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Land Park News

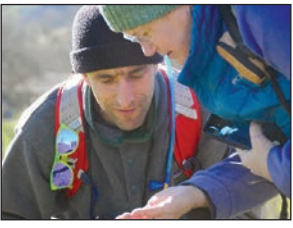
VOL 33 • ISSUE 21

Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years

NOVEMBER 8, 2024

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CERTIFIED NATURALIST COURSE



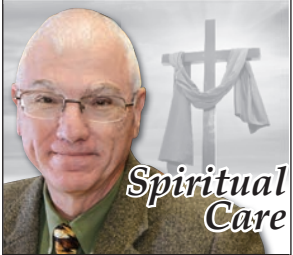
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THE RETURN OF THE SWAGGER



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SAY MORE THAN 'THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE'



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Ruff Priorities

City Discusses Idea of a Land Park Dog Park with the Community

Story and photos by Kristina Rogers

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - No one can argue that the Land Park neighborhood is filled with canine aficionados. Yet many are contemplating whether a dog park is a priority and where it would go.

For those who don't live nearby, it might seem William Land Park has plenty of space for a dog park. Yet anyone who's been to one of Sacramento City's most visited regional parks can tell you that visitors can take up every inch on a regular weekend.

The city's Youth Parks & Community Engagement (YPCE) hosted an Open House on Oct. 23 at Belle Cooledge Library. Results from a recent survey (1,660 responses) revealed two final options for a dog park in William Land Park: 12th Avenue and East Park Road, also known as the "Panhandle," and at Freeport Boulevard and 14th Avenue. The public was invited to review the plans, provide

Continued on Page 10



Megan Wicks helps her daughter choose a location for a proposed dog park.

Certifying Election Can Take 28 Days

County Issues Twice-Weekly Ballot Reports

MPG Staff

CALIFORNIA (MPG) - Due to the requirements outlined in Assembly Bill 3184, the Nov. 5 General Election results cannot be certified in California until Dec. 3, at the earliest.

AB 3184 establishes specific timelines and procedures for certifying election results in California.

While the first release of results happened just after 8 p.m. Nov. 5 (Election Day), those results are in no way final.

The county Elections Office has been tabulating ballots since two weeks ago and the first release of results will only be inclusive of Vote by Mail and Vote Center ballots that are returned and processed through Nov. 4.

The second report includes results from the Vote Centers on Election Day and is issued shortly after 10 p.m. Nov. 5, after press time, with subsequent updates approximately every two hours, if needed, until all Vote Centers have reported.

California allows for 28 days after elections to certify the election, in addition to seven days after Election Day to receive a mail ballot post-marked by Nov. 5.

The second report on Nov. 5 will include results from the Vote Centers on Election Day and will be issued by 10 p.m., with subsequent updates approximately every two hours, if needed, until all Vote Centers have reported (Elections Code 15151(b)).

The first interim report will be posted by 4:15 p.m. on Nov. 8 and will contain results from Vote by Mail ballots and provisional ballots received timely.

Subsequent reports will be updated every Tuesday and Friday until certification is complete, which is expected to be Dec. 3.

For more information, visit online elections, saccounty.gov or call 916-875-6451. ★

Gala Raises Nearly \$200,000 for Senior Facility



Congresswoman Doris Matsui, center, stands with ACC CEO Connie Rusynyk, left, and ACC Board Chair Jean Shiomoto, right.

Story and photos by Bill Wong

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Over 170 guests attended ACC Senior Services' fundraising event on Oct. 17, benefiting its skilled nursing and rehabilitation center. It was the first in-person fundraiser since the COVID pandemic.

The event honored area developer, entrepreneur and philanthropist

Angelo K. Tsakopoulos and U.S. Congresswoman Doris Matsui for their decades-long support for ACC's skilled nursing and rehabilitation center. Tsakopoulos had donated the original land for the five-star facility in the Pocket area. Matsui and her husband, Robert Matsui, who passed away in 2005, had led efforts to build community and government support for the project.

ACC Board Chair Jean Shiomoto prefaced the presentation of awards with, "Today, ACC serves thousands of local seniors with dynamic and diverse programming as well as high-quality, skilled nursing care and housing at culturally sensitive properties. This award honors those individuals that embody the spirit of this bold and uncompromising

Continued on Page 3

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Innovative Homeless Service Center Ready to Build

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County has long envisioned a large-scale project that can serve the unhoused population with diverse offerings to help people in various stages of homelessness. In 2022, the county purchased a 13-acre property on Watt Ave. near Roseville Road that also has a 130,000 square-foot warehouse on site.

The vision is to have a mixed-use service center with shelter, respite, safe parking, Behavioral Health services co-located on-site with case management, storage, pet respite, laundry services, showers, bathrooms, job training and more.

With the board's action on Oct. 22 to approve the staff recommendation to move forward with the construction bid, the Department of Homeless Service and Housing can make this vision a reality.

The Watt Service Center and Safe Stay (Center) provides the space and opportunity to make all of these visions a reality.



The Watt Service Center and Safe Stay, if open for at least 15 years, will serve about 18,000 unsheltered people. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

While the initial price tag feels hefty – at a purchase price of \$22 million for the parcel and an estimated cost of \$42 million for construction of the full vision for the campus – the reality is that this center will serve thousands of people – not just the 350 it can serve at

any given time.

The Service Center will have capacity to host (at any given time): 225 beds in Safe Stay cabins, 50-person capacity in Safe Parking and 75-person capacity for emergency/weather respite beds.

Conservative estimates,

based off the data from other county sheltering and respite projects, show that over 15 years the Service Center will serve 18,000 people – which lowers the cost to less than \$3,600 per person.

With the expectation of this center operating longer

than 15 years, those costs continue to shrink as the impact on homelessness across Sacramento County grows.

In 2017, Sacramento looked at the cost born by the public systems (county jail, shelters, behavioral health and City Fire), and found the average cost for an unsheltered individual to be \$45,000 annually for the top 250 users of these systems. It costs far more to leave people unhoused than it does to stabilize them, address the issues keeping them in homelessness and doing whatever it takes to get them housed.

The Service Center's size and configuration offers a unique opportunity to serve folks immediately exiting homelessness in the emergency/weather respite center, as well as those more stabilized and working towards permanent housing in the Safe Stay cabins. Additionally, it will allow staff to serve people living in vehicles, which includes working poor and those who are only recently homeless.

While having the space to serve folks at these different stages of their

homeless experience, the site will allow for a myriad of community-based supports – behavioral health, physical health, employment services, treatment services (and many more) – to co-locate at the site and support clients towards a permanent exit from homelessness.

Watt will be the county's fourth Safe Stay Community, with locations in south Sacramento at Florin, East Parkway and on Stockton Blvd. In addition to these shelters, the county also has scattered site shelter homes across the county, as well as several other sheltering programs.

This will be the county's first year-round weather respite and its first Safe Parking program.

The county continues to pursue new and innovative programs and services to address homelessness, stretch limited funding and partner with its cities, community-based organizations and local non-profits in the mission to end homelessness.

