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AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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**SECOND STRAIGHT
YEAR OF VEHICLE
THEFT DECLINES**



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'The Mattress Mama' is Citizen of the Year



Known affectionately by locals as "The Mattress Mama," Heather Ford has been in business for three years. Photo by Judy Andrews

By Judy Andrews

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - Each year, the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce proudly recognizes outstanding members with distinguished awards, honoring those who go above and beyond in giving back to the community.

"Being named the Fair Oaks Citizen of the Year is a top honor reserved for individuals whose contributions provide substantial benefit to the community," said Kimberley Pitillo, president and CEO of the Fair Oaks Chamber.

This year's top honor went to local business owner and philanthropist



Named the Fair Oaks Citizen of the Year, Heather Ford displays the award she received from the Fair Oaks Chamber. Photo by Michelle Massaro

Heather Ford. As an active chamber member and busy mom, Ford masterfully juggles multiple roles while maintaining a cheerful, outgoing demeanor that naturally draws people to her.

Known locally as "The Mattress Mama," Ford owns The Restful Roost, an award-winning Better Sleep Boutique at 8137 Sunset Ave., Suite 110, in Fair Oaks.

"Whether she's volunteering, supporting local events, fundraising for important causes or lending a helping hand, Heather always gives her all," declared Pitillo. "Her

Continued on page 2

**Bradshaw
Animal Shelter
Celebrates
DOGust with
Free Dog
Adoptions
Through Aug. 23**



Whether you're looking for an active walking partner, a family companion or a relaxed couch buddy, Bradshaw Animal Shelter has dogs of all ages, sizes and personalities ready for adoption. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

**Sacramento County
News Release**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Every dog deserves a birthday and a chance to celebrate it in a loving home. On Aug. 1, animal shelters across the country celebrate DOGust, the universal birthday for shelter dogs whose exact birthdays are unknown. Since many shelter pets arrive without birth records, DOGust gives them all a special day to be recognized and celebrated.

To mark the occasion, Sacramento County Bradshaw Animal Shelter is waiving adoption fees for all dogs from Aug. 1 through Aug. 23. Whether you're looking for an active walking partner, a family companion or a relaxed couch buddy, Bradshaw Animal Shelter has dogs of all ages, sizes and personalities ready for adoption.

Every adopted dog goes home spayed or neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and are ready to begin life with a new family.

Choosing adoption doesn't just change one dog's life. Every adoption creates kennel space for another animal in need and helps the shelter continue serving pets throughout Sacramento County.

Residents are encouraged to visit the shelter between Aug. 1 and Aug. 23 to meet adoptable dogs and take advantage of waived adoptions fees.

To view available dogs and learn more, visit the Bradshaw Animal Shelter website.

This DOGust, consider giving a shelter dog the best birthday gift possible, a place to call home. ★

**WE SUPPORT
OUR MILITARY**

Helping Seniors' Wishes Come True

By Thomas J. Sullivan

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - A local non-profit, Silver Wishes, is helping to impact the lives of seniors "one wish at a time."

Stephanie Berger, president/co-founder of Silver Wishes Inc. seeks to grant one-time wishes to seniors age 65 and older living in Placer and Sacramento counties, including in Citrus Heights, Orangevale, Carmichael and Fair Oaks which will impact their lives "today, tomorrow and moving forward to help ensure that they feel known and valued," she said.

Every senior has a unique story, she said, and every granted wish reflects the means to cope with the challenges they face.

And as people age, many seniors face challenges which if left unattended, can then leave them feeling isolated, overlooked or without a purpose.

Sometimes a wish fulfills



Stephanie Berger, president/co-founder of Silver Wishes Inc., holding a wish box wants to grant one-time wishes to seniors age 65 and older living in Placer County, including Citrus Heights, Orangevale, Carmichael and Fair Oaks. Photo by Thomas J. Sullivan

a lifelong dream; other times, it simply removes an obstacle that allows a senior to live with greater dignity, comfort and hope, Berger said.

Berger was inspired by

her time volunteering with Make-A-Wish Foundation to create Silver Wishes, a non-profit which could bring hope and make a difference in the lives of seniors by granting them

a one-time wish to make their lives better.

She is a published children's author, serves on the board of directors for the Lincoln Community Foundation and has volunteered for Seniors First, a non-profit that helps to deliver Meals on Wheels.

While Silver Wishes grants a wide variety of one-time wishes, the organization does not provide cash, pay bills, replace roofs, purchase vehicles or provide housing assistance.

Each wish nomination is thoughtfully reviewed by the board of directors each month, and while every request is considered with compassion, not all wishes are feasible for the organization to fulfill.

Anyone can nominate a senior for a special wish to be granted, she said.

"We're hoping to increase public awareness about Silver Wishes and how it may help seniors

Continued on page 2

Helping Seniors' Wishes Come True

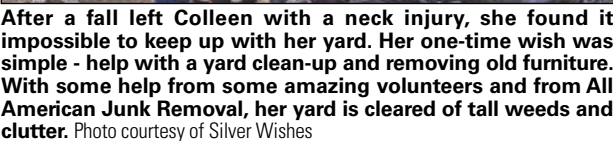
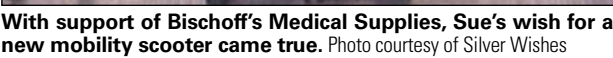
In 2023, Ford took that leap of faith by opening



The Restful Roost consistently receives positive reviews from satisfied customers and currently has more than 80 5-star reviews. Ford relies on word-of-mouth advertising and receives tremendous

For more information about The Restful Roost, visit Heather's website at www.therestfulroost.com. She can also be reached by phone or text at 916-234-6266 or by email at heather@therestfulroost.com. Store walk-ins are welcome during business hours, but customers are advised to call for an appointment before visiting, as hours may vary. ★

obstacles, and find strength during life's most difficult seasons. That's why every Silver Wish is about so much more than fulfilling a request. Whether it's restoring independence, improving safety, creating meaningful experiences, or simply reminding someone they matter, each wish



