

# The Ranchos Independent



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**Death in the Jungle:  
drugs  
deception  
salvation**

by Christi McKinney

Pastor Karl Roth  
of the Ranchos' Flipside Church  
surrounded by armed guards in Guatemala

UATEMALA

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## Death in the Jungle: drugs, deception, salvation

By Christi McKinney

### Riachuelo, Guatemala

On a winding back road on the outskirts of Riachuelo, Guatemala, two men riding on a moped were enjoying an October day with the wind in their faces as the sights and smells of the small Central America countryside flew past. From behind them they heard the rumble of a car grow closer and closer. As the riders anticipated the car passing them on the quiet road, they could not anticipate what happened next. Shots rang out from the approaching car and riddled the body of the rider on the back of the moped, killing him. Some of the bullets had passed through his now dead body and hit the driver of the moped, causing him to lose control of the small motorbike and crash along the side of the road. As he lay there bleeding and suffering the car came to a stop next to his body and the occupants got out and approached his twisted frame. As they stood around him one of the occupants leaned down, placed a steel gun barrel next to the injured man's head and pulled the trigger. And like that, "Pastor José" was dead.

Pastor Karl Roth of the Flipside Church in the Madera Ranchos recently returned from Riachuelo for the sole purpose of trying to help rescue and relocate the families of the recently slain Pastor and tells of the Pastor's life and his connection to the Ranchos church.

"They immigrated to the United States illegally years ago along with their two children," Roth begins as he tells of Pastor José and his wife who were both born and raised in Guatemala. "The couple worked hard to build a life for their family. Along the way he and his wife had two more children. Eventually they built a nice life in North Carolina. Jose had a great job, they rented a home, owned a couple of cars and had achieved the 'American Dream.'"

### Something Missing

Roth said that although life was good, José confided that he felt something in his life was still missing. He and his family began attending church and eventually became Christians.

"As José grew in his faith, he asked God how he could serve him," Roth continued. "At first he did menial jobs at the church, but he wanted to do more. He eventually began teaching and became a minister. He again asked God how he could be of service, promising that he would do whatever was needed and go wherever he wanted him to go." Roth said that José never thought he'd be directed to leave the states and return to Guatemala, but that is exactly what he felt God was leading him to do. He returned to Guatemala with his family and started a new ministry. There were no churches or schools in the area, so with the support of three churches in the United States, including Flipside Church in the Madera Ranchos, the ministry of Pastor José began in Riachuelo, Guatemala.

In just four years the new ministry grew to include four churches and a

Please see **DEATH** on P. 7

## Water Without Borders

### Area Water Expectations vs. Reality

By Igal Treibatch

What expectations did people have when they observed, in amazement, Moses strike a bolder with his staff and water come flowing out?

Today, we have expectations. When we turn on the faucet, water should flow.

The water got there somehow, somebody knew how to get it there, but will it always be there?

Last year in the San Joaquin Valley, over 500,000 acres were not farmed because of lack of water. That is the same as a 1 mile strip, 781 miles long, taken out of farming production. A strip as long as the distance from the Mexico border to near the Oregon border; almost the entire length of California!

### Water Facts

Here are some additional fascinating facts about water most of us do not realize. Of the earth's total water supply, 97.189 percent is salt water and not usable for drinking in its present form. Another 2.2 percent is fresh water tied up in glaciers and ice caps. What remains is 0.6 percent in fresh groundwater, 0.01 percent in freshwater in lakes and streams and 0.001 percent (One hundredth of one percent) is water vapor. To put it in perspective, if you were to have 10,000 glasses of water, only one

glass would be suitable for drinking.

Do we know enough about managing our most precious resource? The more we know about water, water management and recent advances of water related technologies the better off we will be. Engineering, hydrology, geology and chemistry are only a few of the disciplines we need to learn in order to really understand water. We also have politics in the mix; oh yes, my friends, politics. I think most people would agree that water education goes beyond knowing how to turn your faucet on and off. Until recently, water availability was not a priority on most people's minds. Well, times, they are changing and we have to react to the changes sooner rather than later.

Across the ocean, south of the Dead Sea, in the Israeli desert at the north point of the Red Sea, you will find a city called Eilat. Eilat is in the middle of a desert with no significant annual rainfall, no river to rely on and it is totally disconnected from the Israeli National water grid. And yet, it is a thriving city relying 100 percent on its ability to desalinate water and reuse its treated tertiary water for agriculture and landscape.

So what do they know that we don't? They have been at the precipice of no choice. It was no longer a matter of cost. To have a

Please see **WATER** on P. 23

## Wood Stove Change-out Begins for Cleaner Units

### Burn Cleaner offers incentives for cleaner units

*Burn Cleaner*, the Air District's annual wood-burning device change-out program, offers valuable incentives for upgrading wood-burning devices and continues a generous incentive for low-income homeowners. It's the fourth year for the program, which encourages Valley residents to change out older, dirtier wood-burning units for cleaner, more efficient models by offering monetary incentives.

"We're pleased to once again offer Valley residents a valuable incentive to make one change in their daily lives to help improve air quality," said Samir Sheikh, director of the District's Emission Reduction Incentive Program.

The 2010 program begins Jan. 19 and continues until all funding is exhausted.

Residential wood burning is a major source of wintertime air pollution in the Valley and wood-burning emissions cause serious health problems. The program offers varying incentive amounts, depending on the type of device being changed out

and purchased:

\$100 to upgrade a non-certified wood-burning device to an EPA Phase II-certified wood-burning device;

\$250 to upgrade a wood-burning device to a pellet stove;

\$500 to upgrade a wood-burning (including pellet stove) device to gas-burning device;

\$1,500 to low-income residents for the purchase of any of the above devices (low-income status as verified by tax returns, pay stubs, unemployment or disability checks, or bank statements submitted with applications).

Eligible households must be located in the eight-county air basin. People interested in participating can visit the District's website at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) or call the Emission Reduction Incentive Program at 559-230-5800 to learn more. Applications will be accepted beginning Jan. 19.

"Changing out a dirtier, older wood-burning unit is a very effective way to reduce dangerous emissions, and the Burn Cleaner program is a valuable way to support people in making

that change toward healthier air," Sheikh said.



For more information about the Valley Air District, call the Fresno regional office at 559-230-6000.

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**Editorial**

**A Journey of 10,000 Miles ...**

By Randy Bailey

The old saying goes that a journey of 10,000 miles begins with a single step. This is true not only for journeys but serves as a metaphor for any undertaking in life that just might take a while.

On Tuesday, Jan. 19, a small step was taken in the state of Massachusetts with the election of Republican Scott Brown to the United States senate.

I'll wait while that one sinks in.

The seat had been held by a Kennedy since 1953 when John F. Kennedy was first elected to the senate. When J.F.K. was elected president in 1960, Benjamin A. Smith II became the official "seat warmer" to complete J.F.K.'s term until Teddy Kennedy turned 30 in 1962, the minimum age for U.S. senators. True to form, in November of 1962 Teddy was elected in a special election and held the position until his death last August. With the exception of a couple of years, a Kennedy has held that chair for 57 years and Teddy alone held it for 48.

Wow.

But now a new first step has been taken.

I could go into all the ramifications of this step Brown is taking. Such as its effect on Obama's health care death grip on all of us. Or how his election makes him the 41st Republican in the senate, effectively taking away the Democrats' ability to ram legislation through, filibuster free. I could talk

about the amazing impact that Obama has on Democrats running for elected office in the United States, most notably in Virginia and New Jersey and now Massachusetts, solid blue states that are now governed by Republican governors and a new Republican senator, respectively.

But I digress.

What I want to talk about is the message of hope and change that Scott Brown's election sends to Californians. Next year will mark 20 years since California has had a Republican senator. Of my three daughters, two have never known anything but Liberal Democrats as their representatives in the United States senate and one only got one year of Pete Wilson before he got elected governor. Now, I know that fans of the two senators from our state are probably ecstatic with their collective performance and are thrilled with the state of the state of California these days, but I think we can do better. And one way I think we can do better is by having senators who put California first in their thinking and in their voting. I guess something happens when you get that townhouse in D.C. and California becomes your second home, but I think what really happens is that D.C. is Mecca for Liberal Democrats and they can finally do what they *know* is best, regardless of what the voters want. The healthcare debate proves that.

If Scott Brown can win in Massachusetts, a Republican senator is not that far-fetched for California. Hope and change, baby!