For more information, visit <https://schs.saccounty.gov/pages/default.aspx>. ★

Sacramento Police Launch Public Safety Camera Network

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Police Department has unveiled its latest initiative, the Public Safety Camera Network, aimed at enhancing public safety through community involvement and innovative technology.

The platform integrates public and private video feeds, along with features like 911 and Computer-Aided-Dispatch integration, officer geolocation, and multimedia public tips reporting into one



ecosystem. Community outreach efforts will support camera registration, with advocates available to assist businesses over the phone.

This new program will enhance the Real Time Information Center's efficiency and effectiveness for public safety. The

platform includes a camera registry for residents and businesses to voluntarily register their security cameras. This aids in expediting investigations and emergency responses.

The voluntary camera registration eliminates the need for door-to-door canvassing and allows investigators immediate access to potential video evidence. Registrants' information is confidential and is solely used for criminal investigations or emergencies. The program doesn't grant live video access to the police department;

instead, it provides camera location information for incident response.

Residential and commercial property owners are encouraged to participate. Additionally, an option to upgrade security systems for live video feeds to the department is available, enhancing community safety and police response during emergencies.

For more on registering or integrating security cameras into the Public Safety Camera Network, please visit www.connectsacramento.org or www.sacpd.org. ★

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Tuleyome Offers Certified California Naturalist Course



Students get up close to nature during Tuleyome's Certified California Naturalist Course. Photo by Nate Lillge

Tuleyome News Release

WOODLAND, CA (MPG) - Tuleyome, the expert organization on the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, is offering a Certified California Naturalist course in early 2025. Instruction focuses on the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument region while providing participants with skills and resources that are applicable anywhere to increase their knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the natural world.

The Certified California Naturalist course is presented by Tuleyome in partnership with the University of California extension program. This 10-week course is offered from January to March 2025, with classes occurring on 10 consecutive Fridays plus at least three field trips. Friday classes will be held at the UC Davis campus.

No advanced degrees or previous naturalist



During Tuleyome's Certified California Naturalist course, participants are introduced to different ways to measure ecosystem health.

experience is required.

The UC California Naturalist Program introduces Californians to the wonders of our unique ecology and engages the public in study and stewardship of California's natural communities. The program uses a science curriculum, hands-on learning, problem-solving, citizen science and community service to instill a deep appreciation for the natural communities of the state and to inspire individuals to become stewards of their local resources.

In addition to in-person instruction, students are required to attend field trips in the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument region. Field trips consist of low-impact walking trips and auto-tours, so they are suitable for all fitness levels. Impromptu walks are also often provided by the instructors as time permits to give participants more experience in the field.

Questions about the course should be directed to Nate Lillge at nlillge@tuleyome.org. ★

Gala Raises Nearly \$200,000 for ACC Senior Facility

Continued from Page 1

commitment to quality care, unwavering dedication to community service and selfless civic leadership."

In addition to Tsakopoulos and Matsui, ACC recognized Dr. Scott Stringer for Excellence in Care District (SMUD) for Outstanding Corporate Partnership. Stringer currently serves as the medical director for ACC's skilled nursing and rehabilitation center, and SMUD has been actively involved in helping ACC modernize its lighting and electrical systems to increase efficiency and comfort at the skilled nursing and rehabilitation center.

The event was emceed by former KCRA-TV anchor and Emmy Award-winning journalist Pamela Wu, who is now director of Media and Communications for UC Davis Health. Other notables also in attendance were Assemblywoman Stephanie Nguyen, Sacramento County Supervisor Patrick Kennedy, Sacramento City Councilman Rick Jennings and SMUD Board Member Dave Tamayo.

Guests were treated to small bites and beverages from Anheuser-Busch, Binchoyaki, Buckhorn Grill-Land Park, Frank Fat's, Fuji Sacramento, Kalani Kakes, Onibi Beer Company, Bogle Winery, Heringer Estates and Sweet Oven Bakery. A special signature cocktail for the event was crafted by The Social Sip Bar's Shannon Martinez.

In between bites, guests started holiday shopping early by bidding on a treasure trove of auction items, including a guitar signed by Taylor Swift, signed 49ers and Raiders jerseys, Hawaii vacations and a unique and priceless rare-whiskey tasting experience in Nashville that was won with a \$4,500 bid.

The event was also an opportunity for the Sacramento community to meet ACC's new CEO and president, Connie Rusynyk, who joined the organization late last year. Rusynyk brings over 20 years of extensive strategic planning, servant leadership and business development experience in helping healthcare organizations.

Prior to joining ACC, Rusynyk served as the president and CEO of Halcyon Rehab, where she built the \$120 million in revenue rehabilitation and therapy organization from the ground up. Her experience



ACC CEO Connie Rusynyk, right, poses with SMUD Board Member Dave Tamayo.

and leadership has helped ACC overcome the lingering impact of the pandemic and is instituting the changes that will be needed to meet the challenge of providing affordable high quality care for the growing elderly population in the Sacramento area.

"ACC Care Center, like many skilled nursing facilities all across the country, is struggling to survive after the COVID pandemic," Rusynyk said in her prepared remarks. "Nearly 800 nursing homes closed between February 2020 and July 2024, displacing nearly 30,000 residents. Nevertheless, generous individuals like you have made it possible for us to continue to operate and serve the Sacramento area."

Funds raised from the Fall Gala will go toward modernization efforts at the skilled nursing and rehabilitation center, including the acquisition of a \$500,000 96-hour emergency generator recently required by state law.

The mission of the ACC Care Center is to provide compassionate, person-centered care that celebrates cultural diversity and promotes the highest quality clinical and social services for residents and family members.

ACC Care Center, located in the Pocket/Greenhaven neighborhood, has been serving older adults in the Sacramento area since 1986 and was recognized by U.S. News and World Report as "Best Nursing Homes: Long-term Care and Short-term Rehabilitation in 2022-23." ★



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Teresa Olson
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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



What a difference a week makes. Entering last week, the Sacramento Kings had lost all of their preseason games, and the first two games of the regular season.

Enter the Portland Trailblazers on Oct. 28 and the home crowd was treated to what everyone had envisioned the new and improved Sacramento Kings would look like.

DeMar DeRozan carved up the defensive of the Trailblazers along with point guard DeAaron Fox for 23 and 24 points respectively, but the real key was the way DeRozan got to his spots and made his mid-range game look easy.

Combined with the lightning quickness of Fox, this tandem poses a threat to opposing defenses every night, and other teams had better bring their "A" game when they come to Sac Town.

Finally breaking into the win column and lighting the beam for the first time in the 2024/2025 campaign, lifted a heavy weight off the shoulders of the Kings players and fans alike, but the week was not over. Convincing victories on the road over Utah and the Atlanta Hawks gave the Kings a three-game winning streak and lifted the team over 500.

DeRozan looked like a natural fit as the Kings made victories over the Jazz and Hawks look pedestrian, and had the Kings been able to shoot a little better from the charity stripe, it's entirely possible the overtime loss to the Toronto Raptors could have been the Kings 4th win in a row.

Sacramento will wrap up their road trip Monday night against the formidable Miami Heat (after press time), but it's obvious that some of the swagger has returned to the team.

