

December 8, 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

Is Denham reconsidering his LG run? – Some Republican officials are asking state Sen. Jeff Denham to consider dropping out of the lieutenant governor's race in order to run for the state Assembly, according to a Republican source close to Denham, R-Atwater. [Fresno Bee political notebook](#)

Pay cut takes effect for state’s top elected officials – For the first time in decades, perhaps ever, [California's](#) lawmakers and top elected officials saw their pay slashed Monday. The 18 percent salary cut for state officeholders ranging from governor to legislator to [Board of Equalization](#) members was ordered in May by the state's independent compensation commission. [Capitol Alert](#); [LA Times](#)

Sacramento is losing its legislative luster – It used to be a dream job -- making law in the nation's most populous state. But California voters aren't the only ones who've grown frustrated with the Legislature. Increasingly, lawmakers themselves are giving up on the statehouse. [LA Times article](#)

Speakership update: Perez, De Leon discuss Assembly leadership – Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, D-Los Angeles, is planning to hold a vote to elect her replacement on the Assembly floor this week. The two front-runners for the job – Assemblyman John Perez, D-Los Angeles, and Kevin DeLeon, D-Los Angeles -- spoke for about 20 minutes this weekend, and were set to meet again Monday to discuss the race. [Capitol Weekly article](#)

Inmates' lawyers back plan to cut California prison crowding – Lawyers for [California's](#) sick inmates said Monday they like the Schwarzenegger administration's plan for reducing the [prison population](#) and urged a three-judge federal panel to let state officials decide what methods to use. [Sacramento Bee article](#); [San Jose Mercury News article](#)

Group seeks to turn out Kern minority vote -- As the 2010 political campaigns are coming alive in California, the Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association has scheduled a meeting in Bakersfield Friday to map out a strategy for encouraging minority communities to participate in Kern County's political process. [Bakersfield Californian article](#)

Turkey leader sidesteps questions on genocide -- Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday demonstrated the kind of comfortable relationship with President Barack Obama that worries some Armenian-American activists. [Fresno Bee article](#)

California official who resigned over Prius flap has new job -- A senior state official who resigned in October after The Bee exposed a \$1.2 million questionable purchase of vehicles that sat unused for months is back to work, hired by the federal court-appointed receiver overseeing the state's troubled prison health care system. [Sacramento Bee article](#)

News Briefs

Top Stories

Valley counties rank high on economic hardship index – The Associated Press monthly analysis of economic stress in more than 3,100 U.S. counties ranks Stanislaus County as the No. 6 most-stressed county in the nation. It places Merced County at No. 4 and San Joaquin County at No. 8. [AP article](#)

Report: Valley job growth 'flat, cautious' – Even as employers around the nation say they anticipate a moderate increase in their hiring plans for the first quarter of the New Year, hiring plans for those in the Central Valley are "flat," "cautious," "unsteady" and "reserved," says a report Tuesday from the staffing company Manpower Inc. [Central Valley Business Times article](#)

Lawmakers urged to invest in higher ed – As lawmakers held the first of several hearings on the California Master Plan for Higher Education on Monday, leading public educators told the panel there's nothing wrong with the plan that money can't fix. [San Francisco Chronicle article](#); [Sacramento Bee article](#); [AP article](#)

Visalia may tap reserve funds to soften blow of declining revenue -- The city of Visalia's finance chief urged the council's new majority Monday night to use caution when tapping the city's \$34.1 million in reserves. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Infant deaths, cleft palates raise concern about toxic landfill in Valley -- A mystery has settled on Kettleman City, a small San Joaquin Valley migrant farming community off Interstate 5 that's halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. [LA Times article](#)

Millions in U.S. drink dirty water -- More than 20 percent of the nation's water treatment systems have violated key provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act over the last five years, according to a New York Times analysis of federal data. [New York Times article](#)

Agriculture/Water

Sacramento's water use up despite debut of weekends-only watering – [Sacramento](#) residents used more water this past November than they did during the same month in 2008, despite a new ban on weekday yard watering. [Sacramento Bee article](#)

Modesto-area growers bank on holiday, gift-giving spirit -- On the chilly morning of Dec. 25, people in many places will open gifts packed with the flavor of a San Joaquin Valley summer. Some of the region's farmers put their fruit, nuts and other products in gift packages that shoppers can get online or in stores. [Modesto Bee article](#)

