

The Ranchos Independent



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IS THE DROUGHT OVER?



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By Randy Bailey

California's northern Sierra Nevada mountains have made history this winter by becoming the wettest winter in almost 100 years of weather monitoring. As of Thursday, April 13, 89.7 inches of precipitation has been recorded since October 2016 from eight different stations in the northern Sierra, according to the California Department of Water Resources. The previous record was in 1982-83 with a total of 88.5 inches for the same time period. Gov. Jerry Brown, responding to the news, declared California's drought officially over for all counties except Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Tuolumne. The drought's impact on groundwater levels in those counties has created a need for continued emergency drinking water. Gov. Brown said in a statement, "This drought emergency is over, but the next drought could be around the corner. Conservation must remain a way of life."

The large amount of water stored in the Sierra Nevada mountains is crucial because it forms a significant source of water for the rest of the state. But the Sierra Nevada numbers are not the only ones exceeding expectations. The San Joaquin index is poised to break its record as well. Representing an area covering five stations, the San Joaquin index numbers are very close to its 1982-83 record. With six months left to go in California's "water year," there is still room for even greater numbers, however from here on out the state doesn't historically see much more additional water.

Defining Drought

The California Water Science Center, under the auspices of the United States Geological Survey, defines drought as "... a period of drier-than-normal conditions that results in water-related problems." The water-related problems begin as a dry period usually from lack of rainfall that ultimately impacts the flow of streams and rivers, lake and reservoir levels, and the depth to water in wells. If these conditions continue and water-supply problems develop, the dry period can become a drought.

The impacts of drought include water quality degradation, land subsidence (sinking ground) and a decline of surface and groundwater levels. Groundwater provides drinking water for a large portion of the population and supplies business and industries, and is used extensively for irrigation. Surface water is monitored to understand this resource and the California Water Science Center uses a network of more than 500 "streamgages"

to collect real-time data on surface water across the state.

Is the Drought Over?

Governor Brown seems to think so, but what about the scientists at the California Water Science Center? The Center states that the answer requires consideration of California's three primary sources of water: surface water, snowpack and groundwater.

Surface Water:

The majority of California's major reservoirs have been filled in 2016-2017 to above-historic levels. The USGS streamgage network also shows the majority of streams have been at or above average for most of the last four months, indicating that the State's rivers, creeks, lakes and reservoirs are in good condition.

Snowpack:

The Sierra Nevada snowpack supplies an average of about 30 percent of California's water. As of April 1, 2017, statewide snowpack in the North-

ern, Central, and Southern Sierra is 164 percent of normal and it's been determined the snowpack water content is approximately 183 percent of average.

Groundwater: Groundwater aquifers recover much more slowly than surface water. With heavy rain, surface water can recover in a few days; recharging an aquifer often takes years or even decades. Add to that the fact that groundwater systems have been depleted for long periods from which they have not recovered.

Worst case scenarios include subsidence and permanent loss of storage, water quality degradation and seawater intrusion. Long-term impacts on groundwater

have not been remedied by short-term weather. If groundwater recovery is even possible, it will likely take many years to accomplish.

Is the drought over? California's long-term outlook for drought can be better assessed in the coming months. Significant snowmelt typically begins April 1, producing runoff that recharges groundwater and reservoirs, and at 164 percent of average this snowpack signifies that runoff will likely be above average. A slow, steady rise in spring and summer temperatures will be the key to optimally recharge aquifers and reservoirs. The National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center seasonal drought outlook for March 16 - June 30, 2017 shows continued drought in areas of Southern and Central Coastal California likely to persist throughout those dates, *but* the one-month precipitation outlook for April 2017 suggests average precipitation for most of California and above average precipitation for parts of Northern California.



The three keys to killing a drought: 1. Surface water 2. Snowpack 3. Groundwater

Grand Jury's Final Report: Madera County Public Guardian

By Randy Bailey

The 2016-2017 Madera County Grand Jury has issued a final report on an investigation it conducted into the operation of the Public Guardian/Conservator/Public Administrator Office. The last Grand Jury inquiry into the Public Guardian was 2005-2006. The Grand Jury's objective was to learn of the services provided, the clientele served and the structure and staffing of the department.