I'm impressed with DeMar DeRozan in nearly every facet of his game, and like Malik Monk, DeRozan will be an asset and a role model as it relates to free throw shooting. An 84% career free throw shooter, DeMar has proven his reliability at the charity strip, and with the Kings coming off the 2023/2024 campaign in the cellar of the NBA in free throw shooting, adding a 6-time all-star that can shoot free throws at a consistently high level, is just

what the doctor ordered for the Kings.

Big man and double-double king Domantas Sabonis, like Fox, has struggled in the past from the free throw line, but has looked better so far this season, and has raised his average. It's still early, but if both Fox and Sabonis can get to 80% or better at the line consistently, look for Sacramento to be lighting the beam with increased regularity.

At 3-3 the Kings may not have a gawdy win-loss record, but the last four games have given all the fans a positive look at what the season can look like.

Although DeRozan has already shown he can connect from long range when called upon, he consistently passes up 3-point opportunities for mid-range looks, and he is deadly from the 10 to 15-foot range. DeMar looks so comfortable in mid-range, his stroke is almost effortless, and with that kind of confidence, he poses a serious late game option to go along with Fox and Sabonis.

Shout out to Kevin Huerter who after a subpar start in game one, has returned to what fans have expected to see, and once again, Huerter has shown his acumen both beyond the 3-point line, and driving to the hoop.

Huerter's defense has taken a step forward as well, so we'll give some attaboys to coach Brown for putting Huerter back in the starting lineup and sticking with him. If we can keep Kevin off the injury list, the 2024/2025 season could be a breakout year for a popular player with a big upside.

More than anything, the recent wins, particularly on the road, are spurring a higher volume of optimism, and look for an already loud arena to get even louder.

For any naysayers that felt it would take a long time for newcomer DeMar DeRozan to fit in, he is well ahead of schedule, and the way he and Fox are sharing the ball is a pleasure to watch.

Stay tuned Kings fans. This is what you've been waiting for, and the best is yet to come!

All the best!

Your thoughts are always welcome at vggharriskingsfan@gmail.com. ★

ABOUT TOWN

'Think You Can Belt' Song Event Nov. 16

Time to get all dressed up and celebrate SARTA's 40th Anniversary at Howe Ave Theatre (in Howe Park, Sacramento) on Saturday, November 16 from 7:30 -9:30 pm.

Enjoy an evening of fabulous singing, a delicious dessert bar, sparkling beverages, and exciting drawings!

An incredibly talented cast of a dozen singers will delight audiences with songs from the present and days gone by!

Tickets for this amazing event are \$30 for SARTA members and \$35 for non-members. To purchase tickets in advance, please visit www.sarta.com/cabarettickets.

For more information, please contact sarta@sarta.com or call 916-443-8229. SARTA is a 501(3) non-profit theatre arts service organization.

Shredding Event Nov. 16 Benefits Scout Troop

Elks Lodge 6 and Scout Troop 259 will co-host a document-shredding event from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16 in the lodge's front parking lot, 6446 Riverside Blvd. Donation is \$15 per banker's box.

Cook Realty Shred Event Nov. 16

9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 16 at Cook Realty, 4305 Freeport Blvd.

Donation is \$5 per grocery bag and \$10 per banker's box. Proceeds benefit the YMCA Children's Fund.

Checks can be made to Cook Realty.

Elks Lodge Calendar Farmer's Market, 9 am-1 pm every Saturday. Elk's Lodge Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am every Sunday.

Bring your friends and family; \$15 tax included. Best deal in town. Made to order Omelets or eggs any way you want. Bacon, sausage, potatoes, biscuits and gravy, pancakes, waffles, coffee.

Guests are VERY welcome!

Water Aerobics: 10 a.m. Mondays, 2 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. Fridays. Lodge members free.

Yoga, Monday 12 pm, Wednesday 3:30 pm. Lodge members free.

Martial Arts, Monday 5 pm

Pickleball, Multiple days each week. Noon Monday, 3:30 p.m. Wednesday

Mon & Wed 9 am-12 pm, Thu 4:30-7:30 pm, Sun 4-7 pm

To sign up or confirm schedule, join playtimescheduler.com

Improv Night, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6-8 pm

Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 pm. See elks6.net for weekly menu.

Sactown Swing: lessons 7 p.m.; swing social 8 p.m.

Karaoke: 7 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays

Friday Happy Hour, Friday 4-7 pm.

Area Museums Offer Plenty of Experiences

The Greater Sacramento region is rich with museums and popular destinations that offer plenty of must-see and must-do experiences to

explore.

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

California Automobile Museum – Take a ride in a museum car during Sunday Drives, the third Sunday of every month.. With paid museum admission, take a ride from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Details at calautomuseum.org/

California Museum – ¡Pleibol! In the Barrios and the Big Leagues, Oct. 26-Jan. 25, 2025: This Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition takes audiences on a journey into the heart of American baseball to understand how generations of Latinas/os have helped make the game what it is today. Details at californiamuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum & Foundation – The California State Railroad Museum & Foundation are proud to offer the Polar Express Train Ride – Enjoy this magical family event! The evening begins in our passenger station where you will be entertained by Polar Express characters, and then board your train to the North Pole where you will enjoy hot chocolate and a sweet treat courtesy of our hot chocolate chefs.

Once you reach the North Pole, the jolly old elf — Santa himself — will come on board to give each passenger the first gift of Christmas, a silver sleigh bell.

For more details and/or to book a train ride, please visit www.californiarailroad.museum. ★

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Doctors Say Bacterial Pneumonia Increasing, Especially Among Children

UC Davis Health News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Cases of pneumonia caused by the bacteria *Mycoplasma*, also known as “walking pneumonia,” have been on the rise this year in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