**The Ranchos Independent**

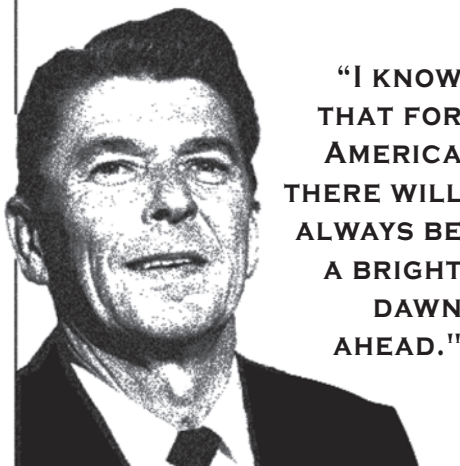
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**Bailey to Speak At GOP Lunch**

The Republican Party of Madera County (RPMC) will hold their next Monthly Lunch-Meeting on Monday, Feb. 1 at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be followed by the Regular Monthly Meeting at Madera Muni Golf Course Banquet Room, 23200 Ave. 17, Madera. **The guest speaker will be Randy Bailey, Publisher and Editor of the Ranchos Independent.** Meal cost is \$11 and includes the tax and tip. Please RSVP for the lunch by calling Bobbie, RPMC Secretary, at 683-0719.

This is a Madera Countywide Political Committee and a part of the CRP (California Republican Party). Newcomers are welcome.

See our website for more RPMC information at [www.MaderaGOP.org](http://www.MaderaGOP.org).

# THE D.O.G. HOUSE

DEMAND OPEN GOVERNMENT BY DALE DROZEN



*At the next Board of Supervisors, keep a wary eye on our Board of Supervisors!*

Its track record so far has been to protect management and administration along with personal support staff at the expense of essential services and County employees actually serving the public (boots on the ground). To date, cuts have been too little too late, creating the need for more and deeper cuts. When you look at past budgets some departments grew at several times the rate of other departments, while the biggest cuts are going to departments with the lowest historical growth rates. The budget for the Board of Supervisors has been one of the faster growing budgets in the County. In the past few years Supervisors have cut two positions from their support staff, the "boots on the ground" staff needed to prepare agendas, oversee contracts and conduct county business. At the same time, they have added three new staffers to personally cater to each Supervisor's needs.

*As the Board cuts employees and services only one Supervisor, District 1's Frank Bigelow, has pledged to take cuts equal to what they are asking of employees.*

### Positions Lost

We have already lost 12 positions from the Sheriff's office, with additional cuts being requested. We have eliminated winter fire station staffing for Ahwahnee and Raymond. Services in many areas of government operations have diminished. **It is way past time for a very public accounting of the county budget with an eye toward:**

1. Historical growth of department budgets and justification.
  2. "Need" vs. "nice to have."
- And last, but not least:
3. A clear look at special accounts long hidden in the budgeting process.

### An Idea Whose Time has Come?

While I was scratching out my last D.O.G. Report I got an idea I would like to run by the D.O.G. Readers. On one hand Madera County Government has seen fit to cut all winter staffing at Raymond and Ahwahnee fire stations and reduce the number of Sheriff Deputies available to patrol. On the other hand, funding continues for parks construction, the Fossil Discovery Center and other "feel good" pet projects. The money is still flowing from various County, State, and Federal pockets. Bottom line is the money all originally came from but one source, taxpayers' (our) pockets.

*I think it is time for WE THE PEOPLE to make a stand.*

Monday, Jan. 11 staffing of Raymond and Ahwahnee Fire Stations ended.

Madera County Sheriff's Department lost 12 Deputy positions and I am told now have another five frozen.

*I feel like it is time to inject some common sense into the government equation.*

In the very near future the new Fossil Discovery Center will have a grand opening, with the associated media coverage. I need some input on this one:

*Do you think it would be a good idea to set up an informational picket line at the grand opening?* The petition to reconsider the staffing cuts got way over 1,000 signatures in just a few days.

How many people would consider joining me on an informational picket line?

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**SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE RANCHOS INDEPENDENT**

**DEATH** cont. from P. 2

school.

While much attention has been focused on Mexico's drug wars, Mexico's southern neighbor, Guatemala, has been overrun with well-armed, well-financed drug cartels, corruption and pervasive poverty. Opium poppy fields grow freely while drug lords and their associates have become the self-ordained local governments and police either directly or by buying off others. More than \$10 billion in cocaine passes through Guatemala each year, with an estimated \$1 billion used to bribe officials. Violence between competing cartels inevitably affects "civilians" and last year alone there were more than 6,200 homicides reported in Guatemala.

The students attending the new school loved learning. The concepts that we take for granted, such as learning to read and understanding math, was opening a whole new world for them and they cherished both the experience and the precious few books they had. The ministry was working actively with the government to obtain funding for additional teachers and was growing. However, the attention that the church's ministry brought to the area and the message being taught to its residents was an unwelcomed change to the status quo of the area by the drug cartels that dominate 40 percent of the country. Representatives of the cartels told Pastor José and his church and school to stop what they were doing because there was too much activity in the area. Pastor José defiantly told

them that he was following God's direction and that he would not stop.

"The cartels are threatened by the church's message of freedom for all people and the children were now being taught about the evil of drugs as the ministry helped people get off drugs," Roth said.

**Drug Cartel Death Threats**

Around May of last year, Pastor José, his family and his ministry began receiving death threats. The cartels wanted the ministry to stop.

Now.

However, Roth said that holding onto his great faith in God, José refused to back down and he continued his ministry. In late October of last year the threats stopped and there was a sigh of relief for what seemed

like the briefest of moments. On Oct. 27, it was Pastor José who took that fateful drive on the moped with his Associate Pastor riding on the back.

When word of Pastor José's assassination reached the churches in the states, church members rallied together to donate money to help get the families out of danger. Flipside Church in the Madera Ranchos collected \$5,000 in one day and similar collections were made at the other two churches across the nation. Roth said the mission became, "They have nobody to help them, let's go get them out of there and get them to someplace safe." The group first hired private investigators to see what they could find out about the murder

Please see **DEATH** on P. 12

*Don't believe the rumor*  
**I am running!**

These are hard times. County and State revenues are extremely low, budgets are being cut and jobs are in jeopardy. In an economic crisis like this experience is the most important quality a County Supervisor can possess.

My pledge to you is to save as many jobs as possible, especially those in Law Enforcement and Fire Protection.

This is a job for someone who:

Knows **WHO** to trust ... **WHERE** not to cut ... and **WHEN** to say enough!

I am the only candidate with the experience and the knowledge to get us through this. I will be proud to serve you again. *Frank Bigelow*

Frank  
**BIGELOW**  
 SUPERVISOR

# When Everything Else Fails, There's Always Room for J-E-L-L-O



by Jean Briner

Here we are in 2010 – are you still writing “09” on your checks? If you are like me, it may take a couple of months before you finally learn that it should be “10.”

I want to start the New Year in this column on a little different food item. In the year that I have been doing this I have themed on candies, pies, cakes, salads and soups. This month I'm going to do something that not everyone likes. Remember this song J – E – L – L – O? When we hear the word Jell-O we instantly think of the wiggly colored gelatin, but that isn't right. The fact is Jell-O is the trade mark name for desserts produced by Kraft Foods. There is also Jell-O puddings and Jell-O no-bake desserts. We are going to play a little game: I'm going to ask you six questions about Jell-O gelatin and the answers will be planted at various parts of this article.

1 – What were the first four flavors?

2 – What state eats more Jell-O per capita than any other state in the United States?

3 – What flavor do they eat the most?

4 – Was there ever a Celery, Bubble Gum, or Root Beer flavor?

5 – In a recent poll by American Food Corp., what is the #1 flavor in the U.S.?

6- What year was sugar free gelatin developed and first sold?

## Growing Up with Jell-O

Growing up we had Jell-O quite often. I don't know if my folks just liked it or because it was an inexpensive dish. One of the ways mama fixed it was the lime Jell-O with cottage cheese and crushed pineapple. If she wanted it to be a little fancy she would make it in a glass cake pan and when she was ready to serve it, cut it into squares and put it on top of a lettuce leaf on the salad plate with a lit-

tle dollop of Miracle Whip on top. (Randy is probably gagging trying to type this into the paper – I've already told you how he feels about cottage cheese and I know how he feels about this dish). Then there was the red Jell-O with sliced bananas and either fruit cocktail or crushed pineapple. And who can forget the lime Jell-O with canned pears? When you are going to be adding pineapple to Jell-O don't make your Jell-O with all water. I pour my pineapple into a sieve that I've placed over a measuring cup and push the fruit with a spoon to get out as much juice as possible. After you've dissolved the gelatin with the required boiling water, use the pineapple juice as part of the cold water required. It makes a much tastier Jell-O.

Answer to question #1: Strawberry, raspberry, orange and lemon.

Those of you of my generation, remember going to baby or wedding showers and being served Jell-O and ice cream that had been made together? It was quite popular 40 years ago. How things change. The last shower I went to we were served dips and chips and raw vegetables.

Or remember making an angel food cake, cutting it in half and making a hallow “trough” in the bottom layer and filling it with whipped cream that had little different flavored Jell-O squares (green and red at Christmas) in it, then put the top back on the cake and cover it with the rest of the whipped cream, and put the remaining Jell-O squares on top? I haven't seen one of those in years!