The Public Guardian Director is also the Madera County Social Services Department Director. The Grand Jury interviewed the Director on Oct. 28, 2016 and the Chief Deputy Public Guardian on Jan. 9 and 27, 2017. The Grand Jury reviewed organizational charts, the Policy and Procedure Manual, budget proposals, relevant California statutes and client profile data.

The Public Guardian serves some of the most vulnerable residents in the County and is charged with ensuring the financial and personal safety of persons unable to care for themselves. When the Madera County Superior Court determines there is no able person to provide care, the Public Guardian is ordered to act as conservator of the person, the estate or conservator of person and estate.

When the Grand Jury investigates something, it begins by ascertaining the facts regarding the subject to be investigated. Next it makes findings based on those facts and finally makes recommendations to the Madera County Board of Supervisors about the investigation based on those findings.

The Facts

These are the facts the Grand Jury discovered about the office of the Public Guardian:

- The Madera County Social Services Director is also Director of the Public Guardian Office
- Prior to mid-fiscal year 2009-2010 the Public Guardian was a separate department headed by a director with the title of Public Guardian
- Oversight for the operation of the Public Guardian Office was placed under the Department of Social Services by the Board of Supervisors midway through

Please see **JURY** on P. 4

Click on "Local News" at

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The 27th Annual Flatlanders Day is Almost Here!



The 27th Annual Flatlanders Day Parade, sponsored by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, is coming Saturday, May 13 beginning at 10 a.m. The annual event showcases local groups, businesses and individuals from the Ranchos and beyond. The parade starts at 10 a.m. sharp and then there's a food and crafts fair at the Maywood Center sponsored by the Friends of the Ranchos Library that will last into the afternoon. Flatlanders Day is always celebrated on the second Saturday in May.

An entry form for the parade is found to the right of this article or you can call the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce at 645-4001 for more information. Applications for booths at the food and crafts fair are available through the Ranchos Library. For more information on booths you can call 645-1214 or visit their website at www.MaderaCountyLibrary.org.



New Members

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome the newest member to the Madera Ranchos business family

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Farmers Insurance

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Golden Valley Chamber

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Individual Entry or Responsible Person's Name _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Theme of Entry: _____

Will youngsters walk with the entry? Yes No

Approx. number of participants _____ Approx. length _____ ft.

Entry Category (select ONE most closely suiting your entry):

Horses (Single) Horses (Group) Explain: _____

Band/Music Name: _____

Floats (Non-profit) Name: _____

Floats (Business) Name: _____

Floats (Other) Name: _____

Children's Groups Name: _____

Dance Groups Name: _____

Single Entry (Children) Name: _____

Single Entry (Adult) Name: _____

Novelty Name: _____

Additional information: _____

Parade begins at 10 a.m. sharp!

Registration of entries begins at 8:30 a.m.

Parade route: Ave. 12 from Topper to Kensington

The undersigned entrant and all participants agree to abide by all parade rules, follow the directions of parade officials and agree to release parade officials from any and all responsibility from loss, damage, and/or injury to any person or property as a result of participation in the parade.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Bring, fax or mail this form by **May 5** to: **Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce**
37167 Ave. 12 Ste. 5C • Madera, CA 93636 • Fax 645-4002 • Call 645-4001

Flatlanders is sponsored by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, Ranchos Kiwanis and Friends of the Ranchos Library.

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The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, always the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m., 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C in the Maywood Center. Come join us on April 12 and help plan the 27th Annual Flatlanders Day Parade. Call us at 645-4001.

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Letters

Dear Editor:

I just wanted to comment on what an uplifting story Robin Tucker wrote as a guest editorial. Not many people get the importance of "family" anymore. He captured the power of family as if he was a professional writer. I tip my hat to him for keeping his priorities of life in order and to you for featuring that piece in your paper.

Thanks for the job you do!

