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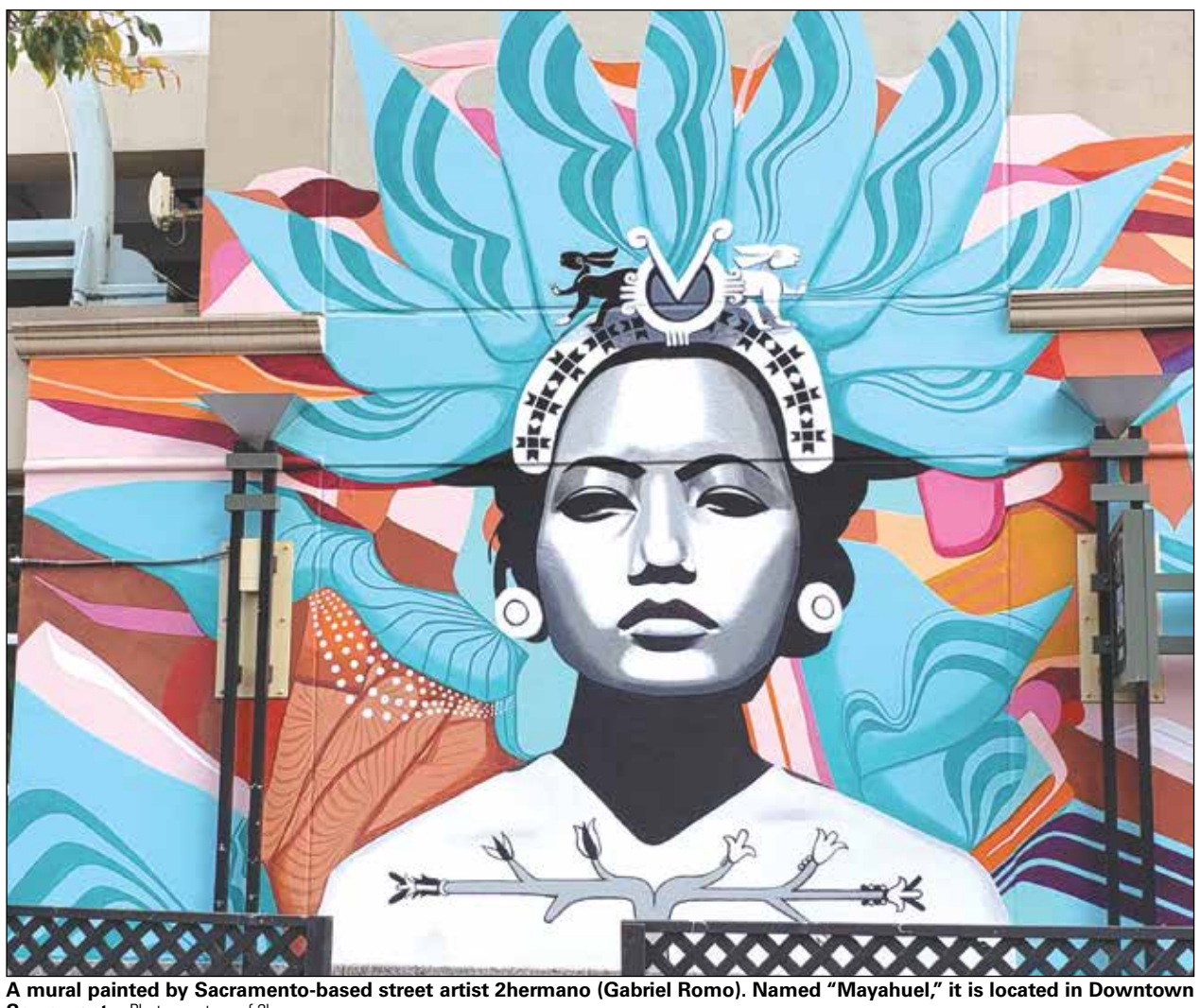
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Graffiti City

Behind Sacramento's Street Art Scene



A mural painted by Sacramento-based street artist 2hermano (Gabriel Romo). Named "Mayahuel," it is located in Downtown Sacramento. Photo courtesy of 2hermano

By Khushi Salgia

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Art nourishes the soul, and the same is true for public art as well. Anyone who has spent even a bit of time in Sacramento will have noticed the expansive portfolio of murals on display, both in the city and in the suburbs. As a result, Sacramento is one of the top mural hubs in the country.

When it comes to public art, not all of it can be painted with the same broad brush (no pun intended). While graffiti is the most popular term to describe any sort of public art, graffiti is different from other street art. While street art is the broad umbrella term to describe public art ranging

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Rally for Community Benefits



Union workers with Unite Here Local 49 and their supporters march Oct. 21 around Old City Hall in Sacramento demanding better community benefits tied to the downtown Railyards project.

Story and photos by Keith Burbank

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - More than 1,000 Sacramento residents have signed a petition demanding better community benefits tied to a development proposed for downtown, according to a local union.

And dozens of people echoed those demands Oct. 21 at Old City Hall, while calling for the City Council to delay a vote on the project so those benefits can be negotiated with the developer. City Councilwoman Mai Vang, District 8, attended the rally.

She supports the Railyards project, she said, but added "we want a railyard for all."

She wants to see the project include at least 25% affordable housing and she wants the community to shape the benefits package, she said. Additionally, she supported a delay to the City Council vote planned for Oct. 27.

That vote has been delayed.

Those rallying Oct. 21 want a community benefits package that

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University Gets National Certification

SACRAMENTO STATE

Sacramento State News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Excelencia in Education announced Oct. 27 that California State University, Sacramento (Sacramento State) has earned certification as an Intentionally Thriving Institution (ITI)–the highest level of recognition through the Seal of Excelencia–for demonstrating positive impact in preparing Latino, and all, students for success after graduation and connecting them to the workforce. This marks the third time Sacramento State has earned Seal of Excelencia recognition and the first time it is placed among the now 12 institutions to ever receive ITI certification.

"We are preparing record numbers of graduates to leave Sacramento State ready to build lives grounded in independence, health, purpose, joy, and the ability to support their families and communities," said President Luke Wood. "Earning the Seal and being recognized as an Intentionally Thriving Institution affirms, on a national stage, that our work across recruitment, enrollment, belonging, graduation, and career success is purposeful, informed by data, and delivering real results."

As one of 21 colleges and universities to earn the Seal in 2026, Sacramento State is accountable for delivering value to students, communities, and the country, reinforcing higher education's role as an engine of social mobility, economic vitality, and workforce development. From demystifying the application process to providing access to workforce and financial readiness opportunities to making sure all students and families feel included, Sacramento State provides support at every stage of the student experience.

"This Seal is a testament to the work our faculty, staff, and administrators do everyday to make sure Sac State students are supported throughout their college journey and prepared for the careers of their dreams," said Lilia Contreras, Hispanic Serving Institution director, Student Affairs & Inclusive Excellence at Sacramento State. "As the No. 1 public university in

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Graffiti City

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from murals to poster pastings, graffiti is different in that it tends to be unauthorized. One of the most common types of graffiti is tagging, which is when someone writes their name or '(their name) was here' in the traditional spray-painted block letters style.

"Graffiti started in Philadelphia and New York when artists wrote their names or nicknames on walls with pens," said Ten Blair, co-founder of Graffiti For Good, a local grassroots nonprofit that supports street art in Sacramento.

