

# RIVER VALLEY TIMES

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Rancho Murieta • Sloughhouse • Wilton

A Valley Oak Press Publication

## Roger Niello secures \$500,000 state grant for reclamation district

By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times Reporter

The beleaguered Reclamation District 800 (RD 800) will receive a \$500,000 grant to pay for long-range planning, thanks to State Sen. Roger Niello, R-Fair Oaks.

Funding for the district was a specific line item in the 2023-24 state budget that was signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. The California State Office of Emergency Services will administer the grant.

RD 800 maintains and repairs 34 miles of privately-owned levees along the Cosumnes River to a 10-year flood standard between Rancho Murieta and Freeman Road in Wilton and Sheldon. The district was already \$1.5 million in debt and hadn't finished repairs from 2017 when the January storms breached three levees and cause massive erosion at dozens of other sites. The district spent \$7 million making emergency repairs and now is in the hole for \$8.6 million. See the separate story about district finances in this issue.

RD 800 Trustee Mark Hite said the planning grant will greatly benefit the district.

"For many, many years we have unsuccessfully tried to get some kind of response from the legislature for our unique needs,"



Courtesy photo

**Beleaguered Reclamation District 800 is slated to receive a \$500,000 grant to pay for long-range planning thanks to State Sen. Roger Niello (pictured). The trustees discussed the grant at their Aug. 16 meeting.**

he said. "Up until now, the state has kind of viewed the Cosumnes watershed as the ugly stepchild in the levee systems because of its (private) ownership patterns and has tried to ignore it as best it can."

Niello's willingness to jump into the fray to secure some money for RD 800 gives Hite cause for hope.

"This signals to us that we are no longer being ignored, and now we have a place at the table,"

**See NIELLO on Page 7**

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## Back to School



Photos by Gail Bullen

## Kids return to school at Cosumnes River Elementary

Spirits are high when Cosumnes River Elementary students return to school on Aug. 10. In photo top, Kiwanian Linda O'Brien stops traffic for sixth grader Billy Baiz. In photo bottom, the school's official mascot, the Roadrunner, is a magnet for photo ops.



Sloughhouse  
Commentary

Mindy  
Cecchetti



In our arid area, traditional turf grasses require more water per square foot than almost any other garden plant. As a result, some homeowners are eliminating the lawn entirely or sharply reducing its size. Maybe most importantly, choose the right grass for our climate and prep the soil carefully. It takes a bit of interest and time to have a great looking and healthy lawn.

First, elect varieties adapted to our area. The lawn will establish most quickly in the spring or fall.

# Consider a great-looking lawn

Warm-season grasses thrive in hot weather, and turn dormant and brown in winter. Most grow in California. The following warm-season grasses are over-seeded with cool-season grasses for the winter months. First and most popular is a Bermuda grass that is drought-tolerant for sunny areas, sold as seed, sod, sprigs, and plugs; mowing height is 1/2-3/4 inch. Next is the Blue grama variety, it tolerates drought, temperature extremes, and a wide range of soils, does best in full sun, makes a better-quality turf when blended with buffalo grass, sold as seed, sod, and plugs, mowing height is three inches. One last warm-season grass is Zoysia,

it tolerates drought and heat, sun or shade, sold as sod, sprigs, and plugs, moving height is 1-2 inches.

Moving on to cool-season grasses. These withstand winter cold but typically have a hard time in hot, dry summers. These grasses are often sold as mixes. So even if one type in the mix is not adapted to your soil or sun and shade conditions in your garden, chances are that others in the package will do well. Bent grass (*Agrostis*) is fine-textured, needs ample water, more care than other lawn grasses, grows in acid soil, in sun or light shade, sold as seed, sod, mowing height is 1/2-3/4 inch. Crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron*) is light bluish green color, tough, drought-tolerant, grows in sunny areas, goes dormant in hot weather, sold as seed, sod, mowing height is two inches. Fine fescue (*Festuca*) is a fine-bladed grass that

succeeds in well-drained soil in shaded sites, fairly drought-tolerant, sometimes blended with Kentucky blue-grass or perennial ryegrass, used to over-seed warm-season grasses, sold as seed, mowing height is 1-1/2-2 inches. Tall fescue is a tough grass that tolerates heat and drought, flourishes in sun or shade, dwarf tall fescues are finer bladed, deeper green, sold as seed, and sod, mowing height is 2-3 inches. Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa*) is a classic grass for cool areas (our winters), needs regular water, takes sun, light shade, sold as seed, sod, mowing height is 2-2 1/2 inches. Last is Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium*) that is deep green grass that does best in sun, needs frequent watering, used to over-seed winter-dormant grasses, sold as seed, sod, mowing height is 2 inches.

Before planting a lawn, till the soil to a depth of about 8 inches

and spread it with a 3-4 inch layer of organic matter. Also apply a lawn fertilizer. Till again; then rake the area smooth, water it thoroughly, and let the soil settle for a few days before planting. Fall seeding is best for most grasses, package labels list varieties included. After preparing the area, scatter seeds, using a mechanical spreader, lightly rake seeds into the soil, spread a 1/2-inch layer of mulch such as compost over the area, roll with an empty roller to press seeds into the soil, water thoroughly. Keep the seedbed moist until the seeds sprout.

To encourage deep rooting and conserve water, irrigate established lawns as deeply and infrequently as possible. In our warm climate, do not let the soil dry out. Many sprinklers apply water faster than the soil can absorb it. To prevent runoff, water in cycles. Sprinkle until just before run-

off or puddling occurs (typically 10-15 minutes), then repeat the cycle in a hour. Adjust sprinklers so they don't overshoot onto walks and roadways.