And because when one senior then feels seen, valued and remembered, the

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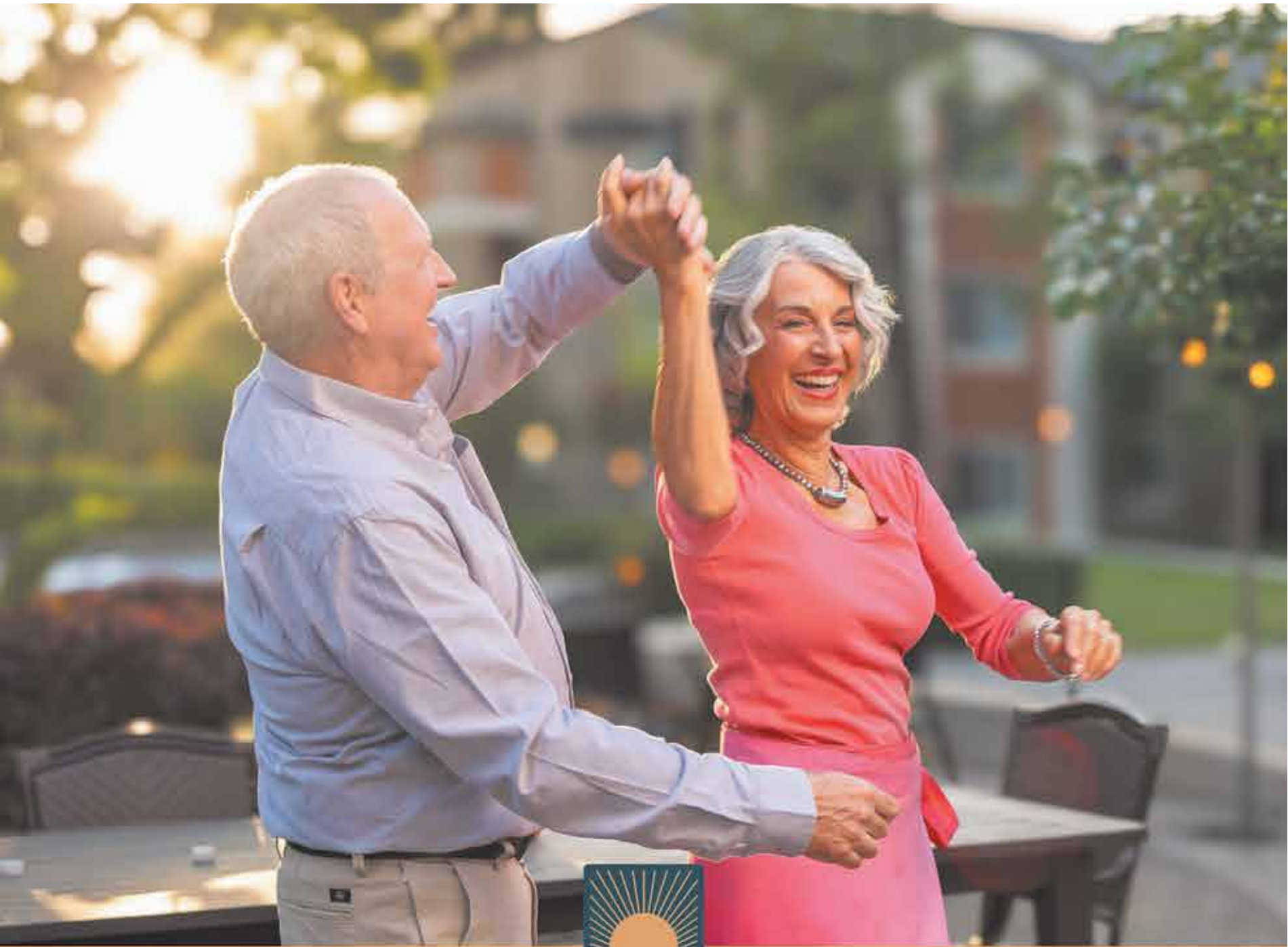
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A Starting Point

How San Juan unified’s early head start program prepared the Fowler family

San Juan Unified School District News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - It was a sunny summer morning at Marvin Marshall Preschool and Children’s Center when Vincent Fowler was walking hand in hand with his parents, eagerly asking to visit his former Early Head Start teacher, Yelena Dorozhko.

“Ms. Yelena! Ms. Yelena,” Vincent called out with excitement before running into Dorozhko’s arms for a welcoming hug.

Craig and Carolina Fowler smiled as they watched their reunion. Years after first meeting Dorozhko, the connection between their family and the educator remained just as strong.

For the Fowler family, that joyful reunion reflected something bigger: the lasting relationships San Juan Unified’s Early Head Start program builds with children and their families during some of life’s earliest and most important years.

Dorozhko was once a friendly stranger, and after teaching both of their children through San Juan Unified’s Early Head Start program, she’s become an honorary member of their family.

“She was a big influence on our lives,” shared Carolina Fowler. “Even though she’s not their teacher anymore, they want to go and say hello.”

For the Fowler family, that relationship began with a simple stroller walk past Marvin Marshall Preschool and Children’s Center.

Entering the program

Like many first-time parents, Craig and Carolina were learning as they went. They planned to wait until kindergarten before enrolling their oldest son in school, but everything changed when they decided to stop by Marvin Marshall to learn more about the programs offered.

“The staff was amazing,” recalled Craig Fowler. “They walked us through every step of the process, from the doctor’s



Parent/guardian and teacher partnerships, such as the Fowler family and Dorozhko’s, are important for student success. Photo courtesy of San Juan Unified School District

appointments and paperwork to the financial side of things.”

After joining the waitlist, the family received a call that opened a new chapter for their family. Their son, Vincent, was offered a spot at the Ralph Richardson Center, where he began his Early Head Start journey before later transferring to Marvin Marshall when an opening became available.

From team to family

The transition to Marvin Marshall came during a difficult time for the Fowler family. Vincent was experiencing a medical situation, and his parents were unsure whether he would return to school.

After sharing their concerns, the staff at Marvin Marshall worked closely with the family to understand his needs and create a plan that helped everyone feel supported.

Upon return to school, Vincent joined Dorozhko’s class, beginning a partnership that extended beyond the classroom.

One of Early Head Start’s unique features is home visits, which gave Dorozhko the opportunity to meet with the family in an environment where their son felt most comfortable. The visits allowed parents to ask questions, celebrate milestones and learn simple ways to support their children’s development at home.

One visit became especially memorable. It was during this visit that Dorozhko advised Vincent’s parents that he was ready for potty training.

“We didn’t know what we were looking for or what to do, and she said she kind of held our hands and told us what to look for, what to do,” shared Craig Fowler. “We reinforced that at home, which he

was reinforcing at school.”

For the Fowlers, moments like this showed that Early Head Start wasn’t only supporting their son, it was helping them grow as parents. When it was time for Vincent to transition into Head Start, they enrolled their younger son, Benjamin, in Early Head Start so he could begin his own journey.

A foundation for the future

Parent/guardian and teacher partnerships, such as the Fowler family and Dorozhko’s, are important for student success. A simple question is the start to a new journey.

