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ANNUAL
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ISSUE

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THE VENUE

AT THUNDER VALLEY



PATTI LABELLE & GLADYS KNIGHT

JANUARY 17 • 7:30PM

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TERESA CAPUTO LIVE! THE EXPERIENCE JANUARY 10 • 8PM	VALENTINE'S JAM '26 FEATURING JOE, MYA, STOKLEY & MONTELL JORDAN FEBRUARY 7 • 7PM	KOLOHE KAI WITH HIRIE & WAVVY FEBRUARY 28 • 7PM	3RD THURSDAY \$30 TRIBUTE SERIES LEGENDS OF NEW COUNTRY WALLEN & WILSON TRIBUTE TO MORGAN WALLEN & LAINIE WILSON APRIL 16 • 7:30PM
3RD THURSDAY \$30 TRIBUTE SERIES VICTOR TREVINO JR. THE ULTIMATE ELVIS EXPERIENCE JANUARY 15 • 7:30PM	ALANIS MORISSETTE FEBRUARY 13 • 8PM	THUNDER SHOWDOWN 4 BOXING LIVE MARCH 7 • 7PM	MAOLI WITH THE GREEN & ANUHEA APRIL 17 • 8PM
CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER JANUARY 16 • 8PM	SMOKEY ROBINSON WITH TOWER OF POWER FEBRUARY 14 • 7PM	BOY GEORGE & CULTURE CLUB WITH MARTHA WASH MARCH 13 • 7:30PM	RUSSELL PETERS RELAX* WORLD TOUR APRIL 18 • 8PM
DIRTY HEADS WITH SPECIAL GUEST ROME JANUARY 23 • 7:30PM	3RD THURSDAY \$30 TRIBUTE SERIES CCSEGER VS. JOURNEY REVISITED BATTLE OF THE BANDS FEBRUARY 19 • 7:30PM	BAD FRIENDS WITH ANDREW SANTINO & BOBBY LEE MARCH 14 • 8PM	RINGO STARR & HIS ALL STARR BAND JUNE 5 • 8PM
DANIEL TOSH JANUARY 24 • 8PM	LOS TUCANES DE TIJUANA WITH TAPY QUINTERO FEBRUARY 20 • 7:30PM	3RD THURSDAY \$30 TRIBUTE SERIES WHEN DOVES CRY THE PRINCE TRIBUTE SHOW MARCH 19 • 7:30PM	NATE BARGATZE BIG DUMB EYES WORLD TOUR JULY 18 • 4PM & 9PM
BRAD PAISLEY TRUCK STILL WORKS WORLD TOUR JANUARY 30 • 7:30PM	HACKEN LEE WITH KEN & SAMMY BEST WISHES 2026 FEBRUARY 21 • 7:30PM	2026 AMERICAN TOUR AARON LEWIS AND THE STATELINERS MARCH 21 • 8PM	
GARY CLARK JR. AND MARCUS KING BAND JANUARY 31 • 7PM			

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R.I.P. Alvin Prasad

Months after suffering severe injuries in an alleged Halloween-night hate crime attack outside Badlands Nightclub in Sacramento's Lavender Heights neighborhood, Alvin Prasad has died, prompting police to upgrade charges against the man arrested in connection with the assault to homicide. Authorities have said the attack, which remains under investigation as a possible hate crime, occurred after Prasad, his daughter, and a friend left the club and were approached by a man who insulted Prasad and then struck him, causing his head to hit the concrete. Lavender Heights, a central gathering place for Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community, has since seen renewed concern about safety, with community members and business owners calling for increased vigilance; heartfelt condolences are extended to Prasad's family, friends, and loved ones as the case moves forward.



Corporation for Public Broadcasting Votes to Dissolve After Cuts

After nearly six decades supporting public media in the United States, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) has officially voted to dissolve. The decision follows the elimination of its federal funding, ending an era that began with the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967.

CPB was created to distribute federal funds to public television and radio stations across

the country, helping support educational programming, local journalism, and cultural content. Over the years, its grants played a crucial role in sustaining smaller and rural stations that lacked strong local donor bases. Without federal appropriations, CPB's board determined that the organization could no longer fulfill its mission and chose to formally wind down operations.

The funding cuts were part of a broader political effort, supported by the president and congressional Republicans, who argued that public broadcasting no longer deserved

taxpayer support. The move has sparked widespread concern from media advocates, educators, and community leaders who view public broadcasting as a vital public service.

It's important to note that PBS and NPR themselves are not shutting down. They are independent organizations and will continue to operate, relying more heavily on viewer donations, member support, underwriting, and foundation grants. Still, the loss of CPB is expected to have lasting effects, particularly for local stations that depended on its funding to stay on the air.



The List

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Elk Grove Restaurant Week
Snail's Pace Therapy
South Slope Wines & Bistro
SMUD Art Gallery
Senator Scott Wiener
HomeGrown, Inc.
Outword Rainbow Fund

Healing Touch Chiropractic
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SPD's Safe Place Program

A Safe Place to Turn, A Stronger Community Together

Safe Place Program Q & A's

What is SPD's Safe Place Program?

The Safe Place program, established in 2015, was designed to support victims of hate crimes and student bullying. The Sacramento Police Department is now extending the opportunity for local businesses to partner with law enforcement in creating safe spaces where victims feel empowered to report crimes.

Who can participate in the Safe Place Program?

All local businesses and social organizations can participate in the Sacramento Police Department Program, as long as they follow (2) requirements below. The Safe Place Program is ZERO cost for the participant to join. This program is not intended for individual or residential use.

What are my responsibilities when becoming a participant?

The requirements to become a volunteer are straightforward, quick, and free. As a participant, you are responsible for training and educating your employees and staff to do the following:

- If a victim of ANY Hate/Bias crime enters your premises, call 911 immediately.
- Allow the victim to remain on your premises until the police arrive.

How do I become a Safe Place Program participant?

Use this QR code to register.



Where do I display the Safe Place Program decal?

The decal should be placed at the main public entrance. 3-5 feet from the ground, and easily visible to anyone walking past your business.

Sacramento Expands Suicide Prevention Efforts

by Lauren Pulido (He/Him), Area Director for the Greater Sacramento Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

Greater Sacramento continues to strengthen its commitment to suicide prevention and mental health awareness through expanded programs from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), including LGBTQ+ education initiatives, peer-based healing support, and the annual Out of the Darkness Community Walk at the State Capitol.