Most lawns are heavy feeders, requiring regular applications of high-nitrogen fertilizer. Give cool-season lawns two applications of fertilizer, one in spring and another in fall. Fertilize warm-season lawns several times from late spring into late summer (Bermuda grass only lightly in summer and lightly in fall). Apply dry fertilizers using a spreader; overlap the spreader's wheel marks so swaths just touch as you pass over. Check the packages for recommended application rates. If you cut back on watering because of a drought, hold back on fertilizer as well.

When mowing never takes more than a third of the blade off each time. If you do, the loss of food-producing leaf blade temporarily checks root growth.

To keep the lawn looking good, give it a tune-up once a year in the fall. Patch dead or damaged spots with the same type of grass as the existing lawn. In our area, over-seed winter-dormant grasses such as Bermuda with ryegrass.

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1. GEOGRAPHY: What South American country lies between Colombia and Peru?
2. MEDICAL TERMS: What is the more common name for a contusion?
3. CHEMISTRY: What is the chemical element symbol for tungsten?
4. MATH: What is the Arabic equivalent of the Roman numerals DXC?
5. U.S. STATES: What is the state capital of Michigan?
6. LANGUAGE: What does the Greek suffix "gamy" mean in English?
7. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of domesticated turkeys called?
8. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who was the first president to fly in an airplane (while in office)?
9. TELEVISION: What is the name of the dog on "Family Guy" animated series?
10. AD SLOGANS: "The dogs kids love to bite" are made by which company?

Answers

1. Ecuador.
2. A bruise.
3. W.
4. 590.
5. Lansing.
6. Marriage.
7. A rafter.
8. Franklin D. Roosevelt.
9. Brian.
10. Armour.

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Wilton Firefighters' Association blood drive Aug. 21

The Wilton Firefighter's Association will be hosting a blood drive on Monday, Aug. 21, from 2-7 p.m. at the Wilton Community Center, 9717 Colony Road, Wilton. To make an appointment, visit [www.donors.vitalant.org](http://www.donors.vitalant.org) and enter blood drive code, SMFM190. You can complete your Fast Track Questionnaire on the day of the blood drive at [vitalant.org/health](http://vitalant.org/health). Please bring a photo I.D., eat well and drink plenty of water. Eligibility questions, please call (877) 258-4825. Appointments are highly encouraged.

### RM caregiver support group meeting slated Sept. 6

You are invited to participate in the monthly Caregiver Support Group in Rancho Murieta. The meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month from 2:30-3:30 p.m. The next one is Sept. 6. Suddenly finding oneself caring for a loved one long-term can be overwhelming. Adjusting can be a challenge. Information is available to help in decision-making. Privacy is strictly preserved. If you have any questions, call Nan at (916) 354-2281.

### Second Sloughhouse solar farm hearing Aug. 23

The Cosumnes Community Planning Advisory Council (CCPAC) will meet at 7 p.m. on Aug. 23 at the Wilton Community Center to consider the draft EIR for the Sloughhouse Solar Facility being proposed at Dillard and Meiss roads. The CCPAC is meeting a second time on this issue

because members weren't supplied a hard copy of the draft EIR when they met on July 26.

### RMA issues call for candidates for 2023 election

Rancho Murieta Association (RMA) members interested in serving a three-year term on the RMA Board of Directors must complete a "self-nomination" form and submit it to the association no later than Sept. 8, at 5 p.m. A nominating committee will then review the forms. The RMA included the form in a blast email sent on Aug. 2. Residents also can pick up the form at the RMA Building. Once your candidacy has been confirmed, you will have the opportunity to write a statement regarding your candidacy in your own words. The candidacy statements will be included in the "Notice of Membership Meeting and Election of Directors" material. The election of directors will be held on Nov. 30 at the RMA Building. Please contact the RMA office should you have any questions.

### RMA seeks information on tire burning incident

On Thursday, July 27, the Rancho Murieta Association (RMA) Board of Directors met in an executive session to discuss issues related to an intentionally set tire fire that occurred on Saturday, July 22, west of South Beach. California law, including the Davis-Stirling Act that governs HOAs, state and federal privacy laws, as well as RMA bylaws require that the RMA Board discuss certain subjects in executive session. The closed session subjects that were discussed include: member disciplinary action, legal

issues, discussions specific to RMA personnel, and contract negotiations and termination. The board did not take formal action and the fire incident is still under investigation. We urge anyone who has any information on the incident to contact RMA Director of Compliance Chris Smith, at (916) 354-3500.

### Free food preservation event at Wilton Community Center Aug. 19

Do you ever wonder what to do with the bountiful produce your garden provides this time of year? If so, join us for a free food preservation presentation at the Wilton Community Center on Saturday, Aug. 19, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. The information will be presented by Master Food Preserver Jan Fetler. Many topics related to food preservation will be covered including food borne illness, spoilage and different methods of preserving food. In addition to the presentation, native plants will be available for sale by All Things Wild. The event is sponsored by the Community Services Area 4B committee.

Please join us on Aug. 19 and learn to safely preserve the fruits of your labor. No tickets or registration are needed. Bring a friend!

### September Wilton Bingo canceled

Wilton Bingo hosted by the Wilton History Group on Saturday, Sept. 2 at the Wilton Community Center is canceled since the air conditioner is broken.

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# Reclamation district board talks high dollar figures at meetings

By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times Reporter

High dollar figures, both good and bad, punctuated the discussion when the Reclamation District 800 (RD 800) Board of Trustees met on July 20 and Aug. 7 at the Wilton Community Center.

