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American River Messenger

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Support the Community Food Drive

Local scouts, leaders and students turned out to help at last year's food drive. Photo courtesy of the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation

By Judy Andrews

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - Join the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank for the 7th Annual Community Food Drive on Saturday, Oct. 17. The food drive will be held in the parking lot at Divine Savior Catholic Church in Orangevale between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m. The church is located at 9079 Greenback Lane.

Donations help stock the food bank's shelves and ensure local families have nutritious food to eat over the holidays and throughout the winter. Whether you donate one bag of groceries or organize a collection with your entire neighborhood, every contribution makes a meaningful difference.

Over 100 volunteers helped organize donated food during last year's drive. Photo courtesy of the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation

"The primary goal of the food bank is to support families in the Orangevale and Fair Oaks area who need food," said Marcus Arnold, the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank coordinator. "Last year, the food bank helped 47,000 household members, and that number continues to grow due to increased demand for assistance from our neighbors who need our help this time of year."

Andrea Scollay, the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank director, explained that local, state and national food programs have been significantly cut back and that requirements have changed, to the point that some families are losing their benefits altogether.

"The annual food drive stocks our pantry shelves, allowing us to feed families throughout the new year," said Scollay. "Community support helps us feed our neighbors in need."

Continued on page 2

Steel Drums Bring Cultures Together

Orangevale's Martin Ross to teach history on steel drums through electrifying presentation

By Ryley Metten

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - Orangevale native, musician and former Salvation Army Pastor Martin Ross will give a presentation on the history of steel drum music on Sunday, Oct. 11 at the Orangevale Grange.

Ross has played the steel drums for years and is harnessing his passion for music and the Orangevale community by immersing the community into what makes the instrument so unique. Ross's presentation will dive into the fusion of African and European cultures in music, and the rich history and sound of the steel drums.

Catch Martin Ross' steel drum music presentation at 8 a.m. on Sunday Oct. 11 at the Orangevale Grange. Admission is free, just come excited to learn about rich music history. Photo courtesy of Martin Ross

Ross's introduction to steel drum music began while he was attending classes at UC Berkeley as a chemical engineering student. He heard the magnetic sound echoing through the hallways and spotted the steel drum kit. Enamored by the sound of it, he later asked if he could join the jazz ensemble and the rest was history.

Ross says that while the presentation is educational it is also a way to bring the community together by describing how many cultures can work together to create something beautiful. Ross explains that music

Continued on page 2

Administrator Report Outlines Operational Improvements for FORPD

By Shaunna Boyd

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - At the Sept. 19 meeting of the Fair Oak Recreation and Park District (FORPD) Board of Directors, District Administrator Aaron Robertson announced the 50-year anniversary of the National Landmark Designation for two areas of Fair Oaks: The American River Bluffs and Phoenix Park Vernal Pools.

"Tonight we have the privilege of celebrating a really remarkable milestone in our community's national heritage," said Robertson. He quoted the original letter issued by the National Park Service in 1976: "This landmark stands as a testament to the unique ecological, biological, historical value of the land that we're entrusted to protect."

Robertson also announced that the California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD) and the California Association of Park and Recreation Insurance (CAPRI) have selected FORPD to receive the Outstanding Renovated Facility Award for Village Park.

This is "a major achievement and a point of pride for our district," said Robertson.

Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District sent a notice of congratulations, stating, "Breathing new life into an existing space requires an exceptional amount of vision, creativity, and dedication. The statewide recognition is a clear testament to your team's hard work and commitment to transforming the community asset into a modern, vibrant, successful hub for Fair Oaks residents."

The board received and filed the 90-Day District Administrator Assessment, which Robertson created during his first months in this role.

The assessment looked at the operational, financial and administrative health of the district, through field inspections, financial data analysis, dialogues with staff, and engagement with regional partners and stakeholders.

The report highlights a backlog in necessary capital improvement projects and lack of funding for ongoing maintenance of irrigation, parking lots, etc. Robertson also identified structural fragmentation across various departments, with shared

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Steel Drums Bring Cultures Together

Continued from page 1

has been a way for him to build bridges in the community and this theme will be highlighted in his presentation.

"That's why I love using it [the presentation] to be able to build some bridges and be that in the community. So that people can come together and get to know each other more," Ross said. "I grew up having to learn to be an ambassador and I think I can help our area; our community be better. We are better together."

However, this is not Ross's first rodeo. Ross has made this presentation at schools and other public events, spreading his knowledge as both a musician and educator in many communities. The location of the Orangevale Grange is particularly impactful for him because of his roots growing up in Orangevale. Ross was invited to share his presentation by Orangevale Grange's President Dave Dill while also inquiring him on becoming the musician of the month.

"I have an identical twin brother so both of us and my sister grew up in Orangevale and finished at San Juan High School," Ross said. "I grew up in Orangevale and to get an opportunity to come and share at the Grange is amazing."

Ross's presentation takes the audience on a journey through the origins of steel drum music. Beginning with the middle passage of the slave trade, through the Caribbean and South America and making its way up from jazz, blues, gospel, classical and eventually all the way up into hip hop music.

Ross begins with teaching the importance of the infusion of cultures in steel drum music through a metaphorical food analogy.

"Gumbo is a blend of African, Spanish, French, English and Native cultures. What came out of a collision of cultures is something beautiful arose when we decided to cooperate and work together, it is unifying," Ross said. "What kind of neighbor do we want to be? Are we better together, more flavorful, than we are apart?"

Ross also gets groovy with tying in some energetic dance moves to his presentation. Starting off with the 1920s fox trot while playing modern hip hop and R&B music. He continues this pattern with a 60s style dance and then incorporating pop and rock. Demonstrating how we can do different dances from different time periods but through the poly rhythm of music it flows together seamlessly.

Catch Martin Ross' steel drum music presentation at 8 a.m. on Sunday Oct. 11 at the Orangevale Grange. Admission is free, just come excited to learn about rich music history!

"Everyone leaves with smiles, joy and understanding of how some of our music of the Americas came about," Ross said. "They're also encouraged to think about interacting in better ways - and making our future brighter."

Martin Ross will also appear on the November 2026 ballot as Los Rios Community College Trustee, Area 2.

Contact him at www.linktr.ee/martinross. ★

Support the Community Food Drive

Last year's Community Food Drive volunteers posed for a photo between tasks. Photo courtesy of the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation

Continued from page 1

Event volunteers will accept the following nonperishable food items at the food drive on Oct. 17 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.: cereal and oatmeal; peanut butter; dry pasta and pasta sauce; canned meals and soups; ramen and instant noodles; canned fruits and vegetables; beans and rice; flavored side dishes (ex., mac 'n cheese); and snacks.

Do you still have plastic shopping bags at home? Bring them to the food drive when you drop off your food items. The Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank can use the bags to pack groceries for their clients on pick-up days.

Volunteers needed

Over 100 volunteers are needed to assist the food bank during the Annual Community Food Drive from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. View the volunteer registration page to find an available shift: www.one.ovfocf.org/volunteer.

"The Annual Community Food Drive is a day of love and collaboration, with neighbors helping neighbors," said Marcus Arnold. "Whether you volunteer with us or donate food, your time and contributions support an important cause. We are grateful for any support from the community."

For more information about the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank, visit: www.ovfofb.org. ★

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Helping Hands OV Brings Community Spirit

Helping Hands OV News Release

ORANGEVALE/FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - Helping Hands OV is keeping the Orangevale-Fair Oaks community connected this October with opportunities to give back, have some fun and support local neighbors.

The month kicks off with Helping Hands OV's second annual food drive from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 10 at Grocery Outlet Orangevale. Community members are encouraged to donate food and help fill the shelves of the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank through the Divine Savior Collection. Every donation helps local families and individuals facing food insecurity.

