

The Ranchos Independent



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The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County

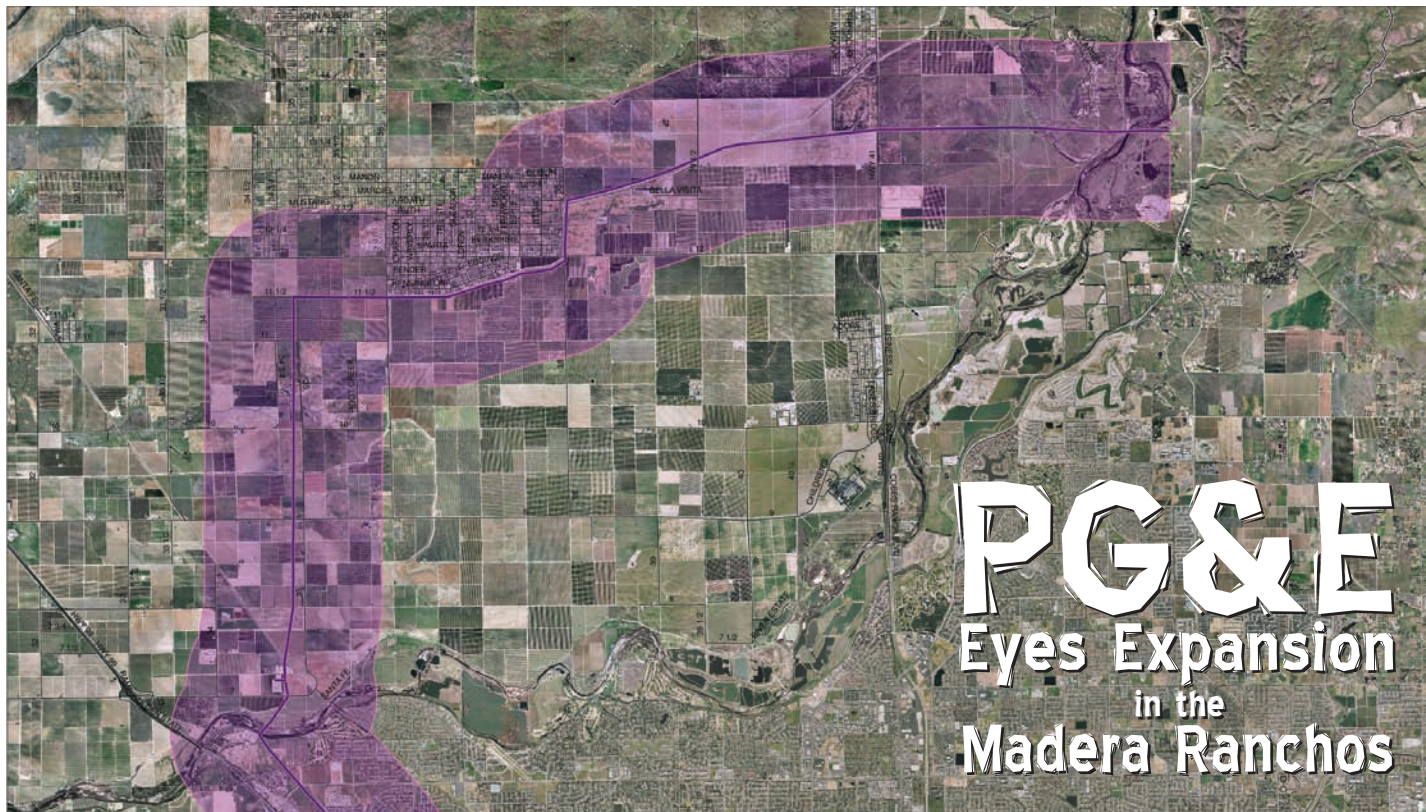
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A low-angle photograph of a tall metal power line tower against a blue sky with white clouds. The tower's structure is a complex lattice of steel beams.

COMING TO A NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR YOU ...

**PG&E's secret plans to turn up the voltage
and run right through the Ranchos**

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This map illustrates a conceptual alignment of the western alternate of PG&E's proposed 500kV electric transmission line. Alignment shown on this plan is based on visual observation of PG&E's planning map on December 13, 2007. PG&E land rights staff were not willing to share the original map at that time due to its preliminary nature. This map intends to replicate the alignment shown on PG&E's planning map.

By Christi McKinney

While most residents of the Ranchos were receiving holiday greetings in the mail last December, some Ranchos property owners received "greetings" of a different sort from Pacific Gas & Electric. Unknown to Ranchos residents and prop-

erty owners, PG&E has been busy for the last two years with expansion plans to build new 500 kV (500,000 volt) transmission towers, possibly right through the middle of our community.

"I'm very concerned about the installation of two new 500 kV towers that will virtually split the Ranchos area

in half," said Igal Treibatch, an owner of agricultural land whose property is among those targeted. "In addition, this project would lower property values and will require a 200 foot right of way easement."

The first word that landowners got about this proposed project came from a letter mailed to them from PG&E Project Manager Mike Neer. The letter says:

"... In order to meet growing demand in the Central Valley with clean, renewable electricity, PG&E proposes to expand its electrical transmission infrastructure through a new project called the Central California Clean Energy Transmission Project

The project proposes a 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Buttonwillow to the foothills northeast of Fresno, which will connect to new, clean wind and geothermal energy sources currently under development in the Tehachapi Mountains and Imperial Valley. PG&E will study several potential corridors for the proposed line, one of which crosses your property. We may need to access your property between now and December 2008 to perform engineering and environmental field studies.

PG&E will take biological, cultural resource, land use and other environmental factors into consideration to determine the best route to recommend for

Please see **PG&E** on P. 19

GV Moves Soil Where It's Needed



Ranchos Independent Photo

Earthmovers remove soil from the ponding basin in front of Liberty High to both deepen the basin to receive more drainage water and to provide additional soil to the site of the new middle school located on the northwest corner of the school property.

By Pete Petersen

Due to the passage of Measures G & S, school construction and modernization projects are progressing for the students of Golden Valley Unified School District. Bond-funded projects are in various stages of construction throughout the District.

Earth work has begun on the new Ranchos Middle School. Up to this point District staff has worked on

developing plans and obtaining State approval to build on the site. The new school will be located on the south east side of Avenue 12 1/2 and Road 35 1/2. A temporary fence has been constructed around the ponding basin in front of Liberty High School. The basin needs to be lowered to accommodate the additional storm water drainage resulting from the construc-

Please see **SOIL** on P. 21

2007 • Top Ten Ranchos Stories

from the pages of the Ranchos Independent

1 Passing of Donovan Tessmer/July • Nothing puts life in perspective like facing the death of a loved one. The senseless accident that took 16-year-old Donovan Tessmer not only impacted the four other kids that were riding with him on July 8, it impacted an entire community. Life is very fragile and all of the Ranchos became painfully aware of that fragility early in the morning on that July day.

2 County's Approval of Gateway Village/Sept. • After what seemed like forever (12 years actually), the Madera County Board of Supervisors finally gave Castle & Cooke's Gateway Village development at Highway 41 and Avenue 12 the green light. When fully built over the next 20 years, the project will be the home of 21,000 new neighbors. The first of 6,500 new homes should be built in about two years.

3 Supes Take \$3.2 Million from Ranchos/Mar. • It wasn't so much that they took the money from the unincorporated areas (the Ranchos and the mountain communities), rather it was the way they did it. No public discussion. Introduced as an "off agenda" item that had to be acted upon immediately. Citizens got upset, a lawsuit followed and the "D.O.G. House" was born.

Please see **TOP 10** on P. 14

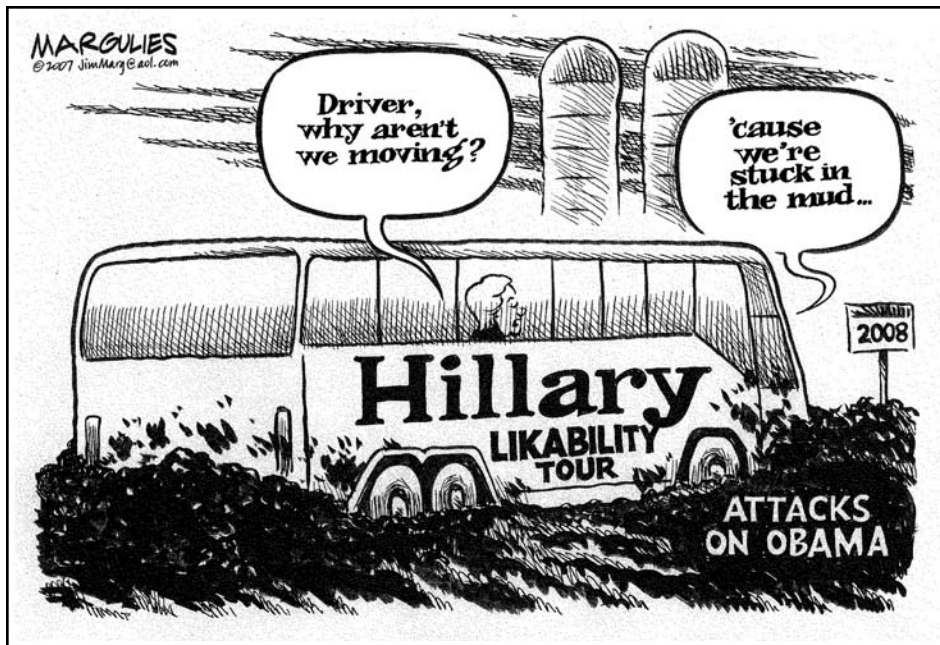
Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Madera Ranchos Library and Community Center Committee Seeks Community Input

This issue of the Ranchos Independent includes a detailed questionnaire on **page 23** for consideration and response from members of the Madera Ranchos, Rolling Hills and Bonadelle communities. The questionnaire provides an opportunity for community members to choose and prioritize virtually all of the elements that may be included in

Please see **POLL** on P. 14

Click on "Local News" at



Editorial

Election Thoughts and Shots

By Randy Bailey

The primary is almost here. Have you had enough yet? Who passed around the memo saying that presidential races now have to be a two-year event before we ever get to vote on anything? States are now vying for the “honor” of being the first state to have a primary or caucus, to the point that some states were actually considering having elections *last* year, just to be first. Give me a break.

Please take note of the significance of Iowa - as in there is none. Every election cycle we have to listen to the media ply us with their opinions about the significance of the Iowa Caucuses and what it means to the election and the election process. I have two words for you: Howard Dean. This year it looks like I’ll be able to replace those words with “Mike Huckabee.”

There are some things about the primary system that I hate. Like “winner take all” for delegates. Let’s look at Florida, for example. John McCain wins Florida and gets all 57 delegates. Seems fair enough, doesn’t it? But he won with 36 percent of the votes. Mitt Romney came in second with 31 percent and got ... nothing. Five percentage points less equalled “nada” for the Mittster. McCain walked away with the prize and the reality is that 64 percent of the Republicans in Florida wanted someone else. Not a lot of representation there.

If McCain got 36 percent of the vote he should get 36 percent of the delegates, or

21. Romney’s 31 percent would have netted him 18 delegates, and so on.

What am I missing here?

I also don’t like the way primaries dribble out across the United States like a dog leaving lawn sausages wherever it decides to stop and drop. By the time we get to our primary (I know - “which one?”) the choice has already been made for us. If you’re a Democrat, you don’t get to express a preference for Joe Biden, Chris Dodd, Mike Gravel, Dennis Kucinich or Bill Richardson. As a Republican, I won’t get to vote for Rudy Giuliani, Mike Huckabee, Duncan Hunter, Ron Paul or my pre-season favorite, Fred Thompson.

Here’s an idea: Just like we have one national election day, let’s have one national primary day. Make it the first Tuesday in June, everybody gets their best shot, count the votes and have a general election five months later. Simple.

And I say this as a backhanded threat to anyone out there who loses an election and then wants to cry about voting irregularities: I don’t want to hear it. It is what it is. In 2000 when Bush “stole” the elections it was all we heard about. At the midterm elections in 2002 and Republicans maintained control, “... something needed to be done!” In 2004 Bush stole the election AGAIN and we needed to completely revamp the whole electoral process. In 2006 Democrats won and miraculously there were no irregularities.

Spare me!

Was I the only one that got a funny feeling that there were no investigations because they just might turn up some improprieties in their own backyards? Just a thought.

And a final thing that is just bugging me to no end. Who are these people who are voting for Hillary, “... because it’s time we had a woman for president.” Is that a fair look into the depth of thought that goes into selecting the most powerful leader on the face of the earth? Ditto for, “... is America ready for a black president?” Just for the record, a few primaries ago I voted for a black man for president, Dr. Alan Keyes. I know of no one more eloquent on the Pro-Life issue. I find it absurd and insulting that someone would vote for a candidate based on plumbing or melanin, but then maybe that’s all they have. I’m going to vote for ideas and I don’t really care how it’s been packaged by God.

The Ranchos Independent

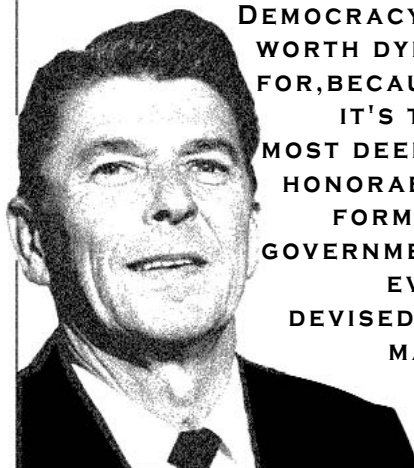
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Random Notes

Happy New Year! I thought it might be nice to hear that one more time before we head into February, but that was definitely my last one.

I really like watching the Food Network on TV. I just love seeing all the creative things people can do with food. One of my favorite programs is *Diners, Drive Ins and Dives*, hosted by Guy Fieri. He travels around the country looking for great food at - well, you guessed it - diners, drive ins and dives. I just might send in our very own Cat's Diner as a suggestion for a future show. Owner Robbie Hammond has come up with a monster burger he calls the "Cho Daddy." It's two hand-formed beef patties wrapped around a block of cheddar cheese and then cooked so the finished burger has a gooey, cheesy middle. With the bacon, lettuce, grilled onions, tomato and avocado added, this thing stands a half foot tall when finished! The hardest part was figuring out how to get your mouth around it, but what a wonderful dilemma to have. If you see me in Cat's, it's what I'll be eating!