Topping the good column was the \$500,000 planning grant, which State Sen. Roger Niello, R-Fair Oaks, placed in the state budget for the district. See the separate story in this issue.

Another piece of good news was the expected receipt in the near-future of \$1.5 million in federal reimbursements for fast-track repairs of two levees after the January 2023 storms.

However, in the bad news column was an update that RD 800 currently owes \$8.6 million

to the Bank of Stockton as of the August meeting. Most of that new debt stems from the extensive emergency repairs the district undertook after the January storms broke the levee in three places and caused massive erosion at dozens of other locations. The emergency repairs cost approximately \$7 million.

In other business, the board took in updates from the engineer about levee repairs and seeking funding for the repairs and voted to authorize assessment levies for the 2023-24 tax rolls, and learned that the purchase of two used tractors for \$19,000 had been successful. A new mowing tractor would cost \$135,000.

RD 800 maintains and repairs 34 miles of privately-owned levees along the Cosumnes River to meet a 10-year flood standard between Rancho Murieta, Freeman Road off Dillard Road in Wilton, and Freeman Road off Grant Line Road in Sheldon. The district also encompasses parts of Sloughhouse. The funding comes from an assessment district that brings in only about \$500,000 a year.

## Finances

As of the August meeting, the district was \$8,565,000 in debt to the Bank of Stockton, according to the district's new contract accountant Perla Tzintzun-Garibay. However, RD 800 still has \$660,000 available left on its \$9,225,000 line of credit, she said. Sacramento County secures the district's bank loans.

At their July meeting,

the trustees voted to secure \$2,225,000 in warrants against its line of credit to pay outstanding bills that mostly stemming the January storms. After Tzintzun-Garibay reported in August that the district had \$268,707 in its general fund account at the county, the board directed her to pay \$48,290 in new bills by transferring money from that account rather than increasing the bank tab.

Even before the January storms, the district was already in debt. As of the November meeting, RD 800 owed the Bank of Stockton \$1.5 million for repairs after the 2017 storms and still had seven more sites in need of repairs.

## Repair reimbursement

The district is seeking reimbursements from two federal agencies after the January storms – the National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), which is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Reimbursements from NRCS are relatively prompt, but FEMA reimbursements could take years and may not even happen for approved projects as happened to RD 800 years ago.

Ervin told the board that he has submitted all the required paperwork to NRCS for the 75% reimbursement for two fast-track repairs on Lee School House Road, and at the end of Fig Road. He said he expected \$1.5 million in reimbursement in 30-60 days.

Ervin told the board he was close to finishing



Courtesy Photo

The image shows recent repairs to levee damage at the end of Fig Road in Wilton that have since been completed. Federal reimbursement for the repair was a topic at recent meetings of the Reclamation District 800 Board.



Photo by Gail Bullen

High dollar figures punctuate discussions when the district board meets on Aug. 7 at the Wilton Community Center.

all of the documentation for the emergency repairs completed between New Year's Eve and Feb. 25 to submit to FEMA for 100% reimbursement. He also said he told the bank he hoped the money would come in by the summer of 2024.

The River Valley Times contacted Ervin after the meeting for more specifics. He said he didn't have a hard number for the emergency repairs because he is still working through hundreds of pages of invoices. However, he said his initial submittal to FEMA was for 20 repair sites and 26 access and repair maintenances for an estimated total of \$5.16 million.

Ervin also updated the board about seeking

FEMA approval for permanent repairs to three levees at an estimated cost of \$700,000, saying he had recently walked the sites with FEMA representatives. The properties are located upstream from the Dillard Bridge, with one on the right bank, and two on the left bank. The repairs won't be swift as the district must go through the full permitting process.

FEMA approval would require the district to pay for the permanent repairs up front with the feds providing a 75% reimbursement. Ervin said that the California Office of Emergency Services would pay 75% of the district's 25% share, and he was seeking a waiver so Cal OES would pay for all of it.

## Assessments

Following the January storms, the Bank of Stockton agreed to increase the district's line of credit. But as a condition of approval, the district was required to seek property owner approval of an increase in their property assessments. To make that happen, the trustees began working with SCI Consulting Group in March to prepare the engineering report required by Proposition 218 to seek a new assessment base.

The RD800 trustees dropped the hammer to seek a higher levy at their June 1 meeting. They were hoping to win approval for a new assessment base of

See RECLAMATION on Page 5

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# Metro Fire names Sloughhouse resident as its seventh fire chief

**By Gail Bullen**  
River Valley Times Reporter

Sloughhouse resident Adam A. House, who has served the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Metro Fire) since its inception in 2000, has been named as the district's seventh fire chief.

His selection came after an extension nationwide search, and he was sworn in at the Oct. 10 meeting of the Sac Metro Board of Directors, according to a news release.

Board President D'Elman Clark had high praise for House.

—“As a trusted member of Metro Fire's leadership team for many years, Chief House has the experience and respect of the board members and the district employees to lead this organization in the coming years,” he said. “We have great confidence that under his leadership Metro Fire will remain one



Courtesy photo

**Adam A. House is the newest Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District fire chief.**

of the best fire districts on the West Coast for effectiveness and innovation.”

House began his 36 years public service career with four years as

a firefighter in United States Army. After his discharge in 1991, he joined the fire department in Yuma, Ariz., where he was eventually promoted to captain. In 2000, he joined Metro Fire and ascended the ranks from firefighter to captain, battalion chief, and assistant chief.

