elk Grove High School’s Awesome Class of 1981 recently enjoyed its 45-year reunion. Festivities commenced the morning of Friday, July 24 with a golf tournament at Wildhawk Golf Course in Sacramento, followed by a casual evening of food and drink at Dust Bowl Brewery in Elk Grove.

The reunion’s main event was a dinner and dance held Saturday, July 25 at the beautiful Murieta Inn and Spa in Rancho Murieta. Smiles, laughter and hugs were abundant as classmates reconnected, shared updates with each other and made plans to keep in touch.

Ongoing entertainment during the Saturday event included a slideshow of snapshots taken during high school and other reunion events, as well as a memorabilia table stocked with yearbooks, photos, Class of ’81 souvenirs, and the ever-growing collection of “What Everyone’s Doing Now” binders. There was also a second slideshow, a quiet reminder of classmates who have passed away since graduation.



Members of the Elk Grove High School Class of 1981 pose for a photo July 25 at the Murieta Inn and Spa in Rancho Murieta. Photo courtesy of Christina Wagner

Background music, an enjoyable mix of favorites from “back in the day,” was provided by DJ Argonaut Event Audio Service during the cocktail hour and dinner.

The volume was cranked up for dancing a while later, giving those so inclined the

chance to demonstrate they can still shake it!

Thank you to everyone who helped make this a fun and very successful reunion. Ideas are already being shared for the Class of 1981’s 50th reunion. Don’t miss out; 2031 will be here sooner than we

expect!

Those who’d like to make sure they’re kept in the loop for upcoming gatherings, join the planning committee or, perhaps, simply update their contact information may do so via email to EGHS1981@gmail.com. ★

Greenfield Outage, Gate Projects, Security Among RMA Topics

Story and photos by Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)

- The recent Greenfield Communications outage, repairs to the North Gate, plans for improvements at the South Gate and the possibility of Rancho Murieta Association taking on additional security responsibilities were among the topics discussed by the RMA Board of Directors on July 21. Questions also continue to be raised about the board’s new public-comment procedure and member access to board packet materials.

Directors also adopted a rule for stand-up motorized scooters and approved an ADA-accessible ramp at Gazebo Park.

Greenfield Outage

Resident Terrence McNamara asked the board to review Greenfield Communications’ handling of the July 12 internet outage, arguing that RMA has a particular responsibility because of its contractual relationship with the company.

McNamara said the outage lasted about 2½ days and residents received their first communication about 30 hours after it began. His concern, he said, was not that a cyberattack occurred, but how long it took Greenfield to respond, restore service and communicate with customers.

“I run an IT department. I understand that cyberattacks happen, and that no service has 100% uptime,” McNamara said. “My concern isn’t the attack that occurred; it’s how long it took to mitigate and recover from it.”

He contrasted Greenfield’s response with Zeta Broadband’s handling of an outage the following weekend. McNamara said Zeta restored service in about 12 hours and communicated repeatedly with customers during the outage.

Because RMA entered into an agreement with Greenfield about nine

years ago, McNamara said the association has a responsibility to advocate for residents when service falls short. He asked the board to seek an after-action report addressing the cause of the outage, the length of the recovery, limited communications, and improvements planned for the future.

“Outages happen,” McNamara said. “What differentiates providers is how they prepare for them, communicate during them and recover from them.”

Board President Patrick O’Hern called McNamara’s concerns valid and said it would be prudent to refer them to staff to “maybe get some answers.”

Gate Projects

General Manager Vicky Lentz reported that repairs to the North Gate are continuing through RMA’s insurance carrier. An engineer assigned by the insurer has completed a scope of work, which was sent to three contractors. RMA had received one proposal and was waiting for two others before sending them to the insurer for review.

At the South Gate, staff is continuing work on improvements tentatively approved in May. Maintenance Manager Troy Schaffner said plans include fencing and gates, changes to the wall and planter boxes, the archway, electrical work and piping. A possible water feature also remains under consideration.

O’Hern said the project will be discussed at the Aug. 3 Maintenance Committee meeting and directed Schaffner to present the “entire concept” to the full board at its Aug. 18 meeting.

Security Study

Director Chris Childs said the Security Ad Hoc Committee is making progress in researching what would be involved if RMA were to establish its own security operation.

The committee, chaired by Childs, was reactivated



Rancho Murieta resident Terrence McNamara speaks at the July 21 RMA Board meeting, where he asked the association to review Greenfield Communications’ handling of the recent internet outage.



Rancho Murieta resident Brian Rosebrock asks why he wasn’t allowed to participate in the community’s July 4 parade.

in May after the Rancho Murieta Community Services District requested discussions about the feasibility of RMA assuming security functions inside the gates.

