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SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Pocket News

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SEPTEMBER 11, 2026

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Kids Will Get Muddy for a Good Cause



The Adventure Playground serves 7,000 kids a year with hands-on physical play: building forts, climbing trees, using tools and caring for animals, with computer screens forbidden. Photo courtesy of Fairytale Town

Fairytale Town News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Kids will climb obstacles, drag tires and crawl through mud pits at the annual Dignity Health Dirty Kid Obstacle Race, hosted by Sacramento Adventure Playground, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 10-11.

The Adventure Playground is located at the Maple Neighborhood Center, 3301 37th Ave. in South Sacramento.

Kids 4-15 – and even some adults – will be challenged by a demanding course with numerous physical obstacles: climbing over walls, jumping haybales, crawling through a mud pit, crawling through tubes, navigating

balance beams and dragging tires. Course length, obstacles and difficulty adjust with age. The race is both fun and an important lesson in perseverance!

The race is preceded by the Dirty Kid Obstacle Race from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 20 at Fairytale Town, which is serving as a fantastic

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Celebrating Both Liberty and Charity

Capitol Rose Garden Hosts Distribution of 40,000 Pounds of Food



Parked on 15th street, an America250 semitruck unloaded commodities such as rice, peanut butter, potations, flour, sugar, pudding, carrots, onions, pasta, tomato sauce and other staples. Photo by Ryley Metten

By Ryley Metten

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - What better way to celebrate the 250th anniversary of America than to give back to the many communities in our country?

On Tuesday, Aug. 25, an America250 truck parked at the

State Capitol Park World Peace Rose Garden on 15th Street and delivered 40,000 pounds of food to local non-profits. The morning drop-off kicked off a larger Sacramento County distribution of over 150,000 pounds of food.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-Saints has collaborated

with America250 to deliver 250 truckloads of food to cities in all 50 states. As a result of this compassionate effort, communities all around California will receive about 100 food trucks.

Robin Cook, a western states spokeswoman for the Church of

Continued on page 5

Fifteen Years Serving the Pocket



Xai Lor opened iYa Taekwondo in 2011. Five years later, She was diagnosed with cancer. This month, the school turns 15. Photo courtesy of Xai Lor

iYa Taekwondo News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On most evenings at 7385 Greenhaven Drive, Xai Lor stands at the front of the class and watches children kick, yell, and grow up. Some are 5 and still learning to skip and kick. Others have been with her long enough to become black belts themselves.

One recent evening, a younger student fought to control his impulses. Before an instructor could reach him, a teenage black belt walked over, stood next to him, and calmed him down.

No one told him to.

That moment – more than a trophy or a championship – is why Lor has spent 15 years here. This month she is inviting the neighborhood to come see it: iYa Taekwondo marks its 15th anniversary with a community potluck on Saturday, Sept. 12, followed by Spirit Week from Sept. 14 through 18 and an open house for former students, neighbors and families.

To understand what 15 years means to her, though, you have to go back much farther than Greenhaven Drive.

The Crossing

Lor was 3 years old when her family fled Laos. She remembers pieces of that night: darkness, moving water, being carried, and the urgency in her mother’s voice.

“Hurry, or they will kill us.”

The family crossed the Mekong River, reached a refugee camp and eventually began another journey to Northern California. When Lor arrived in

Continued on page 3

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Messenger Publishing Group

Fifteen Years Serving the Pocket

Continued from page 1

America, she knew not a single word of English. She had no idea then that starting over would become the recurring theme of her life. She learned the language and the culture, and in college she found Taekwondo, which taught her that strength was not how hard a person could kick, but the willingness to get back up.

Building It

iYa Taekwondo opened in 2011, and it did not look like much. Classes started at Yav Pem Suab Academy, moved into a cafeteria, and only later found a permanent home on Greenhaven Drive. Lor raised three children on her own, and they grew up alongside the business: homework at the school, training on the mat, watching their mother teach classes and keep a family moving at the same time.

One student became 10. Ten became dozens. Families told other families. Thousands of students have passed through her doors since. Today iYa serves more than 200 active students, teaching poomsae, Olympic-style sparring, self-defense and leadership development.

Body, Mind and Spirit

Ask Lor what makes Taekwondo different from the other activities a Pocket family might choose, and she does not begin with

kicking. Most youth sports train the body and hope the rest follows. Taekwondo treats the body, the mind and the spirit as three things that have to be trained on purpose, in the same hour, or the training is incomplete. The body is the visible part: balance, coordination, conditioning, the discipline of controlling your own weight in space. The mind is the part parents notice at home. A student learning a form has to hold a long sequence in their head, find the step they got wrong, and stay with something that is not yet working. That habit does not stay on the mat. It shows up over a math worksheet. And the spirit is written directly into the curriculum. Courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, indomitable spirit and focus are not a poster on the wall at iYa. They are recited, taught, tested and required for promotion. A student cannot advance on athleticism alone. Then there is what the sport does not do. There is no bench and no cut list. No child sits out a season waiting to be noticed, and no one is measured against the fastest kid in the room; a student’s only opponent is their own last attempt. “Martial arts is not just training,” Lor says. “It’s a foundation for success, a mindset for achievement and a lifelong path to personal excellence.” Parents describe it more



Xai Lor, center, poses with students. Today iYa serves more than 200 active students, teaching poomsae, Olympic-style sparring, self-defense and leadership development. Photo courtesy of Xai Lor

plainly. A shy child starts speaking up. A student who quits easily starts finishing hard things.