House was instrumental in establishing the Sac Metro Special Operations Division, specifically the Type 1 Hazardous Materials program, where he served as the initial program manager. House also played pivotal roles in firefighter recruitment, and at the fire academy where he served as a drill master.

As a chief officer, House served as the division manager within the Training, Health, and Safety Division with direct oversight of the training academy, task level and promotional opportunities and training,

special operations training, and the physical and mental well-being of the membership, the news release said.

House also became a member of the FEMA Urban Search & Rescue Task Force 7, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES) Task Force 9, and the Type 3 Sacramento Regional Incident Management Team (SRIMT), deploying numerous times to devastating incidents throughout California.

A Sacramento area native, House graduated from Cordova High School in 1987. He and his wife, Gia live in Sloughhouse. After meeting in middle school, they recently celebrated 30 years of marriage. They have two grown children, a son Joshua and a daughter Taylor.

Metro Fire serves a population of over 720,000 residents in a 359-square-

mile service area. It is the seventh-largest fire agency in the State of California.

Metro Fire is a combination of 16 smaller fire departments that merged over the years. The last merger was in December 2000 when the American River Fire Department and Sacramento County Fire Protection District merged to form the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District. As a special district, Metro Fire is governed by a board of directors. Each member is elected by the voters within a geographical area of the district.

On any given day, 155 on-duty personnel serve the district's communities. Routine and emergency operations are managed with five battalion chiefs with oversight from an assistant chief. Metro Fire is comprised of three branches - Operations, Administration, and Support Services.

## Reclamation

**Continued from Page 4**

\$1.5 million, a three-fold increase in the rates. It would have replaced the current base of \$500,000 that was approved by district property owners in 2018.

However, before the ballots could hit the mailboxes, the mailing was placed on hold based on the recommendation of engineer Ervin and attorney Rebecca Smith, according to Trustee Mark Hite.

They reported finding “some major inequities in the formula” used by the consultant to set the rates for different properties. These couldn't be resolved in time for the scheduled mailing of the ballots on

June 16, so RD 800 missed the deadline to get a new assessment on the tax rolls the 2023/24 fiscal year.

As a result, the trustees voted at their July meeting to authorize the continuation of the current assessment with a 3% escalator.

### Mowing tractors

Earlier this year, the district learned that Sacramento County would surplus two John Deere tractors, one with a rotary motor and the other a slope mower, and the board authorized funding for the purchase if two trustees could work out a deal.

Trustee Dave Utterback reported a successful purchase at the July meeting. The River Valley Times

asked for more details afterward.

Since RD 800 is a governmental entity, the district was able to buy them for about \$9,500 each without going through the bidding process.

The tractors have an arm on the side so they can stay on the levee road but mow about 10 feet down the side of the levee. “That's why we wanted them,” Utterback said.

He reported the approximately seven-year-old tractors were “in pretty good shape” with “a middle range of hours,” and the county had all the maintenance records.

Utterback said the district had been contemplating the purchase of a new

tractor and mower for about \$135,000 to maintain the levees. But the steep price would have required paying for it over five years.

“They weren't brand new, but they weren't totally worn out. We found a happy medium that works for us,” Utterback said.

On a side note, he said that using goats to maintain the levees wasn't an option because the cost had increased so much.

In other business, the board:

- Brought on a new contract accountant from Butterfield & Co. CPAs in Stockton.

- Agreed to change the meeting date to the third Thursday of the month at

9 a.m. at the Wilton Community Center. However, the August meeting had to be held on Aug. 7 because

Ervin and the new accountant were both going to be on vacation on the third Thursday of the month.

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# RM resident helps provide oversight of sheriff's office operations

By Gail Bullen

River Valley Times Reporter

Longtime Rancho Murietta resident Mike Martel was initially reluctant when Sacramento County Supervisor Sue Frost asked about appointing him to the Sacramento County Review Commission.

This organization was formed in 2021 to improve public transparency and accountability with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office (SSO), and to provide greater community interaction with the Office of the Inspector General.

Martel said Frost probably reached out to him because of his background in corrections that culminated in stints as a prison warden. He believes that the county was trying to copy oversight commissions in big cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco.

The local question was: "How does the sheriff's office operate when it deals with the public, and how does it deal with the inmates in jail?"

As for his reluctance, "You don't know what kind of influence you are going to have or if you are just spinning your wheels," he said.

But that was answered in the past year.

"Everybody is taking it seriously to see where this thing goes," he said. "I think it has a lot to do with how we treat issues and how we communicate with the sheriff's office and the county



Courtesy photo

**The Sacramento County Community Review Committee is working with the Sacramento County inspector general to oversee the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office, and to make recommendations about its operations.**

supervisors."

Martel said it took about eight months for the commission members to figure out their rules for engagement.

"And we were very cautious," he said. "We are not an investigative body, but we do have subpoena powers."

The information-gathering process included tours of the two jails and the dispatch center and visits with officials.

"We also took some of the best practices from cities around the nation," Martel said.

Last August, the commission participated as the board of supervisors elected a new inspector general. Francine Tournour has worked closely with the commission since then and attends their monthly meetings.

Asked where local residents should direct an issue with the sheriff's office — the commission or the inspector general, Martel said

either would work. Residents also can contact him at michael.f.martel@gmail.com if they want a local contact.

"I don't know if it is going to get corrected, but I can definitely make sure it is heard," he said.

As part of his service with the commission, Martel served on an ad hoc committee that looked at responses to sheriff's calls for services involving a behavior health component. He is currently chairing another ad hoc committee that is looking at mental health in the jail.