Childs said committee members divided up a long list of research assignments and returned to the July meeting with a substantial amount of work completed.

“We’ve got superstars on our committee,” Childs said.

But he said evaluating the possibility of “standing up an entire security department under an HOA” involves a large amount of detailed work, and the committee is not yet ready to provide costs.

Childs said the

committee plans to hold two community town hall meetings in December, when it expects to be ready to discuss more specific costs. “We definitely want to hear from the membership what they’re interested in, what they’re not interested in, what future costs could look like or not look like,” he said.

Public Comments, Board Packets

During her general manager’s report, Vicky Lentz said she had received comments about the recent change in the board’s member-comment procedure at meetings, but she said the issue had already been addressed and she would not discuss it further.

“Excuse me,” Board

President Patrick O’Hern responded. “We’ll get all that hammered out by the next meeting, I assure you.”

Lentz then said she also was getting questions about member access to board packet materials and that a copy of the member packet is now being placed in a binder at the meeting for members to review.

The member-comment procedure, implemented in September 2025, confines comments to an open-forum period at the beginning of the meeting instead of also allowing members to comment on individual agenda items before directors vote on them. Resident Tom Shewchuk criticized the change at the June meeting and also questioned member access to materials provided to directors.

Before Lentz joined the association in May, RMA members who received blast emails with agendas for upcoming board meetings were told they could request copies of the redacted board packets.

Scooter Rule Approved

The board unanimously approved a rule regulating stand-up motorized scooters after agreeing to align its age and helmet provisions with California law.

Director Scott Adams said he had heard concerns that adopting the license or instruction-permit requirement would mean children who already have scooters “are going to be illegal just like that.” But Adams said he could not recommend that RMA loosen the age restriction in state law, which requires that scooter users either have a learner’s permit or a driver’s license.

The board also changed a provision that would have required helmets for all riders to require them for riders under 18 instead.

Fourth of July

Resident Brian Rosebrock praised the Fourth of July celebration but questioned why he was denied permission

to ride his motorcycle in the parade on behalf of Playmakers, a nonprofit that provides free sports programs for at-risk children and children with developmental differences, when some commercial vehicles participated.

“You led the parade off with a commercial vehicle, and then there was actually burnouts at the end of the parade,” Rosebrock said.

Director John Haviland said some participants with commercial vehicles had been told to remove advertising signs and initially complied, but put the signs back on during the parade.

Later, during his Recreation Committee report, Haviland said the committee plans to modify how vehicles are pre-approved for next year’s parade and provide participants with parade instructions and restrictions when they sign up.

Haviland also said the committee received overwhelmingly positive comments about the fireworks and hopes to continue a similarly large show next year. Audience member Bill Gere also praised this year’s celebration.

Other Business

The board unanimously approved construction of an ADA-accessible ramp at the Gazebo. Childs noted that the project resulted from an issue raised by a member at an earlier meeting.

The board also appointed Director Ernie Cowles as its liaison to the Rancho Murieta Fire Safe Council. Schaffner will also participate in council meetings because of his work on home and landscape hardening to reduce wildfire risk.

The board set Nov. 19 for RMA’s annual meeting and approved other steps required in preparation for the meeting and board election.

The next RMA Board meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 18.

This story is at therivervalleytimes.com and on Facebook. ★

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SECURITY LOGS

Following is a summary of activity for the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Security Department for the following dates. Note: these log entries are condensed. For full security log details, go to the CSD website at rmcsd.com.

July 15

5:20 p.m., RMCS D Patrol conducted a follow-up investigation regarding a possible fence breach related to a call for service at 602 Yellow Bridge on July 14. During the original response, Patrol observed two female juveniles emerge from vegetation leading from Jackson Road onto the RMCC South Golf Course near the 1st fairway/restrooms.

Patrol conducted an area search and located a breach in the perimeter fence approximately two feet wide by three feet high.

The breach was located approximately 100 yards east of the South Golf Course restrooms near the 1st fairway and provided direct access from Jackson Road to the golf course. RMCC Maintenance was notified for repair.

July 16

11:51 p.m., Patrol observed a silver Toyota 4Runner parked at Lake Calero

after park hours. Citation issued.

July 17

12:11 a.m., Patrol observed a gray Toyota 4Runner parked at Lake Calero after park hours. The vehicle was in violation of RMA Rule IX, Section 2 (Park Hours). The vehicle departed shortly after Patrol’s arrival. Citation issued.

July 18

12:42 a.m., Patrol responded to a barking dog complaint near Venado Drive. The reporting party advised the barking was believed to be coming from the Conejo Court area. Upon arrival, Patrol searched the area around the reporting party's residence and nearby streets. No barking was heard, and the source of the complaint was unable to be located.

