



A Distant view of the Sutter Buttes, rising over the Central Valley, is the only view most Californians can get. Photographs by BRIAN BAER California State Parks

A magical state park you can't see

The Sutter Buttes property is otherworldly, and closed to almost all visitors

By JESSICA GARRISON

SUTTER BUTTES, Calif. — About 60 miles north of Sacramento, the Sutter Buttes rise starkly from the floor of the Central Valley, the remnants of a volcano active more than 14 million years ago. Their cathedral-like spires twist upward, some reaching more than 2,000 feet into the sky — an imposing circular formation, 10 miles in diameter, that's been called “the smallest mountain range in the world.” Sheltered within these lava domes is an oasis of rolling hills, rich with wildflowers and Native American artifacts, and watched over by hawks and countless other species of birds. Bitter debates over the lack of public access to the Sutter Buttes have roiled for years. But



CALIFORNIA owns 1,800 acres of park here, but all roads in are privately owned. Feelings are mixed about opening up.

most everyone on both sides agrees on this: They encompass some of the most magical and otherworldly terrain in California. Long sacred to Native American tribes, the formation is now home mainly to cattle that chomp grass behind stone walls built by Chinese laborers more than a century ago, oblivious to the fact that some people want to throw open the gates and some want to keep them locked forever. For the last two decades, the Sutter Buttes have also been home to a California state park that almost no one is allowed to visit. In 2003, the state of California spent about \$3 million to buy 1,800 acres on the north side of the buttes, including an idyllic stretch of emerald called “Peace Valley.” The government has eyed a park in this ruggedly beautiful landscape [See **Park**, A6]



HATEM ALI Associated Press
PALESTINIANS seek shelter from Israeli bombardment at the European Hospital in the Gaza Strip.

‘Complete chaos’: L.A. doctor steps in at a Gaza hospital

Practicing medicine in a war zone leaves a physician stunned — and his family anxious about his welfare.

By THOMAS CURWEN

Mohamad Abdelfattah was supposed to land at LAX last Tuesday at 11:45 a.m., where his wife, their baby and young son would be waiting for him, and they would celebrate his safe return from Gaza. But Tuesday came and went, and Abdelfattah, a critical-care doctor, was still in the southern city of Rafah, with no way of leaving. He was at the end of a

two-week trip volunteering in one of the few hospitals that has remained open in the besieged city, days on end trying to save lives as Israeli airstrikes pummeled neighborhoods. Then, after a rocket attack by Hamas killed four Israeli soldiers, the border crossings with Egypt and Israel were closed. Abdelfattah's wife, Donya Salah, waited at home in Orange County with her phone close at hand. “Could you please be careful?” she texted him Wednesday morning after he asked her to cancel his appointments for the week at Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital in South Los Angeles. “Yes,” he replied. “Doing [See **Rafah**, A9]

WHY A PUBLIC EMPLOYEE WORKS 94-HOUR WEEKS

Rancho Los Amigos anesthesiologist was Los Angeles County's top earner in 2023 at \$1.26 million

By REBECCA ELLIS

The joke around the hospital is that Dr. Sebo Amirkhanian Namagerdy does not leave Rancho Los Amigos, a premier rehabilitation facility run by Los Angeles County. His Mercedes-Benz is always in the parking lot. A

former nurse found him to be such a permanent fixture at the Downey hospital that she compared him to “a piece of the material.” Doctors at other county-run facilities have heard of the guy who's the “one-man-show” of his intensive care unit. “He's basically living there,” said a Rancho doctor, one of four current and

former hospital employees who spoke with The Times on the condition of anonymity to discuss a colleague. “I see him in the mornings with a toothbrush and a towel around his neck.” It's a lucrative second home. Namagerdy, an anesthesiologist in the hospital's ICU, earned \$1.26 million in [See **Anesthesiologist**, A7]



JUSTIN SULLIVAN Getty Images
STRIKE AT UC SANTA CRUZ
Academic workers walked off the job Monday in protest of UC's handling of pro-Palestinian demonstrations. More campuses could follow. **CALIFORNIA**, B1

Big cuts leave victims with few options

Programs that serve survivors of domestic violence and others brace for reduction in crisis services in state.

By SONJA SHARP

A spot in an emergency shelter can be a critical escape route for victims of domestic and sexual violence. But California has long had too few shelter beds — and without a \$200-million infusion from the state, the options will soon dwindle even further. Come July 1, thousands of shelter beds could disappear across the state. It's not just emergency shelters: Scores of rape crisis hotlines, child abuse centers and legal service providers across California are bracing for an unprecedented 44.7% cut this summer — almost \$70 million this year alone — due to a dramatic falloff in the federal Victims of Crime Fund. Established by the Crime Victims Act of 1984, the fund has traditionally been filled by federal prosecutions and asset forfeiture, as opposed to tax revenue. Money is then disbursed to states, which allocate it to service providers. But with fewer cases being brought and more settled out of court, the fund's reserves have dwindled. Efforts to boost them, including the VOCA Fix act of 2021, have come too little too late, experts say.

“It's already wildly underfunded,” said Krista Colón, senior director of public policy strategies at the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence. “We are really just asking to keep this going at the [current] level.” Since 2019, programs in all 50 states have watched in alarm as their allotments were slashed while lawmakers looked for a way to make up the shortfall. A one-time infusion of \$100 million from the state in 2021 kept California's programs relatively intact until now. But this year's cut is far larger than any before, leaving providers with agonizing choices about which staff and services to sacrifice, and barely a month left to cull them. “These cuts are very, very [See **Victims**, A12]

Arrest of war's leaders sought
Prosecutor wants International Criminal Court to hold Israel and Hamas accountable. **PERSPECTIVES**, A2
Iran president's death could echo
The helicopter crash that killed Ebrahim Raisi comes amid high tensions across the Middle East. **WORLD**, A3

Weather
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