There are a lot of things going on and it seems like they're all related to the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. For starters, the Chamber is in the process of putting out a new Community Guide. The present one is about five years old and doesn't have a lot of the newer businesses in it. They have brought on a great sales rep named Tanya Rosa to help you get your goods or services in front of the great folks of the Ranchos. They're shooting for a May publishing date to coincide with the Flatlander's Day Parade so give Tanya a call at 559-779-2304 or email her at tanyarosa@earthlink.net.

By now you've heard that Madera County wants to do something with Avenue 12 to prepare it for the increase in traffic that all of the prognosticators say is coming. The idea that's causing the most concern is the possibility of a loop that would bypass Avenue 12 altogether, effectively turning the Ranchos into a ghost town. On Wednesday, Feb. 13 there's going to be a Townhall meeting at Pizza Factory's new banquet hall with members of Madera County's Resource

Management Agency in attendance. The County seems quite receptive to input from the community so we need to speak now or forever hold our peace. Call the Chamber at 645-4001 for more info.

The Madera Ranchos Library and Community Center Committee needs your input as well about the feasibility of going forward with the idea of a combined Community Center and new library facility. On page 23 of this issue of the Ranchos Independent is a questionnaire that you can fill out in about five minutes. Tear it out of the paper and carry it, mail it or fax it to the Chamber or library A.S.A.P. We'll post the results in next month's Ranchos Independent.

You can now dispose of household hazardous waste (cleaners, drain cleaners, paint, solvents, motor oil, weed killers, etc.) at the Fairmead Landfill at 21739 Rd. 19. You're limited to 15 gallons of liquids and 125 pounds of solids per trip. It's only available on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., but it sure beats dumping it on the ground or into your septic tank. By the way, all of you guys with radioactive material will have to take it somewhere else because they are NOT accepting any of that. If you've got an old Pershing missile in the backyard you're going to have to take it elsewhere. I recommend Fresno.

On Saturday, March 8, there's going to be a Sportsmen's Swap Meet over at the Fresno County Sportsmen's Club. It's ONLY for hunting, fishing, boating, camping, hiking, etc., all that outdoorsy stuff. It's their 11th year so folks seem to be enjoying it. You can reserve space if you've got stuff to sell sportsmen or you can just go and do some shopping. The Sportsmen's Club is on the other side of the San Joaquin River off of Friant Road. Call Douglas Bowman for more info at 559-999-2346.

Finally, I don't know how I missed it last month, but I failed to recognize the nearly 10 Girl Scout troops representing Webster and Sierra View Elementary that participated in the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Maywood Center in November. They sang Christmas carols and provided donations to the Veterans via the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Girl Scouts are part of this event each year and I'm sorry I missed them.



THE D.O.G. HOUSE

DEMAND OPEN GOVERNMENT BY DALE DROZEN



I am going to apologize before you read this one. It is a tirade. If you don't want to hear me venting in pure frustration, please go on to the next story.

"The purpose of the brief general description is to inform interested members of the public about the subject matter under consideration so that they can determine whether to monitor or participate in the meeting of the body."

– State Attorney General's "Brown Act" Pamphlet

Demand Open Government was created about a year ago for just this purpose stated in the Brown Act Pamphlet. Important decisions are made on a regular basis by our government. It is our right and our responsibility to be involved in those decisions. How can we fulfill our responsibility if we are not given enough information on the agenda to understand what is to be decided?

Let me explain what happened at the first Board of Supervisor's meeting of the new year so you can decide if you may have wanted to participate, and if the description fulfills the requirements of the Brown Act.

The agreement involves Madera County and the cities of Madera and Chowchilla.

Among other things, it reduces the tipping fee (fee charged per ton for solid waste taken to the landfill) from \$42 per ton to \$36 per ton for the cities of Madera and Chowchilla. At the same time it will cause increases in the tipping fee for all other residents of Madera County from \$43 per ton that we pay now to \$50 + per ton.

When Supervisor Wheeler expressed concerns he was told that the new fees were necessary and fair. He was told if we don't lower the fees for the cities, they will take their trash someplace else. If the cities took their trash someplace else we could not afford to keep the dump open.

Does this sound as ludicrous to you as it does to me?

As I sit here writing, I just can't understand the logic. Same landfill, same costs to handle the trash. Why do I have to pay more to put my trash in a County operated landfill?

I have been advocating rate increases for special districts because I believe everybody needs to pay for the services they receive. The other side of that coin is our responsibility to make sure we are getting the best bang for our buck. "Because I said so!" may have worked for my dad but, from my government, I want a better explanation of why the cities should pay \$36 for the same service we in the County are being asked to pay \$50. We deserve an opportunity to speak on this matter and have the logic explained to us.

I learned a few lessons from the lawsuit I filed last year regarding a Brown Act violation. Neither our local nor the State government cares to enforce our open government laws; it is up to individual citizens to hold our government accountable. There is a required process before filing another very expensive legal action and I have begun that process. As I did last time, I will offer what I think is a reasonable settlement before I proceed with the process.

Settlement offer:

1) At the next regular meeting of the Board, vote a motion to rescind, as permitted in the Board's bylaws, thereby voiding the vote to approve the agreement.

2) Schedule a public hearing allowing citizens adequate notice of what is to be discussed along with the opportunity to be informed and participate in the discussion before this agreement becomes law.

And now, the venting.

During the first Board meeting of the year there were eloquent speech-

Please see **D.O.G.** on P. 11

Click on "Local News" at

The Olde Cowboy by Woody Laughnan

Papa often said the most beautiful sounds in the world were cattle lowing at eventide, a breeze whispering in the cottonwoods and coyotes in mournful concert on yonder knolls. But more than all else, papa loved his cows, work horses, saddle horse and pigs in descending order. And he loved the land, especially in springtime when the first shoots of wheat, barley and corn poked through the rich chocolate loam earth.

Indeed, the cows got us through

the Great Depression: meat from a butchered beef, the weekly cream check and the pittance we collected from whole milk we sold in town – and little did these customers know it had been stirred in the pail by unwashed and swishing tails.

Papa, gone these many years to the “great meadow in the sky,” as Father Warner said at his funeral, would be sorely disturbed by the Environmental Protection Agency which claims cows are responsible for

15 percent and more of the methane emission fouling today’s atmosphere.

Because Papa is not here to defend cows, I feel obligated to do so, and to the best of my recollection cannot remember any appreciable incidence of farting in our herd. And having been reared on a cattle ranch in far away Montana, I consider myself somewhat of an authority on the day-to-day habits of cows. I milked them, herded them, fed them, hobbled and neck-yoked them, roped and branded them and led them behind a farm wagon to the neighbor’s corral to be bred and in late autumn rounded up

steers and old milk cows – no-longer-paying for their keep – for the cattle drive to the Kremlin, Mont. stockyard for shipment to Omaha, St. Paul and Chicago.

I’ve been splattered by their pies, switched by their tails, gored by their horns and chased across pastures by enraged bulls, but I cannot remember their having a farting problem and creating objectionable methane gas except perhaps during bitter winters when the oats and barley and corn ran out and we had to feed them rotted

Please see **WOODY** on P. 29

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Letters

Dear Editor:

Dip was a special little creature. The pit bull-mix proved that sometimes God does have a sense of humor. As my mother always says, "When God put Dip together He must have used nothing but spare parts." With her long pointed nose, short legs, wide torso, and ears that sometimes stuck up and other times sat halfway between up and down on her head, she was quite a funny little thing to look at. Today Dip was shot and killed; murdered in her own backyard.

Beyond being funny looking her only other real crime in life was that she had never gotten along well with my cat.

My parents took Dip in five years ago when she come wandering up to their home. She was so skinny that she had large dips in her skull where fat and muscle once were, and it is why my younger brother decided to call her "Dip." One of her ears had been severely torn open and she had blood dripping down the side of her face. It took a long time and a lot of love, but eventually Dip took a turn for the better and became a wonderful, sometimes goofy, member of the family.

When my parents moved to the Ranchos four years ago Dip seemed to feel right at home almost instantly. She loved to lie in the backyard and sunbathe until her tummy was as red as a tomato, or sit by the fire and allow the warmth of the flames to heat her little body to a point that you thought she might just roast herself. Dip always let you know when she was tired of being outside because she would jump up and down at the back door so high that you would have bet anything she was on a trampoline. She also caused her share of headaches when she would tear up toys or the Christmas decorations like she did this year, but those moments were few and far between. Dip also loved cuddling up to my parents' old lab-mix named "Princess." The two spent all of their time together both inside and out of the house. Tonight, for the first time in five years, Princess will have to sleep without her buddy, and is, unfortunately, the

only one who saw the person that murdered Dip.

Dip was not a menace, or a demon dog that terrorized the neighborhood. She was a sweet, intelligent dog who had never been out of her fenced-in yard. There was no reason for this horrible act, and whoever did this deserves to be prosecuted. I hate to think that the person who committed this act did it intentionally, but the type of gun that was used would require the shooter to be close to their target. Dip is not the first animal in this community to be killed in such a violent way, and without a cry for justice she won't be the last.

What scares me even more is that if it was an accident and someone was simply not paying attention, then it could have been a child that was struck and not a dog. It could have been my child. According to the deputy that took the report there is no area within the Ranchos where target practice is legal, because you have to be so many feet away from all structures. But I still hear gunfire constantly around my own home and worry about my family's safety. My husband and I moved to the Ranchos because we thought it would be a wonderful, safe place to raise a family, and everyone was so friendly. I hope we were not wrong in our assumptions.

I want justice for Dip, but more importantly I want people in this community to be aware.

If you have guns lock them up so that your children can't take them out and use innocent animals as target practice. My parents are devastated tonight and want answers they will probably never get. Dip had finally felt safe; trusting that she had found her forever home, and to lose her in this senseless way is horrifying. It is a loss that my family will feel for years to come and unless someone comes forward, or the community says "enough is enough." it is a loss that will be felt by another family in the future.

R. Price
Madera Ranchos
Written January 3, 2008



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Turn Off the Tube, Open a Book and Improve Your Health in 2008

By Ellen Mester

Happy New Year Everyone! Here's a suggestion for a New Year's resolution: Put yourself on a TV diet and reduce those TV hours and increase your neural activity by reading more. There is medical evidence that indicates that there is an increase in brain activity while reading and a decrease in brain activity while watching TV. Reading is actually good for your health!

The Library has voter registration forms for those first-time voters and those who need to register a new address. In order to vote in the presidential primary you must register by Jan. 22, 2008. If you miss that deadline, that's o.k. Just register and be ready for the June election and the presidential election in November.

Believe it or not, the Friends of the Rancho Library and the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce are already making plans for this year's Flatlander's Parade and Craft Show. We have set the date for Saturday, May 10. Please mark your calendars. Fliers and applications will be mailed out very soon to regular participants, but if you want to get a head start, stop by the Library and pick one up.

Tax time is here and the Library has federal and state forms available, and if you can't find the form you need we will be happy to download it and print it for you free of charge if it is available. Not all forms can be downloaded. Some like the 1099 must be carbon copied and sent in.

New Library Planning Committee Update

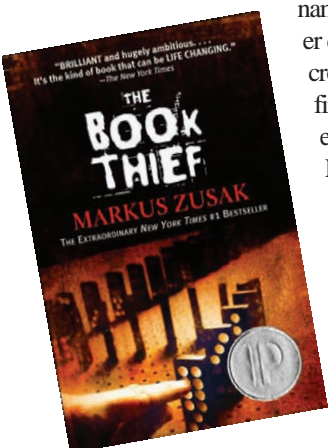
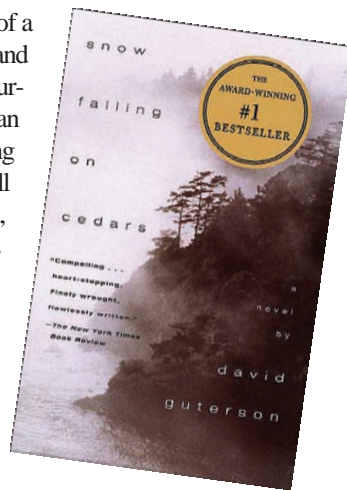
The NLPC is working on a new grant application for the annual Chukchansi grant program. We have some new ideas and hope to be successful this year. The NLPC will meet again on Feb. 20, 2008 at 7 p.m. in the Library. Everyone is welcome.

Parents: Bring your small children to Monday Story Time at 11 a.m. with Mrs. Anderson. This is a wonderful free opportunity for little ones to learn about the library while enjoying a story read by a retired first grade teacher who has been our Story Time reader for over 15 years.

Book Recommendations

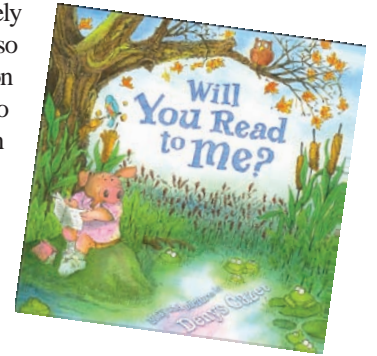
Adult Fiction: *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson. The year is 1954 and Ishmael Chambers is covering the trial of a Japanese/American fisherman accused of murdering a friend and fellow fisherman over 7 acres of land that were taken away during the Japanese internment. Almost all of the young men of San Piedro Island in the Puget Sound fought in WWII — including the Japanese who were interned. Those who returned home still fight demons and struggle to forget the horrors they witnessed, but for some the prejudice is not easy to forget and the islanders of Japanese heritage are still held with a certain amount of suspicion. Combine this with unrequited love between Ishmael and Hatsue, the wife of the accused murderer, plus an uncommon massive snow storm and you have the crux of the story. It is beautifully crafted and leaves you with a sense of justice juxtaposed to the injustice of the Japanese internment.

