

December 3, 2009

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Maddy Events

Maddy Forum – The Maddy Forum, a weekly half-hour show focusing on issues of interest to the San Joaquin Valley, airs Saturday at 1 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m. on 90.7 KFSR radio. The show is available on the [KFSR Web site](#) and iTunes

Maddy Political Insider – The Maddy Political Insider, which can be heard on the Alan Autry Show on KYNO Radio 1300 Tuesday at 10:30 a.m., will be on hiatus for the month of December.

Maddy Associate Luncheon: On Dec. 18, the *Maddy Associate* luncheon will be our “Annual Sacramento Update” with members of the Valley’s State delegation. If you are not a *Maddy Associate* and are interested in attending these events and becoming a *Maddy Associate*, please contact the Maddy Institute at mkeppler@csufresno.edu

Maddy Institute on Facebook and Twitter – To learn about Maddy Institute activities (e.g. *The Maddy Report* tv show, *The Maddy Forum* FM radio/podcast, *The Maddy Political Insider* AM radio show, *The Maddy Associates’ Luncheons*, the *Maddy Legislative Intern Program*), become a fan of the Maddy Institute on Facebook or log on to <http://twitter.com/MaddyInstitute>. And if you have a Facebook or Twitter account, please add us and follow us!

Political Briefs

Berryhill jumps in Senate race, Villines stays out -- Tom Berryhill is in and Mike Villines is out of the race to replace state Sen. Dave Cogdill, R-Modesto, who is leaving the upper house after one term. Former Modesto councilmember Janice Keating is considering a run for Berryhill’s seat. [Fresno Bee political notebook](#); [Modesto Bee article](#); [Stockton Record article](#); [Lodi News-Sentinel article](#)

California Assembly speaker backs L.A. freshman as successor – In a surprise move designed to end a brewing battle over who will be the next California [Assembly](#) speaker, current Speaker [Karen Bass](#) threw her support Wednesday behind rookie Assemblyman John Pérez of [Los Angeles](#). Pérez may become

state's first gay Speaker. [Sacramento Bee article](#); [Capitol Weekly article](#); [LA Times article](#); [San Francisco Chronicle article](#)

Will Indy Arambula get a voice in new Speaker selection – He's an Independent, but often huddles with Democrats. So will Dems give Assembly Member Juan Arambula a voice in the [selection of a new speaker](#)? [Fresno Bee political notebook](#)

Senate, Assembly pay in line with private salaries – The 2,129 staff members of the California Legislature earn an average of about \$61,728 a year, which places them in the upper range of private-sector salaries and higher than the state's average per-capita income. [Capitol Weekly article](#)

George Skelton: Schwarzenegger's last year and last chance – The reign of California's action-her governor has so far been a disappointment. But he has one year left in which to improve his legacy. [Skelton column in LA Times](#)

Katzakian takes over as Lodi mayor – Three years into his first term on the Lodi City Council, Phil Katzakian has been among the least talkative members at the dais. Now that he'll serve a yearlong stint as mayor, folks might expect to hear a bit more from him. [Stockton Record article](#); [Lodi News-Sentinel article](#)

Visalia councilman Steve Nelsen: 'It's not business as usual' -- Steve Nelsen says it will be an uphill battle to get things in Visalia running as smoothly as they did when he moved to the city 19 years ago. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Ad Watch: Whitman spot is big on ideas, short on specifics -- Republican gubernatorial candidate [Meg Whitman](#) has a new radio ad touting her tenure as CEO of online auction firm eBay. Following is the text of the ad and analysis by [Jack Chang](#) of The [Bee Capitol Bureau](#). [Sacramento Bee article](#)

News Briefs

Top Stories

Grim look ahead for San Joaquin budget -- Rising costs and slipping revenues will continue, creating a budget gap the county will have fewer ways to close, county officials said. [Stockton Record article](#)

Budget-busting pension costs: Is there a fix? -- Years of double-digit investment earnings led to the belief that generous pension benefits, notably SB 400 in 1999, could be paid for by investments with little or no need for increased contributions from employers or employees. Now a historic market crash has punched a big hole in pension funds. Government agencies face years of increased pension contributions to make up for the losses, threatening funding for other programs. [Calpensions.com](#)

Could California face a 'brain drain' of college students? -- In the 2007-2008 academic year, California did something it had not done since the 1980s: sent more college students out of state than it received from elsewhere. [Capitol Weekly article](#)

Agriculture/Water

Fired farmworkers return with promise of higher pay – About 50 farmworkers who were fired by a Fresno County grape grower last week when they demanded higher wages are back on the job with a promise of higher pay. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Raspberry ads garner California support -- California's fresh raspberry growers want to make sure they're not dissed in ads promoting frozen berries. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Economy