On Oct. 14, Helping Hands OV will hold its monthly community meetup at 6 p.m. at Mountain Mike's Pizza, 5267 Sunrise Blvd., Fair Oaks. Everyone who attends will receive a drawing ticket. Bring a donation for the food bank and receive an additional ticket. Bring a friend for another ticket and wear something Halloween-themed for one more chance to win.

Helping Hands OV will also team up with Lazy Dog Restaurant & Bar at Palladio in Folsom Oct. 26-30. Guests can dine at the restaurant or order takeout and use promo code 02FOLSOM to have 15 percent of their purchase donated back to Helping Hands OV.

From helping stock local food pantry shelves to supporting education and bringing neighbors together, Helping Hands OV is inviting the community to get involved this October. Photo courtesy of Helping Hands OV

The month kicks off with Helping Hands OV's second annual food drive from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 10 at Grocery Outlet Orangevale. Photo courtesy of Helping Hands OV

On Oct. 30, guests can add some Halloween fun by bringing their costumed pets to Lazy Dog at Palladio. Call the restaurant to reserve a patio table, then check in with Helping Hands OV volunteers by 6:45 p.m. to enter the free pet costume contest. The winner will be announced at 7:15 p.m. and receive a Lazy Dog Swag Bag. There is no entry fee, but guests are encouraged to purchase food or a drink and use code 02FOLSOM so 15% comes back to Helping Hands OV. Takeout and online orders also qualify for the promotion.

Helping Hands OV is also accepting applications for its Blue Collar Trade School Scholarships through Oct. 31. The organization will award up to two $1,000 scholarships to individuals continuing their education or starting a new career in a skilled trade.

From helping stock local food pantry shelves to supporting education and bringing neighbors together, Helping Hands OV is inviting the community to get involved this October.

Learn more, apply for a scholarship or find additional ways to support local neighbors at helpinghandsov.org. ★

Fair Oaks Amphitheatre Celebrates Lennon's Birthday

By MPG Staff

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - This Friday, Oct. 9th, "John Lennon's Birthday Bash" concert will be held at the Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre in the Fair Oaks Village.

The Sacramento Preparatory Music Academy (SacPrep) will perform "A Hard Day's Night" in its entirety live, along with some of Lennon's most iconic songs.

The SacPrep Beatles Guitar Project, made up of about 40 students performing classic Beatles albums, has a reputation for authentic performances of complete Beatles albums.

"We have gone to all their concerts," said Eileen Miller, a Carmichael resident. "Theirs is by far the most enjoyable Beatles shows I've ever seen!"

There are still some tickets available through the Fair Oaks Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre website, but they do expect a sellout according to a Fair Oaks Park district employee.

"It's possible that walkup attendees could be disappointed," said Ben McClara, director and president of the non-profit music academy. "They can always hang around and sing along in the park!"

"This is a concert AND a birthday party!!" said another SacPrep supporter. "I'm really looking forward to it! I'm bringing my grandkids this time." ★

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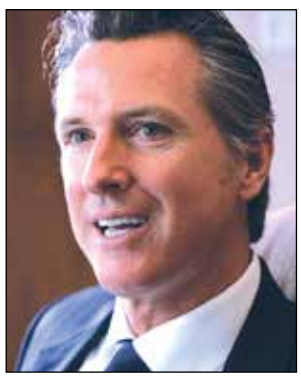
Newsom Signs SB 690, Reforming CIPA to Protect Small Businesses and Nonprofits



Gavin Newsom

Stop CIPA Shakedowns News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Stop CIPA Shakedown Lawsuits coalition celebrated Governor Gavin Newsom's signing of SB 690 on Sept. 30, a major reform to the California Invasion of Privacy Act (CIPA) that will provide much-needed relief to thousands of California small businesses, nonprofits and public agencies facing abusive lawsuits and demand letters.

SB 690 passed the California Legislature without a single "no" vote, reflecting broad recognition among lawmakers of the need to address the misuse of a decades-old privacy law against organizations using ordinary website technologies. The new law will take effect Jan. 1, 2027, limiting private lawsuits involving CIPA's pen register and trap-and-trace provisions when claims arise from activity on websites, online applications, or mobile applications, while preserving California's strong consumer privacy protections and government enforcement authority.

"Tonight, thousands of California businesses have gotten relief from abusive litigation," said Andrew Kingman, Alliance for Legal Fairness General Counsel. "We applaud Governor Newsom for signing SB 690 into law and delivering real relief to businesses, nonprofits and public agencies that have been forced to spend valuable resources defending themselves against abusive CIPA lawsuits. This is a meaningful step forward for organizations across California that have faced costly litigation and significant disruption, even when there is no allegation of actual harm or injury."

"We thank Senator Caballero for her leadership and Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan for her sincere engagement in moving this issue through the Legislature, and we thank Governor Newsom for recognizing the urgent need for CIPA reform," Kingman said in the statement.

Originally enacted in 1967, CIPA was intended to protect Californians from unlawful wiretapping and eavesdropping on landline phones. But the decades-old law, written long before the internet existed, has increasingly been exploited to bring over 4,000 abusive lawsuits over common website tools such as analytics tools, pixels and other digital services, without any allegation of actual harm or injury.

The signing of SB 690 marks an important step toward modernizing CIPA and ensuring California's privacy laws protect consumers without being exploited to pursue abusive litigation against businesses and organizations.

While SB 690 provides important relief, more work remains. The coalition will continue working with policymakers and stakeholders to pursue additional reforms addressing CIPA Section 631 and ensure California's privacy laws provide strong protections for consumers without enabling abusive litigation.

For more information about SB 690, visit Stop CIPAshakedowns.com. ★

Administrator Report Outlines Operational Improvements for FORPD

Continued from page 1

services like marketing, venue rentals and registration handled by different divisions or across multiple positions. Robertson identified this as an opportunity to work toward more streamlined operations through a comprehensive restructuring.

The report focused on strategic direction, an implementation roadmap and immediate policy actions.

Director Delinda Tamagni thanked Robertson for putting together the report and "identifying not only the different challenges, but also providing some action plans."

The board also considered the initial concept for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Fair Oaks Recreation and Arts Foundation.

Until recently, the board of directors also acted as the board of this fundraising group, but they have shifted the foundation to a separate entity with two board members holding seats on the new foundation board.

These two entities will now operate independently, with a shared commitment to enhancing parks, recreation programs and performing arts within Fair Oaks. The MOU creates an official framework, outlining the administrative, financial, operational and legal relationship between FORPD and the foundation.

The MOU requires separation of bank accounts, accounting systems and financial records; outlines foundation grant contributions to FORPD; and guides opportunities for FORPD staff to provide limited, temporary support for foundation events, if approved by the district administrator.

Approval of the MOU does not impact the district's general fund.

The MOU concept was approved 4-0 by the board, with Director Manuel Lavalle absent.

The next meeting of the FORPD Board of Directors is scheduled for Oct. 21. ★

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SacSewer Warriors Take Second Place in Division 3

Team earns first place in Maintenance and third in Safety, highlighting the people and expertise behind SacSewer's essential services

Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer) News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer) is demonstrating the depth of operational excellence behind one of the region's largest essential service providers, as its Warriors earned second place overall in Division 3 at the Water Environment Federation's (WEF) Operations Challenge at WEFTEC in New Orleans Sept. 28-29.

Competing against 26 teams in Division 3, the SacSewer Warriors earned first place in the Maintenance Event and third place in Safety. Made up of employees from SacSewer's collection and treatment operations, the team also posted some of its fastest competition times to date after months of preparation and practice leading up to the event. Operations Challenge brings together skilled water sector professionals competing in events designed around technical skills, and real-world scenarios involved in utility operations including collections, process control, maintenance, laboratory and safety.