Young Adult Fiction: *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. The story takes place in Germany just as Hitler begins to rise in power. The unusual and perhaps most compelling aspect of this book is that the narrator is Death — as in "the angel of..." And interestingly enough, Death has some human characteristics, such as being so busy (especially at the time of war) and having compassionate interest in the survivors — those Death leaves behind. In this case Death is interested in a little girl named Liesel Memminger, who at the age of nine watches her brother die of cold and hunger while traveling with her sickly mother on a crowded train to Munich. During the snowy burial, Liesel steals her first book, *The Grave Digger's Handbook*. Death watches with interest, knowing that Liesel can't read. With her book now hidden, Liesel is left in the care of the Hubermans, foster parents who live in Molching. It is not an easy life with the Hubermans but Hans, the father, is loving and kind and teaches Liesel to read her stolen book. Over the years as the war ensues and they hide a Jewish man in their basement, Death visits again, always interested in Liesel, the little book thief. It is a powerful story written with grit and tenderness, and offers a glimpse of how the Germans (especially the poor) suffered under Hitler's reign. This book was a 2007 Michael L. Printz Honor Book.

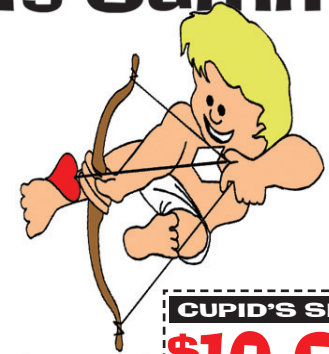


Juvenile Picture Book: *Will You Read to Me?* by Denys Cazet. Hamlet is a little pig unlike the rest of his family. Instead of wallowing in the mud while waiting for the food trough to be filled, Hamlet writes poetry — lovely poetry. But none of his family is interested in listening, so Hamlet wanders off to the pond and discovers his reflection which he thinks is his twin. He calls his twin Eggs and reads to him and asks if he will in turn read to him, but the reflection fades away as darkness falls and Hamlet is alone, or so he thinks. Suddenly, he hears many voices all asking him to read to them! It's a happy ending to a beautifully illustrated soft little story.

Check out these books and more at the library and remember your library card ... don't leave home without it!



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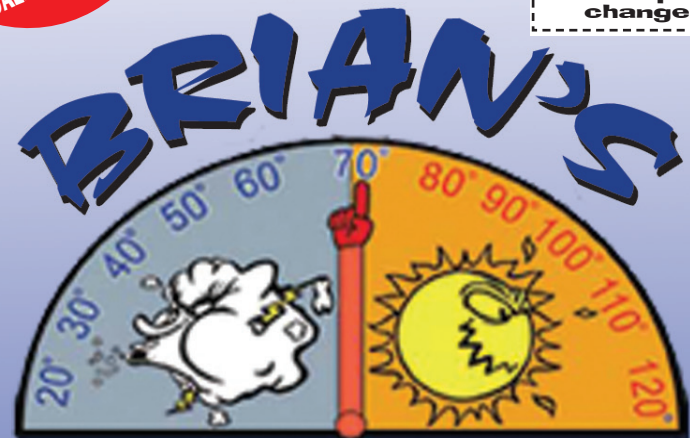


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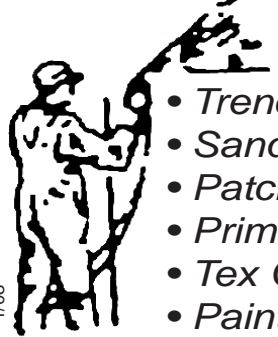


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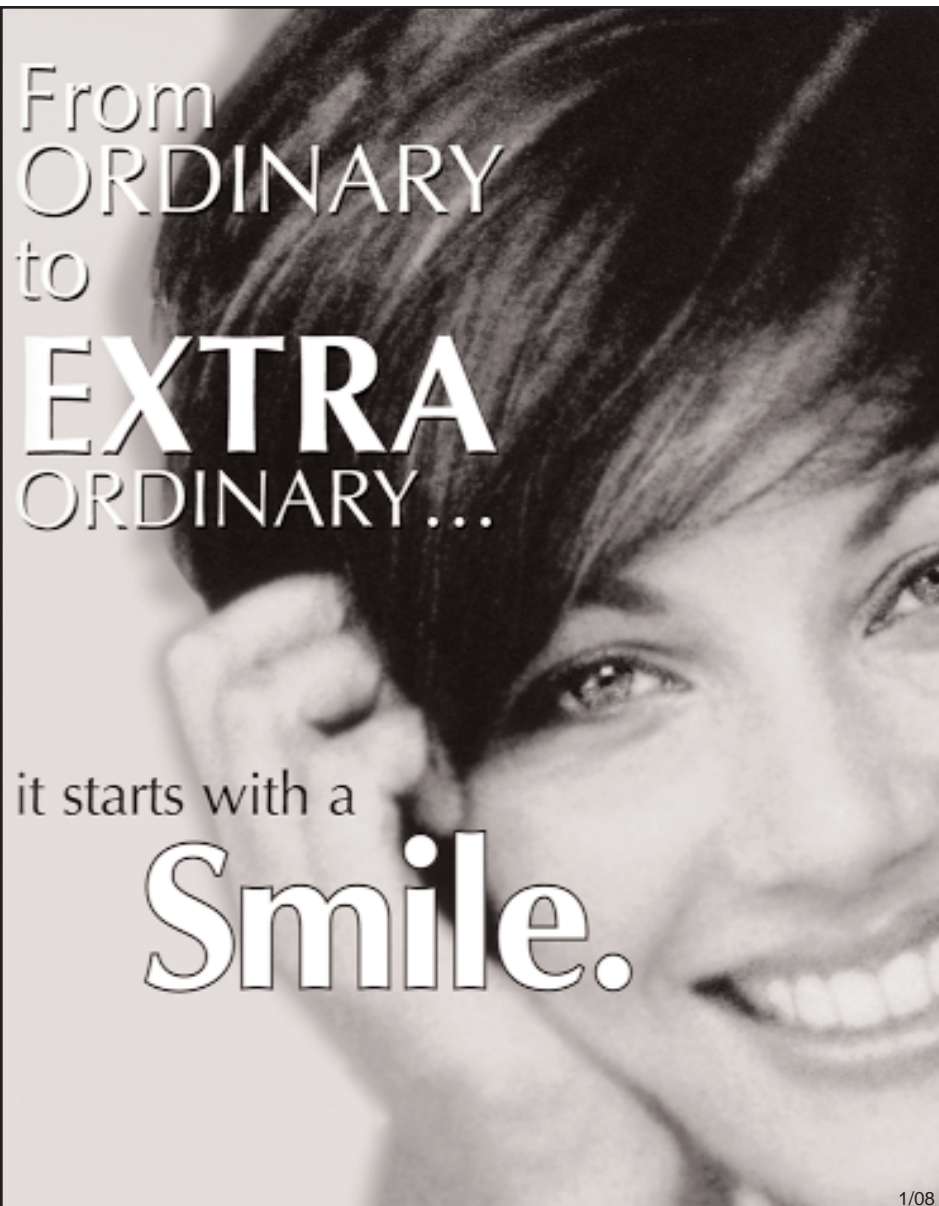
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KIWANIS KORNER



Seasons Greetings, Ranchos Community. We hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season and are already preparing for a great New Year. We wanted to give our community an update covering all the activities the Kiwanis Club of the Ranchos has been involved in over this past year and some upcoming events.

Our Key Club at Liberty High School has just returned from decorating the floats from the Rose Parade in Pasadena. The particular one they worked on this year was the Spirit of St. Louis, which represented The Lewis and Clark Expedition, which was pulled by the Clydesdales. It won the President's Trophy for most effective floral use and presentation. It is true that EVERY part of the float is COVERED in flower material. The kids spent their time placing roses in the appropriate areas and gluing individual carnation petals (called petaling) onto every exposed piece of metal on the float. There were hundreds of volunteers there, along with the kids decorating these huge floats. It was a wonderful experience.



Hanna Ashcraft positions a flower on the float for "The Lewis and Clark Expedition," the entry for the city of St. Louis at the 119th Rose Parade in Pasadena on Jan. 1. The Liberty High student and Key Club member volunteered her time for the annual event.

We help sponsor many service projects throughout the world but we pay special attention to our local community by holding fund raisers and sponsoring, or co-sponsoring, events such as Liberty Under the Stars, Firefighter's Dinner, Firefighter Run, College Run, Cross the River Run, Fireworks booth, Community Picnic, Electronic waste cleanup, Fill the Boot, MDA, Challenger Sports League, along with Flatlander's Parade. Throughout this year, we have donated funds to the Boys and Girls

Scouts, multiple scholarship programs, our troops in Iraq, 4-H program, youth sports, Valley Teen Ranch, Special Olympics, Muscular Dystrophy Association and all of our local schools. All of the money raised from these events go right back to the children and/or the community. We are proud of that fact and we feel honored to be able to provide our services and meet the needs of our community.

In 2007 our club grew with the addition of 10 new members. We welcome these talented, dedicated and community minded individuals into our club and look forward to working with them on our many projects. Our club meets every Thursday morning at an early - yes early - 6:30 a.m. at Golden Valley Unified School District, room 2. On the last Thursday of the month we meet at the same place except we meet at 6:30 p.m. In having one meeting a month in the evening it helps to meet the needs of our members who cannot attend the early morning meetings. If you are interested in joining us, please feel free to attend any meeting as there are interesting speakers, fun, food and camaraderie among us all.

Some new events we have planned for this year will be our first annual Home Garden and Wine tour set for this spring. It will begin at Fernwood Nursery, tour five or six local area gardens and then end at Birdstone Winery with a brunch and wine tasting. Any homeowners in the Ranchos area who would like to showcase their gardens and landscaped yards, please contact any of the Kiwanis officers or board members. Also, we have planned a contest for a new logo. We would like community involvement in designing a new logo that would incorporate the Kiwanis with our community. A \$100 award will be given to the winner who creates the best design. Applications will be available on Feb. 1 at various locations throughout the community and on our webpage at www.ranchoskiwanis.org.

If you are interested in volunteering some time and giving back to your community, please feel free to contact any of our new officers for 2007-2008. They would be happy to answer your questions.



Two more members of the LHS Key Club, Ashley Monk (left) and Lillian Gong, help put the finishing touches on "The Lewis and Clark Expedition" which won the President's Trophy for most effective floral use and presentation at the 119th Rose Parade.

Photos Courtesy of John Glueck

- President - Pam Glueck
- President Elect - Steven Monk
- Vice President - John Herrera
- Secretary - Sandy Monk
- Treasurer - Charisse Stindt
- Past President - Chris Parks
- Board Member - Marie Cameron
- Board Member - Ollia Ridge
- Board Member - Virginia Vick
- Board Member - Bruce Blair
- Board Member - John Glueck



Dave Hallam, a certified arborist, examines a rotting oak tree that is slowly dying near downtown Madera. The sideways growth of branches is a natural response of the tree after it was topped. Branches hang above the road on one side and over a roof on the other. Contrary to popular belief, topping trees causes safety issues.

Use Pros to Prune or Pay the Price

By Ramona Frances
UC Master Gardener

Like graffiti on walls, bad tree pruning is more than out of place. Hacked tree limbs showing up this time of year continue to expose trees that appear naked and malformed throughout the city and county of Madera. And, like graffiti, the results of the mindless action assault visual appeal. Not only is there excessive, unattractive pruning, I am painfully aware of how it stresses trees, making them vulnerable to pests and disease, and shortens the lifespan of the trees. Hacking trees does not prevent safety problems, an argument I often hear by people posing as landscape professionals.

Repeat after me:

BAD PRUNING CREATES SAFETY PROBLEMS AND IS EXPENSIVE TO CORRECT.

Removing too much canopy (branches and foliage) off trees exposes the tree to sunburn. Some trees are more susceptible to sunburn than others. Many of the trees along the Fresno River bed running through Madera are either stressed from sunburn or dying.

Sometimes, tree topping is so severe it cannot be corrected. The only fix is to

remove the tree, but Maderans have an extremely high tolerance for deformed and hacked trees. Untrained pruning crews that remove too many branches cause trees to compensate by pushing out an abundance of weak sucker growth. The tree then becomes bushier and misshapen, creating more work for the pruners or homeowners who *DO* know the difference.

So sad; so true.

Call the Master Gardener hotline, your local nursery or a certified arborist to answer pruning questions and look for upcoming workshops sponsored by Master Gardeners.

This column is provided by the Master Gardener program in Madera County. The MG program extends research based information in home horticulture and pest management, verified by the UCCE Master Gardener program. Call the UCCE office with your garden questions at 675-7879, ext. 210 or e-mail mgmadera@ucdavis.edu. Leave a message or stop by the office on Monday or Thursday from 1-3 p.m. to speak to a Master Gardener or visit cemadera.usdavis.edu.

For weed identification, see wric.ucdavis.edu.



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"Why not start the New Year right...

...call me" - Jesus

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

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Jeremiah 29:11

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D.O.G. cont. from P. 4

es about how the cities and the County were going to work together for the common good of all. If the new landfill agreements are an example of that cooperation we in the unincorporated areas need to brace ourselves for a very ROUGH ride.

When Madera needs to rip us off for \$3.2 million to build an overpass, we are just one big happy family.

When the County spends millions rebuilding Avenue 17 and Road 26 so Madera can annex that area, we are just one big happy family.

When County Fire subsidizes city fire. (I need a full DOG report to deal with this one, but it began the day CDF took over the city and has been costing the County ever sense.) Again, don't worry – just one big family.

We built our government center in Madera, now plan to build another in Chowchilla so they don't have to drive 10 minutes to the main Government Center, but what the heck we are just one big happy family. Raymond, Coarsegold and the Ranchos all have a longer drive but we are not getting satellite facilities.

We are going to build the new courthouse in Madera instead of next to the jail where it belongs, even though it will cost the county millions to transport inmates back and forth forever, and create a massive safety issue for the transporting officers.

Now when they look at the cost to run the County wide landfill the story seems to change. All of a sudden it is not fair for the total costs to be spread across the County. The cities demanded to have their rates lowered or they would drop out of the program.