This practice of tagging, which started in the 1970s in alternative subcultures—such as the skater and punk communities— has since become widespread throughout the country and the world. While tagging and other forms of graffiti have the stereotype of being affiliated with gang activity, and in certain cases that might be true, it started with artistically inclined kids who were bored after school.

"It was never gangs to start off with." said Blair.

Although graffiti can carry a negative connotation, street art on the other hand, is well-loved by artists and community members alike.

"A wall, when done well, just completely transforms the space," said Gabriel Romo, a Sacramento-based muralist who goes by the name 2hermano. "A lot of times, people can't verbalize what it is, but there's symbols and things that are getting transmitted through the color and the pigment."



An example of a type of graffiti called tagging, which is usually not authorized and can be a form of vandalism. Photo by Khushi Salgia

While large cities with vibrant art scenes such as New York City and Los Angeles have some of the biggest street art scenes in the world, Sacramento is special because it has quite a comparable street art scene given its size and population. The city sets aside a budget for commissioning street art as well as designated legal painting areas for those who want to voluntarily paint a mural. Due to this specific infrastructure in place, a whole subculture and community is encouraged to flourish here.

Romo, who has also painted murals in San Diego, said that San Diegans tend to be more hesitant to allow street art as there isn't as big of a subculture there.

"We are lucky that Sacramento does embrace it," he said.

Another reason for Sacramento's high number of murals is due to the annual Wide Open Walls (WOW) Festival (formerly called the Sacramento Mural Festival). This multi-day event, hosted by the nonprofit Wide Open Walls, brings in street artists from all over the world.

"It makes you feel proud to be from Sacramento," said David Sobon, founder and executive director of WOW.

During the festival these artists gather across the city to transform building walls and alleyways with vibrant public art. One of the most famous murals to come out of this event is the large painting of Johnny Cash on the side of Marriott's Residence Inn at the intersection of 15th and L streets. Painted by Shepard Fairey in 2018, this mural was created in honor of the 60-year anniversary of Cash's song "Folsom Prison Blues."



An art installation located in the Graffiti For Good gallery, created by artists Child of Helmuth and Jefferson Eisenberg. Photo by Khushi Salgia

This year, WOW celebrates its 10-year anniversary, and over the past decade, the festival alone has led to about 200 murals in Sacramento. In addition to the festival, WOW as a non-profit has created a total of 400 murals in the Sacramento area. Sobon developed an interest in art from a young age due to this mother being a collector. Later, his work as an auctioneer allowed him to learn who all the major funders were in the region. He was inspired by the murals that he would see daily and wanted to find a way for there to be more of them in Sacramento.

For owners of private buildings and businesses, Sobon approaches them directly and explains the benefits of having a mural on the side of their building.

"I have to convince them it's a good idea," he said. "But the tourist benefits are unbelievable."

When a business has a mural on the side of its building, it brings a lot more people to the building. People take pictures with it and post the pictures on social media, generating free advertising.

"Everybody's willing to pay for good art," he said.

The benefits of street art are more than monetary. When an area has high-quality paintings that are aesthetically pleasing and culturally relevant, it makes people feel like their neighborhood is taken care of.

Graffiti For Good "came out of a need to take ownership of our neighborhood and make people feel safer," Blair said. "We want to keep as many artists employed as possible while also making the city more beautiful." ★



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Rally for Community Benefits



Union workers with Unite Here Local 49 and their supporters show their solidarity following a rally Oct. 21 at Old City Hall to demand better community benefits tied to Railyards project in downtown Sacramento.

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includes 25% affordable housing, a grocery store, an anti-displacement fund and living wages for operations workers at the proposed hotels and soccer stadium, said Aamir Deen, president of Unite Here Local 49, which represents downtown hospitality workers.

LDK Ventures, which is at least partly responsible for the development of the project, did not respond to a request for comment.

The Railyards project will double the size of downtown Sacramento, Local 49 leaders said, with up to 10,000 housing units, a concert venue, stadium and three hotels.

Nancy Williams, 68, now lives where the Railyards project would be built. She lives in affordable housing, which she pays for with her Social Security check.

If they build the more than 9,000 units of market-rate housing, "I'll be priced out," she said. "I can't imagine being homeless out here."

William's opinion is the City Council votes their own way, she said. But she is speaking up.

The existing plans call for 6% percent of the homes to be affordable, union officials said, while 96% will be luxury. Thousands of jobs will be low-wage, the officials added, and developers might get a $222 million tax subsidy for the project.

The project website says the project will have mixed-income housing.

The City Council planned to vote Oct. 27 on an enhanced infrastructure financing district for the project, which is part of the overall subsidy, union officials said. An EIFD is a type of tax increment financing that can help California cities and counties pay for economic development projects. ★

Research Inspires Artwork



The event, which will be a presentation and public exhibition, will take place from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity, 400 Jibboom St., Sacramento. Courtesy photo

By Keith Burbank

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Artists and researchers will come together Nov. 12 at ARx Live to unveil artwork inspired by science research, according to SMUD's Museum of Science and Curiosity.

The event, which will be a presentation and public exhibition, will take place from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity, 400 Jibboom St., Sacramento.

"We are proud to welcome ARx Live to MOSAC," said Carlos Gonzalez-Jaime, executive director of the SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity, in a statement. "This exciting collaboration reflects our commitment to STEAM education by bringing science, art, and innovation together in ways that inspire curiosity and connect people. By pairing this unique exhibition with MOSAC's hands-on, interactive experiences, we hope to make these ideas accessible to audiences of all ages and invite our communities to explore the fascinating intersection of art and science."

The Nov. 12 event is the culmination of a nine-month partnership between artists and researchers resulting in visual, digital, literary, performative and mixed media art. Artwork will be on display at the Museum of Science and Curiosity until Dec. 15.

Nine artist-researcher teams took part in the program. They include Geoanna Bautista with the University of California at Davis School of Medicine and Jennifer Lugris, a Uruguayan Korean American painter based in Sacramento.

Leigh Ann Simmons at the University of California at Davis Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing partnered with artist Jessica Wimbley, who is based in Sacramento.

Jennifer Rosenthal of the University of California at Davis School of Medicine worked with artist Jodi Connelly, whose work involves people and their natural environment.

Drew Cingel at the University of California at Davis and artist and photographer Melissa Uroff partnered.

Angie Louie in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of California at Davis worked with artist Muzi Li Rowe, and Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz with the Centers for Violence Prevention at the University of California at Davis partnered with artist Ruby Chacon. Chacon is based in Sacramento and a high school educator.

Industrial biologist Dave Hogsett and Bay Area artist Sunroop Kaur worked together and artificial intelligence researcher Gabriel Simmons worked with visual artist Taner Ilhan Pasamehmetoglu.

Elizabeth Lopez, a wildlife biologist, partnered with community artist, organizer and educator Yared Portillo.

ARx Sacramento is modeled after a similar program at the Phoenix Bioscience Core in Arizona, which is starting its fifth year of partnerships.

"Nine months ago, we set out to show that Sacramento is a city where creativity and research thrive side-by-side - ARx Live is that vision realized," said Megan Van Voorhis, interim Assistant City Manager, in a statement. "Watching these artist-researcher teams translate rigorous science into work the whole community can experience is exactly the kind of inclusive, innovative arts programming we set out to champion." ★

University Gets National Certification

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the state capital, Sac State and its Latine students are helping power the region's economy."

Only 55 institutions nationwide have earned the Seal of Excelencia, producing outsized positive student impact. Seal-certified institutions represent less than 2% of colleges and universities, yet enroll 16% and graduate 18% of Latino students – and enroll and graduate 8% of all students.