While the results are a point of pride for the Warriors, the competition also offers a visible look at the people and expertise behind SacSewer's essential services. The skills demonstrated in the competition – technical knowledge, safety awareness, teamwork, communication and problem-solving – are the same skills employees rely on every day to operate and maintain critical infrastructure and provide reliable service to the community.

Competing against 26 teams in Division 3, the SacSewer Warriors earned first place in the Maintenance Event and third place in Safety. Photo courtesy of SacSewer

"The Warriors give us an opportunity to showcase the people behind the services our community depends on," said Christoph Dobson, general manager of SacSewer. "Their performance reflects the professionalism, dedication and pride that our employees bring to their work every day. We're proud to see the Warriors represent SacSewer and demonstrate the caliber of talent we have throughout our organization."

The Warriors also represent the interconnected nature of a modern sewer utility. While each area of the organization brings specialized knowledge and expertise, it takes people working together across disciplines to safely and reliably collect, treat and recover resources from sewage.

Preparing for Operations Challenge gives employees an opportunity to sharpen their technical and leadership skills, practice working under pressure, learn from colleagues in different areas and exchange ideas with other utilities. Photo courtesy of SacSewer

"The beauty of SacSewer's work is the way all of these people with diverse skills come together to serve our community," Dobson said. "The Warriors are one example of that collaboration. Whether someone works in collections, treatment, the laboratory, engineering or another part of the organization, every role brings a different area of expertise to the work we do. Together, those contributions allow us to safely and reliably serve our community."

Preparing for Operations Challenge gives employees an opportunity to sharpen their technical and leadership skills, practice working under pressure, learn from colleagues in different areas and exchange ideas with other utilities. SacSewer has captured the Warriors' preparation, competition and experiences through a series of videos that offer a behind-the-scenes look at the skills and teamwork required to compete – and the benefits Operations Challenge brings to SacSewer and the community we serve. To watch a video demonstrating why Ops Challenge matters, visit: youtube.com/watch?si=RhGHvV8g1ZCsRL5F&v=ynLU-UoG5Js&feature=youtu.be

The experience also provides an opportunity for employees to learn from one another and bring new ideas and perspectives back to their work at SacSewer – an added benefit of participating in a competition that celebrates the expertise and professionalism of utility operations. ★

FAA Awards Contract for New Air Traffic Control Tower at SMF

Sacramento International Airport News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has awarded a design-build contract to Walsh Federal LLC for a new air traffic control tower at Sacramento International Airport (SMF), marking a major milestone in the long-planned replacement of the airport's existing tower, which has been in service since 1967.

The contract was awarded Sept. 19, with work scheduled through early 2030. The new tower is expected to become fully operational around 2030.

"This contract award is a significant step forward for the long-term safety, efficiency and resilience of our airspace operations at Sacramento International Airport," said Harry Barrett Jr., assistant director of airports for Sacramento County. "We have been ready for this investment for many years, and we are excited to see the project move from planning toward construction."

The FAA previously identified SMF as a priority site for tower replacement in 2016. SMF is one of eight airports nationwide selected for new tower construction as part of a broader FAA initiative to modernize aging air traffic infrastructure. The program is supported in part by funding from the $5 billion allocated to the FAA Air Traffic Organization through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The current SMF control tower presents operational and accessibility limitations as well as challenges associated with aging facility systems. The replacement tower will be located on the airport's north campus and will provide improved sightlines and a modernized working environment designed to better support FAA air traffic controllers. The new location will also enhance security by relocating critical operations away from public-facing airport areas.

The FAA contract with Walsh Federal covers design and construction of the replacement tower, with a period of performance extending through February 2030. Construction is currently expected to begin in summer 2027. The new tower will remain FAA-owned and FAA-operated upon completion. ★

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

Get Excited Kings Fans

By V.G. Harris

Time to wake from a summer slumber and embrace the 2026-27 season, because the Sacramento Kings will be in action Monday night against the daunting Los Angeles Lakers.

While the Lakers are without Lebron, they are arguably packed with talent and last year's rookie Adou Thiero is just waiting for an opportunity to show the Laker fans what this highly athletic NBA forward can bring to the hard court.

Likewise, the Kings are blessed with a deep team, something that they have struggled with in the past, and that brings with it the looming question, who will be Doug Christie's starters, and who will garnish the majority of minutes off the bench.

Minutes are a precious commodity in the NBA, and players like Malik Monk simply cannot get lost in the shuffle as new faces enter the arena, and the tendency is to play newcomers and rookies early while sometimes forgetting who it is that got you there.

Not lost on anyone is the paltry 22 wins of a season ago, but most fans have put that agonizing number in the "lost to injury" column and I believe rightfully so.

It's the reason Doug Christie is back for a second season, and with a solid draft and the acquisition of an apparently healthy Ben Simmons, Christie has the chess pieces to make last season's 22 wins a distant memory.

Without question this team will need to walk before it can run. Putting too many minutes on rookie Darius Acuff Jr. or veteran Ben Simmon's should be the last thing coach Christie should do, and developing a rotation that satisfies minutes while producing results is the balancing act that he has before him.

This is why we watch the game Kings fans, and while the offseason may not have been as active as you would have liked, I am grateful that the Kings have a post presence led by Domantas Sabonis and backed up by youngsters clamoring for playing time. Both Precious Achiuwa and Dylan Cardwell will undoubtedly get quality minutes and they should.

Coming out of the gate Sabonis needs to establish who he is, and once again be the cleaner of the boards that the NBA has seen over the past four seasons. With that rebounding acumen comes stopping the competition from second chance points and presents fast break opportunities for the Kings.

Many were critical when the Kings brought in Domantas Sabonis and sent Tyrese Haliburton to the Indiana Pacers, but with that trade the Sacramento Kings became the No. 1 scoring team in the NBA.

It was a magical season that saw the Kings win 48 games, make the playoff's outright, and take the archrival Golden State Warriors to a seven-games series.

So, what will the partial rebuild from Scott Perry bring us this year?

Only time will tell, but I can assure every basketball fan reading this column that there is no shortage of talent on this team.

The Looming question resides in the coaching staff, and whether this team can play together and find a real identity. Every team needs one, and most have one.

If you talk to coach Christie, he will tell you defense is the name of the game, but my question is can you teach defensive strategies, and will this team that is getting younger buy into what you're teaching?

No one is going to argue that the Kings need to play defense, but will your veterans step up and lead by example or simply buy into what the national pundits want to banty about.

Enter Keegan Murray who needs to impress and do it early!

Yes, the clock is ticking with regards to Keegan Murray's tenure as a King, but the ball is still in his court and the opportunity starts tonight.

I still have faith that Keegan can find the game that made him the NCAA scoring champion in the nation, and he just needs to remember the accomplishments of his rookie year.

His defense has taken a step forward. Now, it's time to find the shooting stroke that suddenly went dormant.

Mentorship, teaching, are not just words, they are where leadership begins. I'm waiting to see if this coaching staff and Scott Perry have it, but the question will be answered soon.

Get excited Kings fans!

All the best! ★

Californians Are in a Sour Mood but Don't Want to Change the Political Status Quo

By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

Californians are in a sour mood these days, and for good reason.

The state's economy is stuck in neutral with scant job creation since the end of the COVID pandemic. Major sectors, such as high technology, are experiencing layoffs and job shrinkage and California is tied with two other states for the nation's highest unemployment rate.

Meanwhile, Californians' cost of living — especially housing, utilities and fuel — has climbed sharply, more than 100% since 2000, while personal income, adjusted for inflation, has actually declined fractionally since 2020.

A recent poll by the Public Policy Institute of California reflects the angst.

"Majorities of California adults (54%) and likely voters (52%) say the state is headed in the wrong direction," PPIC found. "This belief is held by nearly all Republicans (94%) and a majority of independents (55%), compared to one in three Democrats (32%)."