## Jell-O Poke Cake

1 box white or yellow cake mix  
1 small box Jell-O (any flavor)  
1 C boiling water  
½ C cool water  
1 8 oz. container Cool Whip

Bake cake as package directs in a 9x13 pan. While cake is baking, mix Jell-O in boiling water until dissolved, then add the cool water. After cake has cooled for 20 minutes, poke holes all over it with a meat fork or the handle of a wooden spoon. Slowly pour the Jell-O over the cake, making sure it gets into all the holes.

Refrigerate for 3 to 4 hours. Before serving, cover the top of cake with the cool whip.

Answer to Questions #2 and 3: Utah eats more Jell-O than any other state and their favorite flavor is lime. In fact, in 2001 green Jell-O was declared “The Official State Snack of Utah.” The Governor declared the second week of February as the official “Jell-O Week.”

In going through my mom's recipe cards, I found a recipe for Cranberry Salad that I remember her making, especially at Thanksgiving or Christmas.

## Cranberry Delight

1 pkg. raw cranberries.  
1 ½ C Sugar  
1 small pkg. strawberry Jell-O  
1 ¼ C boiling water  
1 can crushed pineapple  
1 C miniature marshmallows  
1 C Nuts – chopped  
Coconut (optional)

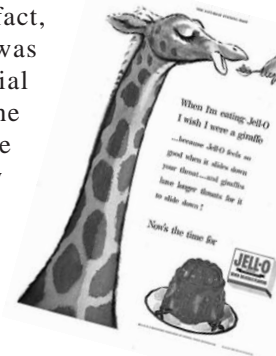
Grind cranberries and combine with sugar. Chill overnight. Next

morning, dissolve Jell-O in boiling water. Add to cranberries. Fold in pineapple, marshmallows and nuts. Mix well. Pour into mold or bowl, sprinkle with coconut if desired. Chill until set.

Answer to questions #4 and 5: Yes, believe it or not, there was a Celery, Bubble Gum and Root Beer flavors. I can remember the Celery, but the other two – nope. In a recent poll by American Food Corps. the Number One Jell-O flavor in the U. S. was Cherry!

Any gelatin recipe can be made with sugar-free Jell-O to accommodate diabetics or people who just want to cut down on their sugar intake. To answer question #6, sugar-free gelatin was developed using saccharine and sold under the name of D-Zerta in 1923. Sugar Free Jell-O as we know it today replaced D-Zerta in 1984 and is now sweetened with Nutra Sweet.

REMEMBER – THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR JELL-O!



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## KIWANIS CORNER



By President John Herrera

In October of 2009, a new board was elected for the Ranchos Kiwanis Club.

President: John Herrera

Past President: Steve Monk

President Elect: vacant

Vice President: Chris Parks

Secretary: Pam Glueck

Treasurer: Marie Cameron

Directors: Jim Heiden, Jolene Mason, Bev Delk, Charles Diaz and Sandy Monk

We meet at the Pizza Factory and we have a time slot for everyone. For the early birds, we meet on the 1st Thursday of the month at 6:30 a.m. Breakfast is \$5. The rest of the month we also meet on Thursday but in the evening. From 6:15 - 6:45 p.m. we eat and socialize. Dinner is \$7. Let us know you are coming as a guest and your first time is free to either meeting. At 6:45 p.m. the program begins. We invite interesting speakers to every meeting. Kiwanis is a great organization to belong to where the emphasis is on service to the com-

munity and the focus is on children. All of the fundraising we do throughout the year goes back into our community.

Recent Kiwanis projects have included 17 LHS Key Club members and advisor Sarah Buress decorating Rose Bowl Floats. The Boy Scouts, Cadets and the LHS wrestling team assisted in an electronic recycling event at the Ranchos Market. The Boy Scouts attended a recent meeting and were presented with a donation for several years of helping us out with recycling and other events. The Tessmers attended a meeting and presented a program they are involved in to help teen drivers understand the importance of not being distracted while driving. I believe everyone knows of the tragic loss to the Tessmer family a few years ago. Find out more at [www.impactteendrivers.org](http://www.impactteendrivers.org).

In future articles I will mention fundraising events we are involved in. We thank the local community for supporting our efforts over the years. The Ranchos Kiwanis Club was formed in 1985. Please visit one of our meetings so you can see for yourself what Kiwanis is all about. Also visit our website at [www.RanchosKiwanis.com](http://www.RanchosKiwanis.com) for more information. Ask anyone who has been to our meetings, we have a lot of fun. For more information call 217-8947 for John.

## The Stock Report

# Ranchos Events Slated for 2010

By Audrey Stock

Hi neighbors,

Happy 2010! My house was filled with warmth, energy, laughter and silliness over the Christmas Holiday. What a delight to be surrounded by my loved ones. I had 20 family members in and out of my house for the week before and after Christmas. There was lots of playing games, gift wrapping, cooking and remembering past Christmases. A long time ago I decided it wasn't about the gifts, it was about the people that you share your love with. You can probably tell that Christmas is my favorite holiday. After everyone left it was time for New Year's Eve, which I spent over at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. We seniors stayed up eating and playing cards until midnight! What fun and good company to see 2010 arrive.

For those of you that don't know, the Golden Valley Unified School District board has an election among themselves each December. This year the elected officers stayed the same as last year. The president of the board is Roger Schuh who did a good job last year; the clerk of the board is Steven Lewis; Superintendent Sarah Koligian is the secretary of the board; Mona Diaz will represent Golden Valley on the Executive Board of the Madera County Schools Boards Association; and Mark Toole will represent Golden Valley at the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce meetings. Mona Diaz will represent Golden Valley at the California School Board Association, the Small Schools Districts Association and the Legislative Network in Sacramento this year. Mona is a good choice to represent our school district at these California-wide meetings. Mona has been attending these meetings since Golden Valley became a school district. We can't let Sacramento forget that we exist. We have worked too hard to put Golden Valley Unified on the California map.

I wonder how many of you noticed the article "Ways to Get Our Children More Active," by Joseph Herzog in the Fresno Bee Valley Voices section in the Saturday, Jan. 9 paper. It was a good article. Joe and his wife Dovey Herzog are both retired P.E. teachers and used to teach at Sequoia Middle School in Fresno when I taught there years ago. They both put together P.E. programs that were recognized by the state of California as outstanding P.E. programs.

Joe has fought hard to keep P.E. programs at all school levels in Fresno and is known throughout the state of California for his work. Joe Herzog is a neurokinesologist. How about that for a word? He is also the president of the Fresno Alliance for Physical Education and Athletics. Joe says that kids need all of the exercise that they can get. Exercise not only burns calories and builds strength, it also promotes the development of both fine and gross motor skills and much more. So teachers keep those kids moving. I still think that there should be four years of P.E. at Liberty.

I am looking forward to the Madera County High Schools Academic Decathlon on Feb. 6. The subject this year is the French Revolution. The tests that the students are given are in art, economics, essay, interview, language and literature, mathematics, music, science, speech and they end the testing day with the super quiz. These are students from the seven Madera County high schools. The event is all day and is held at the Madera South High School campus. The Super Quiz begins at 2:30 p.m. with a reception and awards ceremony immediately following. Liberty High students have won many awards in the past.

The Academic Pentathlon will be held March 20. This event will be held at Liberty High School. Madera County has a total of nine school districts. Not all districts have a high school or a middle school. The Pentathlon is for 7th and 8th graders from the six Madera County middle schools. Our own Ranchos Middle School has walked away with many 1st place awards in the Pentathlon competition.

SALE! SALE! Who doesn't like that word. On Feb. 6 at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center the Treasure House will be having an after Christmas Sale from 8 a.m. to noon. Come one come all. Great bargains are to be had. There will also be homemade goodies, fresh fruit and garden flowers, and trees for sale. The Ranchos/Hills Seniors are sponsoring a trip to Chukchansi Casino on Feb. 11. Bus will leave from the Senior Center at 8:30 a.m. and back at 3 p.m. Call for reservations at 645-4864 and Joann at the Senior Center will answer all your questions.

February Golden Valley School Board regular meetings are scheduled for Feb. 9 and 23 at the Liberty library at 7 p.m. Hope to see you there.

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## This New Year Will be Different

By Bob Crabb

As we start the year 2010 and as we start putting time and distance from our experiences of 2009, it may be time to consider our location in life and faith. Technically, I suppose, the end of the year is really just another day marking a one year anniversary from another day. But the end of the year seems to carry a certain degree of spiritual and emotionally weight. Sometimes January 1st of any new year even has a tension to it. Sometimes the New Year means recovering from the Christmas season or often I have heard that the New Year means making a resolution or commitment to do something or not to do something in the New Year.