Bobby Kahn, Executive Director
Madera County Economic Development
Commission
Madera

The Ranchos Independent welcomes your letters. Whether you're a fan or someone looking for something to line the birdcage, we want to hear from you. The only rules? **Sign it, be civil or forget about it.**

Send your letters to:

email:

ranchosnews@yahoo.com

mail:

The Ranchos Independent

37167 Ave. 12 #5C

Madera, CA 93636

fax:

559-645-4002

JURY cont. from P. 2

fiscal year 2009-2010, with the Social Services Director taking on the additional role as Public Guardian

- As of Jan. 23, 2017 the Public Guardian Office is located at 209 W. Yosemite Avenue, Madera, California and is not housed with Social Services

- The Public Guardian 2015-2016 budget shows three permanent positions funded and one permanent position unfunded

- The Public Guardian 2016-2017 budget shows three permanent positions funded (Chief Deputy Public Guardian, Deputy Public Guardian, and Program Assistant), and one permanent position unfunded. A permanent Office Assistant II position is 100 percent funded through the Behavioral Health Department.

- Social Services provides the Public Guardian with a part-time social worker and a college intern to assist with field visits

- The Public Guardian receives referrals from other agencies, hospitals and the court

- Madera County Counsel represents the Public Guardian in court

- California Probate Code §§2900-2955 provide the framework for the operation of the Public Guardian in all counties

- Effective Jan. 1, 2008 California Probate Code §2923 mandates Public Guardian caseworkers comply with continuing education requirements as established by the California State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians and Public Conservators

- Probate conservatorships, governed by the California Probate Code, may be of the person, the estate only, or both the person and the estate.

- Lanterman, Petris and Short (LPS) Act conservatorships, governed by California Welfare and Institutions Code §§5350-5372, serve persons with serious mental disorders or developmental delays

- Since fiscal year 2015-2016 the Behavioral Health Department has funded a full-time permanent Behavioral Health Case Manager to handle the Public Guardian LPS Conservatorships

- The Behavioral Health budget includes funding for a full-time, permanent clerical position in the Public Guardian Office for the 2016-2017 fiscal year

- In Madera County, the Public Guardian also serves as Public Administrator, managing estates of persons who die with no will or have no appropriate person to act as administrator

- The Public Guardian acts as "representative payee" by providing budgeting and money management services, enabling clients to maintain independent living

- Pursuant to California Probate Code §2942, the Public Guardian shall be paid from the estate of the conservatee for reasonable expenses incurred in the execution of conservatorships

- California Government Code §27441 authorizes the Public Guardian as the Public Administrator to collect fees for services

- California Government Code §27436 authorizes the Public Guardian to collect fees for "representative payee" services. The Board of Supervisors adopted a fee schedule (Resolution Number 2011-148) for Public Guardian, Public Administrator and "representative payee" services on July 12, 2011

- The Department of Social Services/Public Guardian/Conservator/Public

Please see JURY on P. 7

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Editorial

You Say You Want a Revolution?

By Randy Bailey

After Donald Trump was elected president -- virtually while there was still a warm hand print on the bible -- groups were forming to "resist" the newly elected president. Probably no place moved as quickly as California. California was so motivated that in the midst of all the problems we're facing here, the state decided we HAD to hire Obama's former attorney general, Eric Holder, at a rate of \$25,000 per month to "... assist with legal challenges over everything from immigration to environmental policies ..." emanating from the newly elected president's administration.

Nice.

You know who's paying Eric don't you? That's right. You and me. Although Madera County voted overwhelmingly for Trump, we're now being forced to pay to fight Trump. It's like when a murderer goes on trial: *The State vs John Smith*. You know who "The State" is and pays for the prosecution, right? It's us. And if "The State" successfully prosecutes John Smith and gets a conviction, California law says John Smith gets an automatic appeal. Who do you think NOW gets to pay for the defense of John Smith at his appeal? Right again! WE do. We paid to convict him and now we're paying to get him off. Crazy, huh? You'll do those kinds of things when it's not your money being spent.

Now Governor Brown has successfully pushed his grotesque gasoline tax through

the state legislature -- ostensibly for road improvements -- and it awaits his signature. The \$52 billion dollar tax begins in November and will last a decade (because taxation programs always end when they're supposed to, right?) and will be generated by a tax increase of 12 cents per gallon, bringing it to a total of 30 cents. Another variable excise tax would be set at 17 cents, the excise tax on diesel would jump 20 cents and the sales tax on diesel goes up four percentage points. We're always neck and neck with Hawaii when it comes to highest fuel costs in America but, by God, this should make us Number 1!