Martel said he always was a supporter of mental health during his corrections career and remains passionate about it today along with a concern about Alzheimer's and dementia. He said that is why he has been advocating for the construction of an assisted living facility inside Rancho Murietta.

Although Martel didn't go downtown to join him, Commission Vice-Chairman Paul Curtis presented the group's 2022-23 Annual Review Report to the county supervisors at their Aug. 8 board meeting. It focused on the sheriff's office policies and procedures in two areas: responses to calls for services involving a behavior health component and jail releases. Their analysis resulted in 13 recommendations.

A major recommendation

was increasing the coverage of the sheriff's office Mobile Crisis Support Team from weekdays to 24/7. Comprised of a sheriff's deputy and a county health clinician, the teams respond to emergency calls involving individuals having a mental health crisis. Although the county has provided funding for 11 teams, only six are operating on weekdays because of the lack of clinicians.

Curtis told the supervisors that very few of the crisis response calls result in incarceration or hospitalization.

"We are keeping them out of jail, keeping them out the hospital, but getting them the health they absolutely need," he said.

Another recommendation was that patrol deputies and dispatchers receive the same level of mental health training as the jail personnel (because of a consent decree). Curtis said the commission further recommended simulation exercises on how to recognize and respond to a person experiencing a psychotic episode and training on how and when to implement 5150 mental health holds.

The commission also is recommending better data about calls with emotionally challenged individuals.

"Recommendation Six reflects the commission chal-



**Commission member Mike Martel encourages other River Valley residents to contact him if they have issues with sheriff's office interactions with the public or treatment of inmates at the jail.**

lenge in obtaining data from the sheriff's office due to the way it is tracked and collected," Curtis told the board. "This data is just going to be critical in telling us where the mental health calls have been and where they are heading to help the sheriff's office develop resources going forward."

The commission also looked at policies governing the release of inmates from jail.

Curtis told the board that the sheriff's office has already addressed the commission's recommendation against the release of inmates late at night and only does so when a night court judge orders it. Curtis said the sheriff's office also has addressed their concern about medications because inmates are now leaving jail with a 30-day supply.

The commission also is recommending the sheriff's office set up a clothes closet so inmates can leave with safe and appropriate clothing.

The group also is asking for more transportation options after an inmate is released so he can safely make his way home.

"We also have heard a lot about the impact on the downtown core due to jail releases" from the Sacramento Downtown Partnership and



**Commission Vice Chair Paul Curtis delivers the group's report to the Sacramento Board of Supervisors on Aug. 8.**

others," Curtis said.

He said the transportation could come as bus passes, taxis, ride shares, or through partnerships with community organizations.

Phil Serna was one of three supervisors who thanked Curtis for his presentation and the commission's work.

"I have gotten the sense that that the commission was coming at the issues from a standpoint of not trying to be antagonistic towards the sheriff's office, but still being willing to challenge the status quo," he said.

Chairman Rich Desmon asked Deputy County Executive Eric Jones, who is an ex officio member of the commission, what would happen with the commission's report.

"These recommendations will go through the inspector general to the sheriff's office, and then the sheriff will respond on how they will accept these recommendations," Jones said.

The report can be found on the commission website by searching for Sacramento County CRC. The email is CRC@SacCounty.gov. The website for the Office of the Inspector General is <https://inspectorgeneral.saccounty.net>, and her email is [OIG@saccounty.gov](mailto:OIG@saccounty.gov).

The commission typically meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 700 H St. The meetings are streamed online.



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# Niello

## Continued from Page 1

he said. "People who live along the Cosumnes River have concerns that are just as legitimate as those anywhere else in the Central Valley."

Niello, who was elected to the state senate in November, described RD 800 as "a very challenged district that has privately owned levees that no other governmental entity can or will take responsibility for."

Adding to the problem is the millions of dollars the district has borrowed to repair the storm damage while having an assessment that only brings in \$500,000 a year.

"None of that (the borrowed money) has really gone into fixing the infrastructure. It is just mitigating the damage," Niello said.

As the legislature was

plowing through the budget this year, Scott Shapiro, an attorney with the Downey Brand law firm whom Niello has known for years, sent him a request for RD 800.

"He said what we really need is money to perform a long-term, strategic plan so we can figure out with sufficient precision exactly what needs to be done," he said.

Shapiro also told him a strategic plan could help RD 800 justify assessment increases and better position the district to land grants from governmental entities such as the Corps of Engineers.

"He said if we had \$500,000 in totally discretionary money, we could get this done," Niello said. "So I made a request, and it was granted."

Niello was asked why he had scored when two attempts by Assemblyman Ken Cooley had been unsuccessful. One year, a legislative committee stripped money for the district out

of the budget before it was finalized. In another year, the money for the district was put into the budget for the Department of Water Resources, which wrote rules that diverted it to Delta levees.

Niello said he would like to say he secured the funding for RD 800 because of his charm, good luck, and persuasive powers. But the difference in his request was the circumstance of the climate.

The state was in a drought when Cooley tried to get money for the district. It took the January storms to remind people about the flood risk.

"The fact of the matter is that Northern California has a climate of drought that is occasionally interrupted by absolute inundations of rain," he said.

Niello said he has a good friend who lives in Wilton near the Cosumnes River. He emailed him during the 2017 and 2023 storms to check on the water levels.

Both times, his friend's house had become an island surrounded by water. He also knows other people in the Wilton area.

"So, I have been very familiar with their plight down there because of the unique shape of the Cosumnes, and I have always been really involved with water issues over the years," he said. "I was part of the Water Forum in the 1990s, and I have been very involved with flood control issues, so I am all wet."