Today, may I propose that the New Year season is also a good enough time to ask questions about our spiritual condition? In other words, how are you getting along with God? Has your relationship with Christ improved since last New Year's Day? Do you know God better than you did last year at this time? Have you learned anything new about God since last year? Has God given you any new insights about your neighbors and about your enemies and about those folks who are today's modern equivalents of the New Testament's lepers and outcasts and centurions and tax collectors? Since last New Year's Day where did you meet God in your life? Last year, where and when did God comfort you and where and when did God trouble you and where and when did God answer your prayers or not answer your prayers? The New Year is a good enough time to check on your spiritual condition.

The other thing about this time of year is that it can seem like we are on the verge of a great adventure. Perhaps we can look at awe with what is unfolding before us. What does this New Year hold for us? How will the next 12 months shape us and effect us as individuals, as families and as a community? So often the tempo of life doesn't give us much of a chance to think about these things. Life sometimes happens so fast that we don't have a chance or the energy to try to look at it through the experiences of a continuation of faith. I can imagine it might have been the same with Jesus and his family after his birth. For Mary and Joseph and the Christ Child, life came at them pretty fast after Jesus was born. The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew doesn't paint a pretty picture. You may remember (Matthew 2:1ff) the report of the Holy Innocents. The Holy Innocents were the children of

Bethlehem who were slaughtered by order of King Herod in his attempt to eliminate the baby Jesus. Matthew reports that the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to "Get Up!" and take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt because Herod wanted to kill Jesus (Matthew 1:13ff). Life came at that little family pretty fast.

So out of this heritage of faith, tension, uncertainty, change and new starts come those of us who follow Christ. And we are embarking on a new year that may also be filled with faith, tension, uncertainty, change and new beginnings. None of us can predict with any accuracy what this year will hold for us. Will there be prosperity or scarcity, will there peace or continued war, will there be health or illness, stability or change. We only know a little and so much more will be revealed. In our prudent planning and organizing for our life in 2010, we are also given the chance to say one more time: "This year it is going to be different. This year I am going to work a little harder on my relationship with Jesus Christ. This year I am going to try to be a little bit more oriented at looking for the work of the Holy Spirit in my life. This year I am going to pay attention to the health and well being of my relationship with Christ. This year I am going share my relationship with Christ with a few more people. This year I am going to praise God more and practice the presence of Christ every chance I get. This year, I want to be more involved with my God."

Don't wait for the urgency of whatever the New Year holds to prod you into action. Be as prudent in your affairs as you have to be, but be fiercely courageous with your relationship with your God. I offer to you (and to me and my family as well) a path to make this year different. This year increase your prayer life and if you are not already doing so attend a bible study. If you are not involved with a church that follows Christ, get involved; if you have a church, maybe it is time to get a little more involved. Honor your baptism this year and pray with others and for others. Share what you have, share your relationship with Christ with others. We have a lot to offer in the Body of Christ which is the church and we ought to share what we have this year.

By the Grace of God, this year *will* be different.

*Pastor Bob Crabb is the Pastor of the Christian Mission Center meeting at 36875 Avenue 12 (Loren Way and Ave. 12). They worship Sundays at 10:30 a.m.*

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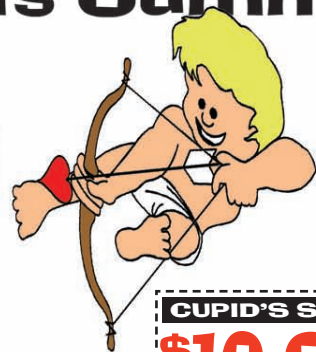
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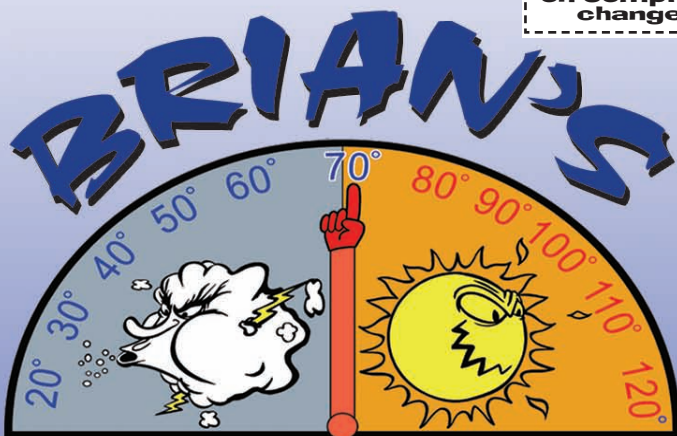
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## The Bookshelf

# New Year, Rules for Ranchos Library

By Ellen Mester

Happy New Year Madera Ranchos! Probably most of us are breathing a sigh of relief that 2009 is now history. What a tumultuous year it has been for our county, state and country. Unfortunately 2010 may be a repeat of the previous year, but let's hope not. The economy WILL get better and we WILL get through this. It's just going to take a while. That's my prediction at any rate.

The Ranchos Library has reduced hours with furloughs in place for two Fridays in January, the 15th and 29th continuing each month with two Friday furlough days. We also closed Jan. 18 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and will be closed Feb. 15 for Presidents' Day. Call the library for an updated phone message. The furloughs are in place for all Madera County staff members with the exception of essential services. Our county has a serious revenue shortfall that is forcing cuts to staff and services so there may be an even greater reduction in open hours in the near future. Our main concern is to keep the Ranchos Library open even if it is for only a couple of days a week. I will keep you posted.

### Library Hours

Currently our regular weekly hours are:  
Monday through Thursday – noon to 7 p.m.  
Friday – noon to 5 p.m.  
Saturday – noon to 3 p.m.

We're gearing up for our annual Flatlander's Day Parade and Craft Show which will be on Saturday, May 8. We'll be mailing out information to vendors this month. For information regarding the Craft Show, contact the Ranchos Library at 645-1214. For information regarding the Parade, contact The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce at 645-4001.

### Children's Programs

Every Wednesday at 2 p.m. there is something for children ages 3-11 at the library. The first Wednesday of the month is Read to Katie the dog. The second Wednesday is Act Up day where kids can dress up and tell a story about who they are. It's a lot of fun. Then the third Wednesday is Craft and Story time where we make something seasonal and very special. Finally, the fourth Wednesday is Game day with Wii Sports or a wide selection of board games. And most importantly, we have pre-school story time with Mrs. Anderson every Monday at 12:30 p.m.

### Book Recommendations

**Juvenile Fiction:** *The Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney. Wildly popular

with boys, this funny journal written by a fictitious middle-school boy named Greg chronicles all the awkward, irrational and ironic moments as he transitions from elementary to middle school. Not only does he admit to the confusion between what is acceptable terminology in elementary school versus middle school, but how his view point is changed for better or worse depending upon what situation he finds himself in. The cartoon drawings that accompany each page only add to the humor. It is definitely a L.O.L. book for all ages, but for those who are reluctant readers this could be the book that turns them around.

**Young Adult Fiction:** *City of Glass* by Cassandra Clare. The third and final of the Mortal Instruments trilogy finds Clary leaping through a portal into Idris, the Shadowhunters' homeland, to find a rune to release her mother from a self-induced coma. She is of course also looking for Jace, her brother. Unknown to her, however, is that her best friend Simon (now a vampire) was also pulled through the portal with Jace to escape the demon ambush. Fortunately for Clary, Luke travels with her and brings her safely to his sister's home. That's just the beginning of the twists and turns this story takes. It is action-packed with demons, Downworlders, Nephilim and real angels. The author will sweep you into an incredible imaginary world that makes the Twilight series look tame in comparison.

**Adult Non-Fiction:** *Medical Tests That Can Save Your Life* by David Johnson, Ph.D. and David Sandmire, M.D. with Daniel Klein. If you feel confused about what tests your doctor should be ordering for you or if you postpone certain tests using a myriad of excuses then you probably should read this book. It helps put things into a personal perspective based on your age, medical history, genetics and lifestyle. The tests are explained in a simple straightforward manner and include the potential risks as well as the reliability and average cost. The majority of the conditions described relate to various cancers, heart disease or diabetes. It is not a comprehensive list of all ailments or tests by any means, but it does make you realize that even if you feel great you might need certain medical tests performed based on other factors such as age, history, etc. If anything, it will help you to ask your doctor the right questions and to be a little more assertive. It could just save your life.

Check out these books and more at the Ranchos Library and don't forget your library card – don't leave home without it!

DEATH cont. from P. 7

and to assess the situation, but while investigating the murder the private investigators got into a gun battle with members of the drug cartel and two cartel members were killed.

At that point the cartel declared war.

The cartel put "hits" out against another Pastor, as well as Pastor José's widow and even his children, allowing for nothing less than a full-blown blood bath. The cartel printed fliers with pictures of each of the targets with the message to each of them that if they came into the area. "... we will hunt you down and kill you."

Time for Action

Roth and a group of others from the representative churches decided it was time for action to get these people out alive and made plans to leave for Guatemala, however, just prior to leaving they received reports of a gun battle in the area in which six more people were executed by the cartel.