Supervisors Bigelow and Dominici decided it was not fair to the city to pay for hauling trash from transfer stations, because their trash isn't taken to transfer stations. If it isn't fair for the city to pay for that haul from transfer sites, why is it fair for Raymond, the Ranchos, O'Neals or any other unincorporated area other than Oakhurst and Northfork? It's because that is the way government works. When there is a County wide government service the costs are spread across the County evenly. Flood control is not just an issue for the mountains so we are all being asked to share in the cost of fixing the Valley's levy system.

Why is it when the cities are getting a good deal we are one big happy family, but when the unincorporated areas are getting a good deal it isn't fair to the cities and needs to be changed?

The Madera City agreement was slipped through like a thief in the night. Every one of the Supervisors knew they were pushing us over a cliff. ("Don't worry – we will have public hearings before anyone's rates are raised.")

Half of the users of the land fill (the cities) are getting a 15% reduction, but the landfill doesn't have any profit margin to cut into. It doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out who is going to get stuck with a 15% increase.

What good are public hearings going to do for us now? We have been pushed over the cliff and as we are falling our supervisors magnanimously are going to give us a chance to say whether or not we want to hit the ground?

Wait a minute ... there is no "or." We no longer have a choice. Our rates are going up. Thanks for the public hearings guys.

Waste Tire Amnesty Day Program

Funded by the California Integrated Waste Management Board

North Fork Waste Tire Amnesty Day Coming Soon!

Tire amnesty days offer residents a time, place and a no-cost opportunity to dispose of any tires collected around the household. The days also allows the County to receive and haul away to recycling centers old tires turned in at these events and provide neighborhoods with educational information on the benefits of proper tire handling.

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MADERA COUNTY RESIDENTS

Senior Center Celebrates Valentine Couple

By Eleanore Burchell

In our upcoming months, we plan to introduce you to some of our couples who have been long-time members of our Ranchos/Hills Seniors, Inc. located at 37330 Berkshire. For the VALENTINE month of February, we have chosen Barbara and Archie Burton. On Jan. 13, the Burtons celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary. They are both native Californians. Archie was born in Stockton on July 7, 1915 and Barbara, a real native to our area, was born in Fresno on Sept. 5, 1921. They have one son, but lost a daughter soon after her birth. The Burtons were not original members of our Ranchos/Hills Seniors, but joined the group soon after. Archie spent many years in the service station and garage business, part of them with Standard Oil. He was a charter member of the Ranchos Kiwanis Club. He also was active in coaching Little League baseball and the establishment of the Babe Ruth League.

Our Christmas Boutique was a huge success. Many thanks to the hard working members of the Ranchos/Hills Seniors, Inc. We had homemade jellies, pickles, baked goods, candies, Christmas breads, tote bags and many Christmas decorative items. It was so successful that we are already talking about the next one. Many thanks to the Ranchos/Hill community for coming and supporting our efforts.

A new year has started and Pat Brunett, our new President, is at the helm. We have had some changes in board members since last month's article. They now are: Helen Lowell, Vice President; Shirley Tickel, Treasurer; Norma Williams, Assistant Treasurer; Nancy Koontz, Recording Secretary; Eleanore Burchell, Correspondence Secretary; Ada Forbes, Felix Corpuz, Ethel Pronin and Dot Sunderlund, Directors.

The next monthly sale will be held on Saturday, Feb. 2, 2008. The garden area has many nice trees for you to plant in your yard. This will be the perfect weather to put them in as they will be well settled in by the time summer comes again. By February we also may have many nice shrubs and flowering plants for your yard. The Treasure House will also be open and waiting to wish you a Happy New Year. We have many new winter items to show you. The bake sale, produce and boutique sections are held in the main building, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The bake sale has cookies, candy, breads, pies and cakes. The produce sec-

tion has persimmons, oranges, tangerines, grapefruits and lemons. However, that may change daily so come in to check out what is there. There are a few cookbooks left and they are \$12 each. The boutique items will be displayed on the shelves in the main building. Come in and see the necklaces, earrings, paintings, antiques, china items, etc.

We don't want you to forget us during the week so remember the plant, produce and boutique sections are available Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Thursday evenings between 6 and 9 p.m.

If you are new to the area, lonely or just lost a spouse, we welcome you to come to see us. We are here for you. Many of our members have surely experienced your same situation.

THE UP SIDE

The three R's for seniors! 1) RESPECT yourself, 2) RESPECT others, 3) and be RESPONSIBLE for your actions.

A Panama Canal cruise is ready to go on April 14 - 28. A flight to Fort Lauderdale, Fla. will be made and then board the ship with stops in Jamaica and Cartagena, Columbia. Then it's off through the locks of the canal and exiting into the Pacific Ocean with dockings in Costa Rica, three in Mexico, namely Huatulco, Acapulco and Cabo San Lucas. The trip concludes in San Francisco where we will disembark. This is really a spectacular cruise. And now, hot off of the press, we have a Nov. 1 - 8, 2008, 7-Night Eastern Caribbean cruise which has just been announced. This leaves Miami on Carnival's new "LIBERTY" ship with dockings at San Juan, St. Thomas and St. Maarten. The flyers may be picked up in our office or for more information - on either cruise - call Joann 645-4864. Just remember, you need NOT be a member to participate in these cruises.

The Birthday and Anniversary celebration luncheon was Jan. 21 at Yukon Jacks at 6833 Golden State Blvd. in Fresno. Nice place! February's celebration will be held on President's Day, Feb. 18 at 11 a.m. at Carrow's Restaurant, 1484 E. Shaw in Fresno.

There will be NO BINGO held until our remodeling is complete.

In the senior years many need someone with which to laugh, so come join our

Please see SENIORS on P. 15

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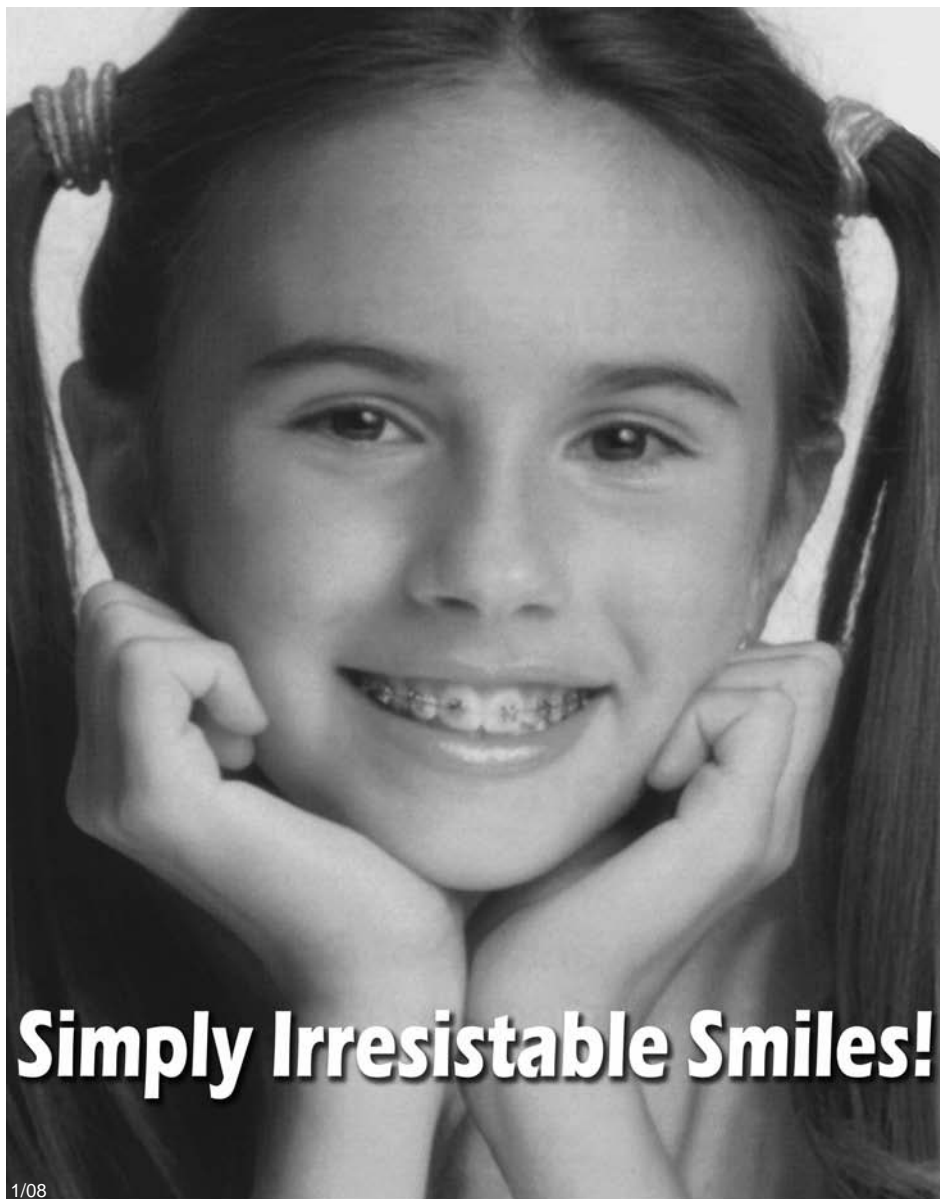
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The Stock Report

Many Changes Coming for 2008

By Audrey Stock

Hi neighbors,

I am grateful that I live in a community that believes in miracles. I got through a wonderful Christmas holiday and now here we are starting a NEW YEAR with all the changes and adventures ahead of us. I have passed the age of making resolutions that I work on for about a week; now I just say that a new year is a new chance to be the best that I can be. Happy New Year to each and every one of you. May it be the best one yet.

There are lots of things to look forward to in Golden Valley Unified. The lights for the football stadium, starting the new Ranchos Middle School, working with Madera County to finish the road along road 36 and running down avenue 12 1/2 in front of the new Ranchos Middle School to road 35, and we all have hopes that Sierra View will receive the California Distinguished School Award this year. All of these and many more things keep your School Board members on their toes.

Last year was a very productive year with our new superintendent Sarah Koligian coming on board July 1, 2007. Sarah Koligian is a strong leader and a super organizer, which is what Golden Valley needs. Planning for the future is so important and is something we will all be working on this year. Golden Valley has a very short history. We have only been in business for nine years but we have accomplished the impossible in that short time. Building Liberty High was just one of the impossible dreams that we have accomplished.

I am in my last year of my second School Board term. Both Mike Kelly and my seat on the board are up for election in November this year. I am telling you this because I want you to be thinking about it. With all of the elections that will be happening this year the School Board election is the one that will change our community the most. When you elect one of your neighbors to serve on Golden Valley Unified, you are choosing the person that will decide how your schools will educate our community children. To be on the School Board takes a person that is willing to go to lots of meetings, can read budgets, read large board packages and always will be willing to ask themselves, "Is the vote that I make going to be good for all of the children that I serve?" It can be tough, emotional, tiring, frustrating, challenging and the most important job that you have ever signed up for. I hope that you consider running for the Golden Valley School Board. There are people that are willing to help you run an election. Ask any board member – it is

quite exciting to figure out the steps. I am telling you all of this because I will not be running this time. I want to thank all of you that have showed your support for me through the years. It has been an incredible experience. I will be on the board until Dec. 1, 2008, so I still have a lot of work to do before my term is up. It is time for a younger person with lots of good ideas about how to make Golden Valley Unified the best school district in the valley to step into my place on the board. It has been said that we value what we spend our time, money and energy on – that is how it has been for me and the other Golden Valley School Board members. Golden Valley Unified belongs to the community and we need to take good care of it.

Talking about stepping up, do you know that there is a community organization called the "Foundation for Golden Valley Schools"? This Foundation raises money for the teachers of Golden Valley Unified. The Foundation has been in business for four years. The Foundation will be having their 4th Annual Dinner on March 29 at Birdstone Winery, so put that date on your calendar. It will be a really nice dinner and a time to honor an elementary teacher, secondary teacher, an instructional aid, a staff member and a district leader. Parents, community members, students and colleagues may nominate individuals. You can pick up a form at the district office. Nominations will be accepted at the district office no later than Feb. 15, so pick up a form and make your choice of your favorite Golden Valley Unified employee known.

At the Foundation Dinner on March 29 the Foundation will give money grants to teachers who want to do a special project with their students. The teachers write the grants and submit them to a panel that selects the ones that will be awarded. Last year every grant that was submitted was approved. So teachers write those grant applications and get them in. Good luck!

I have been asked about what is happening at the ponding basin in front of Liberty High. The district has been asked to deepen the basin by 3 feet at the east end next to the corner of Avenue 12 and Road 36. The dirt is being moved over to the new middle school site on Avenue 12 1/2. Dirt is expensive and we will use it.

Also happening in the community are some changes at the Ranchos Hills Senior Center. Perhaps you have noticed the Senior Center has a new coat of paint. Inside we are getting new flooring and a new roof with a grant we have received. With the money the ladies made at the Christmas Boutique we are

Please see **STOCK** on P. 21

POLL cont. from P. 2

a new Library and Community Center project. To date, there is no definitive proposal for any specific improvements. It is the intention of the Organizational Committee to seek your input from the enclosed questionnaire to assist in the preparation of conceptual plans for later consideration by the community. In essence, we are asking you to tell us what you want.

The questions cover topics from "What will be included" to "Where will it be located" to "How will we pay for it." Keep in mind that this is only the beginning of a process. We really do need your input to help us move to the next step. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to either the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce or the Ranchos Library, both of which are located in the Maywood Center. If you wish to mail your responses, please send them to:

Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce
Library/Community Center Poll
37167 Ave 12
Suite 5C
Madera, CA 93636

Once the results of the survey are tabulated, we will publish the results in the next issue of the Ranchos Independent. It is our desire to schedule a community-wide Townhall Meeting in the near future to make a detailed presentation to the community. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please contact Ollie Ridge or Virginia Vick at the Chamber of Commerce (645-4001), Randy Bailey at the Independent (645-0634), or Ellen Mester at the Library (645-1214).

The questionnaire was prepared and the planning process has been undertaken by an Organizational Committee that is sponsored by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of the Ranchos Library. Other members of the Committee represent the Ranchos Kiwanis and the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Association, Inc. Please take a few minutes of your time to help us understand your wishes by completing and returning the questionnaire.