The Seal is a rigorous national certification earned through the intentional alignment of data, evidence-based practices, and leadership, which together lead to student success. Since first earning the Seal six years ago, Sacramento State has sustained continuous improvement in student outcomes and intentionally invested in post-completion success for Latinos, who are representative of today's post-traditional student majority. In doing so, it is ensuring Latino, and all, students graduate ready for the workforce and civic leadership, thus also strengthening local talent pipelines.

"Seal of Excelencia certified institutions present strength of purpose and impact at a moment of great change in higher education," said Deborah Santiago, Excelencia in Education co-founder and CEO. "Excelencia is proud to work with these leaders that show us how it looks when students succeed because of their institutions — not despite them. Thanks to the leadership of Intentionally Thriving Institutions in particular, we are cultivating talent that will ensure America's future."

Learn more about how Seal of Excelencia certified institutions model the transformation necessary for higher education to ensure Latino, and all, students thrive — and strengthen our nation's civic leadership and workforce: EdExcelencia.org/seal/seal-excelencia-certified-institutions. ★

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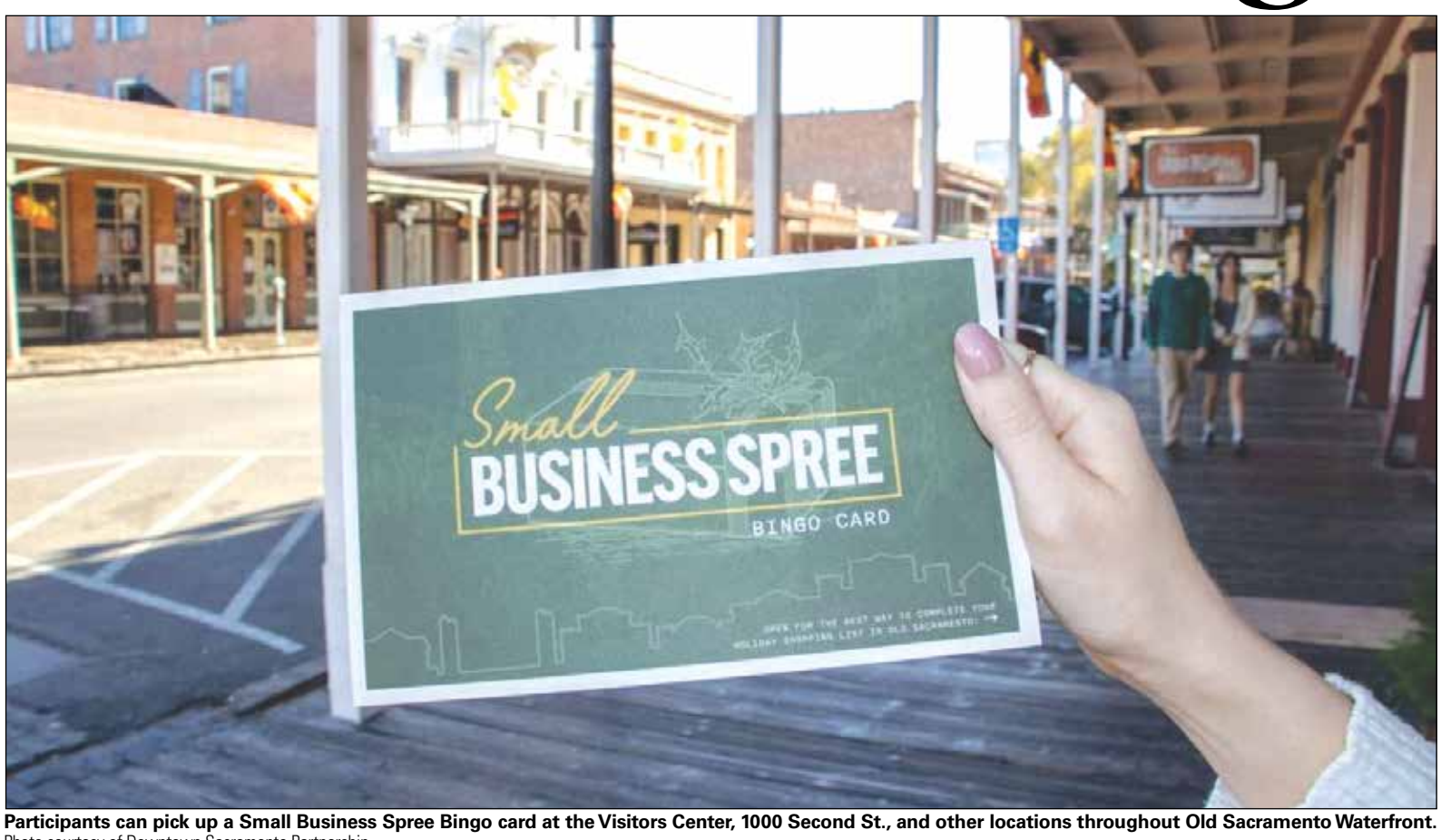
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Win at Business Bingo

Old Sacramento Waterfront News Release

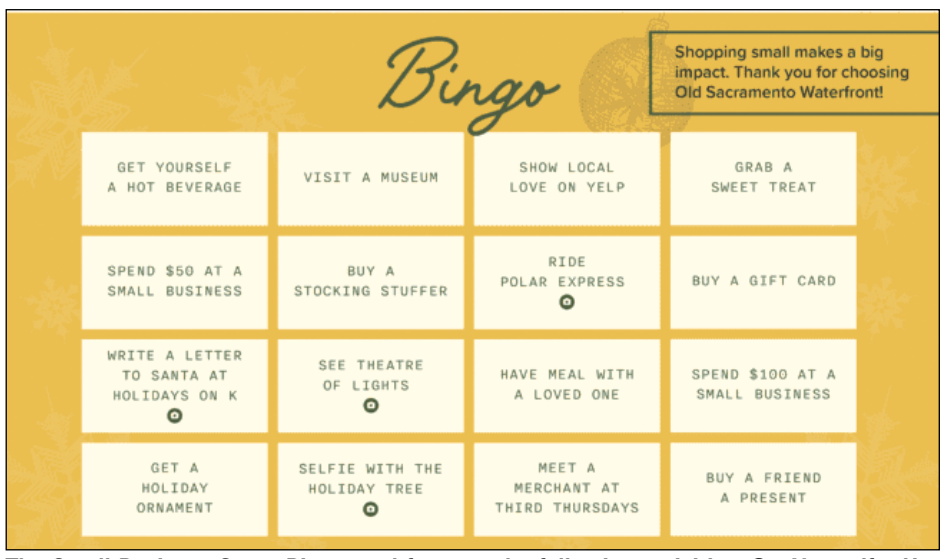


Participants can pick up a Small Business Spree Bingo card at the Visitors Center, 1000 Second St., and other locations throughout Old Sacramento Waterfront. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - This holiday season, shopping comes with a little extra incentive. Now through December 31, visitors of Old Sacramento Waterfront can turn a day of shopping, dining, and exploring into a game with Small Business Spree Bingo.

The interactive challenge invites visitors to explore the historic district, discover local businesses, and complete fun holiday-themed activities for the chance to win prizes along the way. Activities range from grabbing a hot beverage to finding a stocking stuffer and taking a selfie with the holiday tree. With more than 150 small businesses throughout the district, there are plenty of opportunities to discover something new while checking a few names off the holiday shopping list.