July 19

2:27 a.m., Patrol responded to a report of reckless driving near the Backyard BBQ. Upon arrival, Patrol contacted an employee who stated they had not observed or heard any reckless driving. Two vehicles, a black Hyundai and a Mercedes were parked in the lot. One employee became confrontational during the contact. A second employee advised

they would be taking the individual home. Patrol conducted an area search for the reported vehicles but was unable to locate any involved subjects.

2:46 a.m., Patrol responded to a report of a suspicious person walking in the roadway on Murieta Drive. The reporting party was the same resident from a previous call. Patrol contacted an adult male, approximately 6’1”, mid-40s, wearing gray shorts and a red striped shirt, walking on the sidewalk toward Highway 16.

July 28

12:14 a.m., Lake Clementia, Trespassing. Patrol observed a black Toyota Tacoma parked in the Lake Clementia parking lot after park hours. The guest vehicle was in violation of Rule IX, Section 2 (Park Hours). Citation issued.

4:08 a.m., First Callaway Drive and Murieta South Parkway, Stop Sign Violation. Patrol observed a red sedan fail to stop at the posted stop sign. The guest vehicle was in violation of Rule II, Section 5 (Stop Sign Violation). Citation issued.

July 29

11:04 a.m., North Gate: FedEx vehicle struck the visitor gate arm. Upon patrol’s

arrival, the vehicle had already left the scene. The gate arm was reattached and is operational.

July 30

12:24 p.m., Walk-in complaint regarding an adult male reported to be loitering near the Lake Clementia amphitheater and appearing to be transient. Patrol checked the area but was unable to locate person of interest.

10:20 p.m., Divac Court, Curfew Violation: Patrol responded to a report of juveniles speeding and creating a disturbance. Upon arrival, patrol contacted a group of seven juveniles with three vehicles: a black Ford pickup, a white Chrysler, a silver Infiniti and one golf cart parked on the street in a development area. The group was advised they were in violation of curfew and instructed to leave the area. The juveniles complied without incident and departed.

11:44 p.m., Lake Clementia, Trespassing: Patrol observed a black Hyundai parked in the Lake Clementia parking lot after park hours. Shortly after patrol arrived, a group of four individuals returned to the vehicle and left the area. The vehicle was in violation of Rule IX, Section 2 (Park Hours). Citation issued. ★



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Events open to Rancho Murieta residents, real property owners and their guests, ETC sponsors and Rancho Murieta business owners. Tickets available at Ace Hardware and ETC ticket tables.

Note: Discounted tickets for ETC Members are only available at Ace Hardware and ETC ticket tables.

Memberships: Joelle Maggio 951-544-0858

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Thank
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Farm to Fork Tickets Go on Sale Aug. 10

We hope you'll join us for the Kiwanis Farm to Fork Dinner on the Green on from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18 at the Rancho Murieta Country Club. This fundraiser benefits Turn Around Scholarships, which help students who have overcome significant challenges and made remarkable improvements in their academic performance but may not yet qualify for traditional scholarships to colleges, universities or trade schools.

Chef KC Brown will prepare a gourmet four-course dinner to be enjoyed with friends on the beautiful grounds of the country club. It's a wonderful opportunity to spend an enjoyable evening in a lovely setting while helping deserving young people continue their education.

Tickets are \$80 per person. Corkage is \$20 per bottle, including tax and gratuity. Tickets will be available online

beginning Aug. 10 at rmkiwanis.org. Those who would like to contribute to the festive ambiance by providing a table centerpiece may contact Carol Prinzo at rprinzo1962@gmail.com. For other questions, contact Jeannette Edwards at (408) 515-2636.

Corvette Club Plans Memorial Poker Run Fundraiser

The Rancho Murieta Corvette Club will host the Jerry McDonald Memorial Poker Run on Sept. 26 to raise money for its annual Thanksgiving Dinner project, which provides holiday meals to families in the River Valley area of south Sacramento County.

Named in honor of longtime club member and past president Jerry McDonald, who died in 2024, the event is open to all makes and models of vehicles, including sports cars, sedans, SUVs and trucks.

Participants will follow a scenic route

through the foothills and lower Sierra, stopping at five locations to collect playing cards in hopes of building the best poker hand. The drive concludes with a no-host lunch at Castle Oaks Golf Club, where prizes will be awarded. Written directions will be provided.

The \$30 entry fee includes two poker hands: one for the driver and one for the navigator.

Registration is due by Sept. 12. Entry forms are available by emailing pcargts@yahoo.com. Completed forms, along with a check payable to Rancho Murieta Corvettes, should be mailed to the address listed on the form.