PPIC continues, "Californians are much more pessimistic about economic conditions over the next year, with seven in ten adults (71%) and likely voters (73%) as well six in ten or more across parties (61% Democrats, 90% Republicans, 72% independents) expecting bad economic times for the state."

If Californians are dissatisfied with the present and sour on the future, one might assume that they would express that negative frame of mind by rejecting the state's political status quo in favor of candidates who promise change.

However, with voting by mail beginning in a few days, the Democratic Party that has dominated California politics for the last three decades can comfortably expect to maintain — or even increase — its hegemony.

All of the statewide offices, including the governorship, will remain in Democratic hands. Polls by PPIC and UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies have found Democrat Xavier Becerra with a double-digit lead over Republican Steve Hilton for the governorship.

Democrats will retain supermajorities in both houses of the Legislature and probably gain a few congressional seats, thanks to gerrymandered districts that voters adopted last year to help neutralize Republican gerrymanders in other states.

A handful of legislative and congressional districts are in play but the macro results favoring Democrats are certain. Republican candidates, from Hilton down, are handicapped by low voter registration and Californians' deep disdain for President Donald Trump. Just 27% of California voters approve of Trump's performance, according to the Berkeley IGS poll.

The most uncertain — and therefore most interesting — aspects of this year's election are a very close battle for the mayoralty of Los Angeles, pitting veteran incumbent Karen Bass against a left-leaning city council member, Nithya Raman, a few Democrat vs. Democrat duels for congressional seats, and some polarizing ballot measures.

Five of the 14 statewide ballot measures relate to taxes, including two that would increase them and three that would make increases less likely.

The biggest and most controversial is Proposition 40, which would impose a one-time 5% tax on the wealth of about 200 billionaires, with proceeds mostly going to shore up healthcare services.

Prop. 40 is sponsored by a healthcare worker union and generally draws support from some, but not all, Democratic political figures and unions. Meanwhile, billionaires are spending hundreds of millions of dollars to oppose Prop. 40 and pass two other measures, Proposition 41 and Proposition 42, that would undermine Prop. 40's implementation if it survives the election.

Until recently, Prop. 40 was ahead in the polls, although barely. More recent surveys found that its base was eroding as the massive opposition campaign cranked up, so the result is very much in doubt. And even if Prop. 40 wins, it still could be neutralized by the passage of Props. 41 and 42.

Prop. 40 exemplifies the nation's social and political polarization and its outcome, whatever that may be, will reverberate for years to come.

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

Mom Worries Daughter Making Bad Social Security Decision

By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: My question is not for me, but for my daughter who 62 years is old. She does not want to take her Social Security now. Her husband was a doctor and passed away recently. She had been married to him for more than 10 years and, in the meantime, he married someone else. I thought the President erased taxes on earned money so that people could collect what was due them no matter what they earned. My daughter keeps telling me she has already earned too much this year and cannot collect her widow's benefits until next year. I don't understand what no tax on Social Security means then. Also, she wants to wait until she is 67 before she collects her own money. She has been a nurse and believes her own benefits may be larger than her widow's benefits. Is she correct to wait for that long?
Signed: Worried Mom

Dear Worried Mom: Your daughter is likely correct. There are two factors which come into play in your daughter's circumstance – one is the Annual Earnings Test (for those collecting early SS benefits), and the other relates to Federal income tax on SS benefits received. I'll try to clarify both of these for you:

If your daughter claims her widow's benefit at age 62, her benefit will be significantly reduced (by approximately 20+%) from what she would get at her SS full retirement age, and that would be a permanent reduction. And, if she works (which you imply she does) she would also be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test (AET) which limits how much she can earn by working prior to reaching her SS full retirement age (her "FRA," which is age 67). The earnings limit for 2026 is $24,480 (changes yearly) and, if her annual 2026 earnings exceed that amount, Social Security will take away $1 of benefits for every $2 she is over the annual limit. For example, if she is $25,000 over the limit, SS would take way benefits equal to $12,500. That would mean she wouldn't get any SS benefits for the remainder of this year and likely some of next year also. And, if her earnings are significantly more than the annual limit, she may even be temporarily ineligible to receive a widow's benefit (until she either reaches her FRA or earns less money). FYI, the Annual Earnings Test will go away when your daughter reaches age 67 but, until then, the AET will likely restrict her ability to receive Social Security benefits if she continues to work full time.

The next factor to be aware of is the so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill" (OBBB) which the President claimed means "no tax on Social Security." This is an entirely different factor than the Annual Earnings Test (AET) described above. The above AET discussion dealt with SS earnings limits while taking benefits before FRA, whereas the OBBB deals with income tax on Social Security benefits actually received. The OBBB (enacted last year) provides an extra $6,000 deduction per person (on the tax return filed with the IRS) for those 65 years of age or older. That extra IRS deduction is designed to offset (either totally or partially) any income tax which is levied on Social Security benefits received by those age 65 or older. It's also important to know that the OBBB only provides temporary income tax relief, because the law expires after the 2028 income tax year.

All of which leads me to conclude that your daughter's decision to wait longer to claim her widow's benefit from her deceased ex-husband is a prudent choice. As long as she is working and earning more than the annual earnings limit before age 67, the AET will restrict how much Social Security she is able to receive. If she later stops working or goes to part-time employment, she can revisit her decision at that time. And, depending on her own personally earned Social Security benefit amount at age 67 (vs. her widow's benefit), she can assess whether to claim her personal SS retirement benefit or to, instead, claim her benefit as her ex-husband's widow if that amount is larger than her own SS retirement. And, unless Congress later extends the OBBB prior to 2029, she will, at that time, likely need to pay income tax on the Social Security benefits she receives.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. ★

The Revolt Against Tariffs

In 2016, Donald Trump's support for tariffs helped propel him to a shocking electoral victory. In 2026, his tariff policy may help tank Republicans in the midterms. This turnabout counts as a surprise of Trump's second term, and an unwelcome one for the president and his party.

During his political ascent in 2015-2016, Trump exploited issues where there was a disconnect between popular and elite opinion, and trade was prominent among them. His protectionism -- expressed in pungent and excoriating terms -- poached traditional Democratic ideological territory and appealed to the working-class voters that allowed him to crash the traditional Democratic "Blue Wall" states. In sheer political terms, what could go wrong? Well, nothing -- until he got his way.

It turns out that Liberation Day was the beginning of the end for any appreciable political support for his tariff policy. The assumption has usually been that the politics of tariffs favor protectionism -- the benefits are very visible and focused for specific sectors and businesses, so they will be highly committed to maintaining them, while the costs are widely dispersed among people who won't care so much.

The logic here has been turned on its head, though. The costs felt by all the people with no direct stake in protectionism are tanking support for the tariffs. On top of this, there's the fact that Trump won the second time promising to reduce prices, whereas import duties increase them. The Yale Budget Lab estimates the costs to households as about $1,000 a year. The shambolic and arbitrary rollout of the tariffs, as well as the dubious legal basis for many of them, hasn't helped, either.

According to a poll that the libertarian Cato Institute conducted with Morning Consult, 74% of Americans say the tariffs increased the prices they pay, including 66% of Republicans. Fifty-three percent of the public says that the tariffs have weakened the economy, and 49% say they have hurt their quality of life. Regarding the latest trade spat with Canada, a Politico/Public First poll found that 56% of Americans think the tariffs against Canada were "wrong." According to a CBS/YouGov survey, people prefer a candidate who opposes Trump's tariffs over one who supports them, by 26 points.

Democratic Senate candidates are promising to reverse Trump's tariffs, even the card-carrying protectionist Sherrod Brown is critical. And some Republican candidates in states with lots of trade with Canada have dissented from the trade war with Our Friendly Neighbor to the North.

The Midwest is a trouble spot for the GOP in the midterms, and it's not hard to understand why. China cut its purchases of U.S. farm products in retaliation for Trump's tariffs, and the farm sector has been slammed. Exports of wheat, cotton, beef and pork to China plummeted last year, and overall agricultural exports to China fell by 66%.