‘You Have Cancer’

Then, five years after the school opened, Lor heard the words no parent or business owner is prepared to hear. The timing mattered. iYa was young, still growing and could not run without her. Cancer did not arrive after everything was safely established. It arrived in the middle of building it. Lor would face metastatic breast cancer, and the following year, metastatic colon cancer, along with surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation and years of treatment. And still, everything else kept moving. Her children needed their mother. Students kept arriving for class. The doors had to open. For years, she had asked students to recite

“indomitable spirit” and told them perseverance means continuing when something becomes hard. Now the same question was being put to her. Would she continue? She did. She survived both cancers, and the school survived with her. A decade later, iYa is turning 15: a number that for Lor marks every moment the story could have ended and didn’t. “We are here,” she says. “We’re still growing. We’re still teaching. We’re still serving families.”

The Next Chapter

Lor is writing a book about that journey, titled “Indomitable Spirit.” The phrase she uses with students is shorter: Learn it. Live it. Which is why a teenager calming a younger student is not a small thing in that room. She is not treating 15 years as a finish line. After a career spent teaching

people to be physically and mentally prepared, Lor has entered the financial services and life insurance field. The two may sound unrelated until you hear where the idea came from. During treatment, Lor was not only wondering whether she would survive. What happens to my children if something happens to me? What happens to everything I spent years building? Cancer taught her that a family can be strong, hard-working and loving and still be one unexpected event away from losing its footing. She began to see financial protection as another form of self-defense. “In martial arts, you don’t wait until the emergency happens to learn how to respond,” Lor says. “You prepare beforehand. I believe families should have the same opportunity financially.”

For 15 years, she has worked on making children stronger. Now she wants to help protect the families standing behind them. There are many places this story could have stopped. At the Mekong River. While building a business alone with three children. When cancer arrived five years in. It didn’t. On Greenhaven Drive, the children are still lining up, and Lor is still standing at the front of the room: still teaching, still building, still beginning again, right here in the Pocket. iYa Taekwondo is located at 7385 Greenhaven Drive, Suite 2, Sacramento. The school will hold its 15th Anniversary Potluck on Sept. 12 and Spirit Week Sept. 14-18, with a community open house. For information, call (916) 382-9058 or visit iyatkd.com. ★

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Revere Court Harvest Festival Raises Alzheimer’s Awareness

Revere Court
Memory Care
News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Revere Court Memory Care’s Annual Harvest Festival is a celebration at the end of Assisted Living Week. Assisted Living week is a wonderful opportunity to recognize the importance of assisted living and the essential role it plays in the long-term care continuum. It celebrates the unique journeys, stories, and contributions of residents while honoring the dedicated caregivers and staff.

At this event, from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18 at 7707 Rush River Drive, we will offer games, a petting zoo, live entertainment by local jazz entertainer Nat Brown, delicious festival foods (for

purchase with donation to the Alzheimer’s Association), “Revere Court Rebel” Walk to End Alzheimer’s T-Shirt sales and sign up to join our Walk Team! All donations will go to The Alzheimer’s Association. Cash only please.

There are approximately 13 million caregivers caring for someone 50+ years old who have some form of memory loss; they are not alone. At Revere Court Memory Care, we understand that dementia affects whole families. Each person with memory loss and his or her family experience different challenges and needs, which vary at different times during their journey.

Revere Court Memory Care is a state-of-the-art community providing quality of life to persons with Alzheimer’s and other dementias, and to their

families who care for them. At Revere Court, we realize that each family needs different services at different times. That is why we’ve designed a whole spectrum of programs to meet those changing needs.

For families looking for services out of the home that offer their loved one the opportunity to be with others in a safe, stimulating and happy environment, Revere Court offers three different services at our beautiful and secured 31/2-acre campus in Sacramento’s Greenhaven/Pocket Area, including Revere Court Day Club, Respite Care and Residential Care.

Revere Court is focused on educating the public about Alzheimer’s disease and other informative topics. Learn more at reverecourt.com.



A previous Revere Court Harvest Festival featured an alpaca in the petting zoo. Photo courtesy of Revere Court Memory Care

Monthly Caregiver Educational Seminar

Tuesday, September 22 at 2 p.m.

“One Fall Can Change It All”

Presented by:
Dot Boyd, Senior Safety Specialist

Light refreshments will be provided

Please join us as we discover what increases your risk of falling and how you can reduce those risks.

- Learn the importance of being proactive to preserve your independence.
- This presentation will also include an interactive demonstration of personal emergency alert devices.
- Gain the knowledge & confidence you need to live your life safely and independently.

Participants will receive a **FREE Fall Risk Survey & Home Safety Checklist**.

Please RSVP By September 18
At 916-392-3510

Coffee Klatch Support Group
Every Wednesday at 10 a.m.
in the Conference Room:
This Support Group is for families and friends who have a loved one with Memory Loss.
We will help provide caregiving strategies, education, resource information, and a shoulder to lean on!

At Revere Court Memory Care, we believe that support and education are essential for every caregiver. Together, we can build understanding, resilience, and a stronger community of care.

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

Welcome Ben Simmons

By V.G. Harris

Many of you have now been Sacramento Kings fans for literally decades, and discussions of playoffs have been a topic rarely heard in the city of Sacramento.

Enter new GM Scott Perry who has been promising changes with regard to bad drafts and trades that don’t make sense.

Although Perry has made a couple of moves that I strongly disagree with, the jury is largely still out as he has begun in earnest his quote, “rebuild.”

DeAaron Fox was traded not on his watch, but make no mistake about it, the decision to bring on the first overall pick in the 2016 draft is all about Scott Perry.

Sink or swim, the acquisition of Ben Simmons, albeit for only one year and a price tag of only 3.5 million, lands entirely in the lap of Scott Perry.