Roth and his group approached the Guatemalan Embassy and asked for help protecting the families but the Embassy revealed that not only could they offer no protection to the families, or to U.S. Citizens going there, but they couldn't even protect all of their embassy workers. They alerted the group that this area is currently the most dangerous place in the world, bar none, because it is untouchable by any police department. The Guatemalan Government declared the region as uncontrollable, unwinnable and without recourse and Roth's group was told flatly, "If you go, you're on your own. And if you go to Riachuelo ... they will bury you there."

When Roth and another pastor arrived in Guatemala, they'd already lined up security with a group of businessmen and charities. However, upon arriving they discovered that these people had already fled the country in fear for their own lives because of their participation in this mission. Roth's group found themselves hiring their own bodyguards or "pistoleros" to help extract the families.

The group traveled in two vehicles with armed guards surrounding them and the journey took place under the cover of darkness, taking approximately three days moving from secret location to secret location. Any time they stopped for a bathroom break a guard would enter the restroom first with his gun pulled and searching each stall before they could enter the room.

Success ... So Far

The mission has been successful thus far. The family is working with Home-


land Security on obtaining Humanitarian Parole and family members remain secured in several locations with protection. However, the churches assisting them continue to receive threatening phone calls. Roth plans to return to the Guatemalan village in February or March of this year to encourage and strengthen the four churches and assure them they are not forgotten.

He has one other goal on his next trip: He plans to try to talk with the cartel members who assassinated Pastor José.

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*Drinking coffee in moderate amounts during middle age may reduce the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease in the elderly according to a new study done in Finland and Sweden. Those who drank three to five cups of coffee per day in midlife were much less likely to have developed dementia or Alzheimer's disease in follow-up checks two decades or more later, the researchers said in a recent issue of the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease. Here's to your good health!*

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These types of results happen in my office a lot. You see, people hear about this chiropractor, who also uses NEUROLOGY to diagnose and treat -- because of this I am sent the hardest people possible! What a great way to spend a day in the office!

For one, it has to do with the advanced training that I have. I am one of only a handful of doctors with specific training to care for patients with Peripheral Neuropathy. I am a member of the Neuropathy Treatment Centers of America. This gives me an unfair advantage to help patients with tingling, burning, numb and PAINFUL feet. The other thing is that I use tools and instruments that are cutting edge technology for getting patients better.

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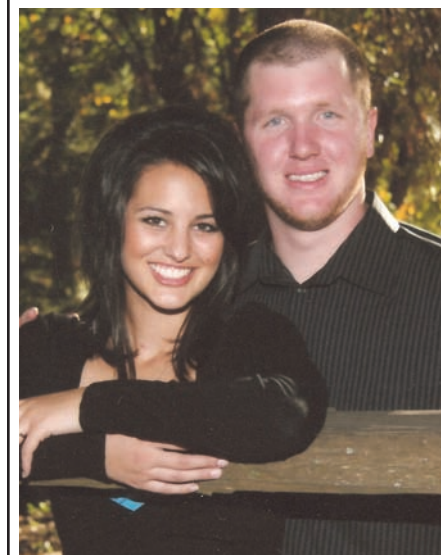
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Engagements



Elise Allegra Monreal of the Madera Ranchos and Bryan Daniel Smith of Boise, Idaho plan a May 30 wedding at Bass Lake and then plan to live in Boise.

**Monreal - Smith**

The parents of Elise Monreal are happy to announce her engagement to Bryan Smith. The couple will be married on May 30, 2010 in Bass Lake.

The future bride is the daughter of Mike and Erna Monreal of the Madera Ranchos. She is a 2008 graduate of Liberty High and is attending Reedley College, Madera Center in a pre-nursing program. She is employed by Sunrise Assisted Living.

The future groom is the son of Ken and Julie Smith of Idaho. He is a 2005 graduate of Sierra High and attended California State University, Fresno before relocating to Idaho, where the couple will make their home. He is currently completing his teaching credential at Boise State University.

**Master Gardener Feb. Workshops**

Sat., Feb. 6, 10 a.m. - noon

**Grafting and Budding Workshop:** Expand fruit and nut varieties in your own garden with the always engaging Lee Fanucchi, noted Master Gardener and orchard owner. **Madera Ranchos/Hills Senior Center, 37330 Berkshire Drive, Madera Ranchos. \$5 at the door.** "How-to" handouts provided.

Sat., Feb. 13, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Plant Clinic:** Planting bare root roses, berries, and shrubs (and other gardening solutions). **Western Sierra Nursery, 49266 Golden Oak Drive, Oakhurst. Free.** Bring your gardening questions and problems - Master Gardeners on site to help.

To register or for more information for either event call 559-675-7879 x 210.



## GV Students More Fit than Peers



Golden Valley Unified School District Superintendent, Sarah Koligian.

By Sarah Koligian

'Tis the season for New Year's Resolutions! One resolution that most people can relate to is making a commitment to become more physically fit and to adopt healthier lifestyles beginning with the new year. This is one resolution that is taking a firmer hold with Golden Valley Unified students. California recently released the spring 2009 Fitnessgram results for fifth, seventh and ninth grade students. We are pleased to share that Golden Valley Unified fifth, seventh and ninth graders far exceeded the results of their peers statewide based on the most recent Spring 2009 results.

The Fitnessgram assesses a total of six fitness areas. In the last school year, a greater percentage of students met all six benchmarks compared to last year. Statewide, more than half of the students in the fifth and seventh grades successfully met five of the six targets as did two-thirds of the ninth graders.

In 1996, the State Board of Education designated Fitnessgram as the required physical fitness test that school districts shall administer to California students in grades five, seven, and nine. The Fitnessgram, a health-related fitness test developed by the Dallas-based Cooper Institute, uses the Healthy Fitness Zones (HFZ) to evaluate fitness performance.

State Superintendent Jack O'Connell said, "The percentage of students who are in the healthy fitness zone is increasing.

However, as a state we must continue to improve. National statistics show that today's children are twice as likely to be overweight than their counterparts of the 1980s. Teenagers today are three times as likely to be overweight as those in the 1980s. Our students must take responsibility for their fitness, health, and overall well-being so they can compete on the playing field, in the classroom, and on the global stage."

The goal of California's physical fitness test is to facilitate learning about physical activity and physical fitness concepts in order to increase the likelihood students will adopt lifetime patterns of physical activity.

We are proud of the results of our students, but we still have more work to do to encourage and enable all students to become more physically fit. Golden Valley Unified will be pursuing a more aggressive plan to help increase the opportunities for students to learn about physical activity and fitness concepts. Beginning this May, during the Physical Fitness Testing window for grades five, seven and nine, all students in grades one through 10, will be given the opportunity to engage in six fitness tasks by taking the Fitnessgram Test. Part of our district's goal is to increase the opportunity for fitness, fun, competition and raising the awareness and importance of lifelong patterns of physical activity. Students will have the opportunity to earn special Superintendent Fitness awards as part of an incentive to encourage students to perform at their optimum levels.

California has also recognized the need to encourage more opportunities for fitness for school age children by increasing the requirement for Physical Education at the high school level from two years to potentially four years if a student has not passed the Physical Fitness Test by their tenth grade year. Liberty High School currently has a four year Physical Education requirement unless students have passed five of the six fitness tasks by either their ninth or tenth grade year. If students have passed, they have the option to waive two years of PE.

For an overview of the Physical Fitness Test please refer to the California Department of Education Website at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov), 2009 Physical Fitness Test. The 2009 physical fitness results for schools, school districts, counties, and state are also available there.

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## LHS Artist Wins State First Prize



GVUSD Superintendent, Sarah Koligian (left) recognizes LHS student Samantha Nielsen's artistic ability and her prize-winning poster which won both First Prize and the overall Grand Prize.

Liberty High School student Samantha Nielsen submitted an amazingly creative poster that won a \$50 cash award for First Prize in the high school category and an additional \$50 cash award for the overall Grand Prize in the Ninth Annual California School Library Association CSLA@YourSchool Library Poster Contest.

Over 100 students statewide participated in the poster contest using pictures of kids, books and imaginary and realistic images in media including crayon, pencil, paint and computer. Posters displayed slogans such as "Read," "Explore New Worlds," "Study," "Have Fun," "Imagine" and "Get Enlightened" all "@yourlibrary."

Nielsen's artwork will be displayed in the CSLA state office in Sacramento and on the CSLA website at [postercontest.csla.net](http://postercontest.csla.net), as well as used on CSLA publications and products.

At Webster Elementary School in December, school principal Kevin Hatch (center) starts a Tug-O-War as part of a leadership activity. Two very determined groups of fifth graders dug in their heels and learned a life lesson about teamwork as it applied to working toward a common goal.