When you layer on top of this the price of diesel fuel jumping 80% and fertilizer increasing 15% because of the Iran war, it's a formula for a revolt. The tariffs have led to a tangle a little more than a month before the election. Trying to address complaints about high grocery prices, the administration wants to relent on beef tariffs to help consumers, but farmers -- hurt by other tariffs -- are balking at a measure that will reduce prices at a time when they are struggling.

One way or another, someone is going to be unhappy. Even if Trump's theory of the tariffs is correct -- that higher import duties will lead to re-industrialization -- the policy involves immediate disruption and increased costs in exchange for a protectionism-driven build-out that will take years to be fully achieved.

Long before then -- indeed, by January -- an opposition congressional majority hostile to the president and his tariffs may be entrenched in Washington. In politics, it's often "careful what you wish for," especially if it involves higher prices on an inflation-fatigued public.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Informing, Empowering & Engaging Readers With Their Community

Association, Perception and What We Do Next: The Seeds of Community Impact

By Patsy McGavock

Like many of you, I'm watching gas prices fluctuate and rise. Our first thought may be the burden that price reflects in our own life, alongside other financial concerns. But behind that price may be a why reflecting something far more challenging for people caught in conflict in the Middle East. A conflict that often affects the price of oil.

Our minds make associations — connections between what we experience and what it brings to mind. Those connections shape how we feel and what we do next. Within ourselves — and toward others.

Looking beyond ourselves can help us see a larger whole — changing not only what we see but also what we feel and do.

When I see the prices rise, I think of the people in the crossfire and say a prayer. I cannot personally fix it, but I believe God, among other things, can help.

But the point isn't the prayer. It's that the price prompted me to turn outward toward others rather than inward toward my own frustration.

That reflection prompted a memory — a time a friend online shared criticism of those who say, "I will pray for you," when they want to help but cannot directly influence the situation. At first I did not understand the criticism. I only felt the sting. So I asked why, seeking to understand.

Through that exchange, I came to understand a different perspective. Saying "I will pray" may be meaningful to me, but others may wonder what direct action accompanies it.

That is worth considering. When a problem is bigger than we can solve, we reach toward something bigger than ourselves. For me, that includes faith. For others, it may mean community, government or advocacy. The two are not in competition. Either can move us beyond ourselves and toward action.

Psychology notes that association – the connection between experience and feeling - is a powerful driver of our perceptions. Some express this as, "Neurons that fire together wire together." In our brain, those firings can tie emotions to experiences, shaping how we perceive a similar experience next time.

Yet powerfully, if we recognize the connections we're making, we can be intentional about what we tie to the next experience. We retain neuroplasticity as we age — our brain's capacity to physically change and adapt those connections through experience and learning. But it takes intention.

We can choose.

What do we see and what do we associate it to?

This is a precursor to effective advocacy. Do we see only a problem — or do we see people? Do we ask questions that put the two together in human understanding?

In community, it takes willingness to look beyond ourselves, to see the why through a human lens.

So I will continue to let the price of gas, as I drive by, remind me of those who are suffering much more than I, and I will let it empower my heart to act. Here at home, I can reach out to neighbors carrying the weight of conflicts affecting those they care about far from home — Israeli or Palestinian, Russian or Ukrainian. Or other neighbors carrying conflicts we rarely see in the headlines. I can acknowledge, "I know these things are going on. How are you?" You are seen. You are not alone.

I cannot directly affect all the conflicts in the world for good, but I can lift neighbors and understand the situation better. That understanding can give me something better informed to bring to people who do have influence — and help me advocate more effectively for positive change.

Beyond that, having spent that time in reflection and with others, I will walk more whole and complete.

Because peace is found in presence.

Patsy McGavock is a volunteer writer and community advocate "informing, empowering and engaging readers with their community." and can be reached at PatsyMcGavock.JustServe@gmail.com. ★

BY JOSH F.W. COOK

★ CALIFORNIA ★ POLICY AND ETHICS

Proposition 43: Close the Two-Thirds Loophole

By Josh Cook

Proposition 43 would restore the two-thirds voter threshold for every local special tax in California—no matter who puts it on the ballot.

Starting January 1, 2027, cities, counties, school districts, community colleges, and special districts could not impose, extend, or increase an earmarked tax without that supermajority. It would also bar new value-based property taxes except Proposition 13's 1 percent rate and voter-approved bonds. Taxes already passed by simple majority would stand.

California has two kinds of local taxes. A general tax goes into the general fund and needs only a majority. A special tax is earmarked for a specific purpose—schools, parks, fire protection, transit, or other programs—and traditionally requires two-thirds voter approval. That higher bar was intentional: voters should reach broad consensus before imposing a tax dedicated to a particular purpose.

Today, however, a special tax can be placed on the ballot through a citizen-initiative process, allowing it to pass with a simple majority. The purpose remains special, but the voting threshold can be reduced to 50 percent plus one. Public-employee unions and other organized interests have used this approach to advance earmarked taxes that otherwise would face the two-thirds requirement.

In San Francisco, for example, a district and teachers' union drafted a parcel tax and used individual residents as the formal proponents, allowing the measure to avoid the higher threshold. At a time when so many families are struggling to make ends meet, wouldn't it be better to be upfront with them and say, "We need two-thirds of you to do this," instead of finding some sneaky way to add some other tax on top of all the other taxes that have sneakily been added over the years?

At some point, those in government should consider what happens when you erode people's trust that the government is transparent, honest, upfront, and forthright. Special interests that drive these mechanisms to keep getting more money may find they run out of goodwill if voters always feel like they're being played at the ballot box.

Prop. 43 responds to a nonstop carousel of mechanisms that people in Sacramento have used for the last 20 years to do nothing but grow government faster than the population. If it passes, it will send a message to the people planning the next 22 ballot measures designed to fund the thing they love. ★

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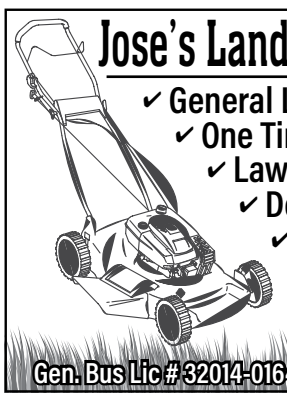

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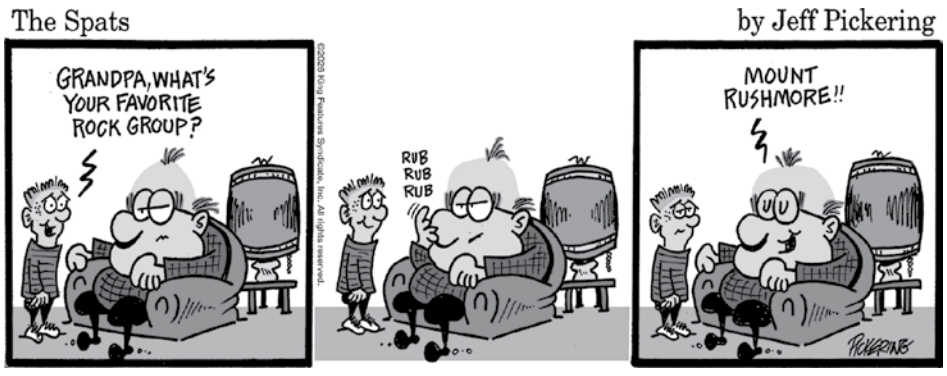
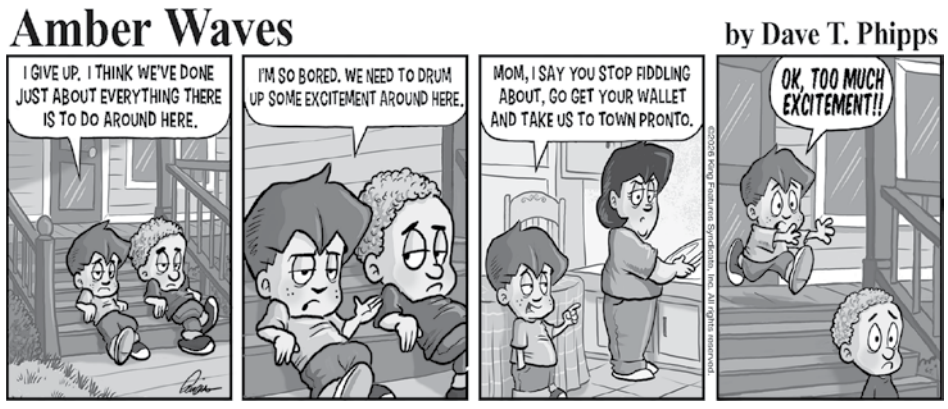
COMICS & PUZZLES