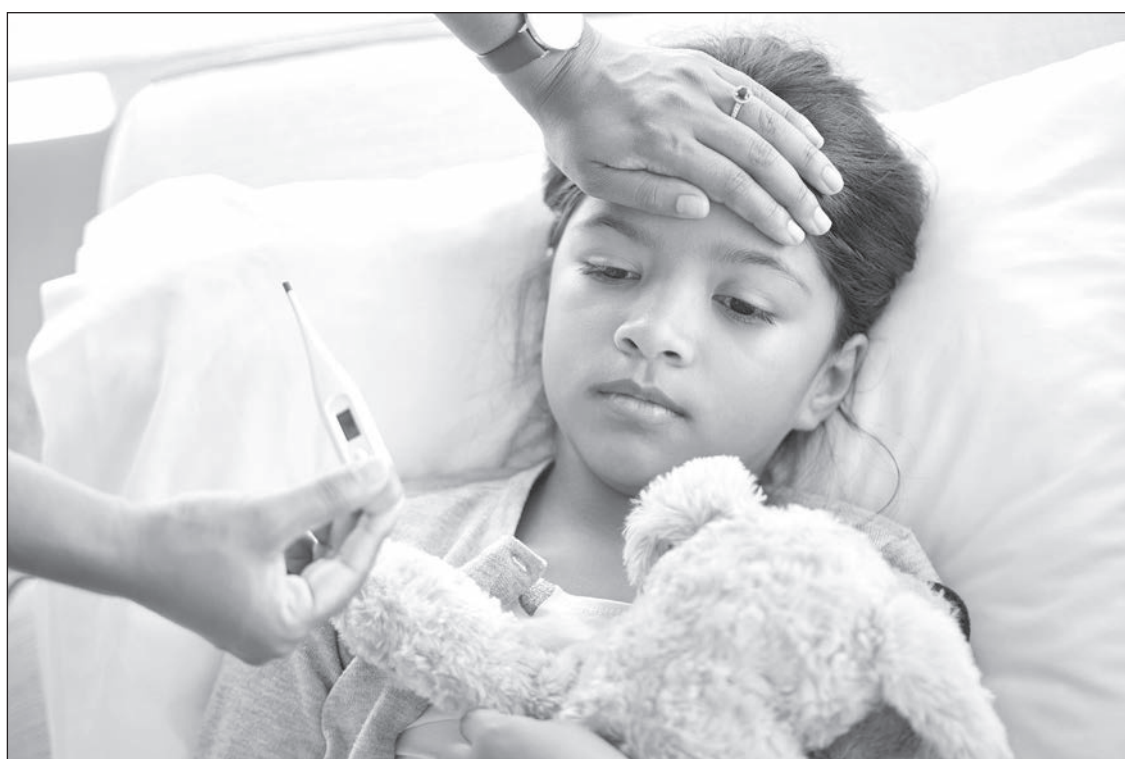
The agency reports an increase among all age groups across the United States from March 31 to Oct. 5 of this year, with the peak in August, and levels remaining high. The data come from the National Syndromic Surveillance Program and bioMérieux BIOFIRE Syndromic Trends.

Young children, particularly those ages 2 to 4, have been most affected this year, with an increase from 1% to 7.2% among children ages 2 to 4. Children ages 5 to 17 also saw an increase from 3.6% to 7.4%.

Dean Blumberg, chief of pediatric infectious diseases at UC Davis Children’s Hospital, answered some questions about walking pneumonia and what parents and families can do to keep their children healthy. His comments follow below.

What is Mycoplasma Pneumonia?

“Pneumonia from *Mycoplasma*, also known by the nonmedical term ‘walking pneumonia,’ is caused by the bacteria *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, which causes a respiratory tract infection. These can be mild infections which, most often, do not require hospitalization, but for some, they can be severe and



Do you have fever, sore throat and cough? It could be “walking pneumonia, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is on the rise. Photo courtesy of UC Davis Health

require antibiotics to get better. Both children and adults can get pneumonia from *Mycoplasma*.”

What are the Common Symptoms of Pneumonia Caused by Mycoplasma?

“Common symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, headache and feeling tired.

It’s often called ‘walking pneumonia’ since some people don’t feel sick enough to stay home but they are still contagious and can spread the disease to others. Complications can occur that require hospital care, including new or worsening asthma, severe pneumonia and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).

Children under 5 often have different symptoms, including diarrhea, sneezing, sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, vomiting, watery eyes and wheezing

Symptoms typically last for several weeks.

Some infected people may have no symptoms but it can still damage the lining of the respiratory tract, including the throat, windpipe and lungs.”

How is it Spread?

“It can spread person-to-person through the respiratory route, particularly when people are coughing or sneezing. People who live or work in crowded settings are at an increased risk for outbreaks.

It can take one to four weeks for symptoms to appear after someone has been exposed to the bacteria.”

Who is at Highest Risk for This?

“Anyone is susceptible but those recovering from a respiratory illness are at an increased risk for serious infection. Anyone with a weakened immune system or with preexisting lung conditions such as asthma or reactive airway disease are also at greater risk for serious infection.”

Is there a Vaccine Available for Mycoplasma Pneumoniae?

“No, unfortunately there is no vaccine.”

How is it Diagnosed?

“Testing is available through a nose or throat swab PCR test at your doctor’s office.”

How is this Treated?

“Macrolides (such as azithromycin) are a class of antibiotics used commonly to treat bacterial pneumonia including infections caused by *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*. Make sure to take the full course of antibiotics and don’t stop when you start feeling better.”

What are some ways to keep Families Safe?

“I think a lot of families may not have heard of *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* or know that it is going around. I would advise families to follow these common-sense strategies:

Stay home when you are feeling sick. Keep your children away from others if they are not feeling well.

Cover your cough and sneeze and teach your kids to use their batwing to cover their cough or sneeze.

Wear a well-fitted KN95 or N95 mask if you feel sick and need to be out in public or if you are in crowded settings with others. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children ages 2 and older can safely wear a mask. But the exception is for anyone who cannot easily remove their own mask or who has trouble breathing.

Those who get worsening symptoms, have difficulty breathing or are unable to keep liquids down, should seek medical attention immediately.” ★

UC Davis Children's Hospital Named Among Best For 2024-2025

UC Davis News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - UC Davis Children’s Hospital has been recognized as a 2024-2025 Best Children’s Hospital by U.S. News & World Report.

The annual Best Children’s Hospitals rankings, now in its 18th year, assist parents and caregivers, along with their physicians, in how to choose the best possible care for children with serious illnesses or complex medical needs.

UC Davis Children’s Hospital is nationally ranked among the nation’s 50 best in five specialty care areas: 23rd in nephrology, 26th in neonatology; 32nd in pediatric orthopedics, which was awarded in collaboration with Shriners Children’s – Northern California, UC Davis Children’s Hospital’s longstanding partner in caring for children with burns, spinal cord injuries, orthopedic disorders and urological issues; 36th nationally in pediatric pulmonology and lung surgery; and Top 50 in pediatric and adolescent behavioral health.

Regionally, UC Davis Children’s Hospital was ranked seventh in California and eighth in the Pacific Region, which includes Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington.

“Our physicians, nurses and health care teams deliver world-class

pediatric specialty care to patients from Sacramento and beyond,” said Satyan Lakshminrusimha, chair of pediatrics and physician-in-chief of UC Davis Children’s Hospital. “These awards recognize the expertise of our staff and their commitment to the care of children. I’m so pleased we get to celebrate that today. It is an honor to be recognized nationally in the U.S. News’ Best Children’s Hospitals rankings.”

U.S. News, together with RTI International, a North Carolina-based research and consulting firm, collected and analyzed data from 108 children’s hospitals and surveyed thousands of pediatric specialists. Children’s hospitals awarded a “Best” designation excelled at factors such as clinical outcomes, level and quality of hospital resources directly related to patient care and expert opinion among pediatric specialists.

“U.S. News & World Report’s annual Best Children’s Hospitals evaluation empowers parents and caregivers with a data-driven guide to help them find the best pediatric hospital to treat their child,” said Ben Harder, chief of health analysis and managing editor at U.S. News.

The full rankings for the 2024-2025 Best Children’s Hospitals Honor Roll, regional and specialty rankings can be found at USNews.com. ★

Steps Toward Becoming a Bully-Free County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Department of Health Services (DHS) recently recognized Bullying Prevention Month by increasing its outreach and engagement efforts, with an emphasis on reaching communities in high-need areas across the county.

This year, the department highlighted its partnership with HeartLand Child and Family Services, the county’s 16th Flexible Integrated Treatment (FIT) site, to expand the county’s outreach to more children, youth and families through enhanced mental health support.