One of AFSP's cornerstone education programs is Talk Saves Lives (TSL), a nationally recognized, evidence-based presentation designed to educate communities about suicide prevention. The program provides participants with an overview of suicide risk factors, warning signs, and practical steps for supporting someone who may be struggling. A specialized version, Talk Saves Lives: Suicide Prevention in the LGBTQ+ Community, addresses the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including stigma, discrimination, and barriers to mental health care. Our programs are 100% free. Reach out to lpulido@afsp.org for more information and to schedule yours today!

According to AFSP National, LGBTQ+ individuals experience higher rates of mental health stressors, making culturally responsive education especially important. The TSL

LGBTQ+ presentation emphasizes inclusive language, understanding identity-related stress, and creating supportive environments where individuals feel seen and valued. The program is offered in schools, workplaces, and community settings throughout the region, both in person and online.

In addition to education, AFSP provides direct support to those impacted by suicide loss through its Healing Conversations program. Healing Conversations connects people who have lost a loved one to suicide with trained volunteer loss survivors for one-time, confidential conversations. These conversations are designed to reduce isolation and provide comfort through shared understanding. Volunteers listen, offer empathy, and help connect participants with local resources, reinforcing that no one has to navigate grief alone.

Community engagement is further



Sacramento Out of the Darkness Walk Committee members and Board members at the 2025 Sacramento Out of the Darkness Walk. Photo by Emma Montalbano

highlighted through the Out of the Darkness Community Walk, held annually in Sacramento County at the California State Capitol. The walk brings together survivors of suicide loss, people with lived experience, families, friends, advocates, and allies. Participants gather to honor loved ones, raise awareness about suicide prevention, and fund critical AFSP programs. The event also serves as a poignant reminder that mental health is a public health priority, deserving of compassion and action.

AFSP encourages community members to get involved in multiple ways. Volunteers can help organize walks, assist with outreach, become trained TSL presenters, or participate in Healing Conversations. Advocacy opportunities are also available, enabling individuals to support policies that enhance access to mental health care and crisis services, while reducing stigma and discrimination.

Social media plays a growing role in these efforts. AFSP and local volunteers use platforms like Instagram, Facebook and TikTok to share educational content, promote upcoming events, highlight personal stories of hope and resilience, and connect individuals with crisis and support resources. By amplifying messages online, organizers aim to reach younger audiences and normalize conversations about mental health.

Together, programs like TSL LGBTQ+, Healing Conversations, and the Sacramento Out of the Darkness Walk reflect a comprehensive, community-driven approach to suicide prevention—one rooted in education, compassion, remembrance and hope. Follow [@AFSPSacramento](#) (Facebook and Instagram) and visit our website afsp.org/GreaterSacramento to join us in these efforts or join us at one of our events.

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You've done the hard stuff. Chosen your people. Built your life. Stood your ground to be seen, heard, and respected. Corrected the pronouns again and again. Even when it's exhausting. Even when it's awkward. Still, you show up. Day after day. In a world that still questions who you are and where you belong. After all that, getting high quality health insurance shouldn't be one more fight.

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Monique Limón Makes History in California Politics

California marked a significant milestone this year as Monique Limón became the first Latina ever to serve as President pro Tempore of the California State Senate—and only the second woman to hold the powerful leadership role in the chamber's long history. The moment is historic not only for what it represents symbolically, but for the doors it opens going forward.

The role of Senate President pro Tem is one of the most influential positions in state government. The pro Tem sets legislative priorities, appoints committee leadership, and plays a central role in shaping policy negotiations with the governor and Assembly. Limón's appointment places a Latina voice at the center of decision-making in the nation's most populous state, a state where Latinas and Latinos make up nearly 40 percent of the population.

Limón's rise to leadership has been shaped by a career rooted in public service and community advocacy. Before joining the Senate, she served in the California State Assembly and held local leadership roles in Santa Barbara County. Throughout her career, she has focused on issues that directly affect everyday Californians, including affordable housing, environmental protection, healthcare access, and education. Her work has often reflected the needs of working families, immigrants, and

historically underrepresented communities.

Her historic appointment also carries added weight in a political moment when representation is being closely examined nationwide. Limón's leadership underscores the progress made by women and people of color in California politics, while also highlighting how rare such milestones still are. That she is only the second woman to serve as Senate pro Tem speaks volumes about the barriers that have existed—and, in many ways, continue to exist.

For many Californians, especially young Latinas watching from the sidelines, Limón's ascent sends a clear message: leadership at the highest levels is possible, and representation matters. As she steps into this role, her tenure will be closely watched—not just for the policies she advances, but for the lasting impact her leadership may have on who sees themselves reflected in the halls of power next.



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For more than 25 years, Rx HealthCare Services has delivered compassionate, comprehensive case management to over 3,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS across Northern California. What began as a nurse-led mission in Sacramento has grown into one of the region's most trusted providers of community-based HIV/AIDS services, grounded in dignity, advocacy, and long-standing community partnerships.



A pivotal moment in the organization's growth came when COO Joe Sharpe led a regional needs analysis that uncovered serious gaps in access to Medi-Cal Waiver Program services.

"We discovered that many individuals living with HIV and AIDS who would qualify for the Medi-Cal Waiver Program had little to no access to its services," Sharpe shares.

"That realization fueled our commitment to extend our reach to a population that has long gone without adequate support."

That commitment led to state approval in 2024 to expand services into five additional counties. Today, the program supports more than 400 active case management clients—the highest volume in its history. This growth is

guided by strong leadership and the hire in 2022 of Program Director Lenore Gotelli, who led the resurgence through tireless networking and collaboration efforts with community stakeholders taking the program to new heights. Known for her team-based approach, Gotelli emphasizes, "My staff is the foundation of everything we achieve... Success is never a solo act."

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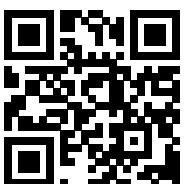


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Funding provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Ending the HIV Epidemic Grant and the Sacramento County Public Health Promotion Unit, Division of HIV and STD Programs

Mpox: What's Happening Now in California, and Across the U.S.

resources: CDC, CDPH and Puccirx.com

Mpox – the infection formerly known as monkeypox – remains on the radar of public health officials both statewide and nationally, even as case counts stay relatively low. Defined by the California Department of Public Health as an illness caused by a virus related to smallpox, mpox generally starts with flu-like symptoms followed by a rash that can persist for weeks, and while most people recover with supportive care, early detection and prevention are critical.