Just a week ago in this column I wrote that the possibility existed that the Kings may have interest in signing Simmons, who has had a checkered past to say the least, and now the suspense is over, and Ben Simmons is now about to become a full-fledged member of the Sacramento Kings family.

I am an ardent believer that any player attempting a comeback deserves his opportunity to allow the fan base see what he has in the tank, and I for one will not root against this player that has literally been injury prone for the entirety of his 10-year NBA career.

It is rare that an organization has the opportunity to acquire a player drafted No. 1 overall, and in the case of 6-foot-10 Ben Simmons he is coming to the Kings after sitting out the entire 2025-26 season.

The prevailing problem has been related to back issues for Simmons, but according to Simmons himself, he wasn’t going to try and mount a comeback until he was “bulletproof.”

The Kings recently worked out Simmons in Sacramento, and he had a meeting with Scott Perry that obviously went well.

Simmons stats are not eyeopening, but certainly worthy of taking note. Over a 10-year career spent with three teams, Simmons had a scoring average of just over 13 points per game, seven rebounds, seven

assists and 1.5 steals.

To his credit, although most widely noted for missing games due to injury, Simmons made the all-star team one time, and in 2021 was runner up for the defensive player of the year.

Aside from the perpetual injury bug, if there is one knock on this otherwise talented big man, it is his abysmal free throw shooting.

At an astonishing low 59 percent, he brings back memories of another talented big man who couldn’t make free throws by the name of Wilt Chamberlain. Wilt shot an almost unbelievable 51 percent from the charity strip, and like Shaquille Oneal he was known for his inability to make free throws when it counted.

Sadly, Ben Simmons is coming to a team that is typically dead last in free throw shooting, so who on the Kings team is going to step up and teach this 10-year veteran how to improve in an area that he clearly knows little about?

The Kings coaching staff?

If you thought all eyes were on Darius Acuff Jr., wait till you see Ben Simmons take the floor for the Sacramento Kings.

As I said before, I refuse to root against Simmons regardless of past problems, and I don’t believe the Kings would sign him to a contract of any length if they thought he wasn’t 100 percent healthy.

I want to close my eyes and imagine what a healthy Ben Simmons looks like playing alongside Domantas Sabonis, with a talented rookie point guard distributing the ball, and two capable three-point shooters on the wings in Zach Lavine and Keegan Murray.

Does this new lineup have potential? Absolutely it does, and once again it boils down to staying away from injuries and allowing a group of very talented players to develop chemistry and do what they do.

If you’re an ardent Kings fan it’s almost impossible not to get excited.

Look for an opening night that Sacramento hasn’t seen in years, and all of a sudden ticket sales just went up!

Stay tuned Kings fans because there is more to come.

All the best!

★

California’s Political Hopefuls Remain Silent on State’s Job Losses, Unemployment



By Dan Walters,
CALMatters.org

In two months California voters will elect a governor, fill several other statewide offices and choose a new class of state legislators and members of Congress.

The aspirants for those positions are making all sorts of promises to win voters’ approval. But few, if any, have mentioned a slow-motion menace affecting a fundamental facet of life: jobs.

The state has never fully recovered from the virtual shutdown of the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. It still has more than a million unemployed workers. Its unemployment rate continues to be the highest, or nearly so, of any state. And its signature economic sectors, such as high tech and film production, have been shedding jobs for several years.

As ominous as those data points sound, a deeper dive into employment data reveals an even darker reality.

“California’s labor market is holding up, but its foundations remain troublingly narrow,” Justin Niakamal, research manager at Beacon Economics, said in a recent overview of the state’s economy. Healthcare is the only sector with strong employment gains, he noted.

While healthcare jobs are welcome, they are highly dependent on spending by

federal and state governments, and both have been cutting back. Moreover, while healthcare is a service industry, it does not create added-value wealth the way technology, film production and agriculture do.

Back to the data.

California’s stubbornly high unemployment rate — 5.1% in July — was second-highest among the states, behind Connecticut and Oregon, both at 5.2%. The rate is the percentage of the labor force that is not employed, even in part-time work, during the month.

The size of the labor force, as well as the unemployment figure, are important to note. Over the previous year, California’s labor force — people who are working or seeking work — declined by 286,300, according to the monthly Employment Development Department report.

To some extent, the labor force decline masks the actual decline in employment. Moreover, the widely quoted unemployment figure is simplistic: Even if someone is paid for working just a few hours in a month, he or she is counted as employed.

The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics makes several other computations of employment that are more sophisticated. One, called U-6, measures underemployment. It takes into account workers who want to work full time but can only find part-time work, as well as those who are “marginally attached” to the labor force.

California’s U-6 rate is a much more realistic measure of the job picture. It was calculated at 10.3% in June, easily the highest of any state.

The bureau also calculated

U-6 for New York City and Los Angeles County because their populations are larger than many states. New York’s rate was 10.2% while Los Angeles’ was 12.1%.

Those are high numbers but may still understate what’s happening — or not — in California’s job market.

The Ludwig Institute for Shared Economic Prosperity takes the U-6 underemployment calculation even further. It discounts jobs, even full-time work, that pay less than a living wage, which it pegs at \$26,000 a year. It calls its number the “true rate of unemployment,” saying it measures “functional unemployment.”

As one might suspect, Ludwig’s calculations for California — reported by major metropolitan area — are very high, especially in rural communities where agriculture is a primary source of jobs.

California’s highest “true unemployment” rate, according to Ludwig, is in Redding (67.4%). Other rural or semi-rural communities fall into the 50%-65% range. But some urban regions see high rates as well, such as 53.8% in the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim metropolitan area.