“Go to the front office and start the conversation,” shared Craig Fowler as advice to parents.

Today, both boys continue to attend preschool as they prepare for kindergarten. Looking back, Craig and Carolina say Early Head Start gave their family much more than a place

for their children to learn. It gave them trusted educators, guidance through important milestones and the confidence to support their children’s growth during their earliest years.

As Vincent wrapped up his visit, he waved goodbye to the teacher who had become part of his family’s story. For his parents, that joyful reunion was more than a greeting; it was a reminder that a strong start can leave a lasting impact.

San Juan Unified offers several programs designed to support children and families from the very beginning. Services include home visits for pregnant mothers and families with infants, a full-day center program for toddlers ages 18 to 36 months and a full-day preschool program for children ages 3 to 5. Families can learn more about eligibility and complete an online interest form by visiting sanjuan.edu/ece. ★

Sacramento Suburban Water District Purchases Groundwater Well Contractor to Secure Scarce Expertise



SSWD Board of Directors and KPM owners group picture. From left to right: Attorney, Adam Brown; Attorney, Josh Horowitz; SSWD General Manager, Dan York; SSWD Director, Robert Wichert; SSWD Board President Craig Locke; KPM Owner, J. Hannum; KPM Owner, Kristin Hannum; SSWD Director, Jay Boatwright; SSWD Assistant General Manager, Matt Underwood; SSWD Director of Finance, Jeff Ott. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Suburban Water District

Sacramento Suburban Water District News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) announced it has purchased Kirby’s Pump and Mechanical (KPM), a California Class A General Contractor that specializes in mechanical work on groundwater well pump systems.

Licensed groundwater

well contractors are in short supply in California. Adding KPM’s expertise allows the district to maintain pumping capacity and respond quickly to repairs, both reactively and proactively.

SSWD entered into an exclusive agreement with KPM in 2023 to maintain and repair the district’s 70-plus groundwater wells for the next five years. SSWD relies on groundwater, and having exclusive

access to their services was critical to avoiding prolonged well outages.

“During the three years that KPM worked exclusively with SSWD, they’ve made a significant difference in strengthening the reliability of our water system,” said SSWD General Manager, Dan York. “Their work has restored approximately 100,000 GPM of pumping capacity. They have also rehabilitated 19 wells, upgraded

and repaired motor and electrical service and made numerous other improvements that made our operations more efficient.”

SSWD staff evaluated KPM’s performance over the initial years of the contract. It was determined that KPM could not only undertake standard well maintenance and rehabilitation but also perform a wide range of additional tasks. They also found that SSWD has the facilities

to house KPM staff and equipment.

A Board of Directors committee reviewed KPM’s performance and commissioned an independent cost-benefit analysis. The independent analysis found that SSWD would recoup the KPM purchase in under 3.5 years and achieve approximately \$7 million in cost savings over a ten-year period compared with maintaining the current contract.

“Today’s purchase of KPM marks another important moment in SSWD’s commitment to water reliability and infrastructure improvement,” said President, SSWD Board of Directors, Craig Locke. “It’s a fiscally responsible decision that strengthens our water system for our ratepayers and the community at large.”

For more information, visit sswd.org. ★

Second Straight Year of Vehicle Theft Declines



CHP officers arrested a suspect after locating and recovering a stolen vehicle. Photo courtesy of CHP Modesto



Officers intercepted a stolen vehicle before it was shipped overseas. Photo courtesy of CHP Modesto



CHP officers recovered a stolen vehicle during an enforcement stop after suspects used an online marketplace to fraudulently sell it to unsuspecting buyers. Photo courtesy of CHP Merced

California Highway Patrol News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - July is National Vehicle Theft Prevention Month, and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is reminding Californians to protect their vehicles while highlighting encouraging statewide trends. California recorded its second consecutive year of declining vehicle thefts in 2025, as the CHP continued working with local law enforcement agencies to combat organized vehicle theft through targeted enforcement and public awareness.

According to the CHP’s 2025

Vehicle Theft Fact Sheet, thieves stole more than 133,000 vehicles statewide in 2025—about 25% fewer than the 176,230 stolen in 2024.

“Vehicle theft is not a victimless crime. It fuels organized criminal activity and creates hardship for families across California. The CHP remains committed to holding offenders accountable, recovering stolen vehicles and working with our law enforcement partners to make our communities safer,” Commissioner Sean Duryee said.

On average, a vehicle was stolen in California about every four minutes in 2025.

Of the 133,372 vehicles stolen statewide last year, 84% were recovered, for a total of 111,661 vehicles. More than half of the recovered vehicles were returned to their owners in drivable condition.

The decline continues a positive trend that began in 2024, when California recorded its first year-over-year decrease in vehicle thefts since 2019. That year, Governor Gavin Newsom deployed CHP officers to work alongside local law enforcement agencies in regional crime suppression operations. Targeted enforcement in Bakersfield, San Bernardino and Oakland helped contribute to reductions

in vehicle thefts and other crime in those communities.

Building on those results, Governor Newsom expanded CHP crime-suppression operations in August 2025 by deploying additional teams to high-crime areas across California.

Several counties where CHP crime suppression teams were deployed also experienced significant declines in vehicle thefts last year. Sacramento county experienced 5,061 vehicle thefts, down 23% from 2024.

Although vehicle thefts continue to decline, motorists remain the first line of defense. The CHP encourages

Californians to reduce their risk by following a few simple safety tips. CHP advises Californians to park in well-lit areas and remove valuables or keep them out of sight. Lock your vehicle every time you leave it, use an alarm system or other anti-theft device. Never leave your vehicle unattended with the engine running and report suspicious activity to law enforcement.