Shopping revenue has Tulare city officials seeing black – Black Friday shopping will be a financial gift to Tulare's bottom line, City Manager Darrel Pyle said this week while delivering an optimistic economic update to the City Council. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Small Stanislaus towns want money – Oakdale and Newman leaders say a tax-sharing deal Modesto signed last year with an oil distributor is siphoning scarce sales tax dollars away from their cities. [Modesto Bee article](#)

No telling how holiday 'strike' went in California – The closest any California public employee union has come to a strike went down last month. It's not apparent that much came of it. [Sacramento Bee article](#)

More in Stanislaus need utility bill help – As the economy wobbles along, some of the customers lined up in the Modesto Irrigation District lobby Wednesday afternoon had grim stories to tell. [Modesto Bee article](#)

Fresno Grizzlies stadium deal to be explained today -- A downtown stadium deal that officials say will keep the Fresno Grizzlies solvent is to be unveiled before the City Council today. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Vision 2040 committee seeks catalyst to revitalize downtown Tulare -- It will take a four-way approach to bring redevelopment to downtown Tulare, said Lionel Pires, chairman of the Downtown Vision 2040 Steering Committee. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Pension funds profit from job-cutting buyouts – CalPERS and CalSTRS are both boosting investments in private equity, which includes leveraged buyouts that a new book says bankrupted many companies, eliminated thousands of jobs and may cause a new credit crisis. [Capitol Weekly article](#)

Wells Fargo to shutter or rebrand Wachovia offices in California -- Wells Fargo & Co says it will close 101 offices now branded with the old Wachovia name, merging their personnel into nearby Wells Fargo branches. [Central Valley Business Times article](#)

Local consultant denied: Kings hires Sacramento firm to monitor project -- Just because something's cheap and local doesn't always mean it's the best, especially when hiring a consultant for a high-stakes job whose outcome can affect future grant funding, Kings County decision-makers concluded Tuesday. [Hanford Sentinel article](#)

Stockton firm preparing for the worst – After Hurricane Katrina FEMA trailer debacle, Stockton firm wants to fill void with environmentally friendly portable homes. [Stockton Record article](#)

Education

Cal State students protest budget cuts – A group of about 60 chanting, whistle-blowing students and their supporters protested in front of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's downtown Los Angeles office Wednesday, urging the governor and Legislature to increase spending on education. [LA Times article](#)

Ruskin convenes Master Plan committee for higher education – For the last 50 years, California's vast public higher education system has been governed by a Master Plan that sets out goals and determines student eligibility. Starting Monday, a legislative committee will begin contemplating the biggest changes in that plan in decades. [Capitol Weekly article](#)

Atwater High School woodshop class well positioned for future -- "There are industries that are jealous of what we have here." Those were Dave Gossman's words as he walked through the remodeled agriculture classrooms and work areas at Atwater High School on Wednesday morning. [Merced Sun-Star article](#)

Stockton Record: Pacific looking beyond borders – This week, Pacific's global outreach was evident when a delegation of Chinese university presidents visited the Stockton campus as well as the university's McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento. [Stockton Record article](#)

Salida McDonald's helping students to supersize grades -- Now, on any given Tuesday or Wednesday from 4 to 6 p.m., as many as a dozen students come to the restaurant. Sometimes, their parents drop them off. Other times, the parents stay and watch from a distance as their kids and tutors work together. [Modesto Bee article](#)

Environment/Energy

Governor: Backup plan on global warming needed -- California has set an ambitious agenda to combat climate change, but on Wednesday Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said the state needs to prepare for the worst if human action cannot stop global warming and the rise of sea levels. [San Francisco Chronicle article](#)

Google unveils new feature to let Californians see risk of climate change -- Google Inc. launched a new feature in its Google Earth Web site Wednesday designed to let Californians see the risks of climate change. [AP article](#); [San Francisco Chronicle article](#)

Health and Human Services

After layoffs, Mercy Medical Center Merced seeks influx of patients who have no insurance – It was what is becoming an average day at Mercy Medical Center Merced's emergency room last Monday -- standing room only. At one point during the day, there were about 60 patients in an emergency room built to take 30. And health policy officials believe that it's only going to get worse. [Merced Sun-Star article](#)

Kindred to shutter Modesto long-term care center – The closure will result in job losses for 127 employees, including registered nurses, vocational nurses, nursing assistants and office personnel. [Modesto Bee article](#)