**Questionnaire
on Page 23**

TOP 10 cont. from P. 2

4 Changing Ranchos Roads/Aug. • As if a sign of things to come, a month before Castle & Cooke got their OK, the Resource Management Agency trotted out some pretty ambitious plans for the future of the roadways around Madera County and some specifics for the Ranchos, including a potential "loop" that would direct traffic - and business - away from Avenue 12.

5 Sarah Koligian New Superintendent/May • After the loss of Marilyn Shepherd to Monterey in December of 2006, it took the Golden Valley School Board several months of resumes, referrals and interviews to finally pick a successor who had to hit the floor running. Koligian was plucked from Central Unified and stepped right into our growing school district without missing a beat.

6 Castle & Cooke and GVUSD Settle/Sept. • After a year of contentious negotiation battles that often had one-time friends on opposite sides of the table, the Golden Valley School District walked away with a package totalling more than \$100 million, more than twice the amount required by the state of California for developers to pay.

7 Ranchos Crime Spree/Oct. • One of the main attractions of the Ranchos is its peaceful, relatively crime-free atmosphere, but in the fall of 2007 we had some back-to-back crime that made people re-think their safety. What was really alarming (and is yet to be addressed) is the limited police presence in the Ranchos because of budget restrictions from the County. What's it going to take?

8 Meth Dump Site Near LHS/June • The drug of choice in the Central San Joaquin Valley is methamphetamine. Easy to produce, meth labs spring up overnight and once they're through "cooking" their deadly concoction, producers dump their waste wherever they can. This time they dumped it within five miles of Liberty High School. That close, how much "product" found its way to our kids?

9 Diane Felix Accident/Nov. • Unfortunately, sometimes someone dies in a car accident. What makes Diane Felix's accident so bizarre is that it wasn't her fault, nor was it the fault of the car she ultimately collided with head-on. A third car that crossed over into her lane and then pulled back at the last minute started the whole chain of events, left the scene without a scratch and has never been caught.

10 New County Fees/Feb. • Madera County had a problem: Lots of growth and more people moving here, but not enough money to cover services like libraries, fire stations and regional parks. After doing some serious research, the county joined the 21st Century and increased fees on new construction so that the people that were creating the demand for these services would actually pay for them. What a concept.

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SENIORS cont. from P. 12

Thursday evening potlucks with games played afterward. There is a lot of fun here. Remember, laughter is good for your body and soul and being happy does not mean everything is perfect – it means you have decided to see beyond the imperfections!

More Facts and Fun

A nutritionally balanced lunch program Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. Suggested price for 60 years and older is \$1.75. Reservations are needed a day in advance so remember to call Joann at 645-4864. We have a growing exercise program being held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. The participants

are getting more than just exercise by attending. They have fun and share laughs. There is still room for you and you can attend all three days or just one or two of them. The Line Dancing class has changed to Wednesdays at 1 p.m. This is fun and also a great way to exercise. The Water Coloring Painting class has also changed. It is now scheduled on Thursdays from 3–5 p.m. No prior watercolor experience is needed. The instructor can be reached by calling 645-1137. You do not need to be a member to attend these classes. We have a large group, but there is always room for one more – you! Fill your car with your friends or neighbors, they will enjoy finding new friends here, too! Come in and check these classes out.

Up and Coming Events

Feb. 2 Monthly Sale , 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Panama Canal Cruise, Eastern
Caribbean Cruise, Nov. 1 through 8, 2008

Weekly Events

Monday through Friday Lunch
Program, 11:30 a.m. (Reservations needed,
call Joann at 645-4864)

Monday, Exercise Class, 10:15 to
11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Pinochle, noon until?

Tuesday, no BINGO at this time.

Wednesday, Exercise Class, 10:15 to
11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, noon to 1 p.m. Card
BINGO

Wednesday, Line Dancing, 1 p.m.

January 2008

Page 15

Thursday, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Watercolor Painting Class

Thursday, 6 to 9 p.m. Potluck then
Hand & Foot, Pinochle or other games
(please bring your own plate and silver-
ware).

Friday, Exercise Class, 10:15 to 11:30
a.m.

Friday, 12:30 p.m. Line Dancing Class

Please feel free to come in and visit our
Senior Center and get acquainted with our
members. We welcome you to come and be
one of us as our organization offers and pro-
motes social, educational and civic activities
in order to provide a better quality of life for
all senior citizens. You have received an
invitation – hope to see you soon?

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Welcome to the future Madera Ranchos.
Not very pretty, is it?



YOU can make a difference for our community.

- Madera County is considering a total bypass of Avenue 12 to ease future Ranchos traffic. Such an option could strike a nail in the coffin of the Ranchos.
- The County wants input from the Madera Ranchos community before it acts. This is a rare opportunity to have some say in the future of the place we call home.

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a **TOWN HALL MEETING** with representatives from Madera County's Resource Management Agency to answer questions and gather suggestions.

• **SPEAK NOW OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE!** •

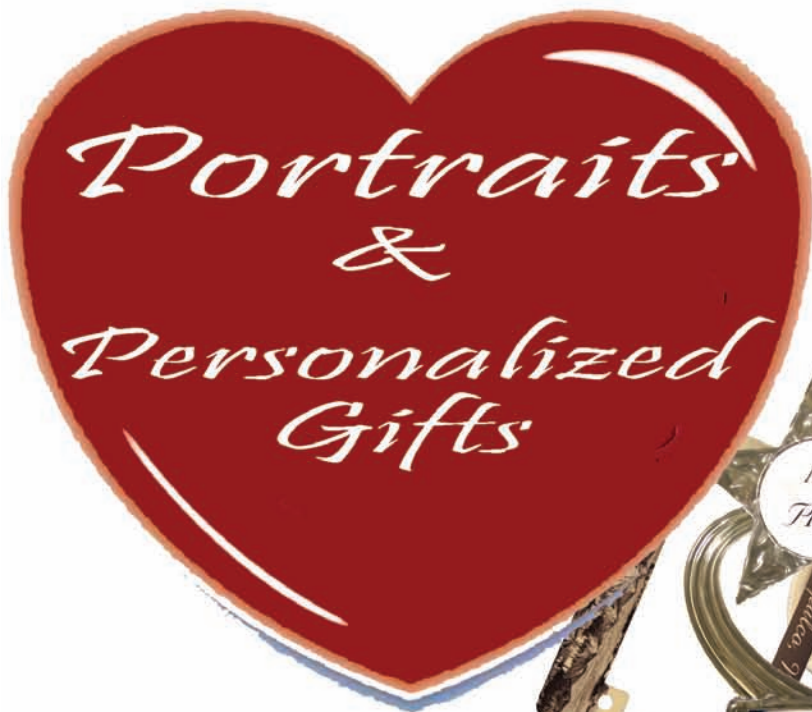
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645-1918 Mon. - Fri. 10-4 Weekend appointments available**



Golden Valley Unified School District Superintendent, Sarah Koligian.

By Superintendent Sarah Koligian

Welcome back to the second semester of the 2007-2008 school year. As we embark on the second semester, one of our priority areas will be a renewed focus on our attendance incentive campaign. The district will be issuing an updated brochure with new and improved statistics for the Golden Valley Unified School

“Count Me In!” – Making a Positive Difference In Golden Valley Unified School Attendance

District “Count Me In!” attendance program. Last year, the overall attendance rate in Golden Valley was 94.6%. Through the concentrated effort of parents, students and staff, the overall attendance rate has increased to 97.9% (Fall 2007). That’s fantastic! If attendance increases by just 1 percent, the district would receive an additional \$129,958 to use for textbooks, library books and increased support for students. The State of California pays the district for every day a student is present. The district does not get reimbursed for family vacations, illness, doctor visits and dentist appointments if they occur during school hours.

What does the research say?

Research shows that students who are in school most of the time do better on state tests. Studies also show that students who are absent more often score lower on state tests. Being late to school also hurts a child’s learning. A student who is 10 minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of instruction during the year. Our chil-

dren’s success in school depends on having a solid educational background – one that can only be gained through regular school attendance.

What is the school’s responsibility?

Schools are responsible for teaching our children, but schools cannot do their job if our children are absent. A child who misses a day of school misses a day of learning.

What can parents do to help?

- Talk with your child about the importance of attending school regularly.
- Avoid scheduling family trips and doctor appointments during school hours.
- Make certain your child stays healthy by eating nutritious foods and getting enough sleep and exercise, but do not send your child to school if he/she is ill.
- Discuss with your child what happens at school each day.
- Support school rules and consequences for skipping class and being tardy. Refer to the on-line Parent/Student Handbook. Point out the consequences of

skipping class, such as Saturday School and a loss of credits.

- Show your child why education is important.
- Talk with your child’s teacher if there is a problem. Together we can make a difference for your child.
- Check PAMS, the online attendance system for parents at www.gvUSD.k12.ca.us/studentparentinfo.



Community Calendar of Events

By Linda Bresee

(all events in the Madera Ranchos UNLESS stated otherwise)

Jan. 31: Kiwanis Club Evening Meeting @ Pizza Factory - 6:30 p.m. - Guests Welcome

Feb. 2: Kiwanis Club Rummage Sale (proceeds benefit admin. account), 36734 Ave 12

Feb. 7: Kiwanis Club Morning Meeting @ Pizza Factory - 6:30 a.m. - Guests Welcome

GVUSD School Board Meetings
Tuesdays - 2/12, 2/26, 3/11

GVUSD Foundation, Wine Trail Event
Sat. & Sun. February 9th & 10th
Birdsong Winery, Road 36
Wine tasting, Dinner, Music

No school, Monday February 11th
Lincoln’s Birthday observed

Feb. 14: Kiwanis Club Morning Meeting @ Pizza Factory - 6:30 a.m. - Guests Welcome

No school, Monday February 18th
President’s Day
Washington’s Birthday observed

Feb. 21: Kiwanis Club Morning Meeting @ Pizza Factory - 6:30am - Guests Welcome

Feb. 28: Kiwanis Club Evening Meeting @ Pizza Factory - 6:30pm - Guests Welcome



Vision Statement

Golden Valley Unified School District is committed to creating and maintaining an innovative learning community based in excellence.

Got an event? communitycalendar1@theranchos.com
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Click on “Local News” at

PG&E cont. from P. 2

approval by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The CPUC will then conduct an independent analysis of PG&E's proposal and seek input from the local community prior to making a decision on the project.

PG&E wishes to maintain a strong, positive working relationship with all landowners along the study corridors. To that end, we will work with you to coordinate access to your property and will strive to minimize any inconvenience associated with the study.

We encourage you to contact us at (800) 422-0841 with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Mike Neer, Project Manager"

Several landowners and their representatives called project manager Mike Neer requesting a meeting to discuss the specifics on what PG&E refers to as the "Central California Clean Energy Transmission Project." This meeting took place in mid-December, however a PG&E public relations representative was sent in Neer's place. During this meeting a detailed map of the proposed

project was reviewed, however PG&E was not willing to allow a copy of this map to be made at the time of the meeting, citing that it was just a preliminary map.

Although initially there were a number of alternative routes under consideration, PG&E has identified two options as the recommended routes. Both proposed routes originate south of Bakersfield and stretch north and include two new 500 kV lines and an additional 200 feet as a right of way easement around these lines.

PG&E stated that there will be a time for community input on this project but

Ranchos landowners attending the meeting found it very unsettling to learn that this project has been in the planning stages for over two years and they'd not heard anything about it, along with the fact that PG&E was not yet willing to provide a copy of the proposed map or even send the project manager to meet with property owners. Based on observations of PG&E's planning map by the property owners at the meeting, engineering firm Provost & Pritchard Engineering Group, Inc. was called upon

Please see PG&E on P. 22

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Kicking the New Year Off Right

By Dave Johnson

Often people use the New Year as the perfect time to begin training in the martial arts. If you are thinking of joining your local martial arts school, "Golden Valley Martial Arts," here are some important points to consider that will help you make the best possible decision.

First, make sure the school teaches the style that best suits you and your needs.

1. Determining Your Training Goals – The first thing to do when considering taking a martial arts class is to determine what you hope to gain from martial arts training. Everyone has a reason for their interest in the martial arts, and it's important to know your options and goals so that you can really get the most out of your training and have a positive experience. Below are some common reasons for studying the martial arts.

2. Fitness/Self-Defense/Fun Related Interests – The most common reason for training that I hear is that people want to Learn EFFECTIVE self-defense skills, have fun and get in better physical condition, whether that is losing weight, getting stronger or just getting more active. Martial art training is a great way to get in shape and can be really fun to learn. It will improve endurance, strength, flexibility, speed, coordination, balance and helps with overall stress levels.

While all martial arts training involves some amount of physical training, the art of SEIEIDO (say-A-doh) combines both a great physical fitness opportunity with elite level self-defense training. The Art of Seieido incorporates the following styles:

Tae Kwon Do
AikiJutsu
Brazilian Grappling Arts
Hapkido
Hwarangdo
Aikido
Judo
Tai Chi
Gung Fu
Along with the art of Seieido, Golden Valley Martial Arts also teaches:
Non-aggressive Control Holds
Joint Locks
Nerve Stimulation
Knife and Gun Defense
Anti-abduction techniques
Realtor Safety
Multiple Opponent Defense

Competition Training **Interest in Traditional or Cultural Arts**

Many people take great interest in the cultural or traditional aspects of martial arts training. They enjoy the discipline, traditions and methods of very traditional arts. Traditional aspects are included and provide an atmosphere of very structured training.

Once you know what you want to get out of your training and your goals are clearly defined, it will be much easier to enroll in your local school, you won't be so overwhelmed by the variety of martial arts and you will make the choice that you will be happiest with in the long run.

3. Visit the school – To get a first impression and see if it is the place for you.

4. Schedule introductory lessons – Call Golden Valley Martial Arts at 559-917-5262 and schedule a time to attend a free class.

5. Still interested? – By now you should have a pretty good idea if this is what you are looking for. Decide if you are still really interested in martial arts training and willing to commit to lessons for at least two years minimum.

6. Ask about all the costs – Before enrolling, be sure to ask about the cost of monthly tuition (there are no long term contracts required at GVMA) and any extra costs that may apply to your specific needs, i.e., testing fees, registration and memberships fees, sparring gear, tournament costs, etc. You will also have to buy your uniform and possibly some shoes.