Did I fail to mention that included in this is also a vehicle registration fee increase, based on the value of your car, from \$25 to \$175 annually? With approximately 34 million vehicles registered in California, you do the math. They don't miss a trick

Hey, wait a minute. Brown says we need this tax because our roads are crumbling due to neglect over the last 23 years, but there's been a tax on gasoline for the last 23 years. What he's proposing just *increases* the tax. Where did all *those* road tax dollars go? And in classic governmental math fashion, do you know why he claims we need to raise \$52 billion? Because there's a backlog of repair and replacement projects throughout the state totalling \$130 billion. Again, you do the math. I'm starting to understand why these people push Common Core mathematics so strongly.

Folks, it's time to say enough is enough. It's time to say "Not MY Tax Increase!" It's time to resist.

It's time for a revolution.

We live in a state that we don't get to have a choice between two parties at election time.

It's time for a revolution.

We have one-party rule in our assembly, senate and executive branches. Every Republican in our state legislature could stay home and never vote again and the resulting legislation would be exactly like it is today.

It's time for a revolution.

We have the highest tax rate in the nation.

It's time for a revolution.

We have the sixth highest energy costs in the nation.

It's time for a revolution.

We don't have enough water storage to provide for our people, but we're getting a train.

It's time for a revolution.

Are you ready for it?

The Ranchos Independent

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Time to Raise Some Adults

GENERATION WHY by eryn b. nyre



I know that parenting is the hardest job in the world. You don't get paid, you don't get sick leave and you usually don't get thanked until your kid grows up, moves out and is dealing with their own little gift of sunshine and tantrums. It's not a job for the weak-willed or weak-stomached. Those who choose to take the responsibility seriously and do it well should be revered. Those who leave it up to teachers and television to raise their children should be subjected to public mocking and ridicule by responsible parents. Bad parenting has unleashed unproductive, irresponsible and entitled menaces on society by coddling and sheltering and spoiling kids.

little backside and assumed that someone else would clean up her mess, and look – here comes mama. She was standing in my office and making a scene rather than telling her precious darling that here in the real world there are consequences when you neglect your responsibilities.

For the life of me I just cannot imagine a situation where my mother would call into my place of business and yell at the people I work with because they didn't give me the

If nothing else, can't we all just agree that we need to raise adults who have a sense of personal responsibility? Whatever else you do with them, let's just call that the baseline.

schedule I wanted. I cannot picture her storming into my office and causing a ruckus because I didn't like the company's time card system. The very thought of it is ludicrous, but I've had four different situations in the last two weeks alone where someone's mother has done just that.

One woman, whose daughter is a caregiver for our company, stormed into my office with her kid in tow demanding to know why her "baby's" pay on her last check wasn't right. It should be pointed out that her "baby" looked to be on the back end of her 20s. It should also be pointed out that her "baby" failed to clock in and out for her shifts and ignored our multiple attempts to get her to come in and correct her time cards. Did she respond to our calls? No. Did she call in before payroll was locked to verify her hours? No. So, what did she do? Well, clearly, she sat on her entitled

This woman actually demanded to know why we won't just pay her daughter the same every week. Well, woman who shouldn't be standing in my office yelling at me while your lazy, ineffectual, no-account daughter stands behind you staring at her cell phone, I'll tell you. It's because she doesn't work the same hours every week. You see we give our employees a paycheck in exchange for work, not just because they exist. This isn't her allowance; it's called a job.

Another woman called me demanding to know why we were withholding her son's W2. Well, ma'am, I doubt we are actively withholding anything. The real question is: Are you calling me instead of your son? Turns out, her son had called me moments before and didn't like my answer so he hung up on me and immediately whined to his mommy. He called to say he hadn't gotten his W2 and he thinks it's because he moved to Phoenix and it went to his old address. Did he call us and tell us he moved? No. Did he initiate a change of

Please see GEN WHY on P. 7

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4/17



Diana Mendoza
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at 559-709-1477

GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

address with the Post Office? No. What exactly did you do man? No, scratching your butt and looking stupid doesn't count.