Economy

Freezing temperatures threaten crops – Citrus growers are firing up the wind machines and preparing for a long night tonight as a hard freeze threatens to damage the county's \$592 million orange crop. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Lodi's new mayor wants to add business and jobs – As the new Lodi mayor, Phil Katzakian plans to focus on bringing more retail to Lodi to increase the tax base and improve the economy. [Lodi News-Sentinel article](#)

Extension sought for jobless benefits – Nearly 600,000 jobless Californians could run out of unemployment benefits by April unless Congress extends a series of special assistance measures that expire at the end of December, says the National Employment Law Project. [San Francisco Chronicle article](#)

Downtown Fresno to add more apartments – Two apartment developments are getting ready to break ground in downtown Fresno -- at a time when the recession is forcing some of the area's most likely tenants to look elsewhere to live. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Improved TARP forecast may mean \$200 billion to help create new jobs – President Obama is looking to use bailout money that banks are returning to the government to help tackle two of the nation's biggest problems -- unemployment and the budget deficit. [LA Times article](#)

Fresh & Easy seeks permit extension in Hanford -- Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market may still come to Hanford, but it remains unclear when that may occur. Just as the British grocery chain opened a new market in Lemoore this week, the company is moving to delay construction of the planned Hanford store for up to two years. [Hanford Sentinel article](#)

Bill McEwen: Hindsight sheds light on Fresno stadium -- In seven short years, Fresno's downtown stadium has gone from a civic treasure to a civic drain. [McEwen column in Fresno Bee](#)

Retirement benefits: CalPERS' changing role – The CalPERS board has played a part in retirement benefit legislation in the past, sponsoring a landmark increase and even a kind of cut that cracked down on pension-boosting maneuvers. But the policy of the giant system, which faces questions about whether current benefits are affordable in the long run, is apparently changing. [Calpensions.com](#)

Kern vendors optimistic about Christmas tree sales -- Many retailers have scaled back on trees and other holiday items to avoid getting caught with unsold merchandise, but they're not giving up. [Bakersfield Californian article](#)

Education

Visalia Unified prepares for \$10 million in cuts – Visalia Unified School District is set to adopt \$10 million worth of budget cuts to be implemented during the next two years. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Legislation would give parents new power to trigger change at a school – The Republican governor and a top Democratic lawmaker have united behind legislation that would give parents the authority to trigger major reform at a persistently low-performing school. [LA Times article](#)

Teachers union, Tulare school district eager to reach deal – While a contract agreement hasn't been reached between the Tulare high school district and the California Teachers Association, both sides say they are eager to come to an agreement. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Report: Top college grads follow the money – States with higher gross state product growth are more likely to attract highly mobile and high-achieving college graduates, both self-employed and wage-and-salary workers, according to a new report Tuesday from the Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy. [Central Valley Business Times article](#)

Changes on Stockton Unified board swift, certain – Relative calm has descended upon Stockton Unified School District in the two-plus months since the firing of Superintendent Tony Amato, and the district may be about to take two more steps toward a semblance of serenity. [Stockton Unified article](#)

Class keeps topics interesting at Delta College – Conventional thinking says students training to be heavy equipment technicians will take an English course because it's required, not because they expect to enjoy it. Ginger Holden's course is not conventional. [Stockton Record article](#)

Fresno State classes for 50 and older funded – A Fresno State program that serves adults who are 50 and older has received a \$1 million grant, university officials announced Monday. [Fresno Bee article](#)

California given high marks for charter schools -- [California](#), [Minnesota](#) and the [District of Columbia](#) are the only [school systems](#) to receive "A" grades on their receptivity to [charter schools](#) from the [Washington-based Center for Education Reform](#), a pro-charter school organization. [Capitol Alert](#)

Could hoops game help Pacific's ties to Stockton? – Pamela Eibeck, the school's new president, wants the university to reach out to Stockton and its surrounding communities. She said she believes Wednesday's game at 7 p.m. at Stockton Arena between the Tigers and Pacific-10 Conference member the University of California, Berkeley, will be a meaningful step in that direction. [Stockton Record article](#)

Dan Walters: Obama's school grants are side issue in California – What's really happening this week, as the [Assembly](#) takes up a measure passed by the [Senate](#) and acts on its own version, is a new skirmish in a years-long war over [education policy](#). [Walters column in Sacramento Bee](#)