7. Congratulations! – You are by this point a beginner martial arts student. You have begun training in something that can offer you tangible skills, fitness, fun, camaraderie and a lifetime of interesting stories to tell. Train hard, Train smart, Live longer and enjoy!

SEE YOU IN THE DOJO!

CONTACT ME. I would love to hear from you. E-mail me at info@masterjohnson.com. Your participation is vital and appreciated. Remember, since we are all in this together, let's make it a community project, have some fun and increase our level of safety.

PARENTAL GUIDANCE: Spend

Please see SAFE on P. 21



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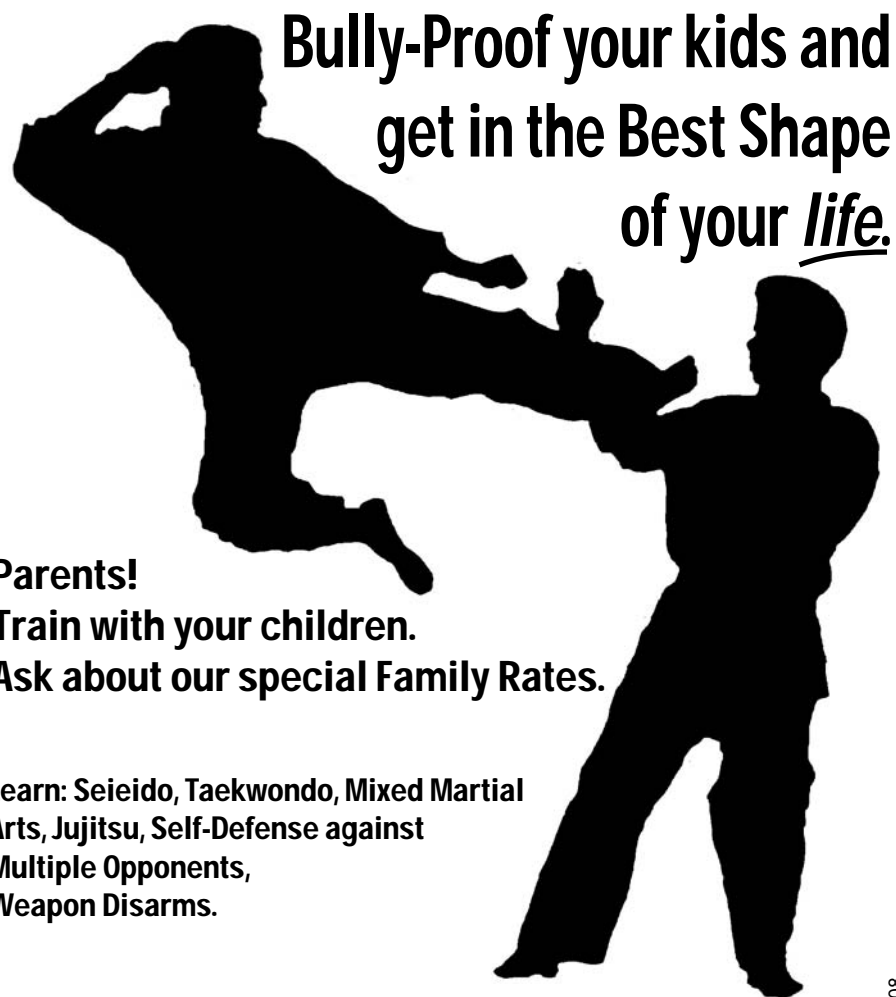
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SOIL cont. from P. 2

tion of the new middle school. The dirt will be transported to the new middle school where it is needed.

Madera County Road Department and Golden Valley Unified School District Staff are working together on plans to realign Avenue 12 1/2 with Ruth Avenue before the new Ranchos Middle School opens in August of 2009. This work will include widening Road 36 to Ruth Avenue, installing sidewalks and a new three lane Avenue 12 1/2. Infrastructure will be installed for a future traffic signal at the intersection of the new realigned Avenue 12 1/2 and Road 36.

Construction is scheduled to begin on Liberty High School Stadium light project at the end of February. Work will include moving a portion of the berm to the visitor side to accommo-

date light poles that will be installed on both sides of the field. Work will be completed by the start of football season in August 2008.

This past summer Webster Elementary School was modernized. The school received new flooring, new wall covering, new classroom sinks, new lights and ceilings. Two old buildings were demolished and replaced with a new library and Wolverine Learning Center. All existing buildings received new roofs and the school received new data cabling, fire and intrusion alarms. The parking lot was repaved, new lights installed and the play courts were sealed.

Golden Valley Unified School District is very fortunate to have the community support which has allowed all of this work to be done on our schools. We are very appreciative of this support and look forward to your continued support.

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Robert Alcalá's qualifications include being a former 4-year "lefty" pitcher at Liberty High School • played with top scouted travel leagues, including MVP Baseball, Baseball Factory and Team One Baseball • named 2007 "Under Armour All-American" • polled as one of the top 20 prospects in the nation for 2007 by teamonebaseball.rivals.com • currently pitching for the Fresno City College Rams

871-4736

1/08

SAFE cont. from P. 20

some time with your children reviewing the following sites. www.amw.com/kids, tcs.cybertipline.com and www.missingkids.com/adccouncil.

SELF-DEFENSE TIPS: SEEK PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION. Protect your space. Always stand at a slanted angle with one foot back spaced at about shoulder width. Hands should be relaxed and held between waist and chest level. Don't wait to be hit in order to defend yourself. **KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT. BE PREPARED TO ACT INSTANTLY.**

Master Johnson is a world recognized security and self-defense expert specializing in executive protection, hand-to-hand, multiple opponents, and weapon disarms. He is listed in the "Who is Who" in Martial Arts and was named "Master Instructor of the Year" 1996 by the World Martial Arts Hall of Fame. He is the owner of Golden Valley Martial Arts, Tactical Training International, Dave Johnson Real Estate, and operates the World's only online self-defense and Black Belt training course at www.masterjohnson.com. He can be contacted at 559-917-5262.

STOCK cont. from P. 13

putting in a gas line into the kitchen for a new stove. We have had electrical problems and hope this takes care of them. Remember that this was a house that the Ranchos Hills Seniors have remodeled for a community senior center.

Here is something else to put on your calendar: Our community always looks forward to the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce annual Crab Feed. It will be held at the Liberty High Cafeteria on March 1. You can pick up your tickets at the Golden Valley

Chamber office in the Maywood center. I know you will want to put this date on your calendar.

Golden Valley School District will be hosting the other School Boards in Madera County at the Liberty High Cafeteria on Feb. 6. The Madera County School Board Association's general meeting will have dinner and the guest speaker will be Craig Scharton. Craig's topic will be "Creating a Cycle of Success."

The School Board meetings will be held on Feb. 12 and 26 at Liberty library at 6 p.m. I hope to see you there.

To Advertise Call
645-0634




by the attendees to recreate the map that PG&E used to illustrate the conceptual alignment proposed for this project. Property owners are still attempting to meet directly with the project manager although it hasn't been determined whether this will be as an owner's group or in a town hall forum.

As it stands now, PG&E and their environmental consultants are in the preliminary stages of gathering project information. They're in the process of doing public record research and city and county general plan research and eventually site environmental reviews. PG&E hopes to have a preferred route identified by April 2008. After that they will continue with more detailed research and preparation, planning to submit the project to the California Public Utilities Commission in either December 2008 or January 2009. This project is expected to be completed during the second or third quarter of 2013.

"PG&E will be making their decision as soon as April 2008 so it's very important that anyone concerned with this proposed project and its effect on our community express their concerns," Treibatch said.

PG&E Project Manager Mike Neer can be reached at 800 422-0841 or at PG&E, PO Box 27918, Fresno, CA 93729-7918.

Central California Clean Transmission Project

- Build a 500 kV Double Circuit Tower Line with two 2300 kcmil AAL conductors (bundled)
- Build a new 500 kV Substation (E2) with two 500/230 kV 1,120 MVA transformer banks
- Loop the Helms – Gregg #1 and #2 230 kV lines into the E2 Substation
- Build 500 kV line terminations at Midway and E2
 - Install additional voltage supports in the Fresno area. The amount and location of the voltage support will be evaluated in a separate voltage stability study.

Benefits from the Project

- Improve transmission reliability for Yosemite and Fresno Areas.
- Increase Fresno and Yosemite area import capability to serve local customers.
- Reduced Local Capacity Requirements in Fresno Area.
- Improve utilization of the existing capability at Helms PSP.
- Help mitigate potential minimum load and over-generation problems during off-peak conditions.
- Increase Path 15 transfer capability to avoid potential congestion and increase access to larger population of renewable resources in southern California.
- Reduce green house gas based on displacement of thermal generation in PG&E area.
- Eliminate the existing Helms Transfer Trip RAS needed for supporting Helms pumping operation.

West Route

One route under consideration is on the west side along Highway 5 turning east and crossing the Ranchos on its way to the foothills. 180 miles. Crosses farmland and urban areas. Lower probability of multiple 500 kV line outages. Crosses four existing 500 kV lines.

East Route

Runs along the foothills – less impacts on farmlands, avoids urban areas. 140 miles. Potential use of Southern California Edison access roads. Lower probability of multiple 500 kV line outages than West Route. No 500 kV line crossing.

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COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE RANCHOS LIBRARY & COMMUNITY CENTER

An Organizational Committee has been established in the Madera Ranchos to explore the possibility of planning and constructing a new Library and Community Center. It is very important that the voice of the community be heard. Conceptual Plans are being considered. In order to be responsive to the needs and wishes of the community, the following questionnaire has been submitted for your response. If you have an idea or comment that is not addressed below, please note it on this questionnaire, or contact the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, either by phone or in writing. For each of the following plan elements, please circle "1" through "5", with 1 being "not important" and 5 being "very important."

Not Important
1
2
3
4
5
 Very Important

WHAT CAN IT BE AND CONTAIN?	1	2	3	4	5
"Full-service" County Library	1	2	3	4	5
Indoor banquet facility/convention hall/reception hall	1	2	3	4	5
Indoor stage	1	2	3	4	5
Audio-video capability	1	2	3	4	5
Smaller multi-purpose meeting rooms	1	2	3	4	5
Restroom facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Separate Women's lounge	1	2	3	4	5
"Full-service" kitchen	1	2	3	4	5
Adjacent snack facility to serve outdoor activities	1	2	3	4	5
Exercise facility	1	2	3	4	5
Student after-school activity center	1	2	3	4	5
Community bulletin board	1	2	3	4	5
On site management offices	1	2	3	4	5
On site residence for security and management	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor meeting, reading space	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor stage/amphitheatre	1	2	3	4	5
Formal wedding garden	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational swimming pool with spa	1	2	3	4	5
Junior Olympic size training & competition swimming pool	1	2	3	4	5
Olympic size training & competition swimming pool	1	2	3	4	5
"All-weather" enclosure for swim facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Locker & changing rooms for pool(s)	1	2	3	4	5
Fully equipped children's playground	1	2	3	4	5
Garage and office for emergency medical response vehicle or ambulance	1	2	3	4	5
Garage and office for firefighting equipment	1	2	3	4	5
Garage and office for public safety and/or sheriff personnel and equipment	1	2	3	4	5
Passive open-space and park with shade trees	1	2	3	4	5
Walking & Jogging Trails	1	2	3	4	5
Skate park	1	2	3	4	5
Climbing wall	1	2	3	4	5
Soccer field(s)	1	2	3	4	5
Little League baseball/softball field(s) • Regulation baseball/softball field(s)	1	2	3	4	5
Snack facility to serve sport-fields activities	1	2	3	4	5
Basketball courts	1	2	3	4	5
Tennis courts	1	2	3	4	5
On-site paved parking	1	2	3	4	5
On-site covered parking	1	2	3	4	5

WHERE CAN IT BE? WHERE WILL IT BE?

At this time, there is no "definitive" or "final" location for any such facility. However, there has been an offer to donate, at no cost to the project, up to 20 acres of property near Ave. 11 1/2 at Rd. 35. Depending on the ultimate size of the project, there are at this time at least five or six potential locations within the Madera Ranchos area for a Library and Community Center. The following questions are designed to help the committee better understand the community's thoughts. Please prioritize by placing a 1 through 7 in the box following the statement, using the number 1 as least important and the number 7 as most important. Use each number only once.

- A new facility should be "centrally located" to the majority of community residents.....
- A new facility should be located near existing schools.....
- A new facility should be located near existing businesses.....
- A new facility should be located on property that is the least expensive.....
- A new library should be located near a facility that can have other community and sporting events.....
- A new facility should be located on the donated property on Ave 11 1/2 at Rd 35.....
- A new facility should be located on any donated property.....

**COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE
CONTINUED IN NEXT COLUMN**

COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE PART II

How far should these facilities be from the center of the Ranchos before they are "too far"? By each potential boundary, please mark "yes" or "no" if that boundary, in your opinion, is "too far" to travel to a new Library and Community Center.

West			East		
Road 36 is too far	Yes	No	Road 38 is too far	Yes	No
Road 35 is too far	Yes	No	Road 39 is too far	Yes	No
Road 34 is too far	Yes	No	Road 40 is too far	Yes	No
Road 33 or further west is too far	Yes	No	Further east of Road 40 is too far	Yes	No
North			South		
Ave 13 is too far	Yes	No	Ave 11 is too far	Yes	No
Ave 14 is too far	Yes	No	Ave 10 is too far	Yes	No
Ave 15 is too far	Yes	No	Ave 9 is too far	Yes	No
Ave 16 or further north is too far	Yes	No	Further south of Ave 9 is too far	Yes	No

HOW CAN IT BE? HOW WILL IT GET BUILT?

Depending on the ultimate size of the property and the facilities that could be constructed, the costs of a new Library and Community Center could be significant. In order for the Ranchos community to design, build, and maintain such a facility, it is quite probable that a new "Special District" would need to be formed, and a new "Special Tax" would need to be levied on existing community homes and businesses. The "Special District" could be a Community Services District (CSD) that would be controlled by a Board elected from the local community. Please circle "yes" or "no" after each of the following statements:

I would be willing to vote in favor of forming a new "Special District" to design, build and operate a new Library and Community Center.