I told him we would process the request and get another W2 sent out by the end of the week. Oh no, that's no good, he has to get his taxes done so he needs it today. Well, sir, you live in Phoenix and I don't have a magic wand. Besides, we are processing payroll today and simply won't be able to get the new W2 processed for a couple of days. I reminded him that taxes are due every year on April 15th. It's not a surprise. It's not like Easter where each year it depends on the cycle of the full moon. It's the same day, every year. The fact that he is under the proverbial gun because he waited until a few days before Tax Day to pull his head out of

his - well, you know - doesn't mean I can suddenly bend the laws of physics and manipulate the space time continuum. I told him he's just going to have to tell the IRS that he screwed up and ask for an extension. Click. Then suddenly I'm on the phone with mommy.

If nothing else, can't we all just agree that we need to raise adults who have a sense of personal responsibility? Whatever else you do with them, let's just call that the baseline. When you take on the responsibility of parenting you should agree to do your absolute best not to turn out someone so inept that they can't properly work a time clock, and so entitled that they expect a company to pay them simply because they managed to shower and put their shoes on the right feet. We have just got to set the bar higher than that.

JURY cont. from P. 4

Administrator 2016 annual report to the Board of Supervisors shows the Public Guardian managed 225 active cases in the month of July 2016

- On Jan. 8, 2017 the Public Guardian/Conservator/Public Administrator case management database showed 243 active cases: 78 active probate conservatorships of the person, the estate, or person and estate; 62 LPS conservatorships; and 92 "representative payee" clients. Acting as Public Administrator, six estates of deceased individuals were also being handled

- In Madera County, guardianships of minors are handled by Social Services; conservatorships of adults are handled by the Public Guardian

- The Public Guardian has a Policy and Procedure Manual in which most documents are not dated; dated documents are from 2010 and 2011.

The Findings

These are the findings the Grand Jury made about the office of the Public Guardian:

- The Chief Deputy Public Guardian oversees the operation of the office and shares casework with the Deputy Public Guardian

- The Program Assistant functions as "representative payee;" most client referrals come from the Social Security Administration

- The clerical position included in the Behavioral Health budget has not been posted for hiring as of Feb. 6, 2017. Until the hiring process is completed, the Public

Guardian employs a temporary extra-help person

- Being under the management of Social Services allows the Public Guardian to tap into additional resources

- Public Guardian caseworkers are in compliance with certification requirements as mandated by the continuing education statute

- As Public Administrator, the Public Guardian manages the estates of intestate County residents under the supervision of the Superior Court, performs heir searches, marshals assets and oversees the distribution of the estate

- Caseworkers diligently search for family or others qualified and willing to manage affairs of those who are unable to do so. The Public Guardian is the agency of last resort for vulnerable County residents

- Upon the completion of a thorough investigation by the Public Guardian, a hearing is set in Superior Court. With the assistance of County Counsel attorneys, the Public Guardian prepares the legal paperwork that starts the conservatorship process in court

- If a judge finds a person unable to properly care for themselves and/or their finances, and there is no able person to assist, the Public Guardian is appointed as conservator

- Client fees collected for services are held in a trust account. A regular accounting of clients' funds is made to the court. An independent auditor audits the office annually and Social Security audits beneficiar-

Please see JURY on P. 11

Facebook Food

In February 2004, Harvard College student Mark Zuckerberg and four fellow students and roommates launched the Facebook website. The founders had originally limited the membership to Harvard students but later they expanded to higher education institutions in the Boston area. Since 2006, anyone 13 years of age and older has been allowed to become a registered user of Facebook. According to a December 2016 count, there are 1.86 billion active users all over the world.

Do you have a Facebook account? In the beginning, I said I wouldn't have one, but I finally relented and one of my nieces opened one for me. My only reason for having an account is to see what family members (that I don't get to see very often) are doing and see the little ones who are growing.

I've seen some recipes that look quite yummy and thought I would pass them on to you.

I think most of you know how I am about anything lemon and to top it off a dump cake. This can't be anything but good. I haven't had time to check the stores but I feel it might be hard to find key lime pie filling so when I make it, I will be substituting lemon pie filling.

Key Lime Dump Cake

1 box Betty Crocker French Vanilla Cake Mix
 2 cans Key Lime pie filling
 1 stick butter, melted
 Spray inside of crock pot with non-stick cooking spray
 Empty cans of pie filling in bottom of crock pot and spread out evenly.