Participants can pick up a Small Business Spree Bingo card at the Visitors Center, 1000 Second St., and other locations throughout Old Sacramento Waterfront and begin completing the activities listed on the card. As participants visit businesses and attractions throughout Old Sacramento Waterfront, they can collect stamps to mark their progress. For the free activities, participants can show their bingo card to the Visitors Center team (on weekdays) or a Holidays on K team member (on weekends) to receive stamps.



The Small Business Spree Bingo card features the following activities: Get Yourself a Hot Beverage; Visit a Museum; Show Local Love on Yelp; Grab a Sweet Treat; Spend $50 at a Small Business; Buy a Stocking Stuffer; Ride Polar Express; Buy a Gift Card; Write a Letter to Santa at Holidays on K; See Theatre of Lights; Have Meal with a Loved One; Spend $100 at a Small Buisness; Get a Holida Ornament; Selfie with the Holiday Tree; Meet a Merchant at Third Thursdays, Buy a Frind a Present. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership

Players can complete bingo in four ways. Complete four consecutive spaces vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. Complete the spaces around the perimeter of the card. Complete the two diagonal lines across the center or complete every square on the card.

The fun continues all season long. Each time participants complete a bingo, they can submit a photo of their card by emailing it to info@oldsacramento.com. Participants can continue building bingos on the same card and submit it again each time they complete another bingo, with a maximum of four entries per person. Prizes will be awarded throughout the season, and all entries must be received by Dec. 31, 2026.

Completing a bingo could mean more than bragging rights. Prizes include gift cards to local businesses, Old Sacramento Waterfront swag, a $100 parking voucher, a family four-pack of tickets to the Downtown Sac Ice Rink, a museum membership, and even the chance to guest star as mama or papa in Theatre of Lights during December.

To enter the prize drawing, participants must email a photo of their completed bingo card. Winners will be selected at random and notified via email. Every submission is guaranteed to win a prize, and completing additional bingo patterns provides more opportunities to win throughout the season.

"Small Business Spree Bingo is all about making holiday shopping more fun while giving visitors a chance to discover the incredible small businesses that make Old Sacramento Waterfront unique," said Chelsea Evans, Old Sacramento Waterfront district manager. "We hope the bingo challenge gives people a fun reason to come downtown, explore new shops and experiences, and make a day of their holiday shopping."

Small Business Spree Bingo is presented by Old Sacramento Waterfront and Downtown Sacramento Partnership, with support from California State Parks, California State Railroad Museum Foundation, and Yelp.

More information about Small Business Spree Bingo, including a full FAQ and details on how to participate, is available at https://www.oldsacramento.com/seasonal-activity/small-business-spree-bingo/. ★

Burnett Awards Celebration Coming

Sacramento History Alliance News Release



An aerial picture of the 7th Annual Burnett Awards held in 2025. Photo courtesy of Sacramento History Alliance

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento History Alliance is proud and excited to announce the prestigious 8th Annual Burnett Awards Nov. 12 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. The celebratory Burnett Awards are named in honor of the late Burnett Miller – a native Sacramentan, former mayor, community icon, philanthropist, business leader, and one of the city's most prominent history enthusiasts. Each year, the Sacramento History Alliance honors long-standing legacy businesses and organizations that are pillars of Sacramento's history and embody resilience, tradition, and community spirit.

Emceed by Scott Syphax, KVIE Studio Sacramento host, the high-profile evening gala will take place in the expansive lobby of the Sacramento History Museum located at the Old Sacramento Waterfront. The event is a benefit fundraiser for the Sacramento History Museum and is presented by Burnett & Sons, SMUD, Bank of Marin, Allan Robin Insurance and Financial Services, Rytina Fine Cleaners, Country Club Lanes, and Preservation Sacramento.

Four businesses are the 2026 Burnett Award honorees.

In celebration of 100 years in business (1926-2026), Downey Brand launched 100 Acts, a year-long initiative to recognize the values that have defined the firm for generations: service, leadership, collaboration, gratitude, and a commitment to making a positive difference.

Founded in 1965, family-owned and operated Broadway Costumes – with the third generation now leading the way – is Sacramento's leading costume rental & supply store, specializing in historical costuming for adults and children.

Rytina Fine Cleaners, this third-generation, family-owned business, offers 60-plus years of expertise in caring for Sacramento's finest fashions. From garment care and laundering to alterations and specialty items, they offer couture level service and quality to every textile that passes through the doors.

Serving the Sacramento community for 65 years and counting, Oto's Marketplace specializes in offering a large selection of Japanese and Asian foods, sushi-grade fresh fish, A5 Wagyu and other quality meats, farm fresh produce, and daily-made bento lunch boxes and sushi.

In addition, two other awards recognize the preservation and community spirit of Sacramento. The Community Partner awardee is Sacramento Ballet that has been a beacon of artistic excellence in the California Capital Region, delivering world-class dance performances, education and community outreach programs since 1954. The Preservation Award, sponsored by Preservation Sacramento, goes to Lil Joe's Restaurant, a staple of North Sacramento since 1948.

Gala participants will enjoy wine and appetizers as part of the evening festivities. In addition to a limited number of sponsorships that are still available, individual 2026 Burnett Award ceremony and reception tickets cost $100 per person that include the awards ceremony, assorted appetizers and a hosted wine bar. For more information and/or tickets to the 2026 Burnett Awards, visit www.SacHistoryMuseum.org.

The Sacramento History Museum is managed by the Sacramento History Alliance, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to making Sacramento's history accessible to all. In partnership with the city and county of Sacramento, SHA operates the Sacramento History Museum and its programs including the Underground Tours, educational school programs and community cultural events.

For more information about the Sacramento History Museum and Sacramento History Alliance, visit www.sachistorymuseum.org. ★

Jackie White Settles in as Sacramento County Superintendent

New Superintendent Reflects on Her Journey and Vision for Public Education

Sacramento County Office of Education News Release



Jacqueline "Jackie" White was sworn in Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools on Sept. 1, becoming the first woman to hold the position in more than a century. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County Office of Education

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Jacqueline "Jackie" White celebrated a historic milestone during her Sept. 1 swearing-in ceremony as Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools, becoming the first woman to hold the position in more than a century.

Surrounded by family, friends, educators and community leaders, White reflected on the people who helped shape her journey, her more than 20 years in public education, and her hopes for the students and communities she now serves.

The occasion marked a new chapter in a career that began in the classroom, where White taught fifth and sixth grades in the Twin Rivers Unified School District. She subsequently served as a principal, district administrator and assistant superintendent at the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE), overseeing programs ranging from career technical education and adult education to services for some of the county's most vulnerable students.

For White, the journey has been both professional and deeply personal.

She spoke warmly about her family, particularly her two grandmothers, one a school secretary and the other a science teacher, whose influence helped shape her life and commitment to education.

"They gave me both roots and wings," White said, reflecting on the generations who helped make the moment possible.

White also paid tribute to her predecessor, David W. Gordon, who served as county superintendent for more than two decades and whose career in education spans more than 50 years.

"You are a leader among leaders and have always modeled grace, compassion and kindness," she told Gordon, thanking him for his guidance and generosity during the transition.

The ceremony also featured a spoken-word presentation by Patrice Hill, a longtime educator, poet and director of Sacramento Area Youth Speaks, whose message of hope, resilience and collective responsibility reflected the spirit of the occasion.

"Together as community, embracing transformative leadership, we will light the way. We will fight for education and a brighter day," Hill told those gathered.

Her presentation, built around the theme "Futures Forward," emphasized the importance of working together to overcome challenges and create opportunities for future generations.