With the new HeartLand Flexible Integrated Treatment site, the Department of Health Services brings vital services to areas with high child-poverty rates, CPS involvement and mental health needs. By tapping into HeartLand’s strong community ties, the county strengthens its grassroots efforts, ensuring trusted mental health resources are accessible and readily available.

This month, the HeartLand team participated in community events to promote anti-bullying messages, share resources



Sacramento County has partnered with HeartLand Child and Family Services to decrease bullying in the county. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

and support local families. Their outreach focused on fostering kindness, empathy and open communication to build a countywide culture of zero tolerance for bullying.

“Seeing the impact of our partnership with Sacramento County, especially during Bullying Prevention Month, brings joy to our team and communities,” said HeartLand Child and Family Services, Director of Clinical Services Todd Palumbo. “We’re dedicated to making a real difference in the lives of every young person feels valued and empowered.”

Some of the efforts included Dudley Elementary Fall Festival,

where families received resources on addressing bullying in schools, emphasizing kindness; Community Collaborative Charter School, where parents were encouraged to adopt anti-bullying practices and reduce mental health stigma; Walk ‘N’ Roll Disability Resource Fair, offering resources to community members while promoting disability awareness and empathy; and Salvation Army Youth Basketball League Celebration (95817) on Oct. 19, offering mentorship programs and support to foster anti-bullying attitudes among youth.

For more information on Sacramento County’s Flexible Integrated Treatment services, visit Sacramento County Department of Health Services website at dhs.sac-county.gov. ★

Hunger in Sacramento Continues to Rise

California Association of Food Banks News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - In California, one in four households with children are estimated to be food insecure — that’s more than 1 million households with children that have unreliable access to adequate food.

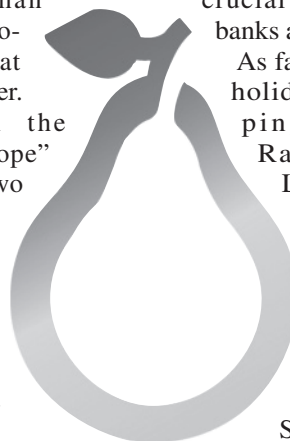
The data, recently released by the California Association of Food Banks, reveals that food insecurity today is similar to that seen in the early months of the COVID-19

pandemic. Right here in Sacramento County, 28% — more than 448,000 people — are at risk of hunger.

Through the “Jars of Hope” initiative, two organizations are joining to help that number. Riviana Foods Inc. (“Riviana”), America’s leading rice company, and the California Association of

Food Banks (CAFB) are teaming up to provide crucial funds to food banks across California.

As families start their holiday food shopping, Walmart, Ralphs, Food 4 Less, and Foods Co. stores have made it easy for Sacramentans help their neighbors in need. Starting this week, Riviana will donate \$1 to the California Association



of Food Banks for every RiceSelect® jar sold at participating stores between Oct. 14 and Nov. 10. In addition, Riviana will donate rice to California food banks. Money raised through the “Jars of Hope” campaign will support the California Association of Food Banks’ Farm

to Family program and the organization’s mission to end hunger. Last year, the California Association of Food Banks’ Farm to Family program delivered more than 250 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to food banks, providing quality and nutritious food to communities while reducing food waste. This food helps support Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, along with 40 partner food banks in the California Association of Food Banks, who collectively serve more than 6 million Californians each month. ★

Panther Cares Center Assists Students

Sacramento City College News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento City College (SCC) celebrates the grand opening of its Panther Cares Center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the main campus on Freeport Boulevard.

The center, made possible through a combination of state funding and donations from organizations and individuals, is designed to provide holistic support for

students who are struggling with financial and food insecurity.

By connecting students with free community resources and providing access to technology, emergency grants, housing information, assistance with applying for CalFresh benefits, and groceries through a daily food distribution on-site, the Panther Cares Center aims to help students stay on their path to achieve their educational goals.

"The Panther Cares Center highlights

the importance for centralized, comprehensive services that address gaps students have with basic needs," said Davin Brown, SCC vice president of Student Services. "By co-locating critical resources that provide access to food, housing assistance, technology, and financial aid, we reduce challenges students face with having to navigate multiple spaces and systems.

"This comprehensive approach ensures that students can focus on their academic and personal growth in a stigma-free

environment that exists to foster student persistence, well-being and achievement."

At the grand opening was Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, who helped with the allocation of \$2.4 million in the state budget in 2019 to support both a basic needs center and a Veterans Resource Center expansion that was completed in 2022.

"I'm proud to have helped secure the funding needed to support this vital resource," McCarty said.

"These centers ensure that all students, no matter their circumstances, have the support they need to succeed." ★

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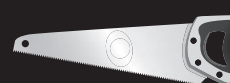
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A tour group learns about the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Photo courtesy of California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Tours Available

California Department of Fish and Wildlife News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Tour the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area with an experienced field trip leader!

Tours are held on the third Sunday of each month and are a fantastic opportunity to explore local wetlands, learn about wildlife and native plants and interact with other community members who share similar interests.

View flooded seasonal and permanent wetlands, native grasslands and young

riparian forests. Depending on the season, look for migrating and resident waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, raptors and wading birds.

Tours run rain or shine from 9 a.m. to noon, on the third Sunday of each month, except in instances of flooding. Tours do not run in July, August and September. Tours meet at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters (45211 County Road 32B). Registration required.

For more information or to register visit yolobasin.org/wetlands-tours or contact volunteer@yolobasin.org via email. ★

SIR Keeps Local Retired Men Active

By Jerry Westerman

Looking to stay active in retirement? I have a club for you.

As many of us approach retirement age, we may find that our activity level and social interactions start to ebb. Like me, many may feel a sense of vacuum or void in our lives when we retire that needs to be filled. We realize that staying active physically, mentally and socially improves our health, vigor and hopefully longevity.

Becoming a member of a club or organization is often just the thing to get us out and enjoy some activities with other men in our age group. I joined one such group eight years ago. There are several branches in the Sacramento area called SIR (formerly Sons in Retirement).

SIR's mission is to enhance the lives of its members through fun activities and events while making friends for life. SIR has over 100 branches in California from Bakersfield to the Oregon border. The branch

I belong to, SIR Branch 23, has nearly 200 members and meets monthly at the Dante Event Center on Fair Oaks Boulevard just past Howe Avenue behind Pavilions Car Wash.

Members of the branch reside in surrounding neighborhoods such as River Park, East Sacramento, Arden Arcade, Carmichael and Fair Oaks, although many live in farther-flung parts of the Sacramento region.

Our monthly luncheons provide an opportunity for members to socialize, enjoy a great meal and hear from interesting speakers from our community on a variety of subjects.

Our branch has many organized activities including an outstanding golf program with weekly 18-hole and 9-hole tournaments at courses around the Sacramento area (during spring, summer and fall); bowling at Country Club Lanes (weekly league play fall and winter); bocce ball at Carmichael Park, hiking, fishing trips, a free library, a book club, poker and bridge. Annual events

include the "Ladies Day" luncheon during the holiday season and the Spring Family Picnic, also at Carmichael Park.