Only a few regions are under 50%.

Given these numbers, one might expect that California’s officeholders and office seekers would be telling us how they will respond. They are not.

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.

★

Celebrating Both Liberty and Charity

Continued from page 1

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints spoke about the compassionate effort of this campaign.

“This is our way of celebrating America. By working together with people who are not always like us. America is great because we have always been a country that comes together when we confront difficulties. We could have just dropped the food off at a warehouse of a big food bank; instead, we decided to try a little harder and connect with our fellow Americans in joint service.” Cook said.

Parked on 15th Street, the America250 semitruck unloaded commodities such as rice, peanut butter, potatoes, flour, sugar, pudding, carrots, onions, pasta, tomato sauce and other staples. 27 local non-profit organizations and religious organizations then picked up the food following a speech which praised the efforts of the campaign and volunteers.

In the speech’s welcoming remarks, Mayor Kevin McCarty addressed the American people and thanked the organizers of the event for bringing food to families in need.

“As we celebrate 250



Nonprofit organization Asian Resources Inc. pose with the packaged foods outside the JustServe booth. Photo courtesy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-Saints

years of this amazing country, the United States of America, at 175 years of statehood, I wanted to thank the organizers and JustServe and the America250 Coalition for thinking about Sacramento. For thinking about our city, our Capital City. So, we appreciate the effort to help families in need here, and we reflect on how we’re all one community here in this Capital City of Sacramento,” said McCarty.

Director of Operations at the Sunrise Christian Food Ministry, April Jacek explained that this is one of the many contributions that her organization volunteers for to give back to

the community.

“We were also in The Giving Machine at the Roseville Galleria. It is a beautiful ongoing relationship that we have with the community, with the LDS church, we have service missionaries that come serve at the food closet, so it’s a win all the way around,” said Jacek.

Elected officials also gathered at the event to help with the distribution and address the organizers. 10th District Assembly Member, Stephanie Nguyen, explained the immense impact the food being donated will have on families in need.

“I think any family seeing a list of the items that

are being distributed would just be over the moon at how they can hold onto some of these items for a while and don’t have to use right away,” Nguyen said.

This humanitarian campaign is especially important now, not only is it the 250th anniversary of America but American families are struggling now more than ever to put food on the table. Food banks across the country report demand far above pre-pandemic levels, with working families, children and seniors making up a large share of those seeking help.

“This is one of the most, amazing charitable undertakings you will ever



Twenty-seven local nonprofit organizations and religious organizations then picked up the food following a speech which praised the efforts of this campaign and volunteers.



The opening ceremony featured a formal Color Guard flag presentation.

witness. The scale of it is staggering, nationally 250 trucks, millions of meals, on a statewide basis, a hundred trucks here in this community in Sacramento County, 150,000 plus pounds, 40,000 just in that truck right here,” Congressman Kevin Kiley said while pointing to the semitruck being unloaded by volunteers.

Kiley explained how this campaign is also an ode to hope and reminder that we are stronger when we come together.

“The number of organizations that have come together and collaborated to make this happen is truly inspiring. I think it provides hope, not just for the individual families who are in need but for all of us, that we can solve problems in a way that makes life better,” said Kiley.

As we burst fireworks on the Fourth of July and hang American flags outside the front porch, this campaign reminds us of what it truly means to be proud to be an American.

★

Kids Will Get Muddy for a Good Cause

Continued from page 1

warmup for October’s Dignity Health Dirty Kid Obstacle Race at the Sacramento Adventure Playground, or for anyone

who simply wants to run over, through and under Fairytale Town’s iconic play structures. Each racer will receive a Fairytale Town Family Pass for four (includes racer). Additional

spectators must purchase admission to Fairytale Town.

These outdoor events are fundraisers for the nonprofit Sacramento Adventure Playground,

which serves 7,000 kids a year with hands-on physical play: building forts, climbing trees, using tools and caring for animals, with computer screens forbidden. The Adventure Playground fosters problem-solving skills and creative thinking in youth

who need this unique program.

To register for this year’s race, visit sacadventureplay.wordpress.com/dirty-kid-obstacle-race.

For more information on the Dignity Health Kids Obstacle Race at Fairytale Town,

visit sacadventureplay.wordpress.com/dignity-health-obstacle-race-at-fairytale-town.

The race is sponsored by Dignity Health, Sacramento County Supervisor Patrick Kennedy (District 2) and HUB International.

★

ABOUT TOWN

Area Museum Experiences

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

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

California Museum – Alebrije Painting Workshop, 1-3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 20: This Hispanic Heritage Month, dive into the colorful world of alebrijes, Mexico’s fantastical, vividly painted wooden creatures, and paint your own in a hands-on workshop led by Balam Arts. Ages 10 and up. Details at californiamuseum.org.

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

lens of 100 years of history. Updated version of exhibit: Carburetor Corners, through yearend. Sunday Drives: Third Sunday of every month, enjoy a free ride (with paid museum admission) in one of the museum’s many beautiful cars from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Details at calautomuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum – Experience travel as it was over 100 years ago on a 45-minute, 6-mile trip in our fleet of historic railroad cars. Learn about the history of railroading in California. Weekends through Oct. 11. Polar Express, Nov. 13-Dec. 21: The evening begins in our passenger station where you will be entertained by THE POLAR EXPRESS™ characters, and then board your train to the North Pole where you will enjoy hot chocolate and a sweet treat. Once you reach the North Pole, Santa will come on board to give each passenger the first gift of Christmas, a silver sleigh bell.