The virus spreads most commonly through close, intimate contact with someone who has a rash or sores. That includes sexual activity, direct skin-to-skin touch, and shared bedding or towels, but does not include passing someone briefly in public spaces. Across the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that most recent mpox cases involve clade II, the strain linked to the 2022 outbreak, with most infections occurring in people who are unvaccinated or have not

and PrEP/PEP to routine immunizations – Pucci's has offered JYNNEOS mpox vaccines and helped bridge access for LGBTQ+ residents and others at risk. (turn0search0) Their staff can administer the two-dose series at their East Sacramento location, and their history of community outreach – including previous pop-up vaccination events and collaborations with the Sacramento LGBT Community Center – highlights how trusted, local providers can reduce stigma and support prevention.

If symptoms develop – such as fever, swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, or a new rash – reaching out to a healthcare provider early can reduce discomfort and the chance of transmission.

completed a two-dose vaccine series.

Vaccination remains a central tool in prevention. The two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine has been shown to significantly reduce risk of infection and severe illness, and health officials recommend it for people who may be at higher risk – including gay and bisexual men, transgender people, individuals living with HIV, and people with multiple recent partners. The CDC continues to monitor both clade II and rare clade I cases in the U.S., but emphasizes that widespread transmission remains unlikely with continued preventive efforts.

In Sacramento, one of the most visible and community-connected mpox vaccination resources is [Pucci's Pharmacy](#). Long known for its inclusive care and sexual health services – from HIV testing

If symptoms develop – such as fever, swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, or a new rash – reaching out to a healthcare provider early can reduce discomfort and the chance of transmission. Clinics and community health partners also offer free or low-cost sexual health services and guidance across Sacramento, often tailored to LGBTQ+ needs. For instance, local sexual health organizations provide rapid HIV and STI testing and counseling – resources that work hand-in-hand with mpox awareness and prevention.

Staying informed about mpox, completing the full vaccine series if eligible, and connecting with community-focused health services continues to be a practical approach for individuals and partners navigating risk in our region.

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What is Ketamine Therapy?

Ketamine therapy has emerged in recent years as an alternative mental health treatment, particularly for people living with depression or anxiety that has not responded well to traditional approaches. Originally developed in the 1960s as an anesthetic, ketamine has a long medical history. Its newer use focuses on much lower doses, administered in carefully controlled settings, where it appears to affect brain chemistry in a different way than standard antidepressants.

Unlike most antidepressant medications, which act on serotonin or dopamine systems and can take weeks to show results, ketamine works on the brain's glutamate system. Researchers believe this may help increase neural flexibility, allowing the brain to form new connections and potentially interrupt entrenched negative thought patterns. For some patients, this can result in rapid relief of depressive symptoms, sometimes within hours or days.

It's important to note that ketamine itself is not FDA-approved as a treatment for mental health conditions. However, an FDA-approved nasal spray version called esketamine is available in certified clinics for treatment-resistant depression under strict supervision. Beyond that model, many providers prescribe ketamine "off-label," a common medical practice, often pairing it with therapy or guided integration sessions to help patients process their experience.

Ketamine therapy is typically offered through in-clinic infusions or monitored at-home programs that begin with a medical screening and ongoing clinician oversight. Sessions may produce dissociative or dreamlike effects, which some patients describe as emotionally meaningful or clarifying, though experiences vary widely.

While research into ketamine therapy is growing and results have been promising, experts also urge caution. Effects may be temporary without continued treatment or additional therapeutic support, and potential side effects can include changes in blood pressure, nausea, dissociation, and, in rare cases, bladder issues with repeated use. Because ketamine has a history of recreational misuse, responsible screening and medical supervision are essential.

For some people, ketamine therapy represents a hopeful option when other treatments have fallen short. At the same time, it remains an evolving area of mental health care – one that continues to balance innovation, accessibility, and the need for careful oversight as research progresses.



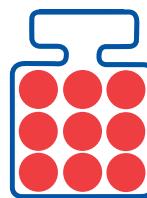
Resources:

- Harvard Health Publishing – Ketamine for treatment-resistant depression: When and where is it safe?

This overview explains how ketamine works, who it's typically prescribed for, and the key safety concerns, including differences between clinic-based treatment and newer at-home models. [Click here to visit](#) that web page.

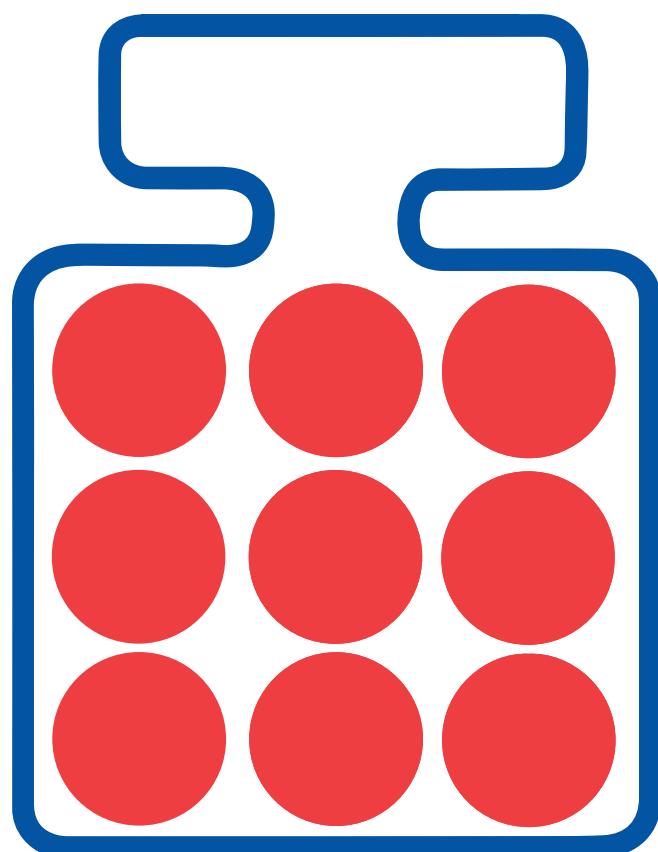
- U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) – FDA warns about compounded ketamine

This FDA consumer advisory outlines risks, lack of FDA approval for mental health use, and why medical supervision is essential – especially relevant when discussing telehealth and at-home ketamine services. [Click here for more info.](#)