In fact, Niello and Sen. Susan Eggman have sponsored a bill to enact the Climate Resiliency and Protection Act, which if approved by the votes would authorize the issuance of \$6 billion in bonds to pay for flood protection and climate resiliency projects. Niello said the main thrust of the bond measure is to help the Central Valley, but it has a provision that would help RD 800 and other rural districts.

The district's contract

attorney is Rebecca Smith, who works with Shapiro at the Downey Brand law firm. Both are partners, and he has extensive expertise in water issues.

In April, Smith told the RD 800 Board that her law firm had been reaching out to find funding streams for the district and other clients. She said that she and Patrick Ervin, the district's contract engineer had met with Niello and his district representative Rob Olmstead earlier in the week. She said both were very supportive and were looking at including the district in a proposed statewide water bond that Niello is working on with another state senator.

Smith also told the trustees that the district must find some planning dollars in addition to money for emergency fixes.

"We can keep throwing rocks at them (the levees), but how do we plan to most expeditiously do that?" she said.



## DO YOU KNOW THESE GUYS?

### Major Automobile Insurance Companies Leaving California

Several well-known auto insurers are leaving the California marketplace saying drivers are just too expensive to insure. The reality is Californians are driving about the same number of miles as before the pandemic, but apparently the quality of their driving has deteriorated. Auto accidents have increased and many insurance companies report they are paying more in claims than they are collecting in premiums.

The California insurance commissioner refutes those claims. From 2020 to 2021, auto insurance losses increased almost 25% while premiums increased by only 4.5%, according to the American Property Casualty Insurance Association. The rate and severity of auto accidents are up as well as the costs to cover them. "The cost to rent a car is up 33% and the cost for a new vehicle is up 11%," said Denni Ritter, American Property Casualty Insurance Association.

Some California insurers haven't seen requested rate increases approved by the insurance commissioner in over 3 years. "What we've seen is that you have insurers who are paying out more in claims than they're taking in with premiums. That's not a sustainable business model," said Ritter. California is a very consumer friendly state and insurers must have any rate hike approved. State Farm, AllState and Farmer's are asking the California Department of Insurance for a nearly 7% premium increase. Progressive is asking for more than 19%. A local agent says insurers are now making it harder for him to get drivers new auto policies.

"They might ask you to pay in full instead of having a payment plan. Right now, all of the carriers that I can even think of have restrictions. They literally say, don't write please," said Karl Susman from Susman Insurance. Geico has closed all of its California offices and Progressive stopped advertising in the state. "State farm, you can no longer get quotes by calling them. You have to go to an agent's office," said Susman.

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## SECURITY LOGS

### Rancho Murieta

The following is a summary of activity for the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Security Department for the following dates. Note: these log entries are condensed. For full security log details, go to the CSD website at [www.rmcsd.com](http://www.rmcsd.com). A quick link to the security logs is on the home page.

#### Aug. 2

- Stop sign enforcement, 11:27 a.m., Murieta Parkway at Alameda and Lago Drive: two citations were issued to one driver.

- Disturbance, 11:47 a.m., Murieta Inn parking lot: man and woman arguing. Patrol contacted a woman who said she was all right. She had her boyfriend had a loud argument when they were checking out of the hotel. SSD was contacted, due to the continuous domestic dispute in the parking lot. Subjects left the area before SSD arrived.

- Resident complaint, 5:49 p.m., South Beach: patrol advised them to leave, which they did.

- Noise complaint, 10:09 p.m. Guadalupe Drive: Patrol contacted some juveniles and asked them to quiet down. They complained.

- RMA rule violation, 10:40 p.m.,

South Beach: report of juveniles after hours. Patrol contacted juveniles and asked them to leave, which they did.

#### Aug. 3

- Stop sign enforcement, 6:51 a.m., Murieta South Parkway and Reynosa: five drivers cited.

- Stop sign enforcement, South Murieta Parkway and Celebrar: three drivers cited.

#### Aug. 4

- Stop sign enforcement, 7:27 a.m., Murieta South Parkway at Reynosa Drive.

- Disturbance, 6:04 p.m., Lake Jean: report of a woman yelling for help. The male RP found her, but she ran away. Firefighters and patrols were unable to locate her because of the terrain. SSD also was notified.

- Suspicious noise, 7:46 p.m., Via Del Cerrito: Patrol checked the residence and didn't find any suspicious activity.

#### Aug. 5

- Two extra patrols.

- Suspicious activity, Highway 16 Bridge: report of juveniles throwing rocks at passing vehicles. Patrol didn't find any activity.

- Boat citation, 10:43 a.m., Lake Clementia: citation for unregistered watercraft.

- Accident, 1:14 p.m., Camino Del Lago, and Clementia Drive: report of golf cart colliding with a road sign. The driver refused medical attention, and a CSD employee took the driver home. Father took possession of golf cart and drove it home.

- Stop sign enforcement, 6:46 p.m., South Murieta Parkway and Celbrar: one driver was cited.

- Miscellaneous, 9:06 p.m. near Chevron Station: report of road rage, vehicles were gone when patrol arrived.

- Juvenile delinquency, 10:08 p.m., park not specified: juveniles in park after hours. Patrol asked them to leave, which they did.

#### Aug. 7

- Five extra patrols.
- Stop sign enforcement, 2:46 p.m., Murieta Parkway and Lago Drive: citation issued.

- Disturbance, 7:13 p.m. Plano Court: Patrol was UTL. However, RP came to the scene and said he had argued with three other males. SSD was called, but cancelled because the two parties reconciled

and asked patrol to call off SSD.