In medium mixing bowl, combine cake mix and melted butter and stir until crumbly. Break up any large pieces into small crumbs with a spoon.

Pour cake-butter crumb mixture over pie filling, spread out evenly and cover crock pot with lid. Cook on high for 2 hours or on low for 4 hours. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream.

And who doesn't like macaroni



and cheese?
Fried Mac 'N Cheese Sticks
 8 Oz. elbow macaroni
 4 T butter
 4 T flour
 2 C milk
 1 tsp. salt
 ½ tsp. pepper
 2 C sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
 2 C flour
 4 eggs
 2 C bread crumbs
 Oil for frying
 Bring 3 quarts of water to a boil and cook the macaroni. Stir occasionally for 7 minutes or until al dente. Drain and set aside.

In a sauce pan over medium low heat, melt butter completely and whisk in the flour for two minutes to create a light roux.

Add milk slowly to the roux and season with salt and pepper. Stir constantly until the sauce fully thickens. Gradually add cheese to the sauce until fully combined. Add cooked pasta to cheese sauce and stir until each piece of pasta is coated. Remove mac 'n cheese from the heat and pour onto a parchment lined baking sheet. Spread evenly and put in freezer and freeze for two hours.

Cut mac 'n cheese into sticks. Batter sticks in flour, then beaten egg, and then bread crumbs. Preheat oil to 375 F. Fry sticks for 2 to 3 minutes or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

My great niece Jesi thinks German Chocolate Cake is about the best cake ever. When I saw this recipe I thought, "This one is for you Jesi."

German Chocolate Cake Cookies

Chocolate Cookies
 2 sticks butter, softened
 1 C light brown sugar
 1 C granulated sugar
 2 tsp. vanilla

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

Do you have a Facebook account? In the beginning, I said I wouldn't have one, but I finally relented and one of my nieces opened one for me.

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RECIPE cont. from P. 8

2 large eggs, beaten
 2 ¼ C all-purpose flour
 ½ C unsweetened cocoa powder
 1 tsp. baking soda
 Pinch of salt

German Chocolate Frosting

1 C evaporated milk
 1 C sugar
 3 egg yolks
 ½ C butter
 1 tsp. vanilla
 1 ½ C shredded coconut

1 C chopped pecans
 ¼ C chocolate candy coating melted for drizzle (optional)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl with a stand mixer or hand mixer, blend the butter, brown sugar and granulated sugar, vanilla and eggs. In a medium bowl, stir together the flour, cocoa, baking soda and salt. Gradually add the flour mixture into the butter mixture and blend until combined.

Drop the dough by tablespoonful

onto the prepared baking sheets, 12 cookies per sheet. Bake 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on a baking rack.

German Chocolate Frosting

Add evaporated milk, sugar, egg yolks, butter and vanilla to a large pan and place on stovetop over medium heat. Stir so that it becomes well combined. Continue stirring until thickened which will take 11 to 12 minutes. Once thickened remove from heat and add coconut and pecans. Beat until thick enough to spread. Spread frosting over cooled cookies. (A note from Aunt Jean in this case, the voice of experience: Do NOT have the burner on too high and stir constantly, this mixture is easily scorched!)

Optional – Drizzle with melted candy coating and let set up.

This one is for you Randy – no garlic!

Chicken Fried Steak

4 (½ pound) beef cube steaks
 2 C. all-purpose flour
 2 tsp. baking powder
 1 tsp. baking soda
 1 tsp. black pepper
 ¼ tsp salt
 1 ½ C. buttermilk
 1 egg
 1 T hot pepper sauce (optional)
 3 C. peanut oil
 ¼ C. all- purpose flour

4 C. milk

Kosher salt and ground black pepper to taste.

Preheat oven to 200 degrees.

Pound the steaks to about ¼ inch thickness.