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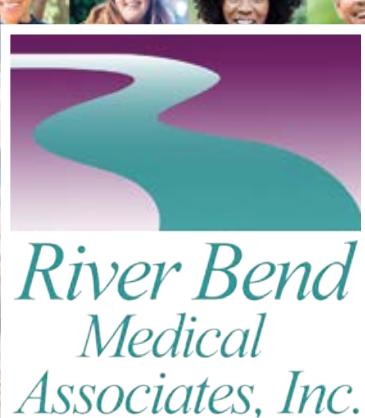
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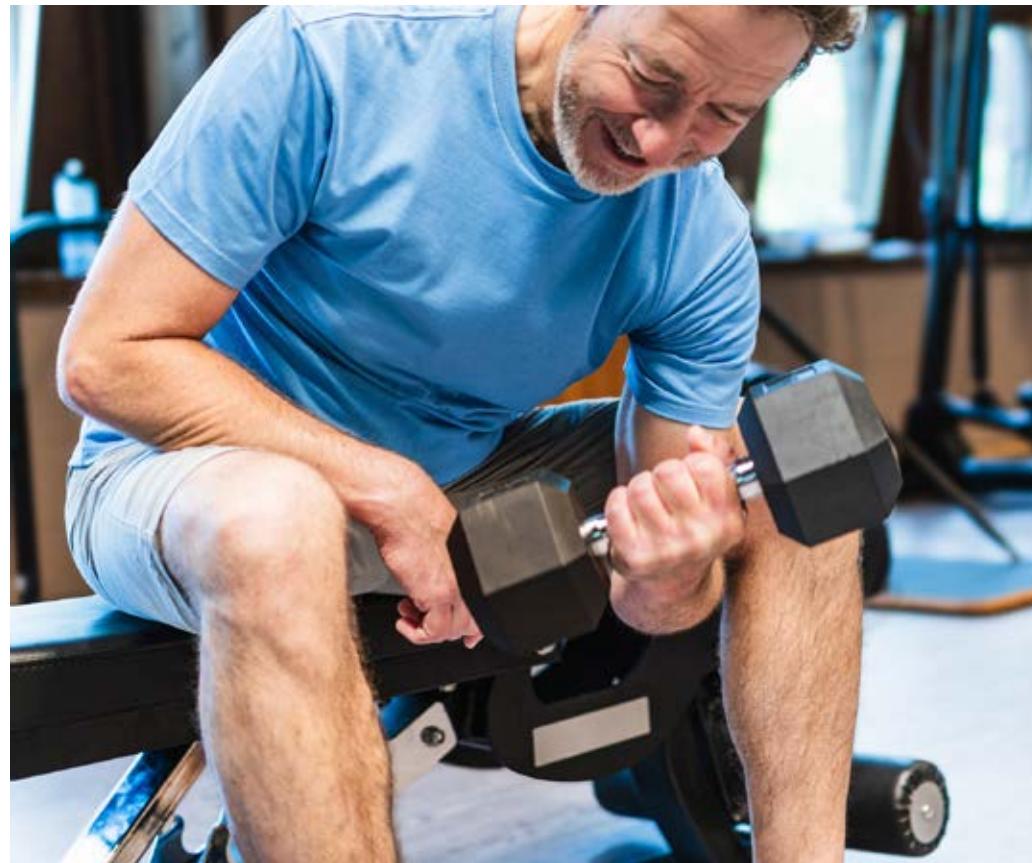
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A Gentle Reset: Five Common-Sense Ways to Start Moving in the New Year

The New Year has a way of putting pressure on our bodies before we've even had time to wake up from the holidays. Suddenly, we're surrounded by promises of transformation, intense routines, and "no excuses" energy that can feel overwhelming—especially if working out hasn't been part of your regular life lately. A simple internet search quickly turns up a surprising number of practical, no-nonsense ideas for easing back into movement—and many of them share the same basic theme: start where you are, not where you think you should be.



1. Start smaller than you think you should

If you haven't been working out regularly, jumping straight into long or intense workouts is a fast way to burn out. Ten or fifteen minutes of movement is a perfectly legitimate place to begin. A short walk, light stretching, or a few basic exercises can help your body remember what movement feels like—without leaving you wiped out the next day. Consistency beats ambition every time.

2. Choose movement you don't dread

You don't need a gym, a trainer, or a complicated plan. Walking, swimming, dancing at home, gentle yoga, or even casual strength work all count. If you enjoy it—or at least don't actively avoid it—you're far more likely to stick with it. The goal isn't punishment; it's finding something that fits into your actual life.

3. Put it on your calendar

Relying on motivation alone rarely works. Treating movement like an appointment makes it feel more real and less optional. Blocking out two or three times a week removes the daily negotiation of "should I or shouldn't I?" Even if some sessions are short, the habit itself is the win.

4. Expect some discomfort, but don't push through everything

Feeling a little sore or winded at first is normal. Sharp pain or exhaustion that hangs around is not. It's okay to take rest days, slow things down, or adjust as you go. Starting—and continuing—is far more important than proving anything.

5. Look for wins beyond the scale

Better sleep, more energy, improved mood, less stress, or simply feeling stronger during everyday tasks are all signs that movement is helping. The scale can be unpredictable, especially early on. If moving starts to feel easier—or even something you look forward to—you're on the right track.

One final, common-sense note: if you've been largely inactive for a long time, or have health concerns, it's smart to check in with your doctor before putting unusual stress on your body. A little guidance can go a long way toward making sure your fresh start stays a healthy one.

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- Develop and foster an environment of trust and confidence between community, stakeholders and City Council.