The Chinese Railroad Workers’ Experience offers visitors a view of the Chinese workers who built the western portion of the nation’s first

Transcontinental Railroad. Marginalized by history, the Chinese workers were more than a nameless group of laborers. Details at californiarailroad.museum.

SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity Laser Concert Series – Grateful Dead, Sept. 18-19. Hallowscream: A Heavy-Metal Laser Show, Oct. 23-24. This immersive music experience, paired with spectacular full-dome lasers, is the best way to listen to your favorite artists outside of a live performance. Details at visitmosac.org.

Crocker Art Museum – Suzanne Adan, “I’m No Spring Chicken,” through Oct. 11. Adan (born 1946) creates personal universes that combine fantasy, popular culture and autobiography. Approximately 100 of these compelling works, in a variety of media, are included in this retrospective assembled in her 80th year. A native Californian, Adan was born in Woodland and raised in nearby Yolo. She earned her BA and MA from Sacramento State College in 1969 and 1971, respectively. It was there that she met her husband, sculptor Michael Stevens,

and became influenced by instructor Jim Nutt, a member of Chicago’s Hairy Who. Details at crockerart.org. For more about upcoming museum events and programs, please visit sac-museums.org.

Elks Lodge 6 Events Greenhaven-Pocket

Farmers Market, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays through November: ghpfarmers-market.com. Sunday Morning Breakfast, 8:30-11 a.m.; \$15. Martial Arts, 5 to 6 p.m. Mondays. Sactown Swings: lessons, 7:15 p.m. Wednesdays, social dance, 8-10 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.com for weekly menu. Yoga, noon Mondays and 3:30 p.m. Wednesdays. Karaoke, 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays. Soulful Fridays, 6 to 10 p.m. ★

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From Tragedy to Tradition

Sac-Town Rodeo Supports a Sacramento Legacy

AMPLIFY 360 News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - When the Sac-Town Rodeo returns to Cal Expo on Sept. 12 and 13, it will bring two days of bull riding, bronc riding, Western tradition and family entertainment to Sacramento.

But beyond the arena action, the event carries a deeper purpose: supporting the Firefighters Burn Institute, an organization born from one of the darkest tragedies in Sacramento's history and one that continues to serve burn survivors, families and injured firefighters across the region.

For many Sacramento residents, the Firefighters Burn Institute is a familiar name. Its origins, however, trace back more than five decades to a devastating day in 1972.

That year, a jet attempting to take off from Sacramento Executive Airport crashed into a crowded Farrell's Ice Cream Parlor. Twenty-three people were killed, and many others suffered serious burn injuries. Among those who died were Sacramento firefighter Gene LaVine and eight members of his family.

The scale of the tragedy exposed a critical gap in the region's medical resources. At the time, Sacramento had limited access to specialized burn treatment, leaving patients and families facing a difficult and uncertain path to recovery.

Sacramento Fire Department Captain Cliff Haskell believed the community could not allow that need to go unanswered. Through his fundraising and advocacy, the Firefighters Burn Institute was established in 1973. The organization later worked with UC Davis Medical Center to help establish a regional burn



The Sept. 12–13 event at Cal Expo will bring together first responders, local businesses, rodeo fans and families from across the region for a high-energy competition and a celebration of Western culture. Photo courtesy of Sac-Town Rodeo

center, providing specialized care closer to home for burn survivors throughout Sacramento and Northern California.

More than 50 years later, the Institute's mission has expanded well beyond its founding goal.

Today, the Firefighters Burn Institute supports burn survivors and their families through recovery programs, peer support, community reintegration and camps for young burn survivors. It also provides assistance to injured firefighters and their families while advancing burn prevention, public education and

awareness throughout the region.

The work is personal for many of the firefighters, survivors and families connected to the organization. It is a mission rooted in a community's response to loss, and sustained by a belief that people recovering from burn injuries should not have to navigate that journey alone.

That is where the Sac-Town Rodeo comes in.

The Sept. 12–13 event at Cal Expo will bring together first responders, local businesses, rodeo fans and families from across the region. While

spectators can expect high-energy competition and a celebration of Western culture, the rodeo also gives the Sacramento community a chance to rally around an organization whose impact reaches far beyond the event grounds.

Proceeds from the Sac-Town Rodeo will benefit the Firefighters Burn Institute and help sustain programs serving children, adults, families and firefighters affected by burn injuries.

For Sacramento, the rodeo represents more than an annual

community gathering. It is also a reminder of how a tragedy that devastated the city more than half a century ago led to lasting action, from improved specialized burn care to decades of support for survivors and their families.

As the Sac-Town Rodeo returns next month, it offers a timely opportunity to honor that history, celebrate the resilience of burn survivors and recognize the firefighters and community members who have carried the Firefighters Burn Institute's mission forward for generations. ★

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Fiscal Year 2026-27 Revised Recommended Budget Available



The FY 2026-27 Revised Recommended Budget includes \$9.2 billion in total appropriations. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors will begin Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 Revised Recommended Budget hearings on Tuesday, Sept. 8, at 9:30 a.m. in Board Chambers in the Sacramento County Administration building, located at 700 H Street, Sacramento, 95814. If necessary, hearings will continue on Sept. 9, 10 and 11 at the same time and location.