While recognizing the significance of becoming the first woman to serve as county superintendent since Minnie O'Neill held the position from 1907 to 1914, White emphasized that her attention is firmly on the future.

She acknowledged the challenges confronting public education, including declining enrollment, financial pressures and rapidly changing technology. But her message was one of optimism, determination and shared responsibility.

"We must stand resolute, arm in arm, knowing our children deserve the best we can give them," White said. "We must dream for them. We must work for them."

White emphasized that meeting those challenges will require schools, families and communities to work together, listening to students, expanding educational opportunities and strengthening the support systems that help young people succeed.

Her vision extends beyond academic achievement to preparing students for college, careers and meaningful participation in their communities.

Throughout the evening, White returned to the importance of the people who supported her journey and the collective effort needed to improve public education.

"It is with great humility that I recognize there is no me without all of you," she said.

As she begins her tenure, White hopes to build on Sacramento County's educational accomplishments while ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Her goal is straightforward but ambitious: creating the conditions for every student in the Sacramento region to "belong, learn, lead and thrive."

"That is the work. That is the opportunity," White said. "And it is an honor to do that work with all of you."

The swearing-in ceremony can be viewed online at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-WiwuzFHbaE. ★

Health Forum Focuses on Detection

By Kevin Ruse

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Shortly after attending an employer-sponsored health screening event, Andrew Cope received a phone call advising him of his APOE status. Andrew was told he had two copies of the APOE4 gene. This rare genetic profile, which occurs in only about 2-5% of the general population, represents the strongest known genetic factor for developing late-onset Alzheimer's disease. What followed, for Mr. Cope, a natural researcher, was an in-depth study of what his future might hold, all while navigating primary care, neurologists, clinics, and additional testing.

How many of us have wondered how we would feel and what we would do if we received similar information? Does having a family history increase my risk? How can I find out? Are treatment options available today? Who will take care of me, and how?

These questions and many more will be addressed at the 11th Annual Brain Health Forum to be held on Friday, Nov. 13 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Carmichael Elks Lodge #2103 at 5631 Cypress Avenue, Carmichael, CA 95608.

This year's theme is: "This Is Our Mammogram Moment." Just as mammograms transformed early detection and outcomes for breast cancer, advances in early detection and treatment are creating new opportunities for patients and families with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

This year's forum will focus on exciting advances in Alzheimer's early detection, including blood-based testing, new treatment options and practical information for families navigating the challenges of caregiving. From 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., resource tables will provide valuable information for caregivers, including help with meals, transportation, home safety and respite care.



Andrew Cope thanks Assemblymember Catherine Stefani at San Francisco's Walk to End Alzheimer's for supporting SB 950's expanded treatment coverage and reduced step-therapy barriers for people with Alzheimer's and other memory conditions. Photo courtesy of Kevin Ruse

Attendees will have the opportunity to speak with representatives from Dignity Health, Sutter Health, UC Davis, the Greater Sacramento Women's Brain Health (GROW) Program, Del Oro Caregiver Resource Center, the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, Veterans Administration and more.

From 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., the forum will feature a variety of presenters including Dr. Shawn J.Kile, a neurologist who specializes in cognitive disorders including Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Claire Day, Chief Mission and Program Strategy Officer for the Alzheimer's Association Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter, will speak about the U.S. POINTER lifestyle interventions shown to support cognitive health. Also presenting will be Andrew Cope, who will share his personal story and perspective on the importance of early detection and timely access to treatment.

Whether you're concerned about your own brain health, caring for a loved one or simply interested in the latest advances in Alzheimer's research, this free community event offers an opportunity to learn, ask questions, and connect with valuable local resources.

The 11th Annual Brain Health Forum is presented by the Alzheimer's Association of Northern California and Congressman Ami Bera, M.D. You can register for this free event at https://bera.house.gov/events/brainhealthforum or call 1-800-272-3900. The Brain Health Forum is free of charge. Light refreshments will be served along with giveaway prizes. ★

Weekday Closures of Freeport Bridge in November



During the closures, detour signs will direct travelers south of the project where they can cross at the Paintersville Bridge. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Department of Transportation (SacDOT) will conduct full weekday closures of the Freeport Bridge between Highway 160 and South River Road throughout the month of November.

The Freeport Bridge is about a mile south of the Cosumnes River Blvd on the east side of the Sacramento River and approximately four miles north of Clarksburg on the west side of the river. The bridge connects South River Road in Yolo County with Highway 160 in Sacramento County.

SacDOT is closing the bridge for repair work. Detours will be set up during the weekday closures. The closures will run Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Nov. 2 through Nov. 30.

The bridge will reopen to traffic each evening and remain open Saturdays and Sundays.

During the closures, detour signs will direct travelers south of the project where they can cross at the Paintersville Bridge. Traveler on the east side of the Sacramento River can take River Road/ Highway 160 to the Paintersville Bridge and drivers on the west side of the Sacramento River can use South River Road to the Paintersville Bridge detour.

The reconstruction cost for Freeport Bridge Deck Repair is $300,000 and is funded by the Sacramento County Road Fund. Drivers are encouraged to give themselves extra travel time due to the weekday detours.

A detour map can be viewed at: https://sacdot.saccounty.gov/. ★

The Lantern Project Welcomes Guests to the California State Railroad Museum

California State Railroad Museum News Release



The project artfully utilizes modern LED lighting effects with historic artifacts to create a unique illuminated display that is rooted in railroad history. Photo courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California State Railroad Museum & Foundation are proud to announce the completion of the Lantern Project – part of a multi-phased, multi-year renovation effort – that now lights up the lobby of the California State Railroad Museum. With support provided by California State Parks, the California State Railroad Museum Foundation, and valued donors, the project includes 204 historic lanterns that create a visually exciting "open storage" display, offering visitors an amazing look at a portion of the museum's impressive collection of more than 500 lanterns. The creative use format allows visitors to view a substantial portion of the Museum's lantern collection.

The project artfully utilizes modern LED lighting effects with historic artifacts to create a unique illuminated display that is rooted in railroad history. As background, railroad workers relied on lanterns to communicate, inspect equipment, and work after dark. Each lantern in the display has a story to tell about the people who used them. Ornate presentation lanterns honored conductors for service milestones or retirement, sometimes featuring names and decorative details on their globes. Inspectors used lanterns with reflective surfaces to provide more directional light. Colorful and eye-catching signal lanterns helped railroad workers communicate with one another and keep them safe. Over time, lantern designs evolved alongside changes in fuel and advances in glassmaking.

To bring the Lantern Project display to completion, a team of dedicated museum staff worked closely with Bekonix to design and custom print 204 individual flames. Each 3D-printed flame was then wired to light up, the result of which is an activated display.

Once the full multi-phased lobby renovation project is complete, guests will enjoy a completely refreshed, redesigned, and reinterpreted space. On average, the California State Railroad Museum welcomes nearly 300,000 visitors during a typical year.

The California State Railroad Museum, 111 I Street in Old Sacramento, is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., regular admission to the California State Railroad Museum is $12 for adults, $6 for youth (ages 6 to 17), and are free for children five and under. For more information about the California State Railroad Museum and Foundation, visit https://www.californiarailroad.museum/.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation, popularly known as State Parks, and the programs supported by its Office of Historic Preservation and divisions of Boating and Waterways and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation provides for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. Learn more at parks.ca.gov.