- Fallen tree, 7:45 p.m., Lago Circle: an oak tree with rotten roots fell on a car. No injuries.

#### Aug. 8

- Parking enforcement, 7:18 a.m. Murieta South: five drivers cited.

- Stop sign enforcement, 8:27 p.m. Murieta South Parkway, and Abierto and Reynosa drives: two drivers were cited.

- Indecent exposure, 4:51 p.m., Bel Air shopping center: report of a male inside his vehicle exposing himself and possibly masturbating. Patrol contacted the Bel Air manager who told them the suspect left prior to his arrival.

- Resident complaint, 6:37 p.m., Yellow Bridge: report of minors jumping off the bridge. GOA.

- RMA rule violation, 8 p.m., Via Sereno: report of contractor working after hours. The contractor couldn't leave because he had forgotten his car keys. The vehicle was picked up at 9 p.m.

- Suspicious activity, 9:24 p.m., Anillo Way: report of unknown activity in the bushes at RP's home. Patrol didn't find anything.

- Stop sign enforcement, 11:32

p.m., Murieta South Parkway at Reynosa: two drivers cited.

- After hours, 11:40 p.m., Clementia Park: resident with a guest fishing at the park. Suspect cited.

#### Aug. 8

- Trespassing, 12:40 p.m., store not specified: manager reported that a male and female transient left store before patrol arrived.

#### Wilton Fire

##### Aug. 1-8

- Fourteen medical aids.

#### Aug. 1.

- Grass fire, 3:24 p.m., 10878 Woods Road.

#### Aug. 7

- Fire alarm, 9:26 a.m., 8580 Berry Road.

#### Aug. 8

- Burn pile investigation, 9:18 a.m., 9655 Dillard Road.

- Fire investigation, 9:42 a.m., 10919 Alta Mesa Road.

#### Sacramento County Sheriff's Office

- No incidents reported.



• On Aug. 28, 1789, William Herschel, court astronomer under England's King George III, discovered Enceladus, one of Saturn's innermost moons, while using his new 40-foot telescope for the first time. Enceladus reflects almost 100% of the sunlight that strikes it and has at least five different types of terrain.

• On Aug. 29, 1998, a strike by 6,200 Northwest Airlines pilots seeking a 15% pay raise left 70,000 frustrated passengers high and dry around the U.S. The pilots had been in contract negotiations for more than two years, and an agreement was finally reached on Sept. 10 after the strike had cost the airline \$26 million per day.

• On Aug. 30, 1951, Sgt. John R. Rice, a decorated World War II veteran and part-Native American soldier killed in the Korean War, was refused burial in Sioux City, Iowa's Memorial Park Cemetery on the grounds of his ethnicity. After hearing the news at a press conference, President Harry Truman authorized a telegram to Rice's widow, Evelyn, offering her a plot in Arlington National Cemetery, which she accepted.

• On Aug. 31, 1888, 43-year-old Mary Ann "Polly" Nichols, a prostitute from London's East End and married but separated mother of five, was found brutally murdered near Whitechapel Road, becoming the first known victim of serial killer Jack the Ripper.

• On Sept. 1, 2013, new internet restrictions imposed by the Vietnamese government prohibited the country's users from discussing current affairs, with social media and other sites, including blogs, limited to sharing personal information but not news stories. The law was criticized by both internet companies and a number of human rights groups.

• On Sept. 2, 1969, the original "Star Trek" TV series aired its final episode after running for just three years. While it never rose higher than No. 52 in the ratings, it remains a beloved cult classic, eventually generating movies and other series.

• On Sept. 3, 1908, J.M. Barrie's play "What Every Woman Knows" debuted at London's Duke of York's Theatre. Written prior to the women's suffrage movement, the show's theme suggested that "every woman knows" she's really the invisible power behind the success of the men in her life.

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### Women's Niners announces Charm and Putt winners

The Rancho Murieta Country Club Women's Niners Golf Group announced the Most Improved Player (MIP) for August at their recent Charm and Putt competition and General Meeting. The MIP was Mary Beth Alameida, her handicap improved 1.9 points for a 4.049 improvement factor.

At the General Meeting, Charm and Putt winners were also announced. This monthly, friendly but fierce, competition awards the golfer with the lowest number of putts, the lowest net score (with handicap) and lowest gross score (without handicap). This month's Charm and Putt player with the lowest number of putts was Pamela O'Hern tapping the ball into the hole 15 times. The golfer with the lowest net score was Pamela O'Hern who netted a 34. The player scalding the score card with the lowest gross score was Therese Yannuzzi, carding a 42.

The Rancho Murieta Niner's Golf Group is open to all female players who are golfing members of Rancho Murieta Country Club and who enjoy playing socially competitive nine holes of golf. Niner's play organized golf each Thursday throughout the year, many times with fun competition tournaments (for example, only using three clubs, playing from various tee boxes, and scrambles). The annual fee is \$50; applications can be obtained in the club office or pro shop.