Part of Sierra View's comprehensive Character Counts Program includes teaching children to be good stewards of resources and the environment. In an effort to expand Sierra View's school wide recycling effort, two large, heavy duty, recycle bins were installed at Sierra View on Dec. 15. The bins were purchased and installed using a \$2500 grant given to Sierra View by PG&E. Sierra View appreciates PG&E's support with this significant grant donation.



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# Business Group Names Webster, LHS as 2009 Honor Roll Schools

By Superintendent, Sarah Koligian

The California Business for Education Excellence (CBEE) recently named its 2009 Honor Roll which included 1,304 California public elementary, middle and high schools that have been recognized by California's business community for having demonstrated consistent high student academic achievement and have made significant progress toward closing achievement gaps among all their students.

The Honor Roll consists of two different awards: the Star Schools Award (395 schools) and Scholar Schools Awards (909 schools). Webster was selected as a Star School and Liberty as a Scholar School. Star Schools are those with significant populations of socio-economically disadvantaged students that have shown a significant increase in grade level proficiency and achievement gap reduction over four years. Scholar Schools are schools that are showing significant academic achievement levels, but do not have a significant socio-economically disadvantaged student population.

According to CBEE staff, this particular recognition program uses hard data, individual school and student subgroup performance data based on the California Standards Tests and the California High School Exit Exam, to evaluate school academic performance. By looking at this data and evaluating students and schools based on grade-level proficiency of the California standards, educators, parents

and the public better understand what is happening in our schools and ensure that schools are on track to get all students to grade-level proficiency.

"Schools on the Honor Roll dispel the myth that certain students can't reach grade-level proficiency and that schools with a challenging student population won't be able to succeed," said Greg Jones, CBEE Chair. "Honor Roll schools are overcoming challenges every day to raise student achievement. CBEE continues to be impressed by the growing number of California public schools that make the Honor Roll each year and that are exceeding high expectations for their students."

Since its beginning in 2006, the Honor Roll list has grown from 304 schools in 2006 to 569 in 2007 to 911 in 2008 to now 1,304 in 2009. This is the first time that

Golden Valley Unified School District has had schools selected for the CBEE Honor Roll Award.

This prestigious honor is one more indication that our schools are on the right track to close the achievement gap, create more successful students and future adults. It is a validation from the business community that sends a message to our schools that dedication and commitment to high standards and expectations truly pays off. Congratulations to our students, staff, parents and community for helping our schools achieve this prestigious recognition and for "Growing a District of Excellence"!



Liberty High Principal Kuljeet Mann (left), GVUSD Superintendent Sarah Koligian, Trustee Roger Schuh and Webster Principal Kevin Hatch celebrate their schools being named CBEE Honor Roll recipients.

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--	---

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### Senior Report

## Staying Safe in Frosty Cold Weather

By Eleanore Burchell

The Ranchos/Hills Seniors, Inc., located at 37330 Berkshire, has been established as an Emergency Designated Warming Center Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Activation of the Warming Center site beyond regular operating hours will be assessed on an "As Needed" basis.

Exposure to cold can cause injury or serious illness such as frostbite or hypothermia. The likelihood of injury or illness depends on factors such as physical activity, clothing, wind, humidity, working and living conditions, and a person's age and state of mind. Follow these tips to stay safe in cold weather:

I. Dress appropriately before going outdoors. The air temperature does not have to be below freezing for someone to experience cold emergencies such as hypothermia and frostbite. Wind speed can create dangerously cold conditions even when the temperature is not that low.

a) If possible, avoid being outside in the coldest part of the day, or for an extended period of time in extreme cold weather.

b) Dress in layers so you can adjust to changing conditions. Avoid overdressing or overexertion that can lead to heat illness.

c) Most of your body heat is lost through your head so wear a hat, preferably one that covers your ears.

d) Mittens provide more warmth to your hand than gloves.

e) Wear waterproof, insulated boots to help avoid hypothermia or frostbite by keeping your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice or snow.

f) Take frequent breaks and stay hydrated.

g) Get out of wet clothes immediately and warm the core body temperature with a blanket or warm fluids like hot cider or soup. Avoid drinking caffeine or alcohol if you think you are experiencing hypothermia or frostbite.

II. Hypothermia can be a serious medical condition. Recognize the symptoms: confusion, dizziness, exhaustion and severe shivering. Seek medical attention immediately if you have these symptoms during cold weather.

III. Recognize frostbite warning signs: gray, white or yellow skin discoloration, numbness, waxy feeling skin. Seek medical attention immediately if you have these symptoms.

IV. Holiday traveling and winter can be a dangerous combination. Allow extra time when traveling. Monitor weather conditions carefully and adhere to travel advisories.

V. Keep a winter storm survival kit in your car. This should include blankets, food, flares chains, gloves and first aid supplies.

### Love in the Air

The Ranchos/Hills Seniors had two of their members marry on Nov. 28, 2009. They are Marie Sell and Bob Costanzo who are now Mr. and Mrs. Bob Costanzo. Their

reception was held at our center. Congratulations Marie and Bob!

The Ranchos/Hills Seniors held a drawing for their Holiday Raffle. Winners are: Arlene Munez won the beautiful hand-crocheted afghan made by one of our own members, Sallie Shassetz; Marie Sell-Costanzo won the Sony camera; and

Pat Brunett won a one-night stay at Chukchansi.


Correction in our 2010 officers: Dorothy Sunderland will hold the position of Assistant Treasurer for 2010. Dot, please accept my apology.

Our next sale will be held on Saturday, Feb. 6 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Many of our members will be there to greet you. Now is the season to plant bare root trees so plan to attend the sale and check out the trees available. The bake sale and treasure house will have many new items. The boutique has jewelry and novelty items and much more. Please 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. We currently have jellies, persimmons and plenty of citrus – lemons, oranges, tangerines and grapefruit – for sale. We also have plain and sugared walnuts in the produce section.

Our center is affiliated with FMAAA (Fresno/Madera Area Agency on Aging). Come in and check with Joann about programs which will help you.

Please see SENIORS on P. 21





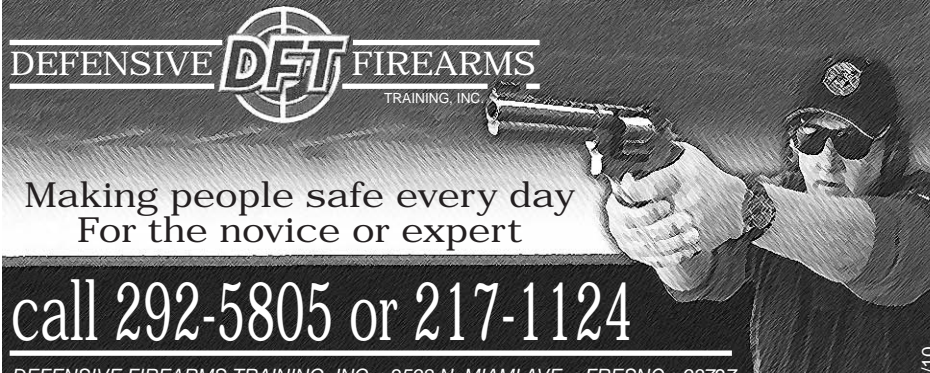
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SENIORS cont. from P. 19

Did you know two nurses from the Madera County Health Department Periodically come to the center to give FREE checkups? The screenings include personal health history reviews, blood pressure checks and blood sugar checks. Low-cost blood tests are available, nutrition and health education is available and referrals to medical providers and community services, if needed, can be made. Their health screenings of adults, age 50 and OVER, at the center result ONLY when they receive your calls. If you are interested in taking advantage of their services, call Melody at 675-7893 to make an appointment.

Our members and friends go out for breakfast, lunch or dinner at different places each month to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. In January, our celebration was held at the Pizza Factory here in the Ranchos. On Feb. 15 at 11:30 a.m. we will meet at Sizzler, 2131 W. Shaw, Fresno. If interested in joining us for this or any of our events, call Joann at 645-4864. We enjoy eating and having fun and we urge you to come and join us.

If you are new to the area, lonely or have just lost a spouse, we welcome you to come in to see us. We are here for you and many of our members have surely experienced your same situation so please call us at 645-4864.

**Senior Thought of the Day**  
*"If you overcommit, it is impossible to follow through!"*

In the senior years, many need someone to laugh with so come join our 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 thru Friday at 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

from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. The participants are getting more than just exercise by attending. They have fun, share laughs and meet new friends. There is room for you and you may attend all three days or just one or two of them. After lunch on Tuesdays there is an opening for a pinochle player. If you enjoy playing pinochle yourself or know of someone else who would like to fill this vacancy, please call Joann at 645-4864. We have started a new craft session on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. Next project will be sweatshirts. However, if you would like to learn to knit or crochet, here is your opportunity to learn while having fun. Card BINGO meets on Fridays, noon to 1 p.m. We have a large group but there is always room for one more: You. Fill your car with your friends or neighbors as they will enjoy finding new friends here, too. Come in and check these classes out.