Through strategic enforcement, strong partnerships and public awareness, the CHP remains committed to reducing vehicle theft, disrupting organized criminal networks and keeping California’s communities safe. ★

Water Forum Awarded Funding for Lower American River Habitat Enhancement

Federal grants will improve habitat while expanding the science that informs future river management

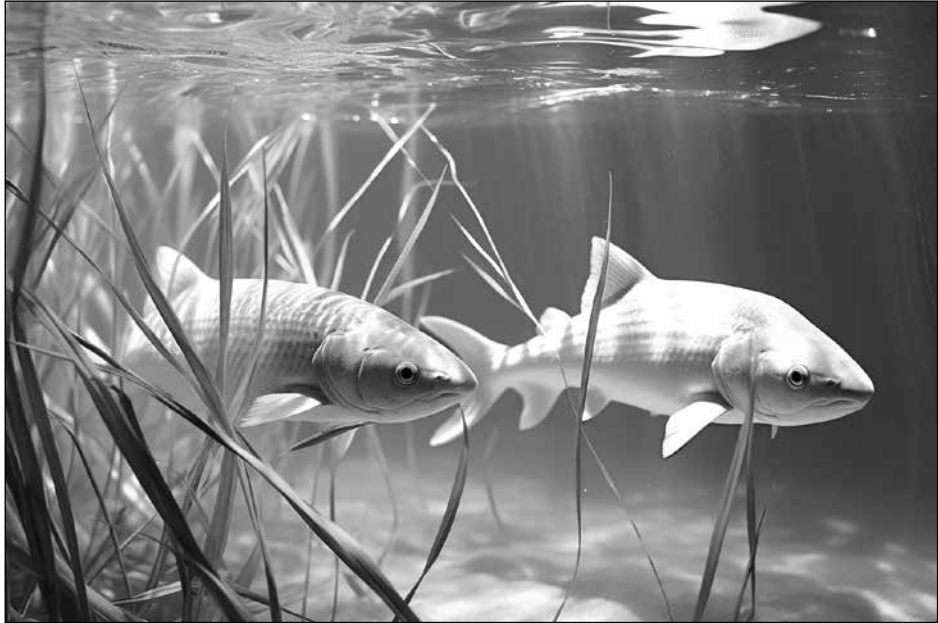
The Water Forum News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Water Forum has been awarded more than \$10.6 million in competitive federal funding to enhance habitat for salmon and steelhead in the lower American River while expanding the scientific research and monitoring that help inform future river management decisions.

“The lower American River is one of our region’s greatest natural resources,” Executive Director of the Water Forum, Ashlee Casey said. “This funding allows us to continue enhancing habitat for salmon and steelhead while using science to better understand what these fish need to survive and thrive. That knowledge helps us make better decisions that benefit the river, the fish that depend on it and the communities that rely on the river.”

The largest award—\$10 million—will support the long-term maintenance, monitoring and enhancement of habitat enhancement sites that the Water Forum has implemented along the lower American River over the past two decades.

“River habitat isn’t static,” Water Forum Habitat and Science Program Manager, Erica Bishop said. “High flows, shifting gravel, vegetation growth and other natural processes continually reshape the lower American River. What makes the Water Forum’s program unique is that we continue monitoring these sites over time and



The Water Forum has been awarded more than \$10.6 million in competitive federal funding to enhance habitat for salmon and steelhead in the lower American River while expanding the scientific research and monitoring that help inform future river management decisions. Photo designed by Magnific

use what we learn to make targeted habitat enhancements that provide the greatest benefit for salmon and steelhead.”

The project will also monitor how salmon and steelhead use enhanced habitat. It will also map the river corridor using advanced sonar and LiDAR technology to identify future habitat enhancement opportunities. And conduct scientific studies to better understand how habitat enhancement influences fish survival and reproduction.

The second award—\$627,835—will fund a major new study of Central Valley steelhead in the lower American River.

“Steelhead are much more difficult to study than salmon because their behavior and life cycles vary considerably and they are fewer in number,” Bishop said. “This study will help answer important questions about how steelhead grow, move through the river, survive and return to spawn.”

The findings will help scientists and resource managers make more informed decisions to protect this species that is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Acts. The study will complement similar research on the Stanislaus River, providing valuable comparisons between steelhead populations north and south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The awards build on more than two decades of collaboration under the Water Forum Agreement and support implementation of the Water Forum 2050 Agreement, which strengthens the region’s commitment to habitat enhancement, scientific monitoring and collaborative solutions that protect the lower American River while supporting long-term water supply reliability.

The awards, announced by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, include two of only 10 projects selected statewide through the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. The Water Forum received one of just four habitat enhancement awards and one of six scientific research awards funded this year.

Funding is provided through the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. The steelhead study grant will be administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, while the habitat enhancement grant will be administered by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. ★

MMS Strategies Honored with FBI Director’s Community Leadership Award

FBI Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On July 28, the FBI Sacramento Field Office honored MMS Strategies, LLC, a Sacramento-based consulting firm, with the local FBI Director’s Community Leadership Award (DCLA) for their collaborative partnership in support of the FBI’s mission to protect the American people and uphold the Constitution. Michelle Smira, founder and chief executive officer for MMS Strategies, accepted the award.

“MMS Strategies recognizes that we are all on the same team, working toward the same goals: Protect the American people and uphold the Constitution of the United States,” Acting Special Agent in Charge, Brian Tosh said. “Their support strengthens our ability to safeguard communities, enhance resilience and ensure that our efforts reflect the needs and priorities of the region.”

MMS Strategies is a Sacramento-based consulting firm that helps its clients think strategically, communicate effectively and find solutions. The firm prides itself

on its thorough understanding of both problems and opportunities in the region. Following participation in the FBI Citizens Academy at FBI Sacramento headquarters, MMS recognized opportunities to foster mutual understanding, improve public safety and support resilience. This partnership has the FBI to community leaders to better understand public safety concerns and community challenges, identify potential threats and effectively prepare for significant development and growth in the region.

The FBI Director’s Community Leadership Award was established in 1990 to publicly acknowledge the achievements of those working to make a difference in their communities through the promotion of education



and the prevention of crime and violence. Every year, each of the FBI’s 56 field offices selects a person or organization to receive this prestigious award to honor their achievements, emphasizing the importance of community partnerships in keeping our shared communities safe. This year’s recipients were recognized for a broad range of efforts, including building bridges between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve, combatting human trafficking and providing resources to victims and supporting local youth programs.

The FBI Sacramento Field Office serves 34 of California’s 58 counties. The FBI Sacramento Field Office community outreach program supports the FBI’s investigative mission by working to address multiple interrelated societal problems—including crime, drugs, gangs, terrorism and violence. Linking community service, prevention and law enforcement is a national trend spurred by grassroots efforts around the country, and FBI employees have joined this movement, volunteering in a wide variety of community-related efforts. ★

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. ★



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 cooperation.” 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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PoppTalk

With Mary Jane Popp

Be a Dog with a Bone

You may not be the biggest or the prettiest dog in the pack, but if you the secrets to success, fulfillment, and happiness, then **Peggy McColl** says you can grab it all with gusto. Her bone is her dream, and you can have yours too with her book **“Be A Dog With A Bone.”** Peggy says dogs can teach us a lot about reaching our goals, so roll over the following tips and find out how to grab your own goals and dreams and roll in the bliss of success and contentment.