The hearing schedule begins with the IHSS public authority budget deliberation and approval, the presentation of the FY 2026-27 revised recommended budget, then follows with public comment and ends with the board deliberation and approval of revisions to the approved recommended budget and capital improvement plan and approval of adopted budget resolutions

The Board of Supervisors approved the FY 2026-27

recommended budget on June 10. This year's \$9 billion spending plan consists of \$3.2 billion in enterprise and special revenue funds (utility rates, fees and other dedicated revenue), \$4 billion in general fund (funded with \$1 billion in discretionary revenue, \$1.7 billion in reimbursements from restricted funds, and \$1.3 billion in federal, state and fee revenue dedicated to specific purposes), and \$1.7 billion in restricted funds (amounts transferred to the general fund to reimburse eligible expenditures in general fund departments).

The numbers in the budget change between June and September when the County receives new information, including the impact of the state budget and updated fund balance and revenue totals. Because of that new information, the revised recommended budget comes back to the board for review and adoption in September.

The FY 2026-27 revised recommended budget includes \$9.2 billion

in total appropriations.

Ok, that was a lot of numbers! You may be wondering, "what services does the county offer that I use and what programs do they run that I care about" – fair question! Let's play a game of did you know?

Did you know? The County runs Sacramento International Airport (SMF) – which is growing year over year. SMF serves award winning food and beverage options, has a vast offering of non-stop flights to new and exciting destinations, and will be opening a brand-new parking garage in time for the holiday rush this year.

The County maintains 23-miles of the American River Parkway – a beautiful greenbelt full of wildlife with breathtaking views of the American River and multiple river access points, and a multi-use recreation trail that runs from Folsom to downtown.

The County maintains thousands of miles of roads, dozens of beautiful parks and four golf courses.

The County collects garbage and provides recycling and organics collection services for more than 165,000 residential customers, collects used mattresses and Christmas trees and runs the Kiefer landfill.

The County provides building permits, and information on land use and ownership, and brings new business opportunities to the region, helping to grow the economy and tax base and helping local small business to thrive.

The County is the connection to general assistance, cash assistance, mental health resources, substance use services and homeless services and manages our youth foster system, child support services and child protective services.

The County also inspects restaurants for food safety and public pools and spas for safety compliance, manages testing and containment on communicable disease and helps people exposed quarantine to limit the spread – potentially saving thousands of

people from exposure.

The County has a robust public safety and justice system – running the multifaceted jail system, including a youth correctional facility, probation, public defender unit and district attorney and law enforcement that all work together to keep our community safe.

The County runs a large, open-intake municipal animal shelter and animal regulation and enforcement operation, caring for tens of thousands of lost and neglected animals a year, facilitating adoptions for thousands of amazing animals back into the community, rescuing abused and neglected animals from abusers, and prosecuting them to the fullest extent of the law.

So – how many did you know? Members of the public may attend the hearings and be heard on any item in the budget, either publicly or through written comments. The budget hearings will also be telecast live on Metro Cable 14 and on the web. ★

State Treasurer Fiona Ma Announces Results of Bond Sale for Sutter Health

Financing will support major health care expansion projects, including new medical campuses across Northern California and refinancing of existing debt



Fiona Ma
California State Treasurer's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California State Treasurer Fiona Ma, CPA, announced the results

of a \$1.407 billion bond sale for Sutter Health providing financing to support major capital investments in health care facilities across Northern California and refinance existing debt.

"This financing will help Sutter Health make significant investments in health care capacity and facilities in communities across Northern California," said Treasurer Ma. "These investments will support expanded access to care, modernize health care infrastructure and help ensure that Californians can receive high-quality services close to home. I am pleased that the California Health Facilities Financing Authority was able to facilitate this

financing and help Sutter move forward with projects that will serve patients for years to come."

The bond-financed capital projects include improvements at health care facilities throughout the Bay Area and the Central Valley. Projects include expansion of intensive care and inpatient capacity; acquisition of land

and medical buildings; laboratory facilities; and improvements to neuroscience and cancer care facilities.

Project locations in the Bay Area include San Francisco, San Mateo, Castro Valley, Pleasanton and Dublin. Two of the largest planned projects include a 1.3 million square foot campus in Emeryville called Emery Yards,

and an 850,000 square foot campus in Santa Clara that will also include a 1-million-square foot additional development nearby. Project locations in the Central Valley include facilities in Sacramento, Roseville, Folsom, Elk Grove and Modesto.

Proceeds were also used to refund Sutter's outstanding 2016B bonds, which generated approximately \$25.7 million in net present-value savings, or approximately 6.7 percent over the life of the bonds.

The original financing request approved by CHFFA authorized up to \$1.6 billion in aggregate principal amount. The final sale amount was \$1,407,070,000. ★



Election Information

November 3, 2026, General Election

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Vote Early!
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Income-Qualified Homeowners Among Those Eligible to Access Remaining State Solar and Battery Funds

Haven Energy is helping eligible California homeowners across participating publicly owned utilities access state funding that can cover the cost of home battery systems



Available to customers of participating publicly owned utilities, the program can cover the cost of a home battery system, as well as solar, and includes installation. Photos courtesy of Haven Energy



Haven Energy, the No. 1 SGIP developer in California, is working to connect income-qualified California homeowners with nearly \$8.7 million in remaining state funding that can provide households with home battery systems at no cost.



The funding is part of California's Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP) Residential Solar and Storage Equity program, which was created to expand access to solar and battery storage for lower-income households.

Haven Energy News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Haven Energy, the No. 1 SGIP developer in California, is working to connect income-qualified California homeowners with nearly \$8.7 million in remaining state funding that can provide households with home battery systems at no cost. Haven has identified the Sacramento area as a key market for the program, with a high concentration of potentially eligible households served by participating public utilities including SMUD.

The funding is part of California's Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP) Residential Solar and Storage Equity program, which was created to expand access to solar and battery storage for lower-income households. Haven has already deployed more than 1,000 residential batteries through SGIP, giving the company deep experience helping homeowners navigate the program from application through installation.