**Up and Coming Events**

February 6, Saturday monthly sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

February 23-25. Snow Train trip to Reno

March 6, Saturday monthly sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Weekly Events**

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

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

Tuesday, Pinochle, noon until?

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

Thursday, 12:30 p.m. Crafts and lots of fun

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

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

Friday, Card BINGO, noon – 1 p.m.

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 promotes 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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frame, Ford Disc brakes front, Ford shoe brakes rear. 500 ci. Cadillac V-8 , low time on motor. Low RPM cam, 10.5/1 aluminum pistons, single 4 bbl. carb, K&N air cleaner, runs on hi-octane gas. Chevy 400 auto trans, new set of Hurst pavement tires, new street tires, lexan windshield, bucket seats. Car runs and looks as new. Pictures available on request. **Asking \$16,500. Delivery possible. Call 645-7226 or 559-269-9871.**

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**For Sale - Brand New KING PILLOWTOP Mattress/Box,** Never Used in Plastic, Cost \$900 Sacrifice \$350. With Warranty. Call 275-8813.

**For Sale - POOL TABLE** - Solid Wood, 1" Slate, Leather Pockets, Never Used. W/Accessories. Cost \$5k Sacrifice \$1,375. Can Move! Call 230-0486.

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**SUDOKU**  
by Linda Thistle

	9			1	3	
8			2			6
	5		3		7	
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1			7		6	
	4			5		2
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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		11
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3		24		20	

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## WATER cont. from P. 2

quality of life, they became creative and innovative by educating themselves as to what are the limits, and then, pushing beyond these limits.

In the last four years, I have been working on creating an information pipeline between the San Joaquin Valley and Israel. We have been bringing delegations from Israel to educate them as to our problems as part of our looking for solutions and we have been sending delegations from California to Israel in order to help people see and realize the possibilities and learn what tools are available in the Israeli water toolbox.

Last October, Eli Ronen, the Chairman of the Board of Israel's National Water Co. (www.mekorot.co.il), visited here and signed an agreement of cooperation in order to bring Mekorot's knowledge, expertise and experience to our valley. Then last November another delegation set out to visit Israel with representatives from Madera County, California State University Fresno and Fresno County to broaden their horizons.

As more people travel and see new ways of water management as well as cutting edge water technologies, hold discussions and exchange ideas with the professionals responsible for it all, the education process will continue and we will be a beneficiary of that education, potentially resulting in better management and decision making as it relates to water in our area.

### Up to Us

Knowledge is available, but it is up to us to do something about it. To find that sometimes one must repeat one's self I will do so now and explain to the folks who did not have a chance to read this column last month.

The IRWMP (Integrated Regional Water Management Plan) is being advanced by the California Department of Water Resources. The program is run by the State as a carrot and a stick. The carrot: money, for improvement projects if you work toward regional water management integration; and The stick: no money, if you don't, leaving you in a worse state.

The thought is to bring water management under more state control to help indirectly (or force, depending on your point of view) to integrate smaller regions and create larger regions with the hope of better water resources management. These regions may not follow political boundaries but watershed boundaries. Through the IRWMP, we may be able to start correcting the folly of our water problems, but, only if we are a qualified entity. As of now we are not able to take advantage of this incentive program. Why? Because we are not a part of a representing body that can qualify and be a signatory to the agreement which would allow us to stand in line and

submit a plan for the preservation of the Madera Ranchos, correcting some of our lingering problems. An individual is not able to represent a community; only through a community's representing body can that be achieved. If we will not join the process, we will be left behind.

We are a part of Madera County, and Madera County will be a signatory to the agreement, but there are other Madera communities which also need help and who do you help first? And where do you get the money to go through the needed process in a budget-cutting environment?

### Controlling Our Destiny

In order to control our own destiny, we have to begin the process by creating an organization representing the different parts of the Madera Ranchos to carry on the torch of self preservation. This body would not be a political body, yet it could carry the community's voice and act on behalf of the Madera Ranchos' community common interest. This body would be able to become a signatory to the IRWMP agreement now ready to be signed by several water management districts, community representing bodies, City of Madera, City of Chowchilla and Madera County. Signing the agreement will mean that if we have a potential solution for a water-related problem in our area, we could submit a planned project for a review and apply for a grant to implement it. We would still have to get in line along with the other projects submitted, but we would have an opportunity we do not have now.

One of the ways to represent the Madera Ranchos is through a "non-profit" organization. It is simple and can be put together fast. As a matter of fact, we already have the beginnings of it through a framework of such a structure. We are in the process of identifying individuals who live in the Madera Ranchos area (Rolling Hills, Bonadelle Ranchos and Madera Ranchos as well as other neighboring communities) who would be willing to become a part of the effort and help improve the future of our community. This is going to be an open process and everyone is welcome to join and help. We need to begin by finding interested individuals from within our community that would help set it all up. It is a process which must come out of and through our community. We have to elect a board of directors of people from our community. Everyone can be a member, help elect the board and shape the direction of this organization and our community.

Equate water – good quality water – to a good quality relationship. One has to work on it every day or we will need to call on Moses for a reenactment.

Get involved in your community's future!

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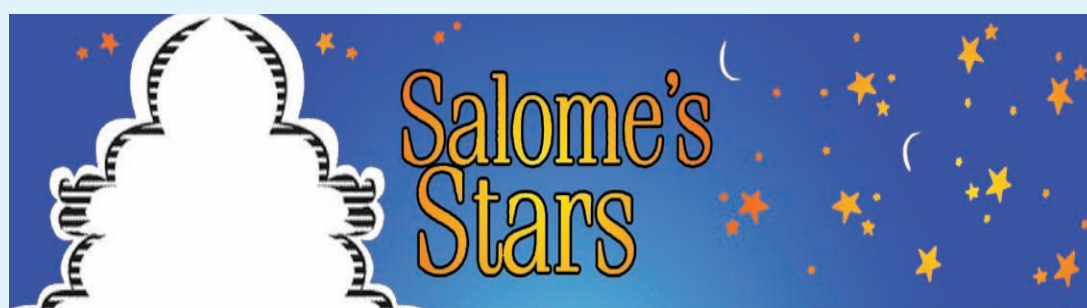
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**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Use that Arian charm to help make a difficult workplace transition easier for everyone. News about a long-awaited decision can be confusing. Don't jump to conclusions.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) Although you might well be tempted to be more extravagant than you should be at this time, I'm betting you'll let your sensible Bovine instinct guide you toward moderation.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) An opportunity for travel could come with some problems regarding travel companions and other matters. So be sure you read all the fine print before you start packing.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) Make an effort to complete your usual workplace tasks before volunteering for extra duty. Scrambling to catch up later on could create some resentment among your colleagues.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) A financial matter could have you rethinking your current spending plans. You might want to recheck your budget to see where you can cut back on expenses until the situation improves.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) One way to make your case for that promotion you've been hoping for might be to put your planning skills to work in helping to shape up a project that got out of hand. Good luck.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) Be careful about "experts" who have no solid business background. Instead, seek advice on enhancing your business prospects from bona fide sources with good success records.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Standing up to support a colleague's viewpoint -- even if it's unpopular -- can be difficult if you feel outnumbered. But you'll win plaudits for your honesty and courage.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) While progress continues on resolving that recurring problem, you might feel it's taking too long. But these things always need to develop at their own pace. Be patient.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) Someone close to you might have a financial problem and seek your advice. If you do decide to get involved, insist on seeing everything that might be relevant to this situation.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) A personal matter takes an interesting turn. The question is, do you want to follow the new path or take time out to reconsider the change? Think this through before deciding.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) Moving into a new career is a big step. Check that offer carefully with someone who has been there, done that, and has the facts you'll need to help you make your decision.