CSD Changes August Meeting Dates

The August Rancho Murieta Community Services District Board and the Finance Committee will be meeting later in the month than usual. The board

will meet at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 26 and the Finance Committee will meet on Monday, Aug. 24.

Rancho Murieta Association Seeks Candidates for Board

The Rancho Murieta Association has issued a call for candidates for the 2026 election of directors that will be held on Nov. 19. The deadline to apply is at 5 p.m. Nov. 26. Two vacancies will be filled.

The election rules and a self-nomination form can be found on the RMA website.

RMA Board to Discuss South Gate Improvements Aug. 18

Rancho Murieta residents with questions about planned improvements at the South Gate might want to attend the Aug. 18 meeting of the Rancho Murieta Association Board of Directors, when the topic will be discussed at some length.

The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. ★

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Car & Art Show Brings Community Onto Golf Course

Story and photos
by Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)
- For the first time in several years, the Rancho Murieta Country Club used its golf course as the setting for a community event, holding its Car & Art Show July 25.

Twenty-five vehicles lined the 18th fairway for the car show, while seven local artists displayed their work in the Terrace Lounge. The event, open to all Rancho Murieta residents, continued with a barbecue buffet dinner inside the clubhouse, with additional seating on the Terrace Patio, where the Engine 4 Band performed. Membership and Events Director Chantil Russo estimated that more than 300 people attended and said the response was strong enough that the club has already scheduled next year's event.

"We are very excited to have brought it back," Russo said. "The members were so excited to have it on the 18th Fairway, and we can't wait to make this an annual event!"

The next Car & Art Show is scheduled for Sept. 19, 2027.

Event Coordinator Laura Koontz said people seemed happy to have an event back on the golf course. "The cars looked great



Ron Russo judges an entry during the Rancho Murieta Country Club's Car & Art Show on July 25. Photo by Gail Bullen



Artist Dan Gonsalves holds the airbrush he uses to create photorealistic paintings, including this portrait of a jaguar. Photo by Gail Bullen

out there," she said. "Overall, it went really well."

Koontz said the enthusiasm continued into the evening, when attendees enjoyed the Engine 4 Band and "danced the night away on our beautiful patio."

Longtime country club member Rich Carlson, who has belonged to the club for 39 years, welcomed the return of an event to the golf course.

"It's a nice little gathering with all kinds of beautiful cars from the 1930s to the 2020s," Carlson said. "Having a barbecue and a concert makes it even better."

Carlson recalled previous events held farther down the course and at the driving range.

"This is a much better venue," he said.

Carlson also praised the direction the club has taken with its activities, saying "the current staff is really trying and doing better events."

Local Artists Featured

The art show in the Terrace Lounge featured Mary Broddrick, Rocky Dunne, Rebecca Riley, Dennyce Farrell, Dave Epler, Pam Szemesi and Dan Gonsalves.

Szemesi, founder of the Rancho Murieta Fine Art Association, said the show was successful from the artists' perspective.

"The artists got a lot of positive comments, and everyone made at least one sale, which definitely makes us happy," she said.

Szemesi started the association about two years ago to promote local artists and



Twenty-five vehicles line the 18th fairway for the Rancho Murieta Country Club's Car & Art Show. Courtesy photo

provide an online presence where community members can find and purchase their work.

"The members support each other and encourage each other to thrive with their unique styles," Szemesi said.

The association has eight members who participate in group shows while also operating their own art

businesses.

Car Show Winners

The car show recognized vehicles ranging from a 1923 Ford Roadster to a 2025 Chevrolet E-Ray.

Winners were Josh Twist, 1955 Chevy Bel Air, Best Hot Rod; John Quiring, 1971 Plymouth Barracuda, Muscle Car; Gary and Teresa Silva,

1923 Ford Roadster, Pre-1935 Vintage; Dan and Pati Gonsalves, 1937 Chevrolet Pickup, Truck/SUV; Kirk Steele, 2005 Porsche, Import/European; John O'Brien, 2015 Bentley, President's Choice; and John Edmunson, 2025 Chevrolet E-Ray, People's Choice.

See more photos at therivervalleytimes.com. ★

A group of four people (three women and one man) are sitting around a wooden table outdoors, enjoying a meal. The table is set with various dishes, including salads, breads, and drinks. They are all smiling and looking at each other.

A close-up of a dish featuring avocado, eggs, and other ingredients on a plate.A view of the outdoor seating area, showing several tables and chairs with orange cushions, and large red umbrellas providing shade.A close-up of a plate of waffles topped with fresh fruit and cream.

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