- 1. WHAT IS YOUR BONE...YOUR GOAL?** A dog knows a good bone when he sees one and goes for it. Chomp on your goal, chew it over, then grab hold and ignore that little voice that says you can’t.
- 2. BE A LITTLE DOG WITH A BIG ATTITUDE.** Don’t think small. Dream big! Be excited about your goal, feel entitled to achieving it, and experience the feelings you’d feel if you’d already reached it. Think little lap dogs barking at a big German Shepard,
- 3. GET OUT OF THE DOGHOUSE.** Be courageous and believe in yourself. See challenging times as a terrific opportunity to leave behind the security of what you once knew and look again at what you might create for yourself.
- 4. ONLY INGEST THINGS THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOU.** A little poison called negativity can strongly affect you. If looking at all the obstacles facing you is making you sad, angry, or scared, stop!
- 5. LEARN NEW TRICKS.** We’re

always having to learn something new. Stop thinking “it’s too late” or “I’m too old.”

- 6. BARK FOR WHAT YOU WANT.** Don’t be shy. Speak up for yourself. If you want people to help you, approach them and ask.
- 7. DON’T CHASE YOUR TALE.** Let go of behaviors that are not serving you anymore. Take a look at your habits that are holding you back, and let go of them.
- 8. WHEN YOU THINK YOU’VE REACHED THE END OF YOUR LEASH, GIVE YOURSELF A LITTLE MORE LEASH TO WORK WITH.** Think positive thoughts and stretch past your comfort zone. Stop believing that your power to change your life is limited.
- 9. WAG YOUR TALE!** The more you feel happiness and appreciation for what you have, the easier it will be to achieve your goal. Look at all that’s working in your life already.
- 10. KEEP YOUR NOSE WET.** Stay healthy. You’ll need to feel good and have stamina if you want to reach your goals. Eat well, exercise, and get your rest...take a nap.

And because we have all been attentive, Peggy has a bonus treat for us!

Lap up your success. Get excited and celebrate your successes! If you do, it will lead to more successes! A dog can be deliriously happy over a bowl of water, and lap it up eagerly!

So lap up life and hang on to your bone with much relish and of course **BE HAPPY!** ★

Unsecured Property Tax Due Aug. 31

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Annual bills for Sacramento County unsecured personal property taxes for fiscal year 2026-27 were mailed on July 17 and are payable without delinquent penalties through Aug. 31.

Unsecured property tax bills are mailed to all owners of unsecured property in July of each year. If you owned unsecured property in Sacramento County, such as a boat or aircraft, or if you leased or owned fixtures and equipment related to a business on Jan. 1 and do not receive a tax bill by Aug. 8, contact the Sacramento County Tax Collector’s Unsecured Property Tax Unit at 916-874-7833, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Nonreceipt of a tax bill does not excuse delinquency or allow the tax collector to

cancel penalties or collection costs.

Tax bills become delinquent if not paid in the Tax Collector’s Office by 5 p.m. on Aug. 31, or received by mail bearing a postmark of Aug. 31.

If the tax bill is not paid by the delinquency date, a 10% penalty and collection cost will be added. DMV registration may be withheld on watercraft if unsecured property taxes are reported delinquent. If a tax bill remains unpaid after Oct. 31, additional collection costs and monthly penalties at the rate of 1.5% will be added to the base tax.

Payments may be made by mail or in person at the County Tax Collector’s Office located at 700 H St., Room 1710, Sacramento, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excluded. For credit/debit or eCheck payments, visit county-taxes.net/sacramento/property-tax. ★

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Ask

DR. UNIVERSE

Why do mosquitoes bite humans for blood when they could just bite animals for blood?

- Neve, 12, Ohio

Dear Neve,

When I sit around a campfire with my human friends, we’re all swatting mosquitoes.

I asked my friend Jeb Owen about that. He’s an insect scientist at Washington State University.

He told me that most mosquitoes bite non-human animals.

“A very small number of species bite people,” Owen said. “Most mosquitoes are relatively specific. They bite a narrow range of animal types.”

There are nearly 4,000 species of mosquitoes in the world. Usually, they sip nectar from flowers. But sometimes female mosquitoes crave something special: a blood meal. They need the proteins, fats and iron in blood to make eggs.

Animal blood isn’t all the same. It has different amounts of water, fats and cells. It always has proteins made of amino acids. But the mix of amino acids is different in different animals.

A mosquito that normally feeds on bird blood might not get the right amino acids from drinking human blood. That might make it hard or impossible to make eggs.

So, mosquitoes have adapted to feed on specific animals.

First, mosquitoes need to find the right animal. They sniff out the carbon dioxide that animals exhale.

“They fly upwind through that cloud of CO2, kind of like a hound dog tracking the scent of an animal on the ground,” Owen said. “They’re tracking our scent through the air until they get close enough to smell other smells that we have.”

Those smells are volatile chemicals. Your mix of volatile chemicals comes from what you eat and what microbes live on

your skin.

Mammals like us smell different from birds. Birds smell different from reptiles or amphibians. Even different species in the same group emit different scents.

A mosquito knows the correct smell for its host animal. So, when the receptors on its antennae and mouthparts pick up the right combo of smells, it locks in on the target.

Now it’s time for the mosquito to get to work.

“When mosquitoes arrive, they use these long cutting mouthparts to cut a hole into the skin and the blood vessels to extract blood,” Owen said. “When that happens, there are essentially alarm signals that go off in the body at the cellular level. Those particular responses are unique among different animals.”

The alarms send messages in the animal’s body. They tell it to clot the blood. They urge the immune system to crank out fighter cells. That’s important because some mosquitoes carry pathogens that can make you sick.

When the body responds to those alarms, the bite gets red and itchy. That might make the

animal swat the mosquito.

That’s not great for the mosquito.

So, mosquitoes adapted their saliva. It contains chemicals that stop clotting and slow down the immune response. It also blocks the pain of the bite.

“Mosquitoes have evolved a salivary pharmacy to block or suppress all of your defenses,” Owen said. “Each animal species has a unique tweak on its defenses. If a mosquito wants to use blood from that animal, it has to evolve salivary chemistry to deal with that animal’s defenses. That means her salivary chemistry only works for that animal.”

Nobody loves getting bit by a mosquito. But they’re important members of our ecosystem. They pollinate and keep some animal populations in check. They make a great dinner for birds, fish and other animals. And the baby mosquitoes that hatch from those blood-fed eggs will cycle nutrients in our water.

They’re complicated animals. And they really leave me itching to know more about them.