Kaiser, VA to share electronic records – [Kaiser Permanente](#) and the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) announced Wednesday a pilot program that will allow the two [health systems](#) to share electronic [health records](#). [Sacramento Bee article](#)

Richmond imposes temporary ban on new pot clubs – New pot clubs will have to wait before settling in Richmond. The City Council this week prohibited new medical marijuana dispensaries until the city can develop regulations for them. With no guidelines on the books, officials have no way to monitor or regulate the four dispensaries currently operating in the city. [Oakland Tribune article](#)

Kings doctors, survivors react to new mammogram screening advice -- Local breast cancer survivors have expressed outrage over suggestions that getting screened for breast cancer so early would often lead to false alarms and unneeded biopsies and anxiety without substantially improving the odds of survival. [Hanford Sentinel article](#)

Land Use/Housing

Court ruling scraps Livingston general plan – The city of Livingston broke state law when it approved its 2025 General Plan Update and certified the requisite environmental documents, a Merced Superior Court judge has ruled. [Merced Sun-Star article](#)

Trying to stay afloat in Fresno – In Fresno County, about 74,253 home mortgages - or 48% of the total - are underwater, according to the most recent stats from [First American CoreLogic](#), which tracks loan activity. [Fresno Bee news blog](#)

7 Valley cities get housing funds -- Seven Valley cities are getting \$800,000 grants for housing programs to benefit first-time homebuyers, housing renovation or rental assistance. The grants, federal money awarded by the state through its HOME program, will benefit residents in Clovis, Madera, Huron, Parlier, Dinuba, Corcoran and Avenal. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Other Areas

New Merced County CEO getting familiar with his surroundings – Larry Combs doesn't have a desk at the County Administration Building, but the conference room that's been converted to the new CEO's spacious "office" isn't half bad. And despite the temporary digs, Combs seems to be settling in just fine.

[Merced Sun-Star article](#)

Jim Boren: It seems our insurance companies will do anything for a profit, including funding terrorism – California Insurance Commissioner Steve Poizner, a Republican candidate for governor, says insurance companies doing business in California have invested \$12 billion in Iran's defense, nuclear, energy and banking industries. That also makes them indirect investors in Iranian-sponsored terrorism.

[Boren in Fresno Bee Opinion Talk](#)

Hearing over historic Fresno garage site continued again -- The longest public hearing in recent Fresno Planning Commission history was continued once more Wednesday as the future remained cloudy for a central Fresno garage that city officials have ordered to shut down. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Lodi approves lunch wagon cap -- The number of lunch wagons allowed to operate at one time in Lodi will be capped at 22 under a new ordinance approved Wednesday by the City Council. [Stockton Record article](#)

Editorial Roundup

Fresno Bee – Plans to [extend COBRA program](#) should become law; Food stamps [feed a nation](#).

Merced Sun-Star – The state should not rebuild San Quentin. [Close it](#) and sell the land.

Modesto Bee – President Obama [takes ownership](#) of Afghanistan war.

Sacramento Bee – [Afghanistan war](#) becomes President Obama's.

Stockton Record – This week, Pacific's [global outreach](#) was evident when a delegation of Chinese university presidents visited the Stockton campus as well as the university's McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento; A decimal [point well taken](#) in Lodi.

Visalia Times-Delta – Small elections but [big influences](#) in Visalia's municipal elections.

Upcoming Events

- The San Joaquin Valley Green Jobs Summit will be held at the Fresno Holiday Inn Downtown on Dec. 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, contact Rey Leon, executive director, Valley LEAP and SJV Regional Green Jobs Coalition Chair, at (559) 269-9563 or sjvleap@gmail.com.
- The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley's Air Quality Work Group will meet in conjunction with the Fast Track Advisory Committee on Dec. 15, from 10 a.m. to noon at the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District office in Fresno. Information: Jennifer Johnson at jejohnson@csufresno.edu.
- The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley's PreK-12 Education Work Group will hold its second annual Exemplary Practices in Education conference on the California State University, Fresno campus on Wednesday, Jan. 20, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Information: Dr. Walt Buster, (559) 269-9563.

278-0388 or wbuster3036@comcast.net, or Dr. Marcy Masumoto, (559) 304-2190 or mmasumoto@csufresno.edu.

The Kenneth L. Maddy Institute at California State University, Fresno was established to honor the legacy of one of California's most principled and effective legislative leaders of the last half of the 20th Century by engaging, preparing and inspiring a new generation of governmental leaders for the 21st Century. Its mission is to inspire citizen participation, elevate government performance, provide non-partisan analysis and assist in providing solutions for public policy issues important to the region, state and nation.

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