The Spats by Jeff Pickering

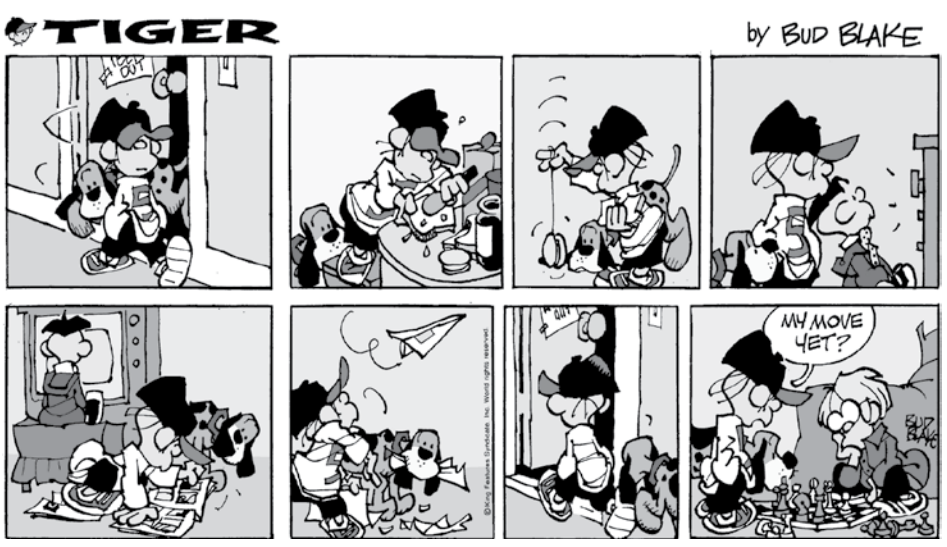


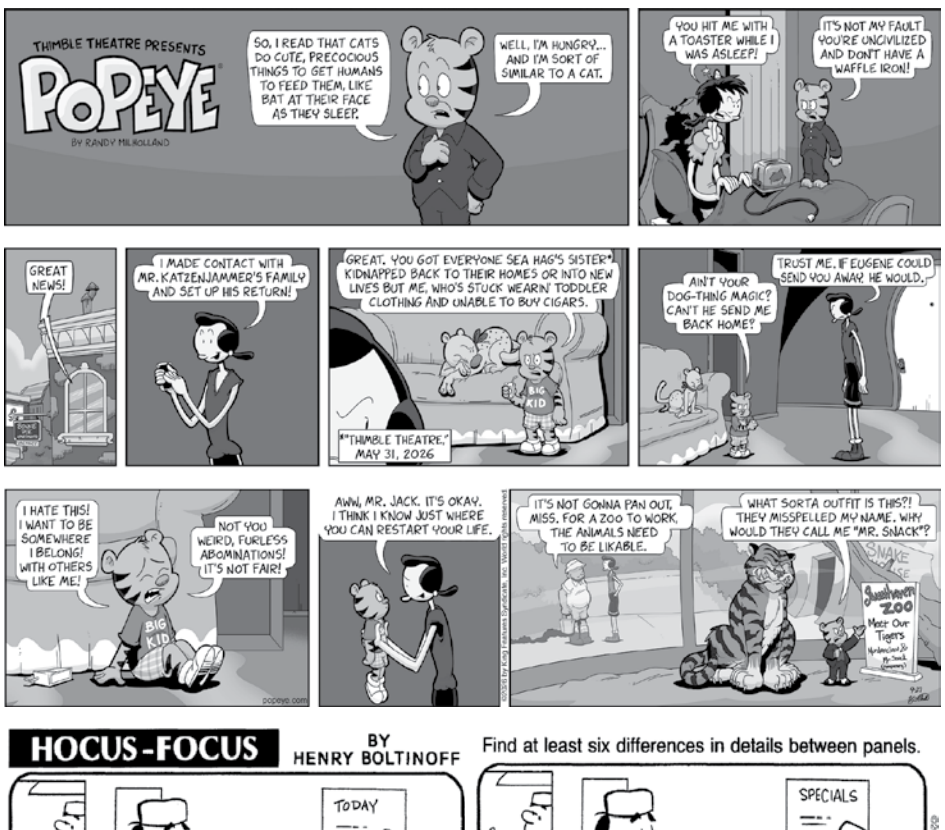
Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb by Gary Kopervas