MEET THE TEAM



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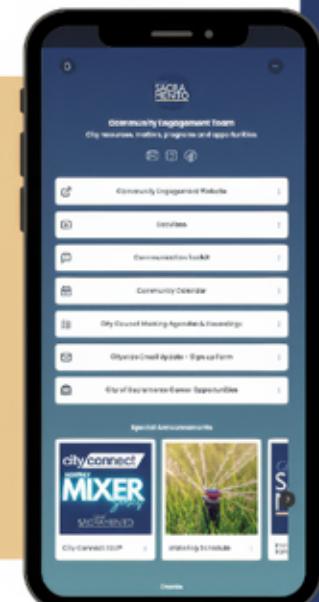
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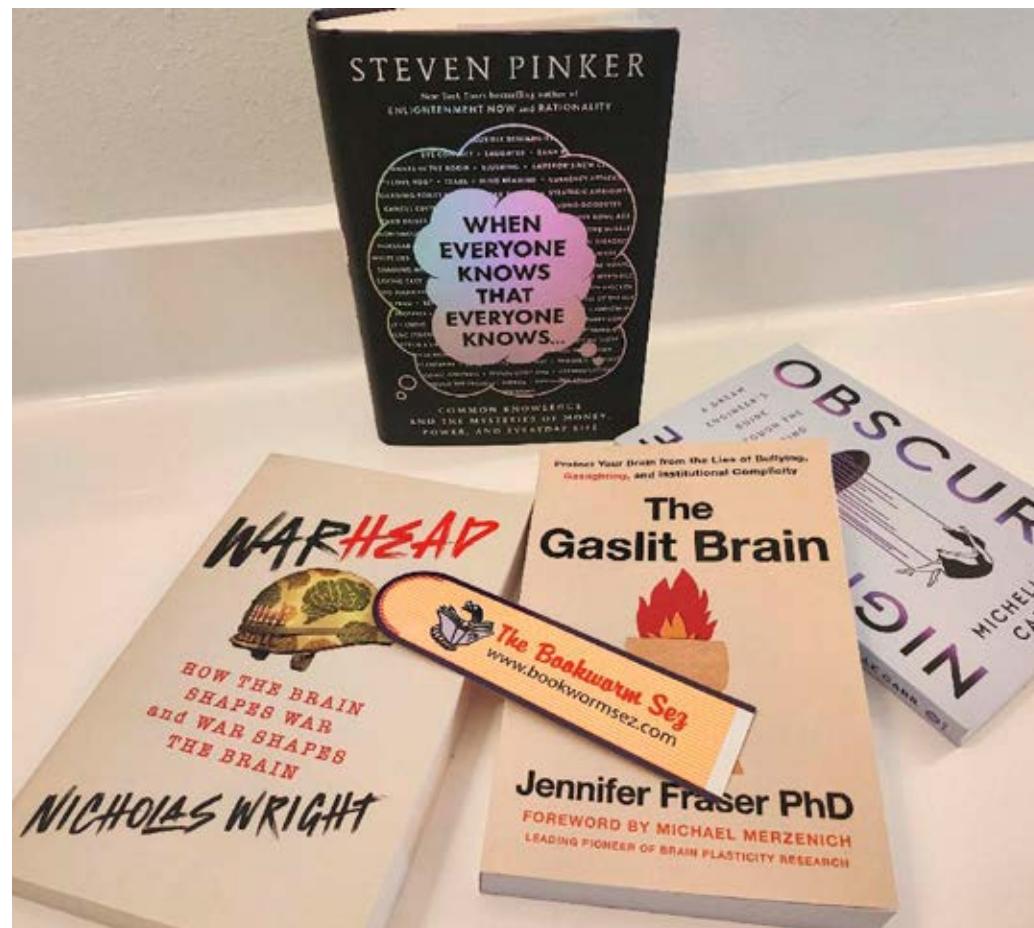
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Books for Mental Health by Various Authors

by Terri Schlichenmeyer

For months, your brain has been full. Full of holidaying and end-of-year-ing and remembering all the things that needed to be done by the new month. Full of gifts and celebrations and news and weather. Now, maybe it's time to see what else goes on inside your cranium with these great new books about mental health...



If you struggle to know what's truth these days and what's not, then "The Gaslit Brain: Protect Your Brain from the Lies of Bullying, Gaslighting, and Institutional Complicity" by Jennifer Fraser, PhD (Prometheus Books, \$34.95) might be the book you need.

Using stories to show, not tell, Fraser helps readers put themselves in situations, so they can learn how to identify a gaslighter. She then looks at the personality traits of someone who gaslights before teaching readers how to deal with the person who tries to lie to you. This is an especially helpful book for anyone who relies on the truth, and accepts nothing less.

Worldwide strife is on everyone's mind these days, and "Warhead: How the Brain Shapes War and War Shapes the Brain" by Nicolas Wright (St. Martin's Press, \$30.00) is a science-based book that will help you understand long-term ramifications of conflict. It takes you from wars and warriors throughout history, to modern warfare and why it might seem like the world is constantly at battle.

This not just a book for warriors on the field, though. Wright says that we are wired to do battle – whether it's overseas, in your neighborhood, or sitting at your workstation. You'll be fascinated by this book.

So how do you know what you know? Is it because someone else knows it? Do they know that you know? Ach, so confusing, so relax your mind a little and read "When Everyone Knows That Everyone Knows... Common Knowledge and the Mysteries of Money, Power, and Everyday Life" by Steven Pinker (Scribner, \$30.00), and it'll all make sense.

In this book, you'll see how "common knowledge" is uncommonly necessary for human society, and how we naturally slip right into using it – until we don't, and then all kinds of bad things can happen. This is a book that may boggle your mind sometimes, but it'll also open your eyes to how our society works.

If this all enough to keep you awake at night, well, then you need "Nightmare Obscura: A Dream Engineer's Guide Through the Sleeping Mind" by Michelle Carr (Henry Holt & Company, \$29.99).

Your alarm goes off, you're wide awake, but what do you remember about your dreams? Carr says that you can learn to "harness" the dreams you have for better mental health, including problem-solving, and you can learn to avoid those bad, troubling dreams that ruin your rest – and the rest of your day.

Not enough reading for your mental health? Then ask a librarian or bookseller for more, and they'll usher you to a section filled with self-help. Grab these four great books and others, then open your mind with good information, and fill it up.

HEALTH & WELLNESS EXPO

February 3, 2026



REGISTER TO ATTEND FOR FREE

Kick off the new year with intention at our Health & Wellness Expo this February. This FREE event is open to the entire community and designed to support your well-being in the year ahead. Registration is quick and easy, visit RainbowChamber.com to sign up, or simply scan the QR code.



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Sacramento's 44th Annual March for The Dream



“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step towards the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

In these trouble times, Dr. King's wise words sound even more essential, and Sacramento will pay tribute to MLK when the residents of River City gather to walk in honor of Martin Luther King Jr., on Monday, Jan. 19.

Honoring MLK means putting his ideals and values into practice by inviting someone from another race, religion, or cultural background to walk and talk with you for the purpose of building authentic

bridges of understanding and human value.