About the California State Railroad Museum Foundation

The mission of the California State Railroad Museum Foundation (CSRMF) is to generate revenue and awareness on behalf of its destinations, while supporting the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of our railroad heritage. The Foundation provides funding for ongoing support of numerous programs, both at the museum's Old Sacramento location and at the historic park in Jamestown, Calif. For more information, visit www.californiarailroad.museum. ★

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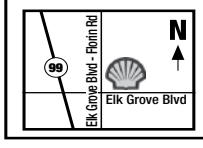
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Water Reliability Depends on More Than Water Supply

By Robert P. Wichert, Director, Sacramento Suburban Water District

Groundwater is one of California's most important water resources, and for many regions, it provides the only reliable source of drinking water.

Through regional collaboration and innovative planning, the Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) implemented sustainable groundwater management practices years before the state mandated it under the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

This long-term stewardship is especially important because groundwater remains the foundation of SSWD's water supply. Today, the District operates more than 80 wells throughout our service area. Keeping those wells running reliably requires continual maintenance, repair and, as infrastructure ages, more significant rehabilitation. As with most technical fields, maintaining groundwater infrastructure requires specialized expertise that cannot be easily or quickly replaced. California requires well drilling contractors to have at least four years of experience and pass state licensing examinations. The work itself can include drilling, casing, cementing, cleaning, repairing and rehabilitating wells and their pumping systems.

Our state has seen what can happen when demand for those skills increases. During the state's severe drought a decade ago, the Contractors State License Board expedited licensing for well-drilling and pump contractors to help meet increased demand for their services. The state also encouraged other qualified contractors to pursue well-drilling licenses to help expand capacity.

For water agencies, access to this unique expertise matters. When specialized contractors are difficult to secure, routine maintenance can be delayed and unexpected equipment failures can leave important water sources offline longer than anticipated. SSWD experienced this challenge firsthand when we became increasingly concerned about our ability to secure specialized well contractors when we needed them. A prolonged outage at one well is manageable. Multiple wells awaiting specialized repairs can begin to affect the flexibility and reliability that water systems depend on.

Although often overlooked, access to specialized expertise is a water reliability issue.

In 2023, SSWD entered into an exclusive five-year agreement with Kirby's Pump & Mechanical, a groundwater well contractor, to ensure we had prompt, reliable access to the expertise needed to maintain and repair our wells. Over the following three years, that arrangement gave us an opportunity to see the value of having specialized expertise consistently available when we needed it. It also prompted us to think differently about how we could address our workforce needs over the longer term.

This year, that thinking led SSWD to purchase KPM and bring its specialized expertise in-house.

It was an unconventional step, and not one that will make sense for every water agency. Before moving forward, our Board commissioned an independent cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the approach made financial and operational sense. The analysis projected that the purchase could pay for itself in less than three and a half years and save approximately $7 million over 10 years.

But the larger lesson isn't about one acquisition.

California spends considerable time planning for the physical infrastructure and water supplies we will need in the decades ahead. We should bring that same long-term thinking to the people and specialized skills required to operate and maintain those systems.

That means asking practical questions. Do we have the expertise needed to maintain critical facilities? Where are we vulnerable to shortages in specialized skills or contractor availability? Could a lack of specialized expertise leave infrastructure unavailable when we need it most? And are there different ways to secure those capabilities before a problem becomes an emergency?

The answers will look different for every agency. But for SSWD, bringing a specialized contractor into our workforce ensures a resilient water delivery system backed by the skills needed to keep our infrastructure working long into the future.

Robert P. Wichert represents Division 3 on the Sacramento Suburban Water District Board of Directors and lives in Citrus Heights. ★

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

Let's Get a Win

By V.G. Harris

As the Sacramento Kings enter the week with a winless 0-6 record to start the 2026/2027 NBA season, fans scratch their heads and ask the question, "where do we go from here?"

In this column I have discussed the value of leadership, and as the Kings continue searching for their first win of the season, I'm asking from what quarter will that leadership come?

Radio talking heads and pundits from all corners are calling for a change in the coaching staff and for All star Domantas Sabonis to be traded.

Doug Christie appears to be a ships captain without a rudder, and of the 6 losses the Kings have to start the season, only 2 of those games did Sacramento have a legitimate chance of winning.

If I have any criticism, it is not having a collective game plan. Simply telling the team to play better defense or shoot more 3's is not a game plan, and I wonder how long it will be before the players begin to lose faith.

All eyes are on Monday night's game against the Dallas Mavericks, and I am hopeful although doubtful that it will produce a win.

For those fans that simply say we don't have the players, I would say as I have before that there is legitimate talent on this team already.

Domantas Sabonis continues to be the constant foundation of the team, and whether it's scoring, rebounds, or defense, Domantas gives it 100% effort from start to finish.

When we talk about leaders, they come from outside the court and most definitely on the court.

While the organization won't stop talking about trading Sabonis, I completely disagree with their assessment, and if the worst thing that Sacramento will have to endure is a cellar dweller of a season to weather the storm, I believe that the fan base will hold their nose and stay the course.

Let it not be said that Sacramento fans ever turned their backs on this team, because it has never happened.

However, ownership needs to begin the process of making cogent changes that will not just bring energy to this team, but true direction.

The idea of playing the rookies and second year players is a no-brainer, but the offensive is unimaginative, and on defense any semblance of guarding the 3-point line simply isn't there.

Fans need to give credit where credit is due, and both Domantas Sabonis and Zach Lavine have shown up in a big way.

Is it any surprise that a healthy Domantas Sabonis is already leading the league in rebounding once again, and relative newcomer De'Andre Hunter is currently 32nd in the league in 3-pointers made.

Zach Lavine is tied in 32nd place in 3-pointers made, and I look for that to improve dramatically if the Kings can make progress with their offensive schemes.

Yes, Kings fans, it is a dark time in Sactown, but this early in the season it is way too early to throw in the towel.

I am but one opinion, and I'm anxious to hear from you, the fans.

Go to thekingskorner.com and subscribe to my website and please, by all means leave me a comment. What direction do you believe the Sacramento Kings should go?

I'll publish your collective thoughts, and we'll navigate through this difficult time together.

Without question bright spots remain in both Darius Acuff Jr., and rookie Emanuel Sharp, and how the Kings develop these 2 youngsters will be a testament of good things to come.

I heard a poem many years ago that the Kings should take note of and it goes like this:

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe, the horse was lost,
For want of a horse, the rider was lost,
For want of a battle, the kingdom was lost,
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

Kings fans, Doug Christie and his staff don't need to reinvent the wheel. They need to find one small thing that is wrong and correct it. Once that has been accomplished, find the next thing, and repeat the process.

Once this exercise has been done a dozen times watch the victories mount up, and one more thing. Keep us informed as to what you're doing. We're all waiting for positive things to root about.

All the best! ★

California's Campaign Drama Entices Political Junkies, But Serious Issues Get Short Shrift



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

This year's political campaigns gave California's political junkies plenty of chaotic events to savor: gerrymandered congressional districts; the sudden, scandalous downfall of a frontrunner for governor, and running feuds with President Donald Trump over voting.

However, for those of us who just want effective governance that addresses the multitude of challenges arising from California's socioeconomic complexity, the campaign season has been drearily disappointing.

Few, if any, office seekers have even mentioned such serious issues as unstable water supplies, budget deficits, homelessness or rising living costs, much less offered voters clear-eyed approaches to them.

The Democratic playbook has often been to blame Trump for everything negative, even though those important issues afflicted California long before he appeared on the political scene.