TIGER by BUD BLAKE



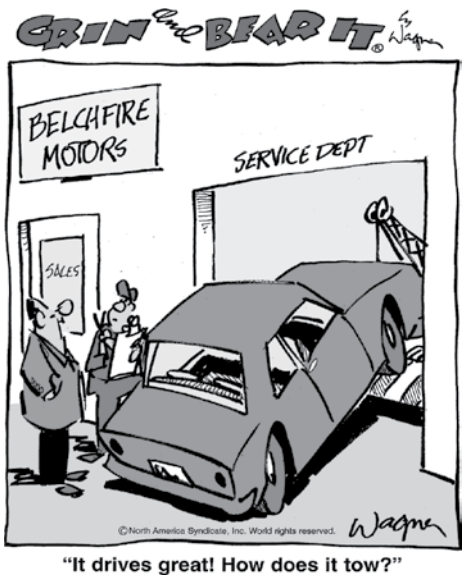


HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

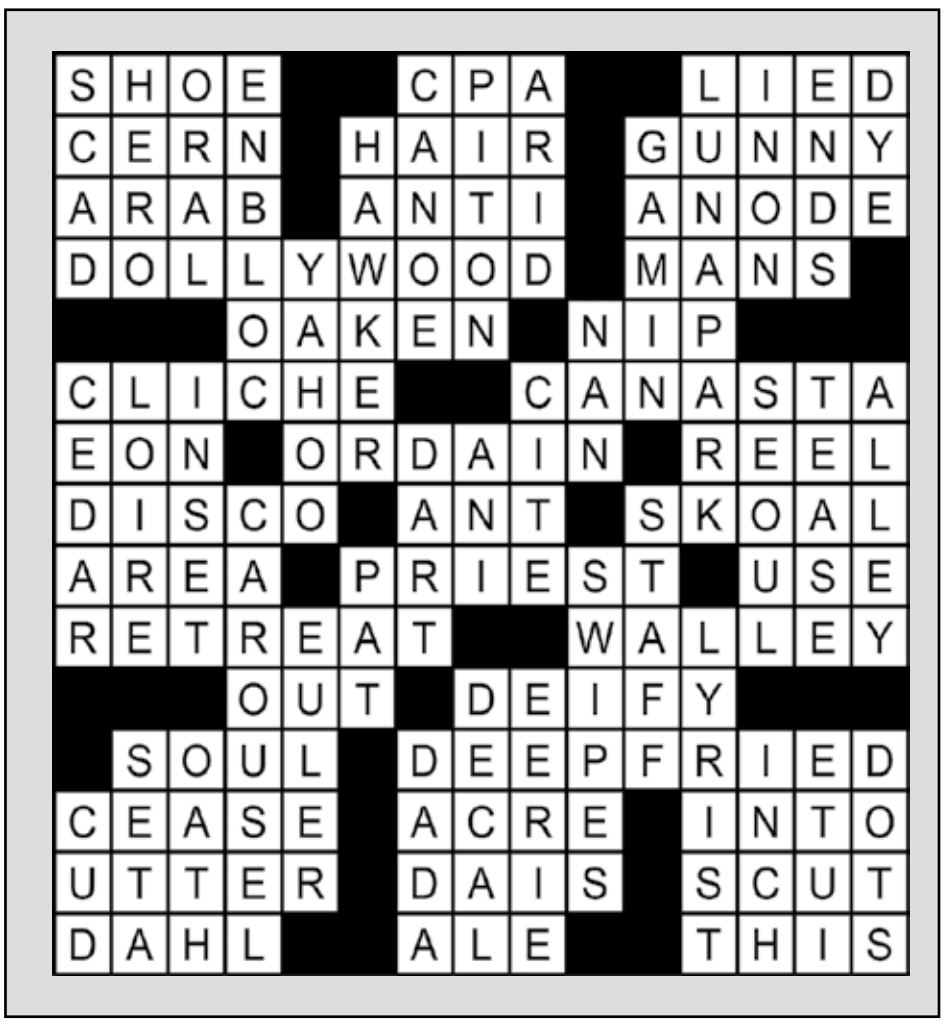
Differences: 1. Word is different. 2. Glasses are missing. 3. Sleeve is different. 4. Hat is larger. 5. Back of stool is added. 6. Mouth is different.

GRIN and BEAR IT by Wagner



"It drives great! How does it tow?"

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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CLUES

ACROSS
1. If it fits...
5. Accounting pro
8. What Pinocchio did
12. What discern and concern have in common
13. "The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical"
14. Sack fabric
15. A in UAE
16. Not with us, prefix
17. Opposite of cathode
18. *Late Parton's amusement venture
20. Dog is ____ best friend
21. Made of certain hardwood
22. Tiny sip
23. Trite one
26. Type of rummy
30. Bajillion years
31. Appoint #40 Across
34. Film wheel
35. "Saturday Night Fever" music
37. Adam of "Stand and Deliver"
38. Smokeless tobacco brand
39. Region
40. Religious minister
42. Wear and tear
43. Opposite of advance
45. *____ World, Griswalds' destination
47. Not in
48. Worship like god
50. Music genre
52. *Like funnel cakes and elephant ears
56. Halt
57. *Disney World in Florida spans over 25,000 of these
58. Not out of
59. Like complete nonsense
60. Podium
61. Cottontail's tail
62. Willy Wonka's creator
63. Bass, e.g.
64. Not that

DOWN
1. Tropical marine fish
2. Submarine sandwich
3. Like traditional story-telling
4. All together (2 words)
5. Not kayak?
6. Mountain climber's spike
7. Like dry clime
8. *Coney Island's original (2 words)
9. Aware of a secret (2 words)
10. Make them meet
11. Food coloring, e.g.
13. *a.k.a. game barker
14. Gavroche, e.g.
19. Cowboy's cry of joy
22. Bobbsey twin
23. Wood in the closet?
24. France's longest river
25. Garment insert
26. Quote
27. "Gangnam Style" capital
28. Badger
29. *2021 movie "Nightmare ____"
32. *Balloon popper
33. "Wheel of Fortune" request, 2 words
36. *a.k.a. merry-go-round
38. Walking stick
40. Singer Benatar
41. Steals
44. Famous Swiss mathematician Leonhard ____
46. Lyre player
48. Hot rod sticker
49. Spooky
50. ____ ____ good example
51. Four-letter word
52. Bit of baby talk
53. Mark on a ruler
54. Tiny purse
55. Popular movie candy
56. Something to chew on

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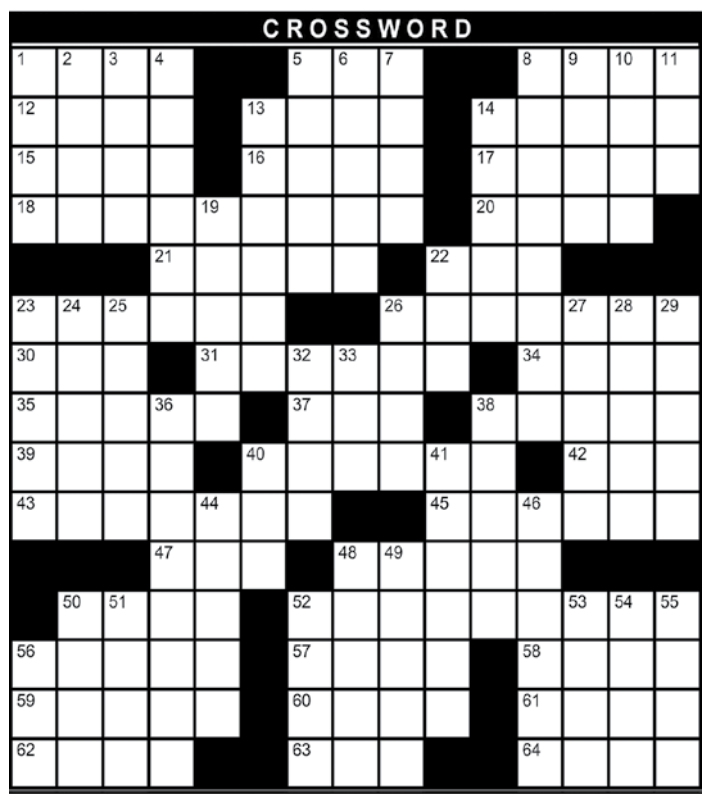

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Spooktacular Fun in Fair Oaks

By Judy Andrews, Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - From October harvest fairs to spooky Halloween fun, Fair Oaks has it all. Be sure to check out these upcoming family-friendly events.

Join the Sacramento Waldorf School for its annual **Harvest Fair** on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event is free to attend and will be held at 3750 Bannister Road in Fair Oaks. Activities will include musical performances, games, farm tours, craft booths, student-run food booths and more. For more information, visit: www.sacwaldorf.org.

Mark your calendars for the **7th Annual Community Food Drive** on Saturday, Oct. 17. Food donations will be accepted from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Divine Savior Catholic Church, 9079 Greenback Lane, Orangevale. Your donations benefit the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Food Bank. For more information, visit: www.ovfocf.org.

Discover Gold, Ghosts, and History at Sailor Bar on Saturday, Oct. 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Travel back to the Gold Rush era along the American River with an interpreter from the Sacramento History Museum. Kids are welcome to dress in their favorite Halloween costumes. Sailor Bar is at 4253 Illinois Ave. in Fair Oaks. Parking is $8. Sponsored by Friends of Sailor Bar in partnership with Sacramento County Regional Parks.

Bring the kids out for **Safe Halloween** on Oct. 29 from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Fair Oaks Village. Fair Oaks Rotary Club members, dressed in costumes, will hand out candy to kids in front of storefronts. This is always a fun event for the young and the young-at-heart.

Join the Fair Oaks First Baptist Church for family fun at their annual **Fall Festival** on Sunday, Oct. 31, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Kids will enjoy a trunk-or-treat, games, crafts, a climbing wall, and more. The church is located at 4401 San Juan Ave.

The **Fair Oaks Farmers Market** is a great place to pick up fresh, locally grown fruit and vegetables and to meet local farming families. The market is open rain or shine every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Fair Oaks Park, 11549 Fair Oaks Blvd. Come see what October has to offer at the Fair Oaks Farmers Market.