While membership in most SIR branches is limited to men, spouses/partners are welcome to participate in many activities.

Our branch is always looking for new members. Many new members were friends, family, neighbors or former co-workers of our current members. But many joined after hearing about our great program and activities.

Annual dues are very low (currently \$25), since SIR is a nonprofit social organization, and joining is easy.

If you are interested, call our friendly Branch 23 membership chairman, Ray Zelinski, at 916-961-4222, and for more information, visit SIR at <https://sirinc2.org/branch23>. Or feel free to call me, Jerry Westerman, at 916-801-7879. I live right here in Fair Oaks and would be happy to share more information with you. ★

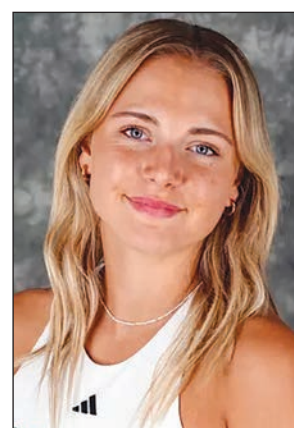
Sac State Women's Tennis Trio Heading to Championships



Sacramento State University Athletics News Release



Sac State sophomore Irene Riva was Big Sky Player of the Week twice in 2024. Photos courtesy of Sac State Athletics



Redshirt sophomore Lou Baudouin will represent Sac State and the Big Sky conference at the ITA Championships.

SACRAMENTO, CA, (MPG) - Sacramento State sophomore Lou Baudouin in singles and the doubles tandem of senior Maddy Ferreros and sophomore Irene Riva have been selected to represent the Big Sky Conference at the 2024 ITA Conference Masters Championships on Nov. 7-10, in Rome, Ga.

The Hornets' trio was selected by a vote of the conference's head coaches following a round of nominations. Coaches could not vote for their own players.

Each Division I conference will send one singles player and one doubles team to the event to played at the Rome Tennis Center, with the four singles semifinalists and top three doubles teams qualifying for the NCAA Division I Individual Championships hosted by Baylor in Waco, Texas, on Nov. 19-24.

The ITA Conference Masters Championships are one of four qualifying tournaments that will seed the field for the NCAA Individual Championships, joining the ITA All-American Championships (10 singles, four doubles), the ITA Regional Championships (26 singles, 13 doubles), and the ITA Sectional Qualifiers (24 singles, 12 doubles). All told, 64 singles players and 32 doubles teams will vie for the NCAA Individual Championships.

Ferreros and Riva wrapped up the 2024 spring season with a 16-4 record at the No. 2 spot in

the Hornets' line up, earning All-Big Sky second team honors in doubles while helping Sacramento State to their first Big Sky Conference regular season and tournament titles since 2012. The 16 wins together were tied for seventh on the school's single-season list.

This fall, the duo were additions to the field at the prestigious Battle in the Bay Classic, which featured student-athletes from 16 of the nation's preseason top 75 schools — including six of the top 10 and two more in the top 25.

They battled the duo of Mila Mulready and Ozlem Uslu from Virginia Tech in the opening round, then drew the No. 36 team in the nation in USC's Emma Charney and Imogen Haddad in the consolation round.

A month later, the duo advanced to the round of 16 at the ITA Northwest Regionals in Berkeley, Calif., posting wins over teams from SeattleU and Santa Clara in the main draw's opening two rounds before falling to the tournament's No. 5-seeded duo from California.

Baudouin finished her first collegiate season with an 18-6 singles record in the spring of 2024, playing at least one match at every spot in the lineup except for No. 1 and won



Sac State senior Maddy Ferreros is part of the doubles tandem heading to the 2024 ITA Conference Masters Championships.

eight of her 10 contests at the No. 3 spot. She was an All-Big Sky second team selection in both singles and doubles, opening her career with eight consecutive singles victories, while her 18 singles wins overall were tied for 15th on the school's single-season list.

This fall, Baudouin finished 3-1 at the Cal Fall Invitational, posting singles wins over opponents from San Jose State, Nevada, and Pacific, while going 2-2 in doubles. She also reached the main draw round of 16 at the ITA Northwest Regionals alongside partner Palina Saulevich, posting wins over doubles teams from Pacific and UC Davis before falling to Washington State's duo of Hania Abouelsaad and Martina Markov in a tie-breaker, 8-7 (5). ★



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4744 67th Street, Sacramento 95820
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Featuring 3 bedroom and 2.5 baths. This home has a formal dining area which is ideal for entertaining, laundry, downstairs 1/2 bath and a living room with wood burning fireplace and sliding patio door. The kitchen boasts granite countertops, stainless appliances, and a garden window. Upstairs you will find 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, including a large primary suite. Outside is perfect for entertaining with a patio, pond and a greenhouse; ideal for growing flowers and vegetables. This beautiful home is located close to schools, restaurants, and stores and the HOA provides the upkeep on the exterior of the property, including the roof. This amazing property is the ideal place to call home.

Stunning Foothill Farms Property



AVAILABLE

6217 Jack London Cir, Sacramento 95842
3 Bed | 2 bath | 1,092 sq. ft. | \$445,000

Stunning Foothill Farms property featuring 3 bedrooms and 2 baths and an opportunity to purchase a property that needs zero updating. This home was completely rebuilt after a fire and has new kitchen and baths, new flooring, fresh paint inside and out, new roof, new electrical and new lighting, just to name a few of the updates. The renovations are completed...whether you are a first-time buyer or an investor, this beautiful residence is ideal. Located on a quiet street that is close to neighborhood schools, shopping and parks. This home is sure to impress!

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Say More Than 'Thank You for Your Service'

This Veterans Day, I want you to do more than just thank a veteran for his or her service.

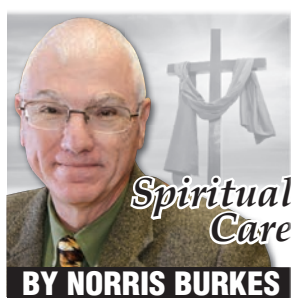
As a veteran of 28 years, I want to challenge you to go beyond patriotic rhetoric by asking some specific questions of the veterans you encounter.

First, ask us what we did in military service. Don't worry; our stories aren't just about bombs and bullets and boats.

For instance, most of us would love to tell you about how we deployed on more than a few humanitarian missions.

If you ask, we'll tell about operations like "New Horizon," where we built schools, clinics and playgrounds all over South America.

Some of us can tell you



Spiritual Care
BY NORRIS BURKUS

about cleaning up New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, while others will tell you about flying into countries devastated by earthquakes or tsunamis.

Ask us what we did, and we might recollect building runways in the desert, pitching tents in the jungle, hot-loading a plane, setting up communications links in the Australian outback and launching a satellite that gave you the cable TV you enjoy.

Get us talking and we'll tell you about fixing planes, loading planes, flying planes, jumping from planes, fueling planes in flight.

As a chaplain, I can tell you about the blessings I prayed over planes as well as the blessing I had of walking away from a plane crash.

This generation of service members might lose you in their technical talk, but I assure you they are proud to talk about the satellites they control, the drones they fly and the cyber warfare they engage.

After you ask them about what they did, ask them where they've been.