Meanwhile Republicans, with very slim chances of making gains in such a blue state, have pinned every unresolved problem on outgoing Gov. Gavin Newsom, even though he inherited many of them when he took office in 2019.

Polls tell us that Californians are in a sour mood. They're worried about soaring living costs and the economy in general and are unhappy with the status quo. Yet they seem unwilling to make big political changes — preferring the known to taking a chance on the unknown.

That contradictory attitude is particularly evident in the campaigns for the two most important offices being filled this year, the governor and mayor of Los Angeles.

Despite having served in public offices for decades, including a stint as attorney general, Xavier Becerra's support for governor in polls last spring was in the low single digits. Back then the odds-on favorite, Congressmember Eric Swalwell, self-destructed as multiple women accused him of sexual harassment or even assault.

Swalwell not only dropped out of the race but resigned his congressional seat. The only other candidates with double-digit support were left-leaning billionaire Democrat Tom Steyer and Republicans Steve Hilton and Chad Bianco.

But they were unacceptable to Democratic leaders and their labor union allies, who immediately chose Becerra as a known quantity and therefore the most acceptable of the single-digit candidates. With Democrats holding a massive edge in voter registration, that made Becerra the likely next governor, and he still is.

Becerra's campaign has consisted almost entirely of blaming Trump and refusing to offer any tangible approaches to the multiple issues he'll likely inherit from Newsom. He knows he can win without committing himself publicly, so he doesn't.

While Becerra represents the don't-rock-the-boat stance at the state level, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, another veteran of multiple offices, is his counterpart in the state's largest city.

But she, unlike Becerra, cannot coast into victory. Bass is carrying heavy baggage from her sloppy handling of the wildfires that swept through Los Angeles and its suburbs early last year.

Bass was junketing in Ghana when the fires erupted, even though there had been forecasts that hot winter winds could create wildfire conditions. She tried to blame others for the miscue, fired the L.A. fire chief and later attempted to alter an official report on how the fires were handled.

Bass is highly unpopular but offers herself as a known quantity, while her left-leaning opponent, city councilmember Nithya Raman, represents the potentially disruptive unknown. The outcome could go either way.

Thank goodness the cacophony of shrieking TV spots making promises that cannot be kept or portraying rivals as devils incarnate — and the fliers filling our mailboxes — will all end soon.

Sometime after the polls close Tuesday — maybe weeks later in some close contests — we'll learn who survived. The losers will be disappointed, the winners will be jubilant and once again we will hope that they'll do more than plot how to climb the next rung on the political ladder.

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

Am I Entitled to More Social Security as a Veteran?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I served in the U.S. Army from July 1964 to July 1967. Am I eligible for a higher Social Security payment? Thank you. ***Signed: Vietnam Era Army Vet***

Dear Army Vet: Please accept my sincere thanks for your military service. I believe you are referring to the "Special Extra Credit for Military Service" which has been the subject of many published articles. That refers to a special Social Security accommodation available only to those who served in the military during specific periods of time - but it does not add to your monthly Social Security payment. Rather, it adds to your military earnings record for the years you served, which may (or may not) result in a higher Social Security benefit when you later claim Social Security.

Here's how it works in your case:

Serving between 1964 and 1967, if you told Social Security of your military service when you applied for Social Security benefits (or gave them a copy of your DD-214), they would have added up to $1,200 per year to your military pay record (FYI, those who served after 1966 were automatically given earnings credit for their military service years). However, whether those special extra credits would affect your monthly Social Security benefit depends on your lifetime earnings record when you later claimed Social Security.

When you applied for benefits, Social Security reviewed your lifetime earnings and used the highest earning 35 years of earnings over your lifetime (adjusted for inflation) to calculate your "Primary Insurance Amount" (or "PIA," which is what you get if you claim benefits to start at your Social Security full retirement age). If, after your military service, you had 35 or more years of earnings which were higher than your earnings while serving in the military, Social Security would have used your later higher earning years to calculate your benefit, and your military earnings would not have had an effect on your Social Security benefit. However, if any of your military earnings (including the "special extra credits") were among the highest over your lifetime, then those higher military earnings would be included when calculating your Social Security benefit.

So, whether you would benefit from these "special extra credits for military service" depends largely on your earnings history after you were discharged from active duty. If your military earnings were among the highest earning years over your lifetime, and you provided SSA with a copy of your DD-214 when you applied for Social Security, then your current SS benefit already includes consideration of your military service (FYI, Social Security should have asked about your military service when you applied). If you didn't tell SS about your military service when you applied for Social Security, or if you aren't sure, you should contact the SSA at 1.800.772.1213 and ask if you were given those "special extra credits for military service" for your 1960s military service years when you applied for Social Security. But if you had at least 35 years of higher earnings after you left military service, your current SS benefit is already based on those later higher earning years, and you will not get any additional /Social Security benefit because of the "special extra credits" for your military service years.

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Abdul El-Sayed is no JFK

Abdul El-Sayed, the Democratic Senate candidate in Michigan, thinks he's another JFK, not in terms of charm or wit, but as a fellow victim of religious bigotry.

When he ran for president in 1960, Jack Kennedy indeed encountered anti-Catholic prejudice, including the preposterous claim that he'd take orders as president from the Vatican. This was irrational conspiracy theorizing, whereas the questions that El-Sayed is facing about his family's ties to extremist groups are well-founded.

It wasn't a right-wing smear artist who first said that El-Sayed's mother was with the Muslim Brotherhood, but his own half-sister. She tweeted in 2012, "Had an amazing talk with my mom about her activism in the Muslim Brotherhood during the early 70s while she was in college #respect." She suggested that other family members in Egypt were involved in the Muslim Brotherhood. His mom -- just her luck -- also worked for the Islamic American Relief Agency, which the U.S. government designated a supporter of terrorist groups.

Now, El-Sayed could say that none of this has anything to do with him, since his biological mother didn't raise him, and that his mother made a mistake in working for the Brotherhood. Or he could produce evidence of the falsity of what his half-sister said, which, if it's wrong, shouldn't be difficult given that both his mother and half-sister are around (his half-sister is a radically anti-Zionist University of Chicago professor who is very excited about El-Sayed's candidacy).

Instead, he's argued that questions about this constitute rank Islamophobia. He makes it sound as though the Muslim Brotherhood is a fraternal association, a Knights of Columbus for Muslims, such that any concerns about associations with it are inherently hateful. His reaction is a little like someone being asked about his family's alleged KKK associations, and responding, "How dare you question my white Protestant heritage."

In a viral exchange, a questioner at a town hall asked the candidate if he disavows the Muslim Brotherhood. El-Sayed responded with a curt, "Yeah, sure," before challenging his interlocutor about why he was asking and going on a long riff about freedom of religion in America. Of course, no one is challenging his right to worship as he pleases, or to run for public office as a faithful Muslim. The questions have to do with the associations and his own views.

His father-in-law, a major donor to his campaign, served on the founding committee of the Islamic Society of North America, a group designated as an unindicted co-conspirator in the 2007 Holy Land Foundation case. He also -- just his luck -- served as president of the Council on American-Islamic Relations Michigan chapter, another group named an unindicted co-conspirator in that case.

As for El-Sayed himself, the New York Times reports that when he was a student at the University of Michigan, he was president of the Muslim Students Association, an organization founded by the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1960s. In 2012, he joined an open letter backing Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed Morsi, who had just become president of Egypt: "We, leaders of the Egyptian community, support the revolutionary decisions taken by the president, and we call on him to purge the media and the police as quickly as possible."