Sincerely,

Dr. Universe

Top left: These female mosquitoes adapted to feed on frog blood. Like chicken eggs, mosquito eggs contain a yolk to nourish the baby mosquitoes. Top Right: Most of the time, female mosquitoes drink flower nectar. That’s all male mosquitoes ever eat. Nobody knows exactly how mosquitoes adapted to sometimes feed on blood. Abhishek Mishra CC 3.0

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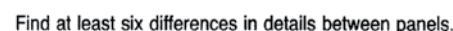
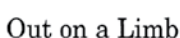
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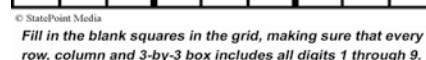
CLUES

ACROSS

11. Thanksgiving tubers
5. _____ Patrol
8. Boochoos
12. Burn soothing plant
13. "Frat Pack" member
Wilson
14. _____ ligation
15. Sound an alarm
16. Marvin, Majors and
Greenwood
17. O. Henry's specialty
18. "Happy Birthday, Mr.
_____"
20. Sporting sword
21. Blue pencil marks
22. Knight's title
23. "One for every year
26. Custodian
30. Be in debt
31. Stay clear of
34. Accompanies relief
35. #1 Down, pl.
37. Owned
38. Subway in Paris
39. Shore extension
40. Per _____
42. Even, poetic
43. City in Netherlands
44. Like voice during
laryngitis
47. Barents or Laptev,
e.g.
48. Noah's passengers
50. Type of code
52. "Astrological sign
for those born on New
Year's Eve
56. Black one and white
one, for Tchaikovsky
57. Crematorium jars
58. "The Odyssey," e.g.
59. Make this, not waste
60. Let it stand, to
proofreader
61. Governmental space
agency, acr.
62. The windows to
the soul
63. Money in Myanmar
64. Theodora or
Dorothea

DOWN

1. Bark or yelp
2. Relating to armpit
3. *"...and many ____"
4. Detected
5. *Like 16
6. Hiking sandals of a certain brand
7. Of the present month
8. *Greeting to the birthday honoree, sometimes
9. Bassoon cousin
10. Misery cause
11. Canny
12. Dated tunes
14. Make a logical connection (2 words)
19. Runs without moving
22. Lumberjack's tool
23. Another word for nutria
24. Look forward to
25. Not as old
26. George Lucas' warrior-monk
27. Concentration of a solution lab test
28. Shrek and Fiona, e.g.
29. Cotes du _____, wine region
32. Online room
33. As opposed to mishap
36. *"...We want your presence, not your ____"
38. New Zealandian
- minority
40. Cuban dance syllable
41. *Quench it with punch
44. Precedes desist
46. Antonym of descent
48. *Traditional birthday celebration
49. Sleeper's woe
50. Up, up and there
51. Level a building
52. Crescent point
53. Colorful fish
54. Greet the judge, e.g.
55. March Madness org.
56. Pronoun

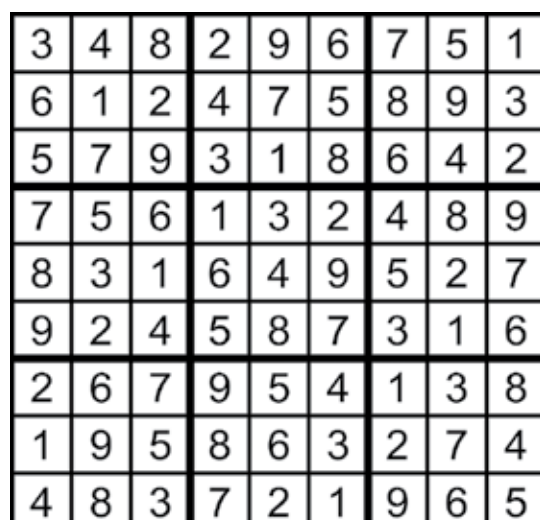


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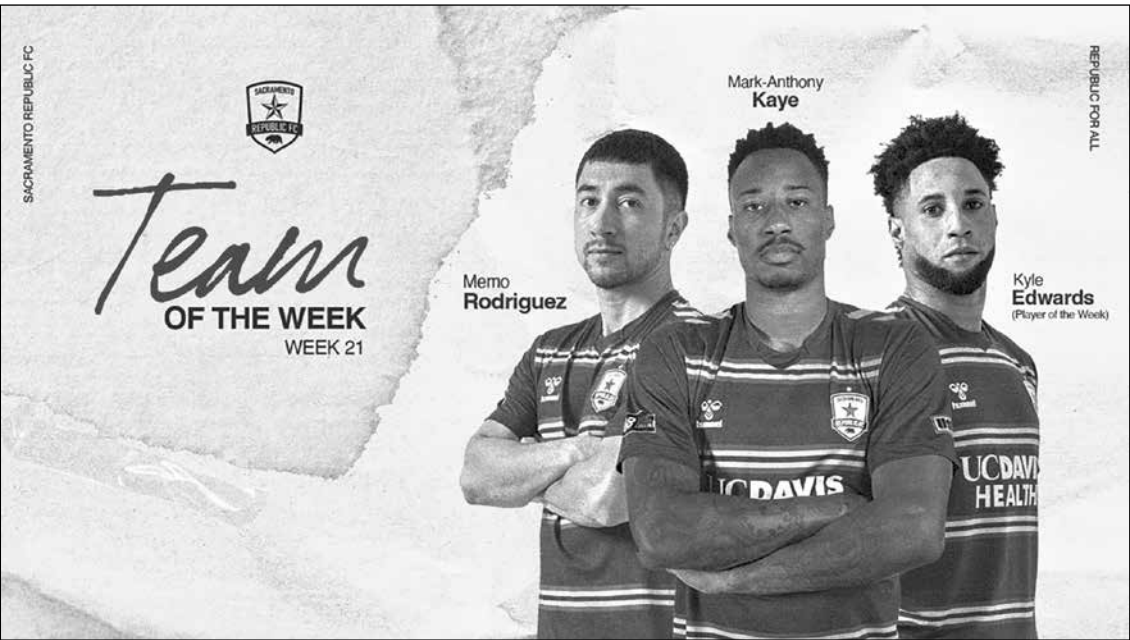


Dominant Rivalry Win Earns Three Team of the Week Selections

Republic FC Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On July 28, the USL Championship announced the Week 21 Team of the Week. Among the top players from the week, Republic FC led the way with three selections as Kyle Edwards, Memo Rodriguez and Mark-Anthony Kaye added their names to the club’s growing list of league honors. Edwards was also selected as the Player of the Week, his first time securing the award since 2021.