The main march departs from Sac City College at 9:15 a.m., concluding at the SAFE Convention Center, and there is an extra march at 8:30 a.m. the same morning that invites attendees to “go the extra mile,” from Oak Park to Sac City College. There will also be pre-march programs at both locations.

For more information about the entire event, [click here](#).



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For 30 years, Outword Magazine—Sacramento's longest-running LGBTQ+ publication—has been a trusted voice, celebrating our community and helping keep readers informed and connected.

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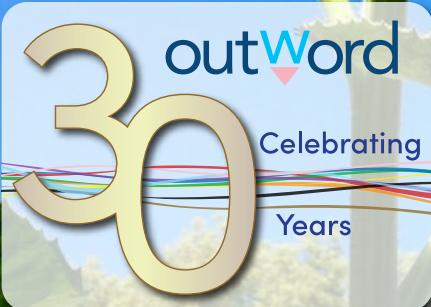
That's why we've launched a subscription and reader-supported donor program, designed to help ensure Outword remains a reliable source of information, visibility, and community connection.

We invite you to consider making a contribution in whatever amount feels right for you through our relaunched Outword Rainbow Fund. Every gift helps. With a simple and secure process, your support directly sustains the work we do and the voices we amplify.

We're proud of the role Outword has played in Sacramento for three decades, and we're committed to being here for many more. Together, we can make sure our stories continue to be told and our voices continue to be heard.

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“The Lion King” Roars into Sacramento

by Chris Narloch

I can think of no better way to kick off 2026 than with a return trip to watch the musical masterpiece “The Lion King,” which is accurately cited as The World’s #1 Musical.



Erick D. Patrick as Simba in Disney's "The Lion King." Photo by Matthew Murphy

More than 120 million people around the world have experienced the phenomenon of Disney’s “The Lion King,” winner of six Tony Awards®, including Best Musical.

This landmark musical event brings together one of the most imaginative creative teams on Broadway, including the Tony Award®-winning director Julie Taymor, who brings to life a story filled with hope and adventure set against an amazing backdrop of stunning visuals.

“The Lion King” also features some of Broadway’s most recognizable music, crafted by Tony Award®-winning artists Elton John and Tim Rice. There is simply nothing else quite like “The Lion King,” which returns to the SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center this Jan. 7 – 25.

To purchase tickets, go to: www.broadwaysacramento.com

Nick Jonas Gives Us a “Gut Punch”



photo by Billy Kidd

Golden Globe- and Grammy-nominated artist Nick Jonas kicks off 2026 with the release of his new single, “Gut Punch,” an emotionally candid track that introduces his upcoming solo album, “Sunday Best,” arriving February 6 via Republic Records. Opening with sparse piano and raw self-reflection before swelling into a chant-ready chorus, the song captures Jonas at his most vulnerable as he confronts self-criticism, growth, and the pressures of adulthood, marriage, and fatherhood. “Gut Punch” sets the tone for an album that marks his first solo project in nearly five years, drawing from recent life events as well as his early musical roots. With rich, unguarded storytelling, “Sunday Best” promises an intimate look at Nick, stepping into a reflective and renewed chapter of his life. [Listen here.](#)

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“No Other Choice” & “Marty Supreme” Plus, Two Terrific Tearjerkers Reviewed

by Chris Narloch

Now that we have been turned on by the first season of “Heated Rivalry” and freaked out by the final season of “Stranger Things,” we can look forward to new seasons of “Shrinking,” “Bridgerton,” and “The Traitors,” coming soon.

We can also look forward to awards season. The Critics’ Choice Awards are in the rear-view mirror now, but the Golden Globes telecast is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 11, and several of the fine films below are nominated this year.



Marty Supreme

Is there anything Timothee Chalamet cannot do? From a big-budget musical (“Wonka”) to his Bob Dylan biopic (“A Complete Unknown”), and now another movie inspired by a real person - the New York table tennis hustler Marty Reisman - “Marty Supreme” proves that Timothee Chalamet is the real deal. Talking a mile a minute and playing ping pong like a pro, Chalamet is something to see, and the equally fast-paced film kept me on the edge of my seat, despite a runtime of 149 minutes. Three fine actresses (Gwyneth Paltrow, Fran Drescher, and Odessa A’zion) provide superb support, and Josh Safdie directs with a sure hand. Currently in wide theatrical release.



No Other Choice

This wild South Korean movie is almost certain to be Oscar-nominated in this year’s Best International Feature Film category and could also find itself up for Best Picture and Best Director (Park Chan-wook). If you enjoyed Bong Joon Ho’s “Parasite,” then I highly recommend this pitch-black comedy thriller about a middle-aged man, abruptly laid off after 25 years at the same company, who endeavors to eliminate the other candidates for the new job he wants. I won’t divulge any more of the movie’s twists and turns, except to say that “No Other Choice” more than earns its R rating. This film is currently playing at Sacramento’s Tower Theatre.



Song Sung Blue

Hugh Jackman and Kate Hudson are a dynamic duo in this stranger-than-fiction true story about a pair of pop music impersonators who team up and find success as a Neil Diamond tribute band, until tragedy strikes. Jackman is hampered by a very unflattering hairdo that is sort of a running joke in the film, but Hudson has her best role in years as his stand-by-your-man wife and bandmate. The movie, while not a classic, is funny and moving in equal measure, and Neil Diamond fans should love hearing all his hits on the big screen. Currently in wide theatrical release.



Rosemead

You will have to act fast to catch this one, but if you want to have a good cry, this tearjerker true story should do the trick. Lucy Liu gives a heartbreakingly moving performance as a widow with terminal cancer whose teenaged son is diagnosed with schizophrenia and then becomes obsessed with mass shooters. The outcome is tragic, but the fact-based film is extremely moving and never exploitative. Liu can be very proud of her passion project, which shines a light on the stigma around mental illness in the Asian community and memorializes a desperate mother and her troubled son. “Rosemead” opens on Jan. 9 at several Sacramento area theaters.

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Out & About

with Matthew Burlingame

Happy New Year, Sacramento! As we step into a fresh year filled with possibility, there's no better way to celebrate than by getting out and supporting the people, places and events that make our city shine. From live music and theater to festivals, markets and community gatherings, Sacramento's events scene thrives because locals show up. Whether you're dancing, laughing, learning or simply connecting, every ticket purchased and every event attended helps strengthen our creative community. Here's to a year of discovery, joy and showing up for Sacramento—one great event at a time.