Available to customers of participating publicly owned utilities, the program can cover the cost of a home battery

system, as well as solar, and includes installation. Eligibility is based on factors including household income – which varies according to county and household size – and utility provider. For single-family homeowners, households earning at or below 80% of Area Median Income may qualify. Homeowners do not need to already have solar panels to participate.

For more information or to determine eligibility, visit havenenergy.com/sgip.

Despite the available funding, awareness remains one of the biggest barriers to participation. Many households that may qualify have never heard of the program or do not know how to navigate the application process.

“For qualifying Sacramento homeowners, the SGIP program can be a gamechanger, offering families access to a home battery system for zero out-of-pocket and opening the door to long-term energy savings and outage protection,” said Vinnie Campo, co-founder and CEO of Haven Energy. “We’ve helped Californians across the state navigate SGIP, and right now

we’re actively working to reach as many low-income homeowners as possible, to help them understand what they qualify for, and to submit their applications while funding is still available.”

Haven manages the entire process for participating homeowners, including determining eligibility, submitting applications and program paperwork, coordinating installation and managing the energy system after it is installed.

The benefits extend beyond individual homes. When electricity demand is high, networks of residential batteries can contribute stored energy to the grid, helping utilities manage peak demand and improve grid reliability for entire communities. During an outage, the battery will also provide direct backup electricity to the home.

Haven has built a proven model for expanding access to home energy storage. Since launching in California in 2022, the company has built more than 10 MW of installed battery capacity, with more than 50 MW of additional capacity in development. Haven also works with



Haven manages the entire process for participating homeowners, including determining eligibility, submitting applications and program paperwork, coordinating installation and managing the energy system after it is installed. Photo courtesy of Haven Energy

utilities, nonprofits, and other community partners to aggregate distributed batteries into virtual power plants that can strengthen the grid.

About Haven Energy

Haven is on a mission to transform the electric grid through the deployment and aggregation

of battery storage and solar. Through strategic partnerships with utilities, non-profits, EPCs and government agencies, Haven deploys distributed energy resources at residential and small C&I sites to build virtual power plants (VPPs) at scale.

★

County Superintendent Seeks Viable SCUSD Fiscal Recovery Plan

Sacramento County Office of Education News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools (County Superintendent) sent letters on Aug. 27 to Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) Superintendent Cancy McArn and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond outlining the continued Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) approach to addressing SCUSD's immediate cash needs and ongoing structural deficit.

The letters follow the Aug. 10 decision by the state superintendent and the executive director of the state board of education to deny SCUSD's appeal of the SCOE-appointed fiscal advisor's rescission of the district's memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Sacramento City Teachers Association (SCTA).

In its letter to SCUSD, the county superintendent states that because the MOU has been rescinded, the district is expected to cancel its request for CalPERS to transfer funds from the district's health benefit trust and return any transferred funds to the trust. It also encouraged the district to amend the MOU by removing parts which could add costs while retaining provisions that produce savings.

SCUSD currently projects a \$221.8 million unrestricted general fund deficit and a negative \$283.6 million unrestricted general fund balance in the current fiscal year. In the 2027-28 fiscal year, district projections show the deficit growing to \$226.9 million and the unrestricted general fund balance falling to negative \$510.5 million. In the letter, it is emphasized that a short-term infusion of cash, without sufficient ongoing savings, would postpone rather than solve the district's financial crisis.

“The issue is not simply whether the

district can get through the next few months, but whether it can remain financially healthy in the years ahead,” Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools Dave Gordon said. “We will continue working cooperatively with SCUSD and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Team (FCMAT) on any viable plan that provides sufficient cash to address the immediate crisis and ongoing savings to put the district on a sustainable financial path.”

SCUSD's board of education and superintendent remain responsible for the district's fiscal condition and for making the decisions needed to return the district to fiscal health. The county superintendent's objective is to help SCUSD make the decisions necessary to restore its financial health while protecting students, families, employees and educational programs. If the district runs out of cash, it will be unable to pay its employees and vendors, which would endanger its schools and educational programs.

SCOE has provided fiscal, educational program and human resources experts, as well as an executive coach, to support the district. Also, Superintendent Dave Gordon and Associate Superintendent Nick Schweizer meet biweekly, and the fiscal advisor meets more often with district leaders to monitor cash flow, provide feedback on budgets, proposed savings, and the costs and impacts of labor agreements.

Gordon reiterated, “Our priority remains helping SCUSD protect students and educational programs and fully restore its financial health so that it is able to remain locally controlled.”

To read the response letter to state superintendent of public instruction regarding SCUSD, visit: catapultfilemanager-prod.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/539908eb-75d1-42bb-967b-e166bd75683e/08-27-26_response_spi_letter.pdf

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Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - On Tuesday, Aug. 25, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors heard a comprehensive and meaningful update on the outcomes of key homeless shelters and service programs from fiscal year 25/26. Emily Halcon, the Director of Homeless Services and Housing (DHS) for Sacramento County, provided a historical lookback at Board policy investment and direction as far back as 2016 that has set investment priorities, project focus and the strategic housing first model staff have focused on the last decade.

The Board also heard from Director of Finance, Chad Rinde, on the process of a forensic audit on countywide spending on homelessness. This audit helps to determine if adequate internal controls exist to evaluate fiscal compliance with contracts and adhere to state and federal standards and ensure that departments are good stewards of public funds.

With the creation of the Department of Homeless Service and Housing in 2023, the County has increased its programs serving the homeless community, increased its full-time employees managing homeless services and the number of people served annually in County-funded programs.