Yes No

Depending on what actually gets built, where it is located, and the ultimate cost, I would be willing to vote in favor of an additional property tax to be levied against my property to pay the cost of a new facility.

Yes No

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this questionnaire. Please return your questionnaire to either the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce or the Ranchos Branch library, both located in the Maywood Center. As soon as the results are tabulated, the results of the survey will appear in the Ranchos Independent.

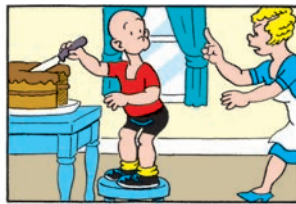
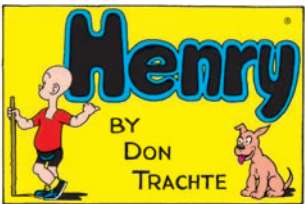
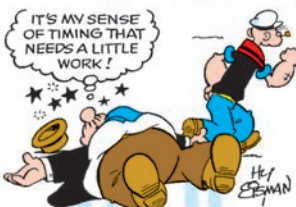
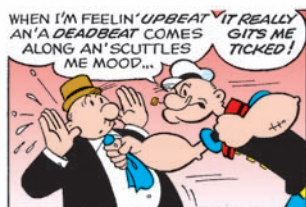
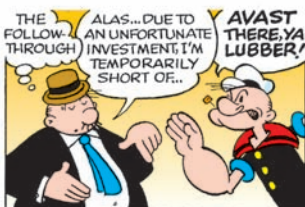
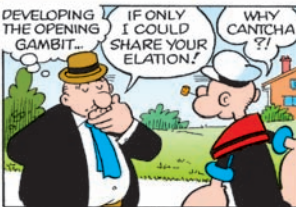
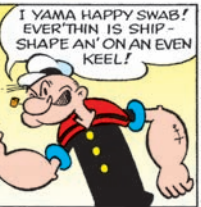
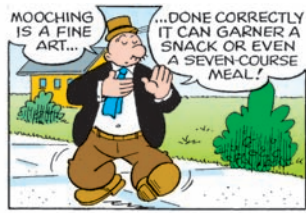
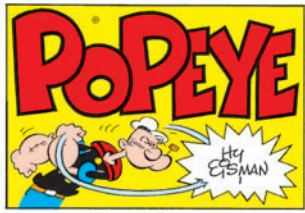
The Organizational Committee is officially sponsored by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of The Ranchos Library. In addition, the committee is made up of representatives of the Ranchos Kiwanis and the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Association. The offices of the Organizational Committee are located at 37167 Ave 12, Suite 5C, Madera, CA 93636. The phone number is (559) 645-4001.

RETURN YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE TO EITHER THE GOLDEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OR THE RANCHOS BRANCH LIBRARY, BOTH LOCATED IN THE MAYWOOD CENTER AT 37167 AVE. 12. YOU MAY ALSO MAIL YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO :

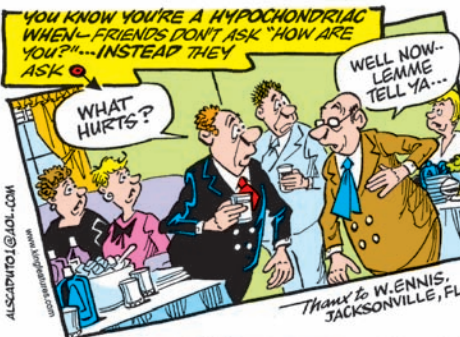
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37167 AVE. 12 #5C
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**YOU MAY ALSO FAX YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO:
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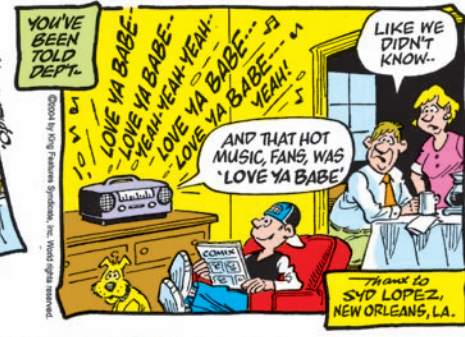
FUN PAGES



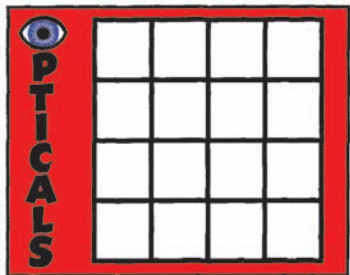
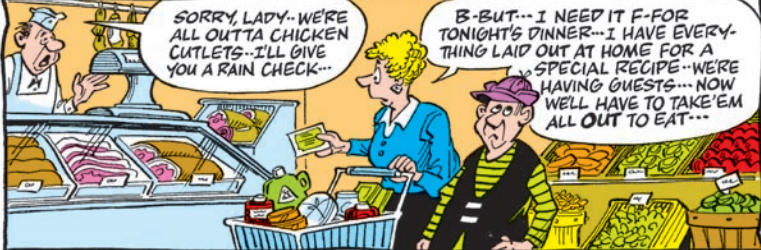
THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



BY AL SCADUTO



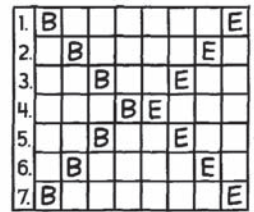
EVER HAPPEN TO YOU? BIG COUPON DISCOUNT SALE ON CHICKEN CUTLETS... SO YOU GO TO THE SOOPER MARKET... and...
—Thank to PAM WEISMAN, ENCINO, CA.



HOW MANY SQUARES are there in the above drawing? (There are four different sized squares in the picture.)

Junior Whirl

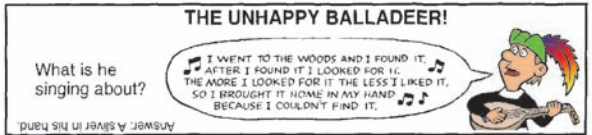
by Charles Barry Townsend



TO BE, OR NOT TO BE, THAT IS THE PUZZLE!

Using the definitions and anagrams below, you must find the seven eight-letter words that fit into the framework pictured on the left. For each definition, the letters in the two anagram words must be unscrambled and used to form the word asked for.

- DEFINITION:
- To move dirt.
 - A type of voter.
 - Owing no one.
 - Found in gyms.
 - Crusty ocean dwellers.
 - Having gained possession of.
 - Between a bass and a tenor.
- ANAGRAMS:
- zebu + doll
 - teen + base
 - bets + sled
 - sell + barb
 - robs + lets
 - dine + boat
 - trio + bane



THE 'A' PYRAMID! As you move down the word pyramid shown, each word contains the same letters as the word above it, plus a new letter. We give you all the A's. Here are some hints from the top down:

1. First letter (given).
2. Present; attending.
3. Loves picnics.
4. A small biter.
5. Pro ballplayers have one.
6. An attracting object.
7. An article of clothing.
8. A heated debate.



Wishing Well

4	6	2	5	3	7	2	4	2	6	7	8	7
H	A	U	L	A	L	N	I	D	L	I	L	F
6	2	7	2	3	7	2	8	6	3	4	6	5
O	A	E	U	N	I	N	O	V	E	G	E	O
6	8	2	8	6	2	3	8	6	4	2	4	7
D	V	T	E	O	E	L	O	N	H	D	E	N
6	2	3	2	5	8	6	2	4	7	4	7	6
E	E	O	F	V	F	C	F	R	B	V	A	A
2	4	6	3	4	8	6	8	7	6	8	2	7
O	A	L	Q	L	L	L	U	L	S	X	R	A
2	7	8	7	4	7	3	5	3	5	3	5	4
T	N	U	C	U	E	E	A	N	B	E		
5	3	8	5	3	4	3	8	5	3	5	3	5
O	T	R	U	I	S	D	Y	N	E	D	A	S

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 Y N W O U W T S N L N S N Q P
 N N N X H L O I I A J A H F E
 C Y A O Y L X (GRAMMAR) V
 U S Q F S P A U H O V G N M K
 J H F E C N D H R T B R U Z Y
 X V R A S E A C S U I T E L R
 Q P O M S M A D A L K L I G K

- Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
- | | | | |
|--------|---------|----------|----------|
| Adams | Danson | Hirsch | Ritter |
| Alda | Durante | Klugman | Romano |
| Benny | Gervais | Lithgow | Shalhoub |
| Caesar | Grammar | Mulligan | |

TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

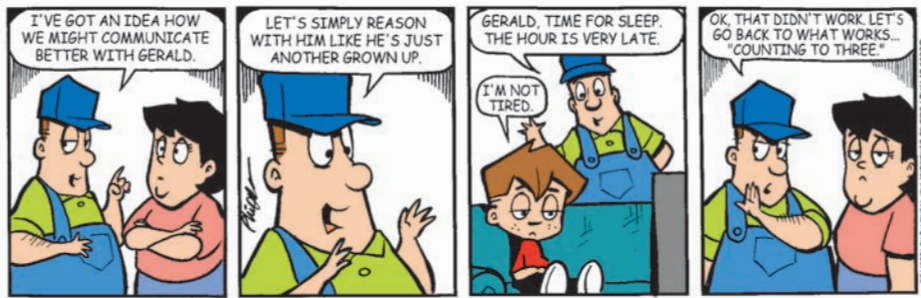
- FOOD & DRINK: What kind of food is a morel?
- LANGUAGE: What does the acronym "sonar" stand for?
- HISTORY: Who were the two heavyweight fighters who participated in the 1975 "Thrilla in Manila" championship?
- ANATOMY: What is the more common name for the tibia?
- COMICS: What was the name of Bazooka Joe's girlfriend?
- MOVIES: What was the name of the moon inhabited by the Ewoks in "Return of the Jedi"?
- MUSIC: What are the names of the Gibbs brothers who made up The Bee Gees?
- GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of the Cayman Islands?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Who works at 10 Downing Street in London?
- MEDICINE: What disease does the drug quinine treat?

Answers

1. Mushroom
2. Sound navigation and ranging
3. Muhammed Ali and Joe Frazier
4. Shinbone Zena
5. Endor
6. Maurice, Robin and Barry
8. George Town
9. British prime minister
10. Malaria

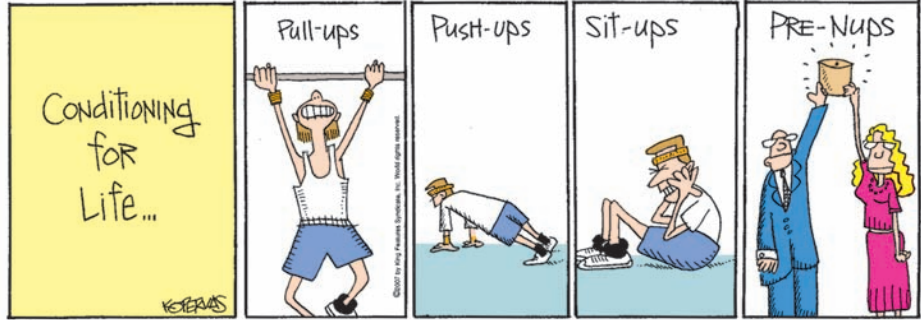
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



MAMA'S BOYZ

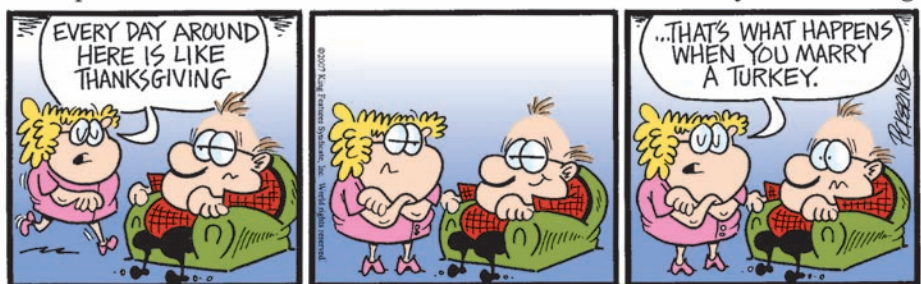
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JERRY CRAFT



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



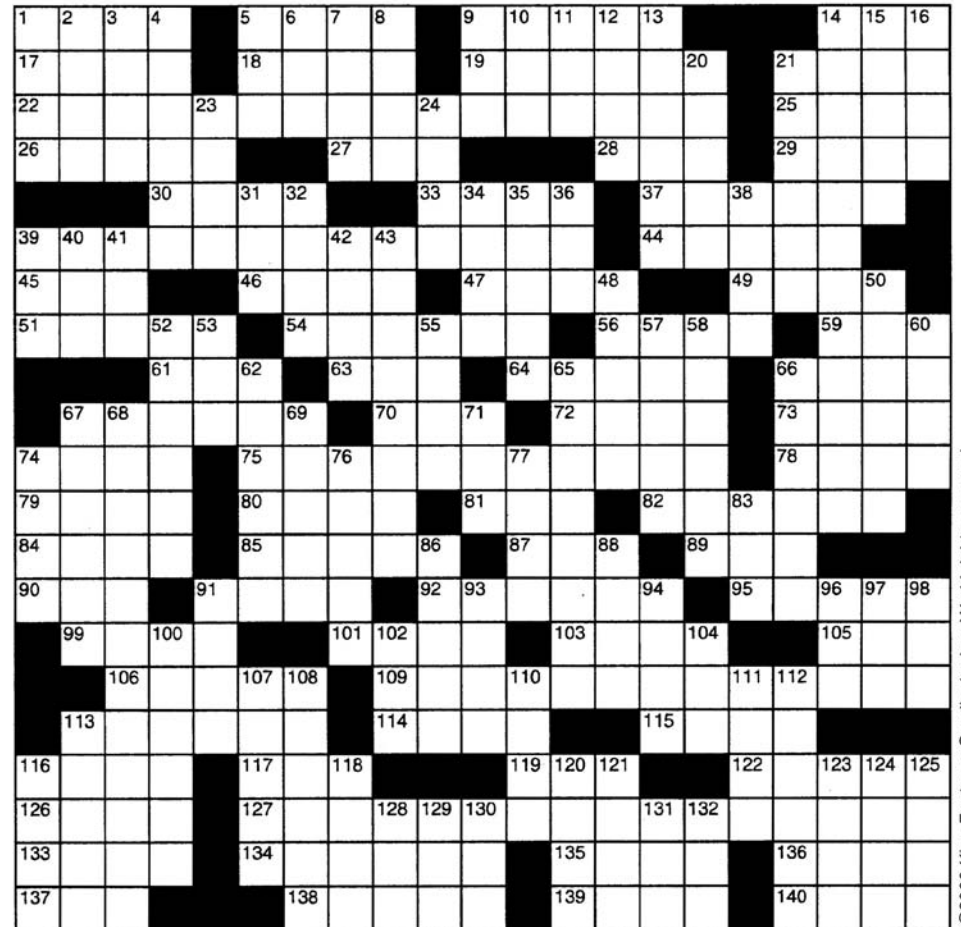
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Window is missing. 2. Man has mustache. 3. Boy is wearing glasses. 4. Snow creature is shorter. 5. Man's scarf is different. 6. Creature's 'arm' has more branches.

Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Sagan or Sandburg
 - 5 Swarm sound
 - 9 Montana city
 - 14 Monterrey Mrs.
 - 17 '58 Pulitzer winner
 - 18 Piece of fencing?
 - 19 He was "The Thing"
 - 21 Pipe part
 - 22 WREN
 - 25 Brobdingnagian
 - 26 For — (cheaply)
 - 27 Comic Costello
 - 28 — Na Na
 - 29 Mascagni opera
 - 30 Poet Wilcox
 - 33 Lohengrin's bird
 - 37 African antelopes
 - 39 LARK
 - 44 "The Optimist's Daughter" author
 - 45 Bonanza material
 - 46 Coveleski or Musial
 - 47 Vichyssoise veggie
 - 49 Tip one's topper
 - 51 Long-tailed parrot
 - 54 Sanford of "The Jeffersons"
 - 56 Scandinavian city
 - 59 Griffon greeting
 - 61 Fool
 - 63 Missouri airport abbr.
 - 64 Valuable instrument
 - 66 Stowe sight
 - 67 Screen-writer Nora
 - 70 Elf
 - 72 Dash
 - 73 Sarah — Jewett
 - 74 Inland sea
 - 75 QUAIL
 - 78 Depravity
 - 79 Easy stride
 - 80 Bit of gossip
 - 81 Parenthesis shape
 - 82 Physicist Fermi
 - 84 Corset part
 - 85 Alfredo ingredient
 - 87 British big shot
 - 89 Monsarrat's "The Cruel —"
 - 90 Tulsa commodity
 - 91 Cheat at hide-and-seek
 - 92 Preposterous
 - 95 Sweetheart
 - 99 Turn over
 - 101 Darjeeling dress
 - 103 Invasion city
 - 105 Frankfurter's field
 - 106 Rent
 - 109 CRANE
 - 113 Church official
 - 114 Oriental staple
 - 115 Big rig
 - 116 Channel
 - 117 Actress Hagen
 - 119 Plutarch character
 - 122 Tole material
 - 126 Be important
 - 127 PAR-TRIDGE
 - 133 Actor Novello
 - 134 Kindle
 - 135 Heart burn?
 - 136 Time for a sandwich
 - 137 According to
 - 138 German port
 - 139 Racing legend
 - 140 Guy Fri.
 - 3 "— Man" ('84 film)
 - 4 Not as fatty
 - 5 Neighbor of Ger.
 - 6 Prosperous times
 - 7 Non-non-chalance?
 - 8 Nil
 - 9 Crank's comment
 - 10 Swiss canton
 - 11 Explosive initials
 - 12 Golfer's gadgets
 - 13 Avoid
 - 14 DUCK
 - 15 Toomey or Philbin
 - 16 Iowa city
 - 20 Musty
 - 21 Japanese religion
 - 23 Hard on the eyes
 - 24 Astrology term
 - 31 Brown or Baxter
 - 32 Vino center
 - 34 Corduroy ridge
 - 35 Writer Rogers St. Johns
 - 36 Formerly known as
 - 38 Moro of Italy
 - 39 One who no's best?
 - 40 Distinctive period
 - 41 — room
 - 42 Singer Elliot Ger.
 - 43 Bete noire
 - 48 Adorable Australian
 - 50 Tenor Corelli
 - 52 One of the Judds
 - 53 Tolstoy title
 - 55 Coalition
 - 57 Play ground?
 - 58 Bedding
 - 60 At large
 - 62 Word with dog or state
 - 65 "Never on Sunday" star
 - 66 Good-humored
 - 67 Amatory
 - 68 CARDINAL
 - 69 — Dame
 - 71 Anaconda, for one
 - 74 As well
 - 76 Pursues
 - 77 Coffee pots
 - 83 Ring counter
 - 86 Andretti or Cuomo
 - 88 Fiber source
 - 91 Swamp stuff
 - 93 "Death of a Salesman" son
 - 94 Pad "Love Story"
 - 96 Ryan's co-star
 - 97 Bud Fluffy female
 - 100 Crime writer Colin
 - 102 PC key
 - 104 SHAEF commander
 - 107 "The March King"
 - 108 Whole
 - 110 Stamping ground
 - 111 TV award
 - 112 Strauss city
 - 113 Debonair
 - 116 — coffee
 - 118 Energy source
 - 120 One of a pair
 - 121 South Seas novel
 - 123 New Mexico resort
 - 124 John of "Roots"
 - 125 Expected back
 - 128 Bossy's chew suffix
 - 129 Sugary
 - 130 Guys
 - 131 College growth
 - 132 Empower

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Today!



ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Guess what, Lamb? You're about to experience a new perspective on a situation you long regarded quite differently. What you learn could open more opportunities later.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) The Bold Bovine is tempted to charge into a new venture. But it might be best to take things one step at a time, so that you know just where you are at any given point.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) It's a good time to go on that fun getaway you've been planning. You'll return refreshed, ready and, yes, even eager to tackle the new challenge that awaits you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) The Moon Child loves to fantasize about magical happenings in the early part of the week. But the sensible Crab gets down to serious business by week's end.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) What goes around comes around for those lucky Leos and Leonas whose acts of generosity could be repaid with opportunities to expand into new and exciting areas of interest.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Your concern about your job responsibilities is commendable. But you need to take some quiet time to share with someone who has really missed being with you.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Aspects favor getting out and meeting new people. And as a bonus, you might find that some of your newly made friends could offer important business contacts.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You might take pride in wanting to do everything yourself. But now's a good time to ask family members to help with a demanding personal situation.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Pay more attention to the possibilities in that workplace change. It could show the way to make that long-sought turn on your career path.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Your need to succeed might overwhelm obligations to your loved ones. Ease up on that workload and into some well-deserved time with family and friends.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Love rules for amorous Aquarians who can make good use of their ability to communicate feelings. Don't be surprised if they're reciprocated in kind.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Fishing for compliments? No doubt, you probably earned them. But it's best to let others believe they were the ones who uncovered the treasure you really are.

Born this Week

*Your good works flow from an open, generous heart.
Nothing makes you happier than to see others happy as well.*

Real Estate



Nancy Watson

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www.nancywatson.net



Nancy has been a Ranchos resident for 28 years and a full-time Real Estate Agent serving the Ranchos for over 17 years. She is a member of the Madera and Fresno Multiple Listing Service and is well known as a *Top Producer*. If you are interested in finding out the value of your home or know someone looking for a home, Nancy can help. Let the dedicated, experienced agent work for "You!"

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DAVID PARKER

Realtor Associate

www.davidparker.info

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Continental Realty P.R.E.S.E.N.T.S



3 Bed
2 Ba.
\$399,000

12786 Road 37

Lovely landscaped home w/pool and horse set-up on 2.5 acres. Upgraded tile counters and flooring throughout much of the house, energy efficient windows and new roof. Sparkling pool, large patio, lots of grassy area and privacy fencing. Horse set-up has round pen, tack shed, tie up, corral and pole barn. Convenient location near local schools.



4 Bed
3 Ba.
\$315,000

35340 Ave. 13 1/2

Sharp, 1-year-old home zoned for horses. Vaulted ceilings, fireplace with brick hearth, spacious kitchen with lots of counter space and breakfast bar. Walk-in pantry, isolated bedroom and bath, large bedrooms. Walk-in closets, quality paint, carpeting and tile throughout. Fenced yard, concrete walkways and driveway, and front gate. Near schools and just 15 minutes from Riverpark shopping.

Call the listing office for all of the amenities of any of these properties

1/08

call Paul Sobaje at Continental Realty

431-7060 or 645-5450

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WOODY cont. from P. 5

straw and Russian thistles.

Actually, Papa probably passed more gas than the entire herd, and I wonder if he were still alive if the Environmental Protection Agency wouldn't put a ban on him.

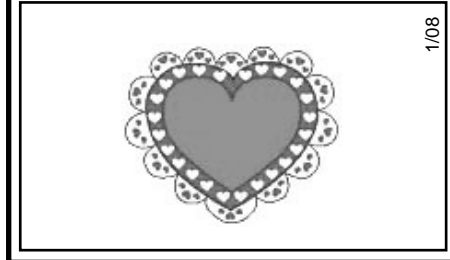
Probably, the truth be exposed, if cows passed as much gas as the bureaucrats claim – and believe me, they ought to know because it takes one to smell one – it is because cows are no longer treated with respect. I mean, instead of oats and barley and corn they are fed such things as powdered turkey feet, soy, rotten tomatoes and I don't know what all. No wonder they suffer gas pains and PMS (Pre-Milking Stress). Likewise, I would not be at all surprised to learn they are abided with agonizing hemorrhoids.

Secondly, each of our cows had a name and a stall and could wander the meadows at will. Instead, today they must escape fouled and rotten-smelling corral water by standing on manure piles! And imagine the humiliation when an artificial inseminator comes out from town with a cold needle and deprives them of a barnyard romance with a magnificent snorting bull!

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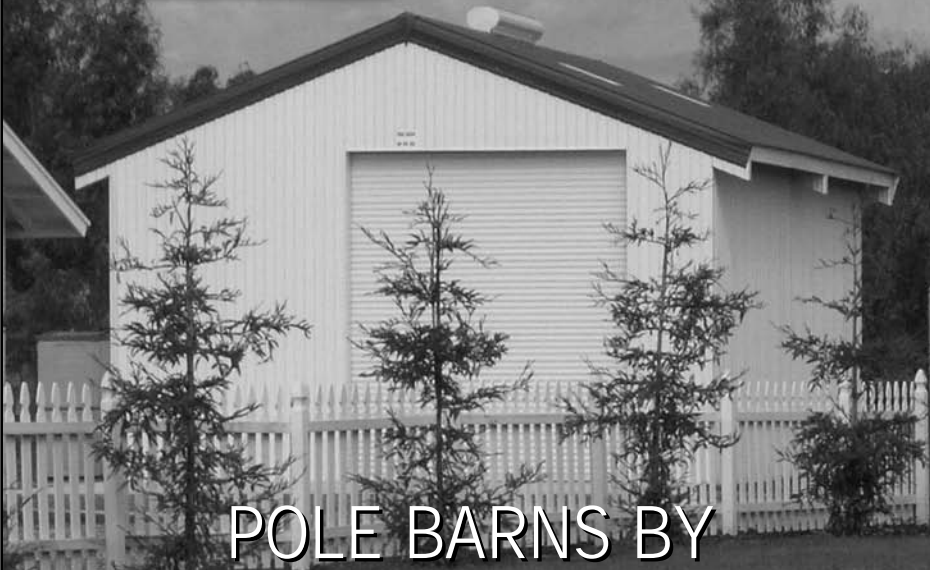
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For Sale - Horses AQHA mares in foal. Palomino or buckskin. 3-in-1 packages. Call 559-645-5290 or 559-304-5073.

For Sale - Pool Table 2008. Never used in crate. 8' Professional, leather pockets. 1" slate. Cost \$3,500, sacrifice \$975. Can deliver. Call 559-230-0486.

For Sale - 2008 Hot Tub. Brand new! Loaded, ozonator, therapy seats, full warranty. Sacrifice \$2,475. Can deliver. Call 559-360-9047.

For Sale - Bedroom Set. Solid wood. Chest, dresser/mirror, nightstand, sleigh bed. New in boxes. All dovetailed! Cost \$8K sacrifice \$1,875. Call 559-438-0248.

For Sale - Queen PILLOWTOP mattress/box. Cost \$600 sacrifice \$195. Brand new with warranty. King cost \$700 sacrifice \$295. Call 559-447-5066.

For Sale - \$295 all new King PILLOWTOP mattress/box. Never used w/warranty. Cost \$700 sacrifice \$295. Call 559-438-0248.

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Handyman Services

Rancho Handyman - You need the Rancho Handyman. Call Ohan for estimates for fencing, electrical and plumbing jobs. Call 645-6924.

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Tractor work, lot discing, mowing and scraping. Call Thomas at 645-6068.

Tractor discing, grading, mowing, trenching, drilling, home irrigation systems. Call Tomas at 645-4932.

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SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

		5		1	2			
	1			7				9
4			9			8	7	
9		3		6			8	
5			2			3		
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		4		3		9		

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	X		+		22
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	+		+		11
X		÷		X	
	+		+		20
18		1		18	

1 2 3 4 6 7 8 8 9

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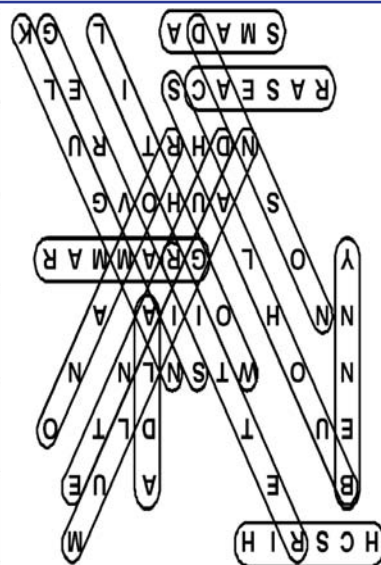
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ANSWERS

P	E	R	R	E	M	D	E	N	F	O	Y	T	A	S	S	T		
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18						18
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