

South Pocket Homeowners' Association
NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS
Spring 2026



**Egg-stra,
egg-stra!**
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**Membership
meeting!**
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Around the Pocket

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www.southpockethomeowners.org

Working to restore a beloved South Sacramento landmark

Maintenance underway to keep Freeport Water Tower safe

By Pat Clark
Director at Large

The U.S. flag and mast at the Freeport Water Tower were removed on February 2 after City of Sacramento Department of Utilities (DOU) staff identified corrosion in the steel support structure inside the tower. This proactive step was taken to ensure safety while a closer look at the structure is completed.

DOU will now conduct a detailed engineering study to better understand the extent of the corrosion and evaluate repair options. This phase is expected to take approximately 6–9 months. If more extensive structural repairs are needed, that work could take an additional 9–12 months or longer.

Restoring the flag presents a unique challenge. Under Proposi-

tion 218, funds designated for utility services—such as drinking



water—cannot be used for non-utility purposes. As a result, bringing the flag back may require a separate funding approach, potentially including community fundraising efforts. The Freeport Water Tower, built in 1960, has long been a recognizable feature in the area. While it has undergone several rehabilitation projects over the years, the flag itself was added in 2005, thanks to the efforts of then-City Council member Robbie Waters. The mast and its support system are now about 20 years old.

For many, the flag is more than just a feature—it's a symbol of community pride and a familiar welcome

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160 Members and Counting — Join Us Today!

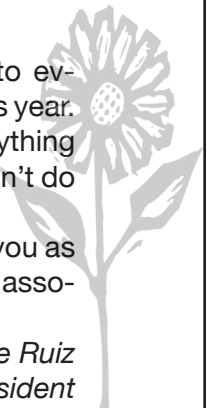
As of press time, our membership count remains strong at 160 — just slightly below past years — but we are still welcoming new members!

If you've recently joined, keep an eye on your doorstep — your membership roster will be arriving in the next few weeks.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who has joined this year. You are the heart of everything we do, and we truly couldn't do it without you.

We're grateful to have you as part of our neighborhood association!

—Sue Ruiz
SPHA President



Egg-strordinary fun at our neighborhood Easter egg hunt!

Thank you to everyone who came out to play — and to those who helped bring this year’s Easter Egg Hunt to life! The weather was perfect, and kids and parents alike had a wonderful time.

Many community members shared how much they enjoyed the event, highlighting its positive impact. We received countless thank-yous from parents, grandparents, and kids, and I’d like to recognize the amazing team who made it all possible: Janette and Gustavo Casillas, Gary Funk, Pat Clark, Jake Garcia, Sabrina Pape, Paulo Ferreira, Sue Faist, Michael Lipkin, Ray Mancini, the Flinn-Espinosa family — Karina, Allison, Collin, and Zaiya — and the West Campus team: Kira, Liam, Regina, and Caitlyn.

Together, they handled everything — from securing the park permit, creating signs and flyers, and sending neighborhood emails, to shopping for candy, refreshments, prizes, and toys. They filled every egg (yes, every single one!), managed setup and cleanup, captured photos, and kept everything running smoothly on event day — including toys, prizes, refreshments, and even crowd control.

Be sure to check out the photos and videos on our website!

— Sue Ruiz, President



Photos by Gary Funk



Be our cover photographer!

Send your best neighborhood photos for the upcoming membership roster cover. Capture tree-lined light, park life, or quiet moments along the river path. Email Sue at ruizsue@icloud.com by April 17. Your image could appear on the cover!

Show & Shine Car Show

The South Pocket Show & Shine Car Show, featuring classics, imports and exotics, is set for Saturday, April 18, at Marriott Park from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Food will be available while supplies last.

Car owners who want to participate should arrive by 8:30 a.m.

Thanks to Ray Birch for bringing this event to Marriott Park.

Mark your calendar:

SPHA yard sale is May 30

Our annual, neighborhood-wide sale returns next month. We will promote the event on Facebook and Nextdoor and post signs at neighborhood entrances. Visit our website for “Tips for a Successful Yard Sale.”

Growing Strong

Great progress in our Marriott Park tree project

By Pat Clark

Director at Large

Our SPHA Tree Project in Marriott Park is progressing beautifully. The trees at River Ranch/El Douro are now three years old, while those at Roman Oak/Grand River have reached the two-year mark.

In January, City Arborist Jodi Carlson visited on several mornings to inspect the trees and perform structural pruning. She reviewed all of them and pruned the River Ranch/El Douro trees to encourage a strong “central leader,” or main trunk. She also completed structural pruning on the five-year-old trees along Roman Oak at the north end of the park. The great news: she reported that all the

trees look healthy and she is very pleased with their progress.

At the River Ranch/El Douro corner, some of the older trees will begin receiving less supplemental water this summer as they transition to typical dry summer conditions. You may have noticed three new fenced areas nearby in mid-January—these protect three naturally sprouted saplings with strong central leader growth. Ms. Carlson was so impressed with their form that Parks staff installed fencing to give them the best chance to thrive.

Fun fact: Valley Oaks sometimes sprout from acorns years after they fall to the ground.