Save the Date

Help **Light Up the Cemetery** with the Fair Oaks Cemetery District on Thursday, Nov. 5, between 4:30 and 7 p.m. Bring the family for a special night with s'mores, hot chocolate, tea lights, and a bonfire. The Fair Oaks Cemetery is located at 7780 Olive Street.

Mark your calendars for the annual **Fair Oaks Tree Lighting** event on Thursday, Dec. 3, from 5 to 8 p.m. at Plaza Park, 7003 Park Drive, in Fair Oaks Village. More information will be available soon.

See you in Fair Oaks! ★

Protecting Yosemite for Future Generations

Josh Hoover

By Assemblyman Josh Hoover

There are some places in California that belong to all of us. Yosemite is one of them.

More than 160 years ago, in the middle of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant Act of 1864. That law transferred Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of giant sequoias to California for public use, recreation and preservation. Among its most important provisions was a simple but powerful promise: the land would be "inalienable for all time." That promise is worth remembering now.

Unfortunately, a proposed land exchange at Yosemite National Park would give a private developer access across federal park land to connect an adjacent property to a road inside the park. Kingsbarn Realty Capital owns an 83-acre parcel outside Yosemite's western boundary and is seeking that access to facilitate development. The Department of the Interior has said no final decision has been made and that any exchange would have to comply with federal law and environmental review. Those assurances do not settle the larger question: whether Yosemite land should be on the table at all.

I do not believe it should. Earlier this month 61 members of the California Legislature — more than half of the state's 118 lawmakers — sent a bipartisan letter to Interior Secretary Doug Burgum urging him to halt and reject the proposal. I was proud to sign it. Our message was straightforward: Yosemite belongs to no one and to everyone. It is held in trust for generations yet to come and this deal would break that promise.

The idea is not new. A previous owner sought private road access through park land beginning in the 2000s. The National Park Service refused. The owner sued. In 2012, a federal appeals court upheld the rejection. That should have ended the matter. Instead, after the current developer purchased the adjacent parcels in 2024, the same underlying request returned — not through the courts this time, but through a land exchange negotiated with federal officials.

We are also concerned by reports that the Department has considered using the Land and Water Conservation Fund in connection with the exchange. That fund exists to acquire and protect public land, not to underwrite its handoff to a private developer. Earlier this year, the Legislature adopted AJR 9 urging full funding and staffing for the National Park Service and opposing the transfer of federal park lands. We write in that same spirit.

The existence of a land-exchange mechanism does not make this appropriate use of it. Protecting Yosemite requires no creative reading of federal law. It requires the judgment to say no.

Californians disagree on many things. Protecting the places that belong to all Americans should not be one of them. Our national parks are not ordinary parcels of government property. They are part of the nation's heritage. When Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant, he was not thinking about the next news cycle. He was thinking about a future he would never see. It is now our responsibility to protect Yosemite for future generations.

Assemblyman Josh Hoover represents the 7th Assembly District in Sacramento County, which includes the cities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, and Rancho Cordova and the unincorporated communities of Carmichael, Fair Oaks, Foothill Farms, Gold River, Mather, McClellan Park, North Highlands, Orangevale and Rosemont. You can follow him on X @ joshua_hoover or contact his office at Assemblymember.Hoover@assembly.ca.gov.★

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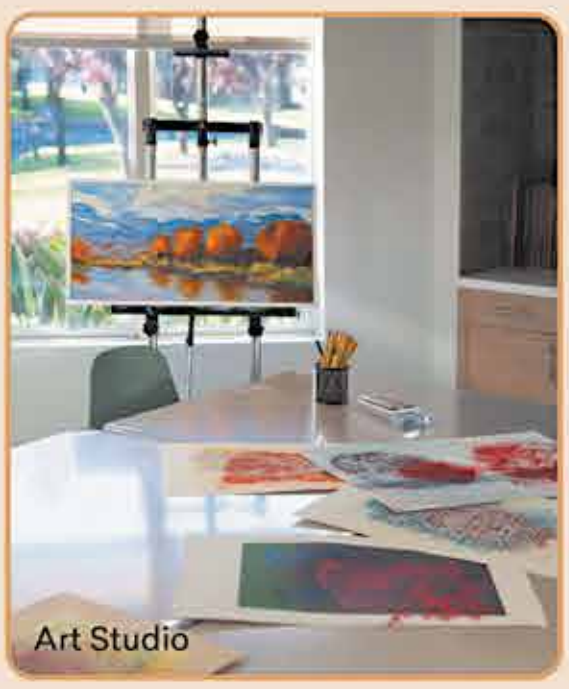
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California Capital Airshow Returns with Night Show and World-Renowned Performer Lineup

California Capital Airshow News Release

The Airshow team is grateful to its 1,000 passionate volunteers that keep the airshow running. Photo courtesy of Mark E. Loper/California Capital Airshow

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The 20th annual California Capital Airshow (CCA), presented in partnership by Sacramento County and the City of Rancho Cordova, returns Oct. 10-11 from noon to 8 p.m. daily at Mather Airport in Sacramento.

The two-day event will recognize CCA's 20th anniversary alongside the nation's 250th with an extraordinary lineup of performers, including the United States Air Force Thunderbirds and the Canadian Forces Snowbirds. The event will feature miles of aircraft on display and hands-on exhibits for all ages, and conclude with nighttime aerial performances and a massive pyro-musical fireworks show.

This unique show features nonstop aerial performances running from 3:30-8 p.m. each day, culminating with the night show. In addition to the two headlining jet teams, the USAF Thunderbirds and Canadian Snowbirds, airshow highlights include performances from the U-2 Dragon Lady and T-38 Talons of Beale Air Force Base, the United States Air Force C-17 Globemaster III Demonstration Team, and the United States Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet Demonstration Team. As the sun sets, the show will continue with maximum afterburner followed by aircraft lighting up the night sky with pyrotechnics, walls of fire, spectacular fireworks and hundreds of drones.

"This year's show is a milestone celebration that offers a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience," said Darcy Brewer, CEO of California Capital Airshow. "We're bringing the Thunderbirds and Snowbirds to Sacramento to celebrate our 20th anniversary and the nation's 250th, with a night show and fireworks finale to match."

Airshow tickets are on sale now at CaliforniaCapitalAirshow.com. Each adult General Admission ticket includes free admission for up to six youth (age 15 and under) and free parking. A variety of upgraded tickets and experiences are also available for purchase. Tickets are available online only and will not be sold at the gate. They are expected to sell out, so attendees are encouraged to purchase their tickets soon.

Special thanks to our generous partners Sacramento County, the City of Rancho Cordova, Sutter Health, Wilton Rancheria, Modern Aviation, SMUD, Teichert, Roseville Auto Mall, Sky River Casino, Kaiser Permanente, Sacramento Republic FC, Five Star Bank, Southwest Airlines, Atlas Disposal, UPS and iHeart Media.

In addition, the Airshow team is grateful to its 1,000 passionate volunteers, a long list of committed community supporters, as well as the teams of law enforcement and emergency services that give their time and energy to keep everyone safe.

The event heavily relies on volunteers to assist with admissions, guest services, ramp and flight line security and more over the two-day event at Mather Airport. Photo courtesy of Mark E. Loper/California Capital Airshow

Tickets and more information can be found at CaliforniaCapitalAirshow.com.★

The event will feature miles of aircraft on display and hands-on exhibits for all ages, and conclude with nighttime aerial performances and a massive pyro-musical fireworks show. Photo courtesy of Mark E. Loper/California Capital Airshow

The USAF Thunderbirds will headline the California Capital Airshow on Oct. 10-11. Photo courtesy of Mark E. Loper/California Capital Airshow

The Thunderbirds and Snowbirds are coming to Sacramento to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the airshow and the nation's 250th, with a night show and fireworks finale to match. Photo courtesy of Mark E. Loper/California Capital Airshow