The three offseason additions each put in a strong performance to lift Sacramento in Saturday’s 3-1 win over Northern California foe Oakland Roots, the team’s fourth consecutive win in Oakland. Memo Rodriguez got Republic FC on the board first in the 19th minute. Jack Gurr delivered a low cross from the left and Rodriguez kept his composure as he was surrounded by two defenders to make a one-touch tap into goal for



The USL Championship announced the Week 21 Team of the Week including Republic FC players Kyle Edwards, Memo Rodriguez and Mark-Anthony. Photo courtesy of Republic FC

his first scoring contribution for Republic FC.

Oakland answered quickly with an equalizer, but that would prove to be their only chance on goal all night. From then on, it

was all Republic as the club put on an unrelenting press that kept the Roots under constant pressure. Mark-Anthony Kaye was a disruptor in the midfield all night with 9 of 10 duels won, six possessions

won and three tackles won. The veteran midfielder has now been selected to back-to-back Team of the Week rosters.

The press paid dividends when Kyle Edwards took the lead for

good in the 75th minute, just six minutes after subbing on. A shot from Blake Willey forced the goalkeeper to make a save, but the rebound only went as far as a wide-open Edwards, who got the jump and volleyed a shot to the back of the net.

Edwards later put the exclamation point on the match in stoppage time. Building on his goal earlier in the night, Memo Rodriguez lofted a cross to Edwards on the far side. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines international opened his hips to control the ball with a touch before firing a low shot to the corner. Edwards now leads Republic FC with five regular season goals and seven across all competitions. Last season, he set a new league record for goals off the bench in a single season and is now just one shy of tying the all-time record for substitute goals.

Republic FC is currently on a three-game undefeated streak, as of press time. Tickets are available at [SacPublicFC.com](https://sacpublicfc.com). ★

Katherine Zhu Wins 56th Sacramento County Women’s Golf Championship at Mather Golf

Sacramento Golf Council News Release

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - The 56th Sacramento County Women’s Golf Championship took place July 25 to 26, at Mather Golf Course in Rancho Cordova, drawing top female amateur golfers from around the region.

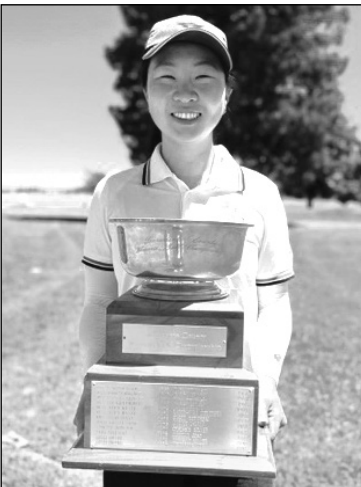
Katherine Zhu emerged as the 2026 Sacramento County Women’s Champion, capturing the Championship Flight title with

a score of 69/65/134, over Emily Guan with a score of 70/65/135.

Karen Garcia won the Senior Division with a score of 74/71/145. In the Senior Handicap Division, Vivian French with a 13 handicap claimed victory with a gross score of 135.

The Championship Flight featured golfers with a handicap index of 6.6 or less. Senior Flight players age 50 and up.

Tournament chairman was Linda Bigler of the Sacramento Golf Council.



★ Katherine Zhu emerges as the 2026 Sacramento County Women’s Champion at the Women’s Golf Championship. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council



Karen Garcia won the senior division at the Sacramento County Women’s Golf Championship. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council



Vivian French wins the Senior Handicap Division in Sacramento County Women’s Golf Championship. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council

Men’s Soccer Welcomes Magaña to the Roster for 2026



Washington native Jesus Magaña comes to Northern California after spending his true freshman season at Western Oregon in 2025. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Athletics

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento State men’s soccer team made another addition to its roster for 2026, welcoming Washington native Jesus Magaña to the fold, Interim Head Coach Matt McDougall announced on Monday, July 27.

“We are extremely excited to have Jesus join our Sacramento State men’s soccer family,” McDougall said. “Jesus is a hardworking forward that will push to make an immediate impact with his work rate and ability to be dynamic in the final third of the field. He had a very successful club career, winning two ENCL National Championships with the Crossfire Premier Soccer Club in Washington and we look forward to him bringing that winning experience to our program this fall.”

Fans of the Hornets’ men’s soccer program may recognize the last name as Jesus’ older brother, Francisco, was a four-year letter winner at Sacramento State from 2019-23, earning All-Big West Conference honors as a junior in 2022 and

finishing his Hornet career with nine goals and five assists.

Magaña comes to Northern California after spending his true freshman season at Western Oregon in 2025, appearing in five matches and making one start as the Wolves finished 11-5-4 overall en route to a Great Northwest Athletic Conference tournament title and a NCAA Division II Tournament berth. He put two of his four shot attempts on frame, eventually netting his first collegiate goal against St. Martin’s while playing 26 minutes.

That followed a senior season at Auburn Senior HS that saw him pick up All-North Puget Sound League first team honors after scoring 10 goals in 2024 and a decorated club career with the Crossfire Premier ECNL squad.

In five years with Crossfire, Magaña helped the club to a pair of ECNL Northwest championships and back-to-back ECNL National Championships in 2024-25. He finished with five assists during the run to the 2024 championship and added a goal and two assists en route to the crown in 2025. ★

Mountain West Announces Credit Union 1 Basketball Championships Brackets

UC Davis Athletics News Release

LAS VEGAS, CA (MPG) - The Mountain West announced the 2027 Credit Union 1 Mountain West Basketball Championships presented by Palms Casino Resort brackets on Thursday, featuring all 10 men’s and women’s teams competing at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas from Sunday, March 7, to Saturday, March 13.

“We look forward to two premier championships at the Thomas & Mack Center in 2027,” said MW Commissioner Gloria Nevarez. “In evaluating our men’s and women’s championship formats, we considered the NCAA tournament’s expanded field in addition to maximizing postseason opportunities for Mountain West teams and providing our student-athletes with meaningful postseason competition. This format enhances the championship experience by creating additional opportunities to compete, extend seasons, and be part of the excitement and visibility that comes with postseason basketball in Las Vegas. As we do every year, we will continue to study the behavior of both the men’s and women’s NCAA basketball selection committees



“We look forward to two premier championships at the Thomas & Mack Center in 2027,” said MW Commissioner Gloria Nevarez. Photo designed by Magnific

to ensure that our championship format gives the Mountain West the best opportunity to secure multiple NCAA bids at the highest seeds possible.”

As MW basketball enters a new era with three new members, the 2027 basketball championship formats maximize national television exposure for the Mountain West, while also providing a format that prioritizes travel planning for its loyal fans who attend annually.

The women’s tournament begins on Sunday, March 7, and concludes on Wednesday, March 10, with the championship game. The men’s tournament will begin on Wednesday, March 10, and conclude with the champion crowned on Saturday, March 13.