Place 2 cups of flour in a pie pan. In a separate pie pan stir together the baking powder, baking soda, salt and pepper. Stir in the buttermilk, egg and hot sauce to the baking powder mixture. Heat the oil in a deep frying skillet to 325 degrees. Dredge each steak first in the flour, then in the batter, and again in the flour. Fry the steaks until golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Place fried steaks on a plate with paper towels to drain. Once they have drained, place the steaks onto a sheet pan that is lined with a cooling rack. Place the steaks in the oven. Drain the fat from the skillet, reserving ¼ cup of the oil and as much of the solid remnants as possible. Return the skillet to medium-low heat with the reserved oil. Whisk the remaining flour into the oil. Scrape the bottom of the pan with a spatula to get any of the remnants up, stir in the milk over medium heat and bring the gravy to a simmer. Cook until thick, 6 to 7 minutes. Season with kosher salt and pepper. Spoon over the steaks to serve.



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What Difference Does It Make?

I love my husband. I have lots of reasons, but one is that he cleans the filter on my blow dryer. It's one of those little maintenance things that doesn't take a lot of his time, but could potentially (worst case scenario) save my hair from catching on fire. I appreciate that.

There are lots of things we do that aren't particularly arduous, but if left undone can have dramatic effects. If you neglect spending 15-20 minutes at Jiffy Lube every few months, you might need a new car engine. If you neglect daily dental hygiene habits, you might end up with tooth pain and big dental bills. Changing the batteries in your smoke alarm is fast and easy, but if neglected it could be a matter of life and death.

Today I've chosen a few tips that, when applied, will have positive consequences. I'm not going to suggest that being organized will save your life, but it will enhance it. Here are a few ways to start:

Make your bed. Yes, every day. It's a fast and easy (1 1/2 minutes) way to create a little order. It gives you a sense of control and sets the tone for the rest of the room. In addition to all that, the National Sleep Foundation conducted a survey and found that those who make their beds are 19 percent more likely to say they regularly get a good night's sleep. A made-up bed creates a more restful environment. Probably a touch more romantic too.

Process the mail. Again, daily is best. Once you let a couple days go by, it's like leaving a few clothes on the chair in your bedroom: they invite more. Be ruthless as you remove anything that doesn't fit the criteria of something you need to file, take ac-

tion on or read. Have containers for each category. All else goes directly and immediately into recycle or shred. No more frantically searching through multiple piles for important papers, finding uncashed checks or losing bills. Ahhh, peace of mind.

Plan your meals. OK, this is going to take longer than making your bed, but your body will thank you. When we wait until we're on our way home, tired and hungry, we're more apt to choose the packaged and fast foods. Start small with planning for just two to three meals per week so you don't get overwhelmed. Make your grocery list at the same time and purchase the items you'll need. Meal planning reduces the "What's for dinner?!?" stress and provides an opportunity for nutritious eating and healthier bodies.

Clean off your desk. Researchers at the Princeton University Neuroscience Institute published a study in the January 2011 issue of The Journal of Neuroscience. The results

showed that clutter is distracting. It inhibits our ability to focus. When you walk into your office and see your desk covered with projects, they pull at your attention and you get less done. Spend the last 15 minutes of each day putting things away.

An organized desk enhances productivity.

Host a social or family event. Weekly, monthly or at least quarterly have something going on in your home that forces you to declutter. It doesn't have to be a formal dinner. Prepping regularly for company means the clutter won't have a chance to build to the point of being overwhelming. An orderly home creates a welcoming, peaceful environment for your guests AND, more importantly, for you.

So, what do you want most — a good night's rest, peace of mind, a healthier body, more productivity or a welcoming, peaceful environment? They all sound good, right? Choose one for starters and see what a difference it makes.

Contact Organized by Choice (because things don't always fall into place) at P.O. Box 26152, Fresno, CA 93729, call 559-871-3314 or email info@organizedby-choice.com. You can also visit their website at www.organizedbychoice.com.

So, what do you want most — a good night's rest, peace of mind, a healthier body, more productivity or a welcoming, peaceful environment? They all sound good, right? Choose one for starters and see what a difference it makes.

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JURY cont. from P. 7

ies' accounts

• Most of the Public Guardian clients are poor with negligible estates. Many have dementia, are elderly and frail, reside in nursing homes and have no family

• The number of cases managed by the Public Guardian increased 8 percent in the

first six months of this fiscal year. The Public Guardian caseload is increasing and will likely continue to increase

• The framework for Public Guardian policy is the California Probate Code and the Welfare and Institutions Code

• The Public Guardian Policy and Procedure Manual is out of date. Office procedures for performing tasks change often. Updating written procedures is time consuming and a drain on resources. Hands-on training takes place as soon as a procedure changes.