*Nancy Clevenger*

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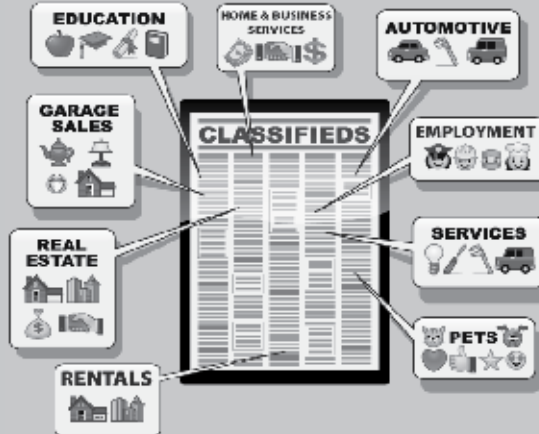
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<p><b>MY STUFF STORAGE &amp; RV</b> <b>PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENTS!</b> Keep your RVs, Boats and Recreational Vehicles Safe and Secure in a Covered Storage <i>With flexible short-term and long-term options! Plus, our onsite RV dump station and online rent updates make maintenance and payments easy.</i> <b>24/7 gate access</b> <b>Questions? Call 209-912-3195</b> <a href="http://msstorage.net">msstorage.net</a> 415 Pringle Ave Galt, CA 95632</p>		<p><b>020 Help Wanted</b></p> <p><b>Part time yard person/driver</b> needed for local lumber yard and steel company. Retired welcome. Apply at 648 Fairway Drive Galt, CA 95632 (209) 745-2933</p> <p><b>Wamfeo Inc. in Elk Grove, CA is seek'g Senior Software Developers to coordinate</b> the design, dvlpmnt &amp; implmntn of sw apps &amp; delivery of sw solutions. No trvl; no telecomm. Salary: \$152,818/yr. Send resumes to: <a href="mailto:recruits@wamfeo.com">recruits@wamfeo.com</a>.</p>	<p><b>142 Wanted To Rent</b></p> <p>Senior Stroke Survivor looking for a country place around Galt for rent or lease. Need to have a house for my caregiver son and daughter-in-law and a granny unit or casita for me. Was a 40 + years home owner and will treat your property as if you were still living there, if medical reasons are forcing you to move, as they did for me! Am able to pay up to \$2500. Month for the right place. 916-937-5700</p>	<p><b>201 Real Estate Loans</b></p> <p><b>RETIRED COUPLE</b> \$\$\$\$ for business purpose Real Estate loans. Credit unimportant. V.I.P. Trust Deed Company <a href="http://www.viploan.com">www.viploan.com</a> Call 1-818-248-0000. Broker-principal DRE 01041073. No consumer loans. (Cal-SCAN)</p>	<p><b>377 FARM &amp; RANCH</b></p>	<p><b>387 FARM &amp; RANCH</b></p>	
		<p><b>024 Work Wanted</b></p> <p><b>My wife laughed when I wanted to be a CEO, But when I took the company public?</b> Can't Get That Right Job? Is Age A Problem? Have You Been Downsized? Want To Change Industries? Do You Find Sending Resumes To Job Boards Unproductive? Are You Reaching The Unpublished Market? Would You Be Open To</p>	<p><b>147 REAL ESTATE FOR SALE</b></p> <p><b>147 REAL ESTATE FOR SALE</b></p> <p><b>CLASSIFIED! YOUR AT HOME MARKETPLACE!</b></p>	<p><b>203 MERCHANDISE</b></p> <p><b>203 MERCHANDISE</b></p> <p><b>DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME WITH MEGASITES!</b> Place your ad in your hometown newspaper! 209-745-1551 or 916-685-5533 <b>GOT JUNK?</b> Sell it in the Classifieds!</p>	<p><b>400 RECREATIONAL</b></p> <p><b>400 RECREATIONAL</b></p> <p><b>419 AUTOMOTIVE</b></p> <p><b>419 AUTOMOTIVE</b></p> <p><b>NEED MONEY? IT'S ALL AROUND YOU...</b> Sell that junk today. Classified, your at home marketplace!</p>	<p><b>400 RECREATIONAL</b></p> <p><b>400 RECREATIONAL</b></p> <p><b>419 AUTOMOTIVE</b></p> <p><b>419 AUTOMOTIVE</b></p> <p><b>434 Auto Parts</b></p> <p><b>GOT AN UNWANTED CAR???</b> Your car donation to Patriotic Hearts helps veterans find work or start their own business. Fast free pick. Running or not! Call 24/7: 1-877-529-0495. (Cal-SCAN)</p> <p><b>Tiene un vehiculo no deseado?</b> Donelo a Patriotic Hearts! Recogida rápida y gratuita en los 50 estados. Patriotic Hearts ofrece programas para ayudar a los veteranos a encontrar trabajo o iniciar su propio negocio. Llama ahora: 1-844-244-5441 (24/7) (Cal-SCAN)</p> <p><b>YOUR AT HOME MARKETPLACE CLASSIFIED!</b> Call!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! 209-745-1551 916-685-5533</p>	

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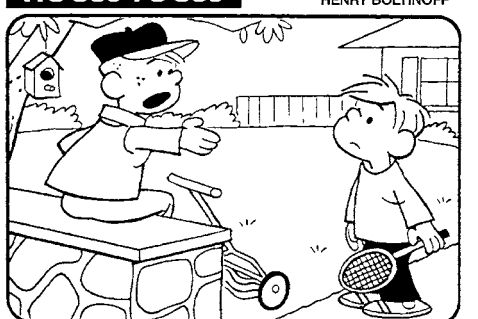
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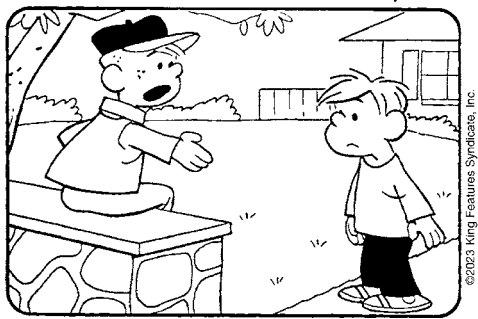
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