Seeding for the post-season championship is determined by the regular

season with the top six seeds receiving a bye into the quarterfinals on the second day of competition.

The updated bracket will begin the Conference tournament with the No. 7 seed playing the No. 10 seed and the No. 8 seed matching up with the No. 9 seed in the first-round games. The quarterfinals feature the No. 1 seed against the winner of game one, the No. 4 seed versus the No. 5 seed, the No. 3 seed playing the No. 6 seed and the No. 2 seed facing off with the winner of game two.

The semifinals will feature the winners from the day before with the winners of each semifinal squaring off for the championship title and the league’s automatic berth to the NCAA tournament.

The Mountain West basketball championships will air on a combination of CBS, CBS Sports Network and MW+. Tip times and network designations will be released at a later date.

Mountain West basketball is Built Bold. Six MW women’s basketball programs have appeared in the postseason over the last two seasons, while MW men’s basketball has sent four or more teams to the NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship each of the last five years, including a league record six in 2024. ★

Summer Fun Run in the Books

By Abbey Wicks

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - Families with young children flocked to Phoenix Park on Saturday, July 25 for the annual Summer Fun Run sponsored by the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District (FORPD).

Along the 1.2-mile course, participants encountered a series of obstacles including an inflatable water slide, color stations, a goo gauntlet and other interactive challenges. Volunteers staffed obstacle stations and helped ensure participant safety.

The Human Car Wash presented by Waterfly Car Wash was one young participant's favorite obstacle. Others enjoyed the Dirt Derby Dash, which utilized the park's bicycle park and encouraged participants to conquer rolling dirt mounds, balance beams, twists, turns and rugged terrain.

To embrace the spirit of summer fun, runners were encouraged to wear vibrant colors, tie dye or come dressed in matching attire. Many runners ended the race covered in



Race participants cross the finish line. Photo by Abbey Wicks

colored goo and dust, while others were drenched from water activations. By noon, temperatures were nearing the 90s.

After crossing the finish line, participants enjoyed an ice cream treat and party in the park. Booths from Fair Oaks Family Taekwondo, FORPD, Stretch Zone and Waterfly Car Wash provided information, resources and community connection.

According to recreation manager Nick Davison, there were a

total of 256 volunteers and eight runners at this year's event. The event increased by about 10 percent from last year, the district reported. Cost to participate ranged from \$20 to \$30, depending on the time of registration.

The district's goal with the Summer Fun Run is to provide a fun, active community event that encourages outdoor recreation, brings families and neighbors together, and creates positive experiences in our parks, Davison said.



The 1.2-mile course featured obstacles including an inflatable water slide, color stations, a goo gauntlet and other interactive challenges. Photo by Abbey Wicks

The district sponsors additional running events throughout the year, including the Lake Natoma Trail Run which took place in June and offered 5K and 10K races.

Summer events will continue in Fair Oaks. The youth NFL flag football league returns Aug. 15 for boys and girls ages 6-14.

The Dueling Pianos fundraiser benefiting the Don Ralls Memorial Scholarship will take place on Sept. 12. The event, which brings together some

of the region's finest pianists for head-to-head face-offs, is intended for adults 18 and older.

The 21st Annual Fair Oaks Chicken festival returns Sept. 19. Known as one of the district's largest events each year, the festival brings a day of family-friendly activities, craft and community vendors, live music and more to Fair Oaks Park each fall.

For more information and a full calendar of events, visit: www.forpd.org/. ★

Ready for the Call

Metro Fire new training facility opens with a focus on preparedness and partnership

By Ornella Rossi

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - When residents call 911 during a wildfire, medical emergency or major disaster, the response often depends on training completed long before the emergency begins. The firefighters who will protect the Sacramento region for decades to come now have a new place to learn their craft.

Sacramento Metro-politan Fire District officially opened the Zinfandel First Responder Training Facility on June 25 at 3801 Zinfandel Drive, marking a major investment in firefighter training, regional collaboration and public safety for the more than 750,000 residents served throughout Sacramento and Placer counties.

The new campus brings Metro Fire's Training Division and Recruit Academies together in one location for the first time, creating a centralized

environment where recruits, firefighters, paramedics and specialized teams can train using realistic, hands-on scenarios.

"The opening of the Zinfandel First Responder Training Facility represents far more than a new building," Metro Fire Chief Adam House said. "It reflects Metro Fire's long-term commitment to excellence, preparedness and the communities we serve."

House said the facility will help strengthen regional readiness while ensuring firefighters are prepared to respond to increasingly complex emergencies, including wildfires, technical rescues, hazardous materials incidents and medical emergencies.

The purpose-built campus integrates classroom instruction, physical fitness training, hands-on exercises and mentorship opportunities in a single location. According to House, the approach creates a

more consistent and efficient training experience while exposing recruits to realistic emergency situations before they encounter them in the field.

Metro Fire officials said the facility was also designed with regional partnerships in mind. Agencies from across the area will have opportunities to train together, improving communication and coordination before responding to large-scale emergencies.

"From the beginning, this facility was envisioned as more than a Metro Fire asset," House said. "It creates opportunities for agencies throughout the region to train together before responding together."

The campus is already serving its first recruit class. Recruit Academy Class 26-1 became the first group of firefighter trainees to call the facility home.

House said the class represents



Metro Fire officials said the facility was also designed with regional partnerships in mind. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

the future of the profession and the beginning of the facility's long-term impact.

"For decades to come, thousands of firefighters and first responders will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to serve our communities from this campus," House said. "That's the lasting legacy

of this investment, not the building itself, but the people who will train here and the lives they'll protect throughout their careers."

The training center is expected to serve firefighters and emergency personnel throughout their careers while helping strengthen public safety across the Sacramento region. ★



The training center is expected to serve firefighters and emergency personnel throughout their careers while helping strengthen public safety across the Sacramento region. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District



Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District officially opened the Zinfandel First Responder Training Facility on June 25 at 3801 Zinfandel Drive. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

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Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
Sacramento Field Office
News Release

On Oct. 24, 2017, a federal arrest

Anyone with information that may aid in these cases may contact their local FBI office, United States embassy, or submit information online at tips.fbi.gov. The FBI does not confirm the identity of individuals who provide information to the FBI and tips from the public remain a valuable tool for preventing, detecting and deterring crime. ★



By Josh Cook

This is not about abandoning all high-end platforms. It is about recognizing that the force needs both and cannot afford to shoot down \$16,000 drones with \$ 6 million missiles.

The Ukrainians adapted because they had to, because the war was on their doorstep. We should adapt our processes before that happens. ★

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