Jan. 9

Duran Duran brings decades of hit-packed '80s magic to The Venue at Thunder Valley at Thunder Valley Casino Resort, 1174 Athens Ave., at 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9. Expect classics like "Hungry Like the Wolf" and "Girls on Film." Guests must be 21, or ages 13-20 with an accompanying adult. Thundervalleyresort.com



Jan. 24

Jinx Jones & the KingTones bring high-energy, hot-rockin' twang and swing to The Torch Club, 904 15th St. on Saturday, Jan 24, at 9 p.m. Led by guitar virtuoso Jinx Jones & the KingTones, the band delivers a rockabilly dance party packed with blistering riffs, jazz-infused flair and nonstop groove—pure California cool with serious chops. Torchclub.net

Upcoming

Jan. 24

The Sacramento Youth Symphony hosts a powerful community concert at Sacramento Memorial Auditorium, 1599 J St., on Saturday, Jan. 24. Five premier youth orchestras unite for a one-day festival of music and collaboration, culminating in a massed finale. Proceeds benefit teen health and organizations serving unhoused youth. Sacramentoyouthsymphony.org

The Sacramento Horror Film Festival returns Saturday, Jan. 31, at Historic Colonial Theatre, 3522 Stockton Blvd., with an all-day showcase of razor-sharp horror shorts from 12:30 p.m. until late. Expect dark humor, gut-tightening suspense and big scares, plus an after-party performance by Aurelio Voltaire. SacHorrorFilmFest.com

Monster Jam roars into Golden 1 Center, 500 David J Stern Walk at noon on Saturday Jan. 24, bringing high-flying stunts, massive air and head-to-head racing. Watch world-class drivers tear up the dirt in iconic trucks like Grave Digger, El Toro Loco and Sparkle Smash. Expect big trucks, bigger thrills and adrenaline-packed fun for everyone! Golden1center.com

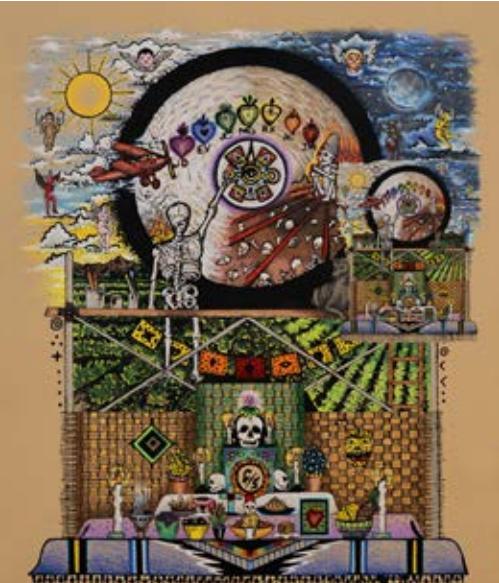
Ghost brings its Skeletour World Tour 2026 to Golden 1 Center, 500 David J Stern Walk, at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20. The concert is a phone-free experience using Yondr pouches, immersing fans fully in Ghost's theatrical, heavy-hitting live spectacle. All floor seats include club access. Golden1center.com

Community Announcements

We wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Alvin Prasad, the community member who was the victim of a hate crime on Halloween night. Alvin passed away Dec. 29 as a result of his injuries. We also extend our condolences to the family and friends of Shawn Nash-Jackson, who passed away Jan. 1. Harriscenter.net

Hands4Hope-Youth Making a Difference presents Nashville Songwriters Live, an intimate night of acoustic performances and stories behind hit songs, at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 27, 2026, at the Harris Center for the Arts, 10 College Parkway, Folsom. Grammy-nominated and Emmy-winning writers take the stage in a fundraiser supporting youth leadership and community service. Harriscenter.net

Do you have events, birthdays, or announcements to share? Feel free to send them to matthewburlingame@gmail.com.



Jan. 11

The Sacramento Wedding Festival brings an all-in-one planning experience to Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 6151 H St., from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 11. Engaged couples can explore fashion shows, meet top wedding vendors, enjoy tastings and samples, and score exclusive deals and giveaways while gathering inspiration for their big day. Internationalweddingfestival.com

Jan. 15

Stand-up sensation Mario Adrián brings his "German Efficiency" tour to the Punch Line Comedy Club – Sacramento at 2100 Arden Way, Sacramento, California, on Thursday, Jan. 15 at 7:30 p.m.. The German-American comedian mixes observational wit, pop-culture commentary and personal anecdotes in a night of contagious laughter. Punchlinesac.com

Jan. 22

Janeane Garofalo hits the stage at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22, at Punch Line Sacramento, 2100 Arden Way. She will be delivering her trademark sharp wit, fearless political commentary and laugh-with-a-bite stand-up that helped define alternative comedy. Punchlinesac.com

Jan. 10

Verge Center for the Arts hosts a free opening reception for R.C.A.F. Mid-Flight: The Artwork and Influence of the Royal Chicano Air Force from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 10, at 625 S St. The exhibition honors the Royal Chicano Air Force, celebrating its lasting impact on Chicana/o/x art, culture and social justice through visual media, performance and activism. Vergecontemporary.org

The Hello Kitty Cafe Truck rolls into Arden Fair, 1689 Arden Way, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10. Fans can shop the pink pop-up in the parking lot near Q & RH Outlet for exclusive Hello Kitty treats and limited-edition merchandise while supplies last. Hellokittycafe.com



Brandi Carlile To Perform in S.F.



Our favorite queer, alternative folk rocker, Brandi Carlile, who has recently recorded and/or performed with the likes of Elton John, Tanya Tucker, Joni Mitchell, Dolly Parton, and many other music icons, will bring “The Human Tour” to San Francisco’s Chase Center on March 26, 2026. Brandi’s latest album, “Returning to Myself,” was released in October. To see all her tour dates, go to: www.brandicarlile.com/tour

A Holiday Miracle for Oasis in S.F.

The bad news in the Bay Area is that face-value tickets for all 20 shows in Sam Smith's upcoming residency at the iconic Castro Theatre are sold out.

The good news in San Francisco, however, is very good news, and I am talking about the Christmas miracle that saved Oasis, the fabulous queer performance venue located at 11th and Folsom in San Francisco's SOMA district.

Not even one of Oasis' cabaret shows could dream up a script like this: just days before the final curtain was set to fall on Oasis, a surprise twist delivered pure holiday magic.