Antonio Villaraigosa: Time runs short in Race to the Top – The Los Angeles mayor writes that the Race to the Top Fund is an opportunity to fix our state's education problems and once again make [California](#) – the [Golden State](#) – the gold standard in public education. [Villaraigosa op-ed in Sacramento Bee](#)

Donations give Modesto garden a start -- Onions and carrots soon will be on the menu for special education students in Modesto City Schools' Transitions Program. [Modesto Bee article](#)

[Environment/Energy](#)

Sacramento Bee: Climate is right for action on CO2 – Like the rest of the world, [California](#) must adapt to global climate change. That adaptation must include a constant examination of ongoing research, an open mind and a recognition of the consequences of making the wrong choices. [Sacramento Bee editorial](#)

Bids solicited to test SmartMeters – The California Public Utilities Commission on Friday began soliciting bids to conduct Independent meter testing and bill validation assessment for Pacific Gas & Electric Co. meters in the San Joaquin Valley. [Bakersfield Californian article – second item](#)

Sacramento biofuel institute gets federal funds -- [Sacramento's Renewable Energy Institute International](#) has received a \$20 million economic stimulus grant from the [U.S. Department of Energy](#) to demonstrate a new way to turn crop residues and wood waste into [diesel fuel](#). [Sacramento Bee article](#)

Health and Human Services

State mammogram funds reduced – California will temporarily stop enrolling low-income women in a program that provides free mammograms beginning Jan. 1. And when the program resumes on July 1, it will be available only to women age 50 and older. [Fresno Bee article](#); [Bakersfield Californian article](#)

H1N1 vaccines open to everyone in Kern – Officials at the Kern County Department of Public Health announced Monday they are changing course and will make the H1N1 swine flu vaccine available to the general public at their free vaccination clinics. [Bakersfield Californian article](#)

Nurses unions join together for more clout – Nurses from three unions, including the powerful California Nurses Association, have founded a new national union to influence national health care policies and try to extend California's patient ratio law into other states. [San Francisco Chronicle article](#)

Land Use/Housing

Merced council committee to explore problem of homeless -- The council decided 6 to 1 -- John Carlisle was the only nay -- to form a committee that will make recommendations on the homeless matter to the council within 120 days. Those recommendations would include whether or not there should be a homeless camp in Merced at all, among other things. [Merced Sun-Star article](#)

Modesto councilman to sit out votes on two projects -- Newly elected City Councilman Joe Muratore has yet to cast a vote on the council, but with deep ties to local real estate, he's identified two housing developments he won't vote on because of possible conflicts of interest. [Modesto Bee article](#)

Transportation

Clovis Oks funding for 87 curb cuts – The Clovis City Council approved a plan Monday night that will pave the way for dozens of curb cuts over the next few months. [Fresno Bee article](#)

Other Areas

Visalia council considers ordinance banning panhandling -- The Visalia City Council on took a first step Monday night toward adopting an ordinance that would put restrictions on panhandling and where homeless people can set up camp. [Visalia Times-Delta article](#)

Bob Foy is tops in Stockton -- Crashing a board meeting of the venerable Pacific Storage Co., a 153-year-old Stockton-based corporation, is a little unusual, but the "crashers" were on a goodwill mission: presenting longtime businessman, community activist and volunteer Robert W. "Bob" Foy with the Stocktonian of the Year Award for 2009. [Stockton Record article](#)

Stockton gets snow for first time in 33 years -- At breakfast at UJ's Family Restaurant on Monday, regulars drank coffee and talked about the snow - Stockton's first measurable amount in more than 30 years. [Stockton Record article](#)

Editorial Roundup

Fresno Bee – Survey findings show [need for health reform](#).

Merced Sun-Star – Time is right for [action on climate](#).

Modesto Bee – California needs [a new vision](#) as bold as the 1960 Master Plan to assure that higher education remains a key element in the state's prosperity and a principal avenue of individual opportunity.

Sacramento Bee – Like the rest of the world, California must adapt to [global climate change](#).

Stockton Record – [Short takes](#) on the San Joaquin job market, library shutdowns, the Grape Bowl and other issues.

Visalia Times-Delta – For best results, [donate to local charities](#).

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 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Information: Dr. Walt Buster, (559) 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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