**Born this Week**

*Your warmth and generosity both of spirit  
and substance endears you to everyone.*

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# Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



# Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



# R.F.D.

by Mike Marland

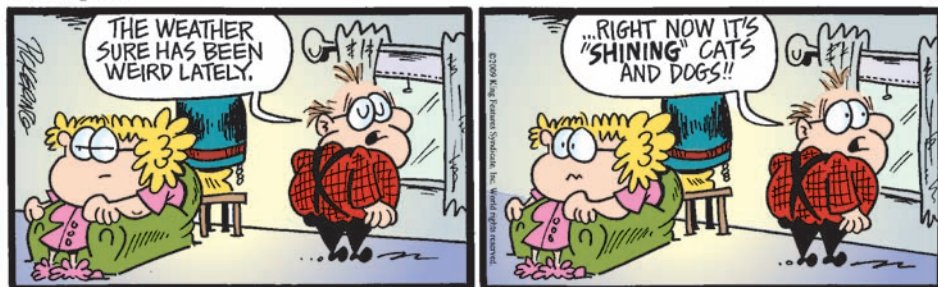


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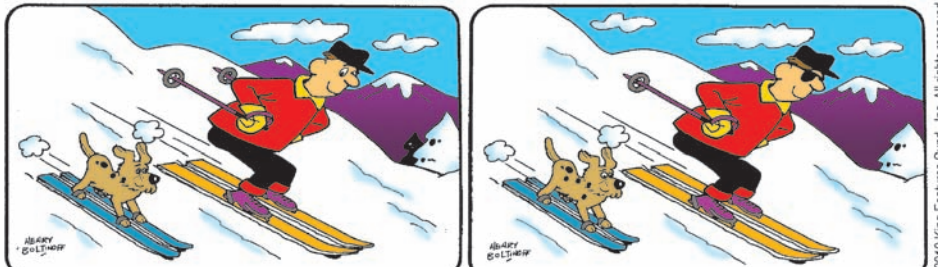


# The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

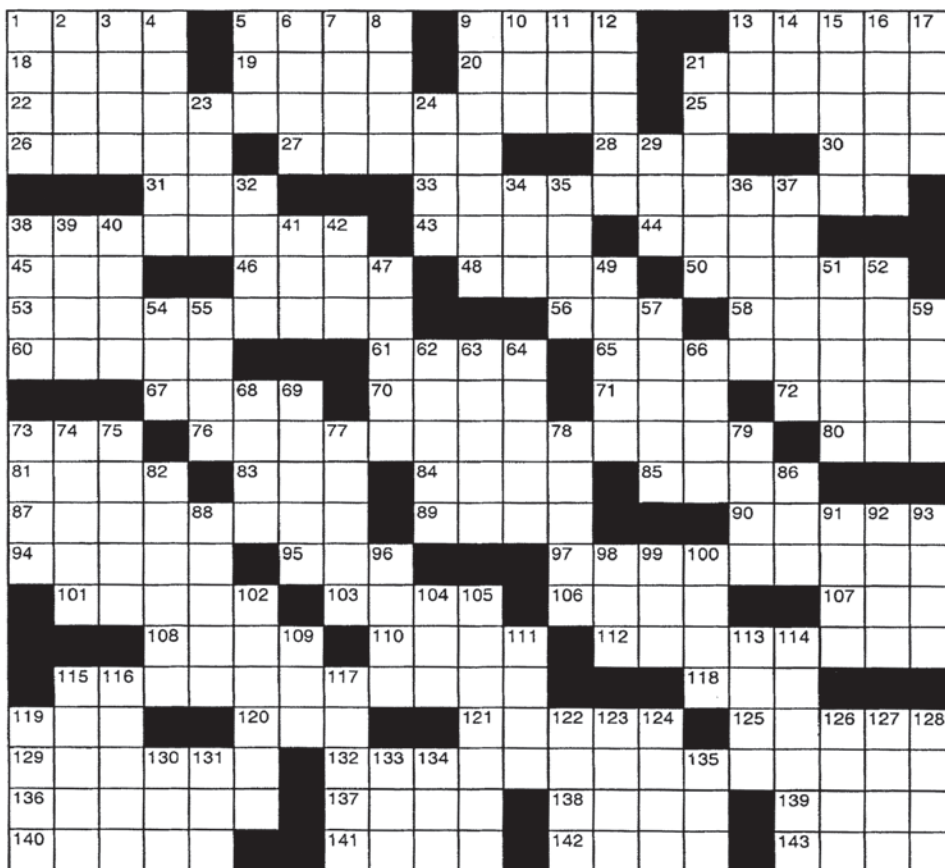


# HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Tree is missing. 2. Man has sunglasses. 3. One ski pole is missing. 4. Dog has more spots. 5. Cloud has been added. 6. Dog's skis are shorter.

# Super Crossword



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- |                       |                              |  |                                   |                           |                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>         | 61 "L—, c'est moi"           | 118 Be in debt                         | 9 Chekhov's "The Cherry —"        | 49 Indira Gandhi's father | 96 Poet in the past      |
| 1 Din from dynamite   | 65 Longfellow subject        | 119 "— Nidre"                          | 10 — juice                        | 51 Tall story?            | 98 Rapper Tone —         |
| 5 Iceberg kin         | 67 "Carmina Burana" composer | 120 Pallid                             | 11 Springfield's st.              | 52 Maestro Zubin          | 99 Scrape by, with "out" |
| 9 Exclude             | 70 Take the tube             | 121 Victorian wit                      | 12 Caruso or Corelli              | 54 Ike's domain           | 100 Pianist Peter        |
| 13 Platonic character | 71 "Kidnapped" monogram      | 125 At attention                       | 13 Use a shuttle                  | 55 "Cheers" patron        | 102 Regardless           |
| 18 South Seas novel   | 72 Prepares to dine          | 129 Sheik spot                         | 14 Thwack                         | 57 Jazzman Davis          | 104 — Cruces, NM         |
| 19 Steber solo        | 73 Part of EST               | 132 Driven rock star?                  | 15 Monitor message                | 59 Kind of file           | 105 Dense                |
| 20 Iago or Othello    | 76 Driven actress?           | 136 Real thing                         | 16 Contaminate                    | 62 — wave                 | 109 — Na Na              |
| 21 Alligator relative | 80 Mushroom part             | 137 Actress Skye                       | 17 Moffo of the Met               | 63 Mr. Rochester's ward   | 111 Oklahoma city        |
| 22 Driven President?  | 81 Meat cut                  | 138 — mater                            | 21 Afternoon refresher            | 64 Electrical inventor    | 113 Kind of pitcher      |
| 25 Procure            | 83 Thompson or Salonga       | 139 King or Satie                      | 23 "Cactus Flower" star           | 65 '68 US Open winner     | 114 Lyricist Johnny      |
| 26 "Rawhide" rope     | 84 — breve                   | 140 Gibbons of "Entertainment Tonight" | 24 Christen                       | 68 Fedora fabric          | 115 Mezzo Marilyn        |
| 27 Muslim deity       | 85 Barbecue                  | 141 Rocker Rundgren                    | 29 Basilica bench                 | 69 Cut loose              | 116 Make one's day       |
| 28 Select, with "for" | 87 Pangolin, for one         | 142 Parent                             | 32 Richard of "Love Me Tender"    | 73 Blow for a boulder     | 117 Incompetent          |
| 30 Pig — poke         | 89 Slender                   | 143 Dressing gown                      | 34 Hwy.                           | 74 Pick-me-up             | 119 Film critic Pauline  |
| 31 Fluffy female      | 90 Heel type                 | <b>DOWN</b>                            | 35 Beatles refrain meaning "both" | 75 "Same here!"           | 122 Inventive sort?      |
| 33 Driven novelist?   | 94 Mideastern pockets        | 1 Piglet's papa                        | 36 Cupid's missile                | 77 Jeweler's weight       | 123 Take-out order?      |
| 38 Might              | 95 Smidgen                   | 2 Prefix                               | 37 Legendary Colt Johnny          | 78 All legs               | 124 Austen's Miss        |
| 43 Art deco designer  | 97 Driven actor?             | 3 Author Ephron                        | 38 Have a ball at the mall        | 79 Suburban obsession     | 126 Continental currency |
| 44 Caution            | 101 Terra —                  | 4 Mitch Miller's trademark             | 39 Buster Brown's dog             | 82 Tidy up                | 127 Farm structure       |
| 45 Rush               | 103 Lauder powder            | 5 Remark from 31                       | 40 Some wines                     | 86 Ring counter           | 128 Little guy           |
| 46 Son of Zeus        | 106 Garment feature          | 6 Role for Shirley                     | 41 Singing syllable               | 88 Philanthropist Brooke  | 130 Show —               |
| 48 Big man on campus  | 107 Accomplished             | 7 "Show Boat" song                     | 42 "— a Rebel" ('62 hit)          | 91 Extinct bird           | 131 "Make — double!"     |
| 50 Paris' pop         | 108 Time to evolve?          | 8 It's often jumped                    | 47 Sociologist Hite               | 92 Prepare to bear it     | 133 Milne creature       |
| 53 Driven humorist?   | 110 Valuable                 |  |                                   | 93 Whirlpool              | 134 Remnant              |
| 56 Shorten a skirt    | 112 Rite                     |  |                                   |                           | 135 Teacup part          |
| 58 Aquatic mammal     | 115 Driven explorer?         |  |                                   |                           |                          |
| 60 Trattoria treat    |                              |  |                                   |                           |                          |

# FUN PAGES

# Who wants to help the Ranchos?



1/10

## That's what we thought ...

A non-profit group is forming in the Madera Ranchos to finally give us some say over what happens here, specifically regarding our water. County representatives are doing what they can but they can't do it all. This organization of local people will answer to one group only: the people of the Ranchos. If you have a passion for the Ranchos or if you want to get involved in water issues, this is for you. Please call to see how you can be a part of this history making group. 559-363-9095 or email [ranchos.community@gmail.com](mailto:ranchos.community@gmail.com).

If we don't get together, outside forces will take it into their own hands. Guaranteed.

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