A big thank you to our neighborhood volunteers for providing supplemental



Photo by Gary Funk

Young oak in Marriot Park.

watering during the summer—your efforts are making a lasting difference!



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Big Night at the Park: Meeting and Elections Ahead

Mark your calendar for June 3 at 7 p.m. at Marriott Park. Join your neighbors for our next general membership meeting. We will announce a guest speaker soon. Board elections take place that night, so now is the time to get involved. Contact a current board member to learn how you can serve.

South Sacramento symbol

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along the I-5 corridor, where more than 100,000 vehicles pass each day.

We appreciate the DOU staff for taking the time to meet with community representatives and explain the situation, as well as the support from Council member Rick Jennings' office and the City Manager's Office in keeping options open for restoring the flag. We remain hopeful as the engineering review moves forward and look forward to identifying a path to bring this important landmark back.

Welcome New Neighbors!

The SPHA is pleased to introduce ...

By Sabra Sanchez

The South Pocket Homeowners Association is pleased to warmly welcome our newest neighbors to the community!

Welcome, Katelyn Williams & Damian Ortellado

After relocating from Tahoe Park, Katelyn and Damian are excited to settle into their new home on Sand River Court. They've been busy painting, organizing, and making the space their own — alongside their beloved family dog.

By day, Katelyn, a Princeton graduate, works from home as a civil engineer focused on roadway projects. Damian, a UC Berkeley graduate, is an IT specialist with

the California Legislature.

Katelyn is an avid runner — I had the pleasure of meeting her just as she returned from completing the annual Shamrock'n Half Marathon! In his spare time, Damian enjoys music, playing guitar, and singing. His performances include

a mix of original songs and classic favorites.

We're delighted to have you both in the neighborhood — welcome to South Pocket, Katelyn and Damian!

Also joining the community:

• 7701 Sleepy River Way – Seifu Asefa & Sarkalem Gudeta (Closed October 30, 2025)



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AVAILABLE

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7688 Marina Cove — Riverlake



COMING SOON

Carmichael



COMING SOON

Pocket

Design Trends in Remodels and New Home Construction

Just when we think we know what the best and most desirable floorplan is...it changes. For several years the open floor plan has been the gold standard, but lifestyle changes have demanded change. Lifestyle appears to be gradually shifting from spacious to "closed-offness," according to the National Association of Realtors.

Shift to More Closed Concept

Instead of removing walls between common areas, the trend is to prefer more defined rooms so there is less noise, less visibility of clutter and more privacy. Certainly, many buyers still appreciate the open living concept, but roughly half of those surveyed prefer the less open layout. In fact, some homeowners are even spending money to add walls back which previously had been taken down.

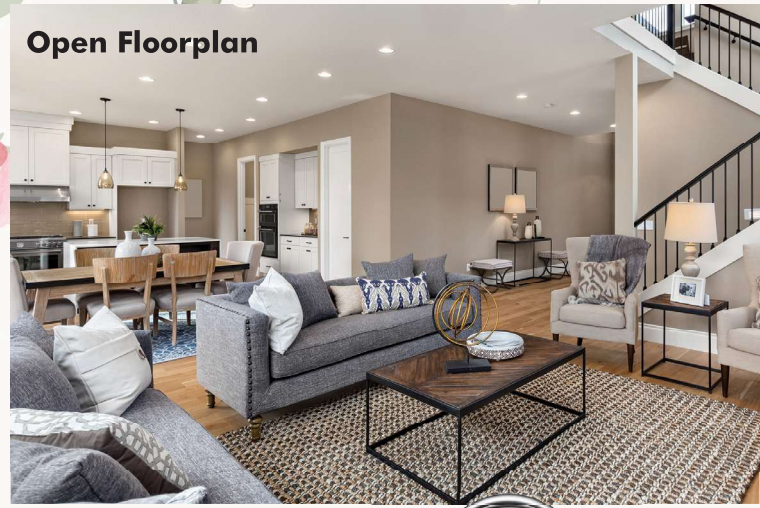
5 Reasons Open Floor Plans Are Getting Reimagined

1. Privacy matters more than before.
2. Clutter feels more manageable.
3. Homes can serve multiple functions.
4. Energy efficiency.
5. Noise control is a real concern.

What Does This Shift Mean to the Real Estate Market

1. A change in how homes are marketed and sold.
2. Some homes with defined living spaces may stand out more than in previous years and therefore present more of an opportunity for sellers with more traditional, closed-off homes. Homes that were considered "dated" not long ago may appeal to this new wave of buyers.

Open Floorplan



Defined-Use Floorplan



REAL ESTATE SNAPSHOT

Sacramento County
Feb '25 vs. Feb '26

Ave. List Price of Sold Listings: +.75%

New Listings: -1.10%

Sold: +.63%

Pended in February: +11.2%
(in Sacramento Core Communities**)

Despite fluctuating interest rates, likely due to events in the Middle East, rates are still well below where they have been for much of the past 4 years. This has opened opportunities to buyers, many of whom were not able to qualify before.

**Sacramento County Core Communities:
Downtown/Midtown, West Sac, Land Park, East Sac,
Arden/Arcade, Greenhaven/Pocket, Elk Grove



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