In this coming fiscal year, DHS will contract more than \$65 million dollars into community-based organizations to operate shelters, outreach and programs that are serving the homeless community in Sacramento County. Many of those partners were in chambers – supporting the work already being done. Several stood at the lectern to provide positive feedback on the County's investment and partnerships into the community and how valuable the County's leadership on regional collaboration has been as the homelessness has

grown in the last decade.

Data pulled from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) from DHS funded homeless programs and select Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Department of Child, Family, and Adult Services (DCFAS) shelter programs shows that in Fiscal Year 2025–26, 6,662 unduplicated people were served across outreach, shelter, rehousing, prevention, and transitional housing programs. Despite significant housing barriers, 43% of participants who exited programs transitioned to permanent housing. Prevention and rehousing programs achieved particularly strong permanent housing exit rates of 77% and 78%, respectively.

These outcomes are especially meaningful given the significant vulnerabilities of the people served. Among participant heads of household, 61% were identified as highly vulnerable, meaning they self-reported at least four County-identified vulnerability factors. In addition, 50% of participants reported having no income, while an additional 36% reported annual income below \$20,000 a year.

The County also continued to make strong use of its shelter resources – with overall utilization for shellers running the full year at approximately 86%.

Perhaps the most compelling testimony was that of the providers and provider staff. The CEOs of Community Health Works, First Step Communities, CityNet and Brilliant Corners each spoke about the meaningful work their organizations do, specifically with the County, the populations they serve and the trends and outcomes the work the do in Sacramento in experiencing. The passion they all have for the work, the people they serve and for solutions was evident in their voices and the conviction in which they stood with pride and said, “We stand with the County – we’re here as partners.”

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Homeless Services: Progress, Challenges and the Work Ahead

A Morning Like No Other – Ground Zero at 25 years



An early morning skyline view from the Staten Island Ferry. This was the daily view of thousands of commuters to Manhattan before 9/11. Years later, I met with my friend, the captain of the ferry, in Sacramento for lunch. John had to leave New York because he just couldn't live another day in that memory. He stopped his ship in the middle of the harbor that 9/11 morning, as he and his entire shipload of travelers and crew watched the horror unfold.



Reflections at East River and John Finley Walk. Photo by a savior

Commentary and photos by Paul V. Scholl

After a long night of late work well into the morning, I was in a deep sleep. The repeating ring of the telephone awakened me. I received an alarming telephone call from a close friend frantically trying to get my attention. She said “just get up and turn on the TV. You won’t believe what is happening”. She was absolutely right.

As I sat there on my white leather couch in my small rental home in Roseville, tuned in as the world was tuned in, to the disaster in New York as it unfolded live for everyone to see. We were all New Yorkers that day.

I had previously lived in Manhattan. After returning to California, I traveled to New York City often to teach classes at The Learning Exchange and spiritual training centers as a part of my ministry. I also met with many clients as a spiritual life coach each visit. Through these visits I became friends with so many great people who lived in The City. I stayed at their homes, got to know their families, learned about their lives, loves, and fears. Many of them worked in the immediate area of the Twin Towers.

As I sat there watching the towers fall along with the rest of the world, I had no idea if any of those friends or members of their families were being crushed under the weight of that destruction. It was a personal anguish and horror felt by millions

simultaneously. It was a grief embedded forever. And we as a nation vowed to never forget.

Everything changed for everyone during those hours. Terrorism had come to our shores, and those whom we had charged to protect us failed miserably. We have been paying for their failures ever since.

And for those who paid the ultimate price, giving their lives to save others inside and around the Twin Towers? And for all the First Responders who witnessed the death and destruction at the end of their fingertips and right before their own eyes? What did they get from so many after only 25 years? Many forgot.

Yes, life goes on, but as individuals we do not. Our time is limited. We are here to understand life, liberty, love, and loss. We are here to understand joy and grief. These become the web that builds our evolution, our DNA that we pass on to those who follow us. If we do not teach our emotional history to our children, good and bad, they will suffer repeating our mistakes and the feeling of betrayal from us for not forewarning them.

Enter our current day Neon Nation. Have we lost our way in one generation? Does the “Shiny thing” distract us so easily because it is too hard for us to focus on the truth and explaining it to others as our society crumbles around us?

A few months after 9/11 I traveled back to New York to offer support to any of those friends who needed it. I traveled to the site while the clean-up was still underway. I saw the scorched church and cemetery. There were still many “Missing” flyers posted to walls and lampposts. I saw the many memorials around the site. When I found one memorial that listed all of the names of those lost I read every one of them. I thank God to this day that not one of my



One of the many memorial walls surrounding the Ground Zero site. Photo by Paul Scholl

friends was on that list.

The history of Ground Zero is complex and still unfolding. The more the years fall away the more important it is that we reveal as much as we can about that fateful morning and all that led up to it.

When someone kills your son or daughter, husband or wife, it doesn’t matter what political party they belong to. It doesn’t matter what religion they belong to. It doesn’t matter their motive. All that matters is your loved one is gone forever. Grief takes over. And no one can ever really fill that void. It never truly heals. You just learn how to manage it in the silent times, alone with your Creator.

All those who lost loved ones during those tragic days only asked one thing from us. Never Ever Forget.

On this remembrance weekend 25 years later, take a few moments in silence to share the grief and the weight of the losses experienced by so many on September 11, 2001. If only with that simple action, love will prevail.



Visitors reading through the many memorials and “missing” posters.



A dedication plaque honoring the fallen first responders.



A memorial sculpture remembering all the construction workers.



And then an angel appeared over the site in my camera lens.