They'll likely share their version of Johnny Cash's song, "I've Been Everywhere."

They've filled passports doing temporary duty in places like Antigua, Ukraine and Djibouti on the Horn of Africa.

They've flown planes over the North Pole, landed them on the South Pole and navigated submarines under both.

And yes, they've even spent some time in "dark sites" that don't exist.

They shivered with their families on assignment in Minot, N.D., and spent a few sweltering years in Fort Huachuca, AZ.

My family loved the two years they spent in Izmir, Turkey, while other military families enjoyed the island seclusion of Guam or the Azores.

A few lucky ducks will regale you with stories of embassy duty in Paris,

London or Madrid.

But if you want to go deep, ask them what it means to have served.

If you listen well and they think you're interested, they just might tell you.

But it's just as likely they won't be able to tell you. It's just as likely that there will be a hitch in their voice, a mist will form in their eyes and they'll turn away from that question.

Don't get me wrong. They're proud of the things they've done and they want to share them with you.

But I caution you: There are some things they won't share.

Taking an oath to obey the legal orders of those appointed over them meant that they also did the unimaginable and for some

the unspeakable.

I know because they told their chaplain.

They told me about the lives they couldn't save and the lives they had to take. They've shown me their physical wounds and they've bared their moral wounds.

Thankfully, the stories of most servicemembers run the course of everyday life; albeit a life of transfers every two or three years, endless inspections and exercises, family separations and making ends meet on military pay.

It was a life of long ago, but it was life from only yesterday.

Ask us and we'll tell you.

Please join my mailing list: Sign up online at <https://thechaplain.net/newsletter/> or send me a direct email at comment@thechaplain.net. ★

SacRT Receives More Than \$105 Million in Grants

Compiled by Daniel Canfield from Sacramento Regional Transit News Releases

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) recently announced several grant awards, totaling more than \$105 million, that will benefit Sacramento commuters, public transit riders and the environment.

First, on Oct. 23, SacRT announced that the California State Transportation Agency has awarded SacRT \$29 million in grant funding through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program.

The grant funding will be used for several high priority light rail projects. Funding for the program comes from the federal Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund which was created and funded through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.

According to SacRT, the projects, once complete, will offer significant benefits, including a reduction of 78,032 metric tons of CO2 equivalent in greenhouse gases, a decrease of 250 million vehicle miles traveled, \$160,722,974 in passenger travel cost savings and the support of 984 full-time equivalent jobs.

"This funding will allow us to continue advancing our vision of a more connected, accessible, and sustainable transit system for all Sacramento residents," said Henry Li, SacRT General Manager/CEO. "We are excited to work with our partners to bring these projects to life, and we look forward to



The S700 low-floor light rail trains are designed to enhance accessibility, comfort and efficiency for all. Photo courtesy of SacRT

seeing the positive impact on our community."

Light rail projects supported through this grant funding include:

New Low-Floor Light Rail Vehicles

SacRT will replace aging high-floor light rail vehicles with new state-of-the-art S700 low-floor light rail vehicles from Siemens Mobility. SacRT previously ordered 45 of these new light rail cars, with the first 20 already in service on the Gold Line.

This new grant funding will assist with the purchase of 10 additional new low-floor light rail vehicles, bringing the total to 55.

Light Rail Station Conversions on the Blue Line

SacRT is converting 17 of the 19 light rail stations along the Blue Line to accommodate the height requirement of the new low-floor light rail vehicles, making the system

more accessible by eliminating the need to climb stairs to board the vehicles. With this new grant funding, SacRT will be able to complete station conversions at all light rail stations. Learn more about this project at sacrt.com/modernization.

New Dos Rios Light Rail Station

A partnership between SacRT, the City of Sacramento and the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA), the new Dos Rios Station on the Blue Line will serve as a key part of the Twin Rivers-River District transformation. This project aims to provide connectivity to the historically isolated area, integrating transit access with Mirasol Village, a new development offering 427 low-income units and market-rate housing. The vision for the River District includes increased access to jobs, services and cultural amenities, creating

a vibrant gateway to downtown Sacramento. Learn more about the project at sacrt.com/dosrios.

Horn Road Light Rail Station and Complete Streets Improvements

SacRT is working with the City of Rancho Cordova and Sacramento County on "complete streets" projects along Folsom Boulevard, creating safer and more accessible routes for bicyclists and pedestrians near the future Horn Road Station. Rancho Cordova's streetscape work and the design of a new Class IV Bike Trail will further connect the station to regional bike paths like the American River Bike Trail.

Transition to Digital Fare Technology

SacRT is transitioning to a digital fare system through the Cal-ITP Platform Validator and Smart Fare Vending Machine, in partnership

with the CCJPA. This will streamline fare payments and transfers between SacRT services and Capitol Corridor trains, providing a more seamless experience for riders. SacRT plans to extend this template to other regional rail services, such as ACE and San Joaquins trains, making travel throughout Northern California easier and more efficient.

Then on Oct. 30, SacRT announced the Federal Transit Administration's award of approximately \$76 million in Capital Investment funds.

The federally funded Capital Investment grant program funds transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars and bus rapid transit.

The grant award will enable SacRT to purchase new hydrogen fuel cell buses, replace aging fleet vehicles, construct a permanent hydrogen fueling station, modernize a key bus maintenance facility and establish a workforce development program to train local workers in maintaining and operating the advanced zero-emission buses.

As part of the grant award announcement, SacRT hosted a ceremonial ribbon-cutting event at the site of the new bus facility to be funded through the grant.

Several local elected officials and dignitaries attended the event and shared their thoughts.

"This investment solidifies SacRT's commitment to a greener, more sustainable future," said SacRT General Manager/

CEO Henry Li. "The new hydrogen fuel cell buses and modernized facilities will significantly reduce our carbon footprint while enhancing service for our riders. We are grateful for the federal partnership and the strong support from our congressional representatives."

Said U.S. Representative Doris Matsui, "Sacramento is leading the way in the transition to clean energy and this investment underscores our region's commitment to sustainable transportation. The hydrogen fuel cell buses will make a tangible difference in our air quality, while creating jobs and boosting economic development in our community."

Said U.S. Representative Ami Bera, M.D., "This federal investment will have lasting benefits for Sacramento. It supports clean energy solutions while improving access to safe and reliable transit. Thanks to funding passed from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, I am proud to support SacRT's efforts to modernize our transportation infrastructure."

SacRT acknowledged the bus service improvement projects are made possible through strong partnerships with the California Air Resources Board, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, Center for Transportation and the Environment, New Flyer of America, American River College, Clean Cities Coalition and the County and City of Sacramento. ★

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Funding Approved for Homeless Hospice Program

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - At its Oct. 22 meeting, the Board approved up to \$1,137,788 in funding to complete construction on Joshua's House, a facility that provides end-of-life comfort care for homeless individuals with terminal illnesses, after being discharged from an acute care hospital.

Joshua's House specifically provides a location for homeless patients to receive home-like hospice services when they, by definition, do not have a home to receive such care and may otherwise be unsheltered at the time of passing.