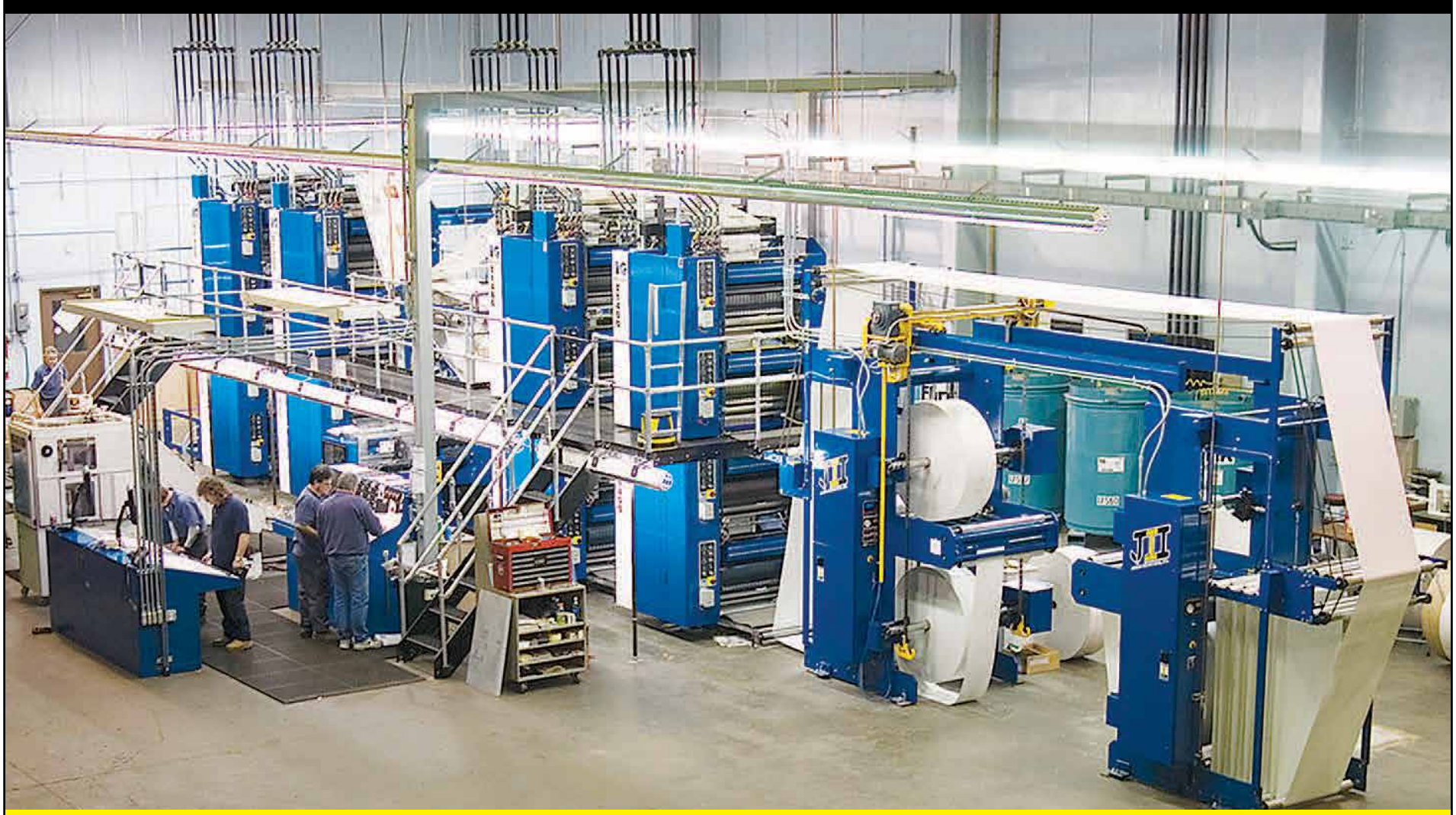
Here one must pause to express a little sympathy for El-Sayed: Who among us hasn't, at least once, urged an Islamist authoritarian to crack down on his political opponents? During this Senate campaign, El-Sayed excused an Islamist attack on a Michigan synagogue (before apologizing). He invited streamer Hasan Piker, who has repeatedly expressed sympathy with terror groups, to campaign with him. And he has refused to say that Iran is more dangerous than Israel.

He doesn't deserve the benefit of any doubt and has responded to questions about all of this with evasions and high dudgeon. No matter how often El-Sayed invokes JFK, Kennedy didn't defend his Catholic faith as a way of distracting from his own extremism and that of people around him.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Lace Up Those Skates

By Keith Burbank, from press reports and a Downtown Sacramento Partnership News Release



Two children enjoy skating at the Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink. Photo courtesy of the Downtown Sacramento Partnership

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Downtown Sacramento's favorite winter tradition is back! Presented by Dignity Health, the Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink returned Nov. 4 in Ali Youssefi Square at 7th and K streets. The 34th season was scheduled to kick off with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m., bringing together local leaders, community members and partners to celebrate the rink's return. The rink was expected to open to the public at 2 p.m.

Located in the heart of downtown, the rink puts visitors within easy reach of Sacramento's seasonal attractions, including the Theatre of Lights show and holiday tree in Old Sacramento Waterfront and winter performances at the SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center. Just steps from Golden 1 Center, DOCO, and a wide variety of shops and restaurants, it's an ideal stop for a full day or evening of holiday festivities.

The Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink will operate Tuesdays through Sundays from Nov. 4 through Jan. 18, offering locals and visitors plenty of opportunities to hit the ice throughout the holiday season. Groups of 10 or more can book online for dedicated two-hour skating sessions, while those planning a private celebration can reserve the entire rink by calling 916-442-8575. New this season, the rink will offer figure and hockey skating lessons.

"The Downtown Sacramento Ice Rink is a place for everyone, from first-time skaters to longtime visitors," said Michael Ault, executive director at the Downtown Sacramento Partnership. "We're excited to introduce figure and hockey skating lessons this season and offer even more opportunities for skaters of all ages and experience levels to learn new skills, build confidence, and make lasting memories on the ice."



A figure skater graces the ice in downtown Sacramento. Photo courtesy of the Downtown Sacramento Partnership

Skaters can also look forward to themed events and community activations throughout the season.

Veterans and active military members skate free from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Nov. 11 and all season with a valid military ID.

Visitors can skate with superheroes and princesses Nov. 14, which is Princess and Superhero Day from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. Skaters can have their face painted and skate with guests dressed as Elsa, Anna, Incredible Hulk, Spiderman and perhaps others. Skaters are urged to dress as their favorite princess or superhero.

Donation week at the rink is Nov. 16 to Nov. 29, when guests can get $5 off admission when they donate an item to the River City Food Bank.

Figure skating lessons begin Nov. 17, with the Sacramento State figure skating team. Sunday sessions begin at 9:15 a.m. and Tuesday sessions begin at 1:15 p.m. Skaters must arrive at 9 a.m. Sundays and 1 p.m. Tuesdays.

Cost of the first session is $30 and includes rink access when public skating begins. Skaters may receive instructions based on age and skill level.

And thanks to the A's, everyone can skate for free from 10 a.m. to noon Nov. 22. Stomper might visit the rink.

General admission to the rink is $15 while children 6 years old and younger can skate for $8. The prices include skate rental. The rink is open 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fridays through Sundays, weather permitting.

Call 916-743-4669 to see whether the rink is open when the weather is bad.

This report contains information provided by a Downtown Sacramento Partnership news release. ★