Months after its announced closure and amid mounting sadness among artists, audiences, and community members, the Stevens Family came forward with a significant financial gift to Oasis Arts, the nonprofit arm that is responsible for programming at Oasis, allowing its iconic and award-winning cabaret acts, theatre performances, nightclub parties, and drag shows to continue.

"This moment reflects the heart of San Francisco," said D'Arcy Drollinger, owner and artistic director of Oasis and Oasis Arts, as well as the City of San Francisco's first Drag Laureate. "Saving Oasis is more than keeping a venue open, it's about protecting space for marginalized artists to take risks, share their stories, and build sustainable careers."

"It's a powerful statement that allies are stepping forward to support the visibility and creativity of our queer community. Oasis Arts exists because artists and audiences believe in each other, and this moment proves our city still shows up for the spaces that make it unique," said Drollingen.

Following New Year's Eve, Oasis has temporarily closed for several months to prepare for this last-minute development,



Photo by Rachel Z Photography

including building 2026 programming, exploring opportunities to secure the existing space permanently, and operational planning to set the stage for this new era of Oasis. The brief pause will pave the way for an exciting new chapter, with further updates and announcements to follow.

Since its grand opening on New Year's Eve in 2014, Oasis has been a cultural hub for drag, cabaret, live theater, and queer expression. The iconic venue has been home to some of San Francisco's, and the country's, most beloved and creative artists, shows and events - from Cher to Doja Cat, Jurassiq Parq to Rocky Horror, Princess to Reparations, Dina Martina to Sasha Velour, Sex and the City Live to Baloney - just to name a few.

It has hosted drag royalty, nurtured emerging talent, and become a touchstone for LGBTQ+ storytelling in the Bay Area and beyond.



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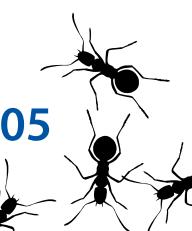
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Sip, Chill, Smile: Why Willie's Remedy+ Deserves a Sampling

Move over mocktails and sad sodas—there's a new plant-powered social sip in town, and it's turning heads in chilled-out style. Willie's Remedy+ Spirit is a cannabis-infused alternative to alcohol that's all about elevation without the hangover. Think laid-back good vibes, mellow laughter, and vibrant conversation—minus the “please don't text my ex” regrets.

“The biggest killer on the planet is stress and I still think the best medicine is and always has been hemp. I gave up drinking alcohol a long time ago and switched to hemp, I think hemp should be recognized for what it is, as a remedy—an herb that grows in the ground. If you need to use it, use it.”

- Willie Nelson, drinkwillies.com



This spirited beverage blends hemp-derived THC with CBD, CBG, and L-theanine for a smooth, calming buzz that hits gently yet noticeably in about 10-15 minutes. The magic is in the mix: THC brings euphoria, CBD and CBG help balance the feel, and L-theanine adds that relaxed, happy clarity—all with zero alcohol and zero hangover.

In a 1.5-oz shot, you'll find about 5 mg of THC alongside plant buddies that make the experience approachable for both cannabis curious folks and seasoned enthusiasts. The flavor? A subtle, citrus-leaning profile with hints of lemon, lime, and passionfruit that's equally delicious on ice, straight up, or mixed into your own creative concoctions.

Whether you're swapping traditional cocktails for something lighter, hosting a game night, or just craving a mellow end-of-week wind-down, Willie's Remedy+ serves a refreshing twist on social sipping. Fans report everything from belly laughs during board games to cozy calm after a long day—proving good times don't need to be loud to be memorable.

So go on—raise your glass (or shot!), embrace the chill, and toast to new ways of socializing that feel good all the way around. For more [info click here](#).

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Memes from Facebook

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DONALD TRUMP'S ACTIONS IN VENEZUELA DO NOT MAKE AMERICA SAFER, STRONGER, OR MORE AFFORDABLE. THAT MADURO IS A BRUTAL, ILLEGITIMATE DICTATOR DOES NOT CHANGE THE FACT THAT THIS ACTION WAS BOTH UNLAWFUL AND UNWISE. WE'VE SEEN THIS MOVIE BEFORE. WARS FOR REGIME CHANGE OR OIL THAT ARE SOLD AS STRENGTH BUT TURN INTO CHAOS, AND AMERICAN FAMILIES PAY THE PRICE. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DO NOT WANT THIS, AND THEY ARE TIRED OF BEING LIED TO.

Kamala Harris

BRIAN
TYLER
COHEN



It actually takes more time to judge people than it does to forgive them!

If you spend your time judging people, now you have to make up some story about why they're not worthy of your forgiveness. It would take less time to just forgive the bastards.

-Gary Renard-

Don't drink and drive



Your dog won't understand why you never came home

“

IF BILLIONAIRES PAID TAXES AT THE SAME RATE AS NURSES AND TEACHERS, WE WOULDNT BE ARGUING ABOUT HEALTHCARE, HOUSING, OR PUBLIC EDUCATION. SCARCITY ISN'T REAL. IT'S ENFORCED.

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Elon Musk: “AI and robots will replace all jobs. Working will be optional.”

Bill Gates: “Humans won't be needed for most things.”

I have a simple question:

Without jobs and income, how will people feed their families, get health care, or pay the rent?

- SENATOR BERNIE SANDERS

OCCUPY DEMOCRATS

Melanie D'Arrigo

@DarrigoMelanie

- no universal healthcare
- no universal childcare
- college is unaffordable
- housing is unaffordable
- groceries are unaffordable

The average salary for Gen Z is \$39,416.

The average household income needed to live comfortably raising 2 kids is \$233,604.

Hope this helps.

Joseph

@ihyJosephX1

Why does this generation seem to be so against having kids?

3:56 PM · Dec 4, 2025

“We have multiplied our possessions but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living but not a life. We've added years to life, not life to years.”

We're all just one accident, one diagnosis, one unexpected phone call away from a completely different life.

Stay humble and don't take anything for granted.

UNKNOWN / ART OF POETS

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- CONGRESSMAN MIKE LEVIN

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Not extending ACA subsidies means millions of our people will have to choose between seeing the doctor and buying groceries or paying rent. GOP cruelty is not good for public health.

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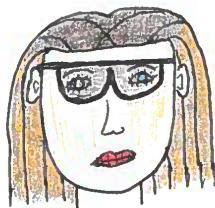


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