Joshua's House provides shelter, food, clothing and certain volunteer comfort services. In addition, YoloCares will provide licensed expert/specialized end-of-life care for individuals and families facing a life-limiting illness. Yolo Cares has provided high-quality hospice care across the six-county region for nearly 50 years. YoloCares also recently became an enhanced Care Management and Community Supports provider through CalAIM.

"Joshua's House is a natural expression of our community-grounded mission. YoloCares has been a safety-net provider for nearly 50 years," said Craig Dresang, CEO at YoloCares. "We already routinely provide care and support for unhoused individuals, so we see the addition of Joshua's House as a normal evolution for our agency."

Joshua's House has been a long-standing passion project of Marlene

Fitzwater, whose grandson Joshua died on the street, while homeless. In his honor, she has envisioned a place that provides shelter and care to people in the most need at the end of their life. Marlene's compassion is evident when she talks about the project: "This project has been my passion and motivation ever since I lost my grandson, Josh, who died on the street in Omaha, NE of an overdose. As I learned more about homelessness and the prevalence of it in our community, I knew that all my professional experience had prepared me to do this - to provide shelter, meals, comfort care, love and dignity to the poorest of the poor, and the sickest of the sick - the terminally ill, homeless men and women in our community."

Anthem Blue Cross is investing \$400,000 to support the expansion of Joshua's House Hospice. The investment will help close a funding gap to bring on additional beds to serve more individuals experiencing homelessness dealing with a terminal illness who need a safe and secure environment.

"Anthem is proud to support and partner with the City and County of Sacramento on expanding the Joshua's House Hospice program to be able to serve more terminally ill homeless people who do not have the ability to cope with their tragic circumstance in their own home," said Les Ybarra, President of Anthem Blue Cross CA Medicaid Plan. "Anyone who is facing an end-of-life circumstance deserves the right to be comfortable and safe, regardless of housing status."



More than \$1 million was approved in funding for Joshua's House, a facility that provides hospice care for homeless individuals. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

A Service Missing from the System

One of the Board of Supervisors' priorities is to identify and fill gaps in local and regional homeless programs and services. The opportunity to help Joshua's House fill its funding shortfall and offer a service not yet available in the Sacramento region was an easy decision.

With more than 20 percent of the homeless population aging over 55 and nearly half of those self-reporting a chronic illness, these services are needed more than ever. Furthermore, project proximity to the Parkway made using this particular funding source, granted by

the state of California to address the needs of people exiting homelessness coming off the Parkway, another smart decision.

Joshua's House is located in Sacramento County's First Supervisorial District, represented by Supervisor Phil Serna. The Board is proud to make a meaningful and compassionate investment in this program.

"Hospice care is a compassionate and critical element of our healthcare system, yet its availability to those suffering homelessness has been inconsistent at best" said First District Supervisor Phil Serna. He continued, saying, "Joshua's

House hospice care is the first of its kind not only in Sacramento, but in the entire state, and I'm proud to be associated with its mission and to help bring it to fruition, especially in the district I serve. I challenge anyone to convince me those without shelter deserve something less than what we all deserve: a dignified and compassionate experience, one with commensurate care and comfort nearing the end of our lives."

The Balance of Parkway Funding

Staff have worked with the Board and other community partners to identify other projects that can

provide shelter and housing opportunities for people exiting the Parkway for the remaining approximately \$6.9 million in ARP that is unallocated. In addition to the Joshua's House project, staff recommends an allocation of \$1.9 million in ARP funding to support the construction of the Watt Avenue Safe Stay project and to allocate the balance (approximately \$3.8 million) to on-going operational needs and/or expansion of ARP shelter programs.

For more information on what Sacramento County is doing to respond to homelessness, visit our website at <https://schs.saccounty.gov/pages/default.aspx>. ★

Ruff Priorities: City Discusses Idea of a Land Park Dog Park with the Community

Continued from page 1

feedback and choose between the two locations.

Renderings of a possible dog park were on display, with all the amenities a passionate pooch owner could ask for such as canine water fountains, teeter-totters, step platforms and hoop jumps, fencing, benches and lovely green turf to run on. Who wouldn't love that?

Glenn Wedell lives near the Land Park Panhandle and liked the idea.

"It's much closer to my house," he said. "We normally go to the park several times a week. It would be nice to let my dog off the leash." Wendell's comments align with the results, noting 3 out of 4 surveyed own a dog and that they want their dogs to make furry friends.

Longtime Land Park resident Luree Stetson commented, "I am concerned about maintenance. The city doesn't have enough staff or money to maintain other dog parks. My question for the city is, do you have a sustainable plan for another dog park?" Stetson also reflected survey participants where 40% worry about dirty, muddy parks and leftover dog poop.

For decades, Rich Hanna has organized annual charity races in the park, including Urban Cow. He said, "The proposed Freeport spot is where we put our tents and



Jeff Nittka, Youth Parks & Community Engagement senior landscape architect, discusses dog park plans with the public.

equipment. Plus, it's across from the Sacramento City College where parking is used for our runs. I'm concerned this dog park would impact race/walk events."

Zack Wandell accompanied Hanna and shared similar thoughts. Wandell manages the Donut Dash and Scoop Scoot runs. He says, "Location is the point. The combined charities using that (Freeport and 14th) space raise over \$5 million annually. Plus, we pay thousands for permits and fees. That's revenue positive for Sacramento City. If the dog park smells and we need to clean up around it before holding an event, then we can go somewhere else. Any time there's change, we must look at other



Roman Ambroselli, Michelle Bell and Zack Wedell discuss the park plans.

options." He continued, "Land Park has survived 140 years without a dog park. What's the rush to do this now? It makes more sense to me to put a dog park in

high-density areas where people don't have yards."

Other questions centered around enforcement of leash laws and managing dog behavior. These concerns reflect 33% of



People were encouraged to bring photos of their dogs and leave more written comments on the board.

those surveyed who worry about aggressive dog behavior. Currently, only seven park rangers are on duty to patrol over 140 of Sacramento's parks. No one should expect regular park enforcement around dog issues.

Guests were encouraged to leave written comments and share photos of their dogs on a board called "Sactown's Best in Bark." Some people were excited about a dog park, while others gave it a hard 'no.' A few wrote the Panhandle location would displace families and large groups. Notes also suggested a dog park in Curtis Park's new Petrovich Basin or Plaza Cervantes Park.

What it comes down to is the city's "bottom line." Budgets are tight. This year Youth Parks & Community Engagement advocated to minimize budget cuts, and they may have to do it again in 2025. Plus, core park amenities are struggling too. This includes bathroom upgrades, grounds care,

sports area upgrades, tools, public safety and proper staffing.

YPCE staff and District 7 City Councilman Rick Jennings, along with his chief of staff, Dennis Rogers, were at the event to listen and answer questions. They explained this is a process and nothing will happen soon. Part of the process has been completed. There's been a survey, the community provided feedback and plans have been submitted.

Guests put paw stickers on the two choices to choose a final winner. The results are still under review as of the writing of this article. It will be announced later.

Now, the topic is added to a list of priorities for over 240 Sacramento parks. Final decisions will happen when funding is available. Until then, Land Park dog owners will continue to run their dogs on leashes and go about their day while Sacramento City faces "ruff" financial choices. ★