The Recommendations

Based on these facts and findings, the Grand Jury made the following recom-

mendations to the Madera County Board of Supervisors:

The Madera County Grand Jury recommended that the Madera County Public Guardian remain under the management of the Department of Social Services and that the Madera County Board of Supervisors fund the current unfunded permanent position in the 2017-2018 budget to

... the Grand Jury recommended that the Public Guardian staff be commended for diligent and compassionate case management.

add another Deputy Public Guardian to handle casework. They also recommended that Human Resources complete the recruitment process to fill the clerical position funded by Behavioral Health in the

2016-2017 budget.

The Grand Jury said that the Public Guardian should review the Policy and Procedure Manual by the end of this 2016-2017 fiscal year and update it as needed and do the same for the fee schedule for services.

Finally, the Grand Jury recommended that the Public Guardian staff be commended for diligent and compassionate case management.

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• "Add dryer sheets to storage totes along with clothes and shoes." -- M.W. in Iowa

• "I do dishes the old-fashioned way: in the dishpan in the sink. I put a second dishpan in the other sink and rinse the dishes over it to catch the water. I then use it to flush the toilet. I can flush at least three times a day with the rinse water. Washing your produce also takes a lot of water that you can catch in the dishpan and use for watering outdoor plants." -- C.S.R. in Florida

• "Instead of using candles during a power failure, most hardware stores and home-improvement centers sell battery-powered lanterns for \$16 to \$20, and some last for days." -- J.P. in New Jersey

Senior Report

Home & Garden Festival Successful, Flatlanders Day Parade/Craft Fair Next

By Patti Groh

The Seniors' Home and Garden Festival has come and gone. The weather was such a great concern to us, but Saturday turned out to be a beautiful day (with just a few gusty winds). The black clouds started coming over about 1 p.m. and we really hustled to get the pop-ups down and just got a little bit wet when the rain started.

On the whole, it was a great Festival. We had two long rectangle tables and a card table just covered with baked goods and all of it was sold out by 10:30. The Garden had a very good day, with lots of people leaving with wagons full of plants and trees. If you didn't make it out, we certainly hope you can make it next year. Of course, we have open house the first Saturday of every month with more baked goods, and boutique, Treasure House and the garden open. I want to thank all the members who worked so hard to put this event together and also the Boy Scouts who helped load and pull the wagons of plants.

Before the Festival, I started going through cupboards looking for things I no

longer wanted or needed. These I would donate to the Center. There were certainly more than a few things. I went online looking up the marks on some of the items to see what they might be worth. A rerun of the Andy Griffith Show was playing on my TV in the background and I was looking at a lot of treasures from the 1950s. I really felt like I had gone back in time and there were some really nice memories.

A new member in the Ranchos/Hills Seniors is Della Metzler. She is a retired bookkeeper who enjoys sewing and is a member of the Madera Quilt Guild. Please say hello and welcome her when you meet her at the Center.

Hope you had a wonderful Easter. The Center had Easter baskets for sale. They were beautiful and full of lots of goodies. I am sure that next year they will be made and sold again, so don't forget to come get yours.

Saturday, May 20 will be the day of our Birthday and Anniversary luncheon. It will be held at George's Bar and Grill on Blackstone, just south of Herndon. Please sign up at the Center. We must let the restaurant know how many to expect.

We are planning on being in the Flatlanders Day Parade. I hope the weather cooperates for this event as well. Everyone is talking about the crazy weather we've had this year. It is hard to complain about the rain after the dry years. I'm thankful for every drop of water.

Please remember to pick up the May newsletter from the Center or at local businesses. It will let you know the menu for the food program. Just remember, you must let the Center know you're coming the day before and before 11:30 a.m. The newsletter will also provide information and reminders of events, meetings, birthdays and anniversaries. Please especially note the date of the monthly General Meeting. It is always the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. We didn't quite have a quorum in April and couldn't vote on anything. Go through and mark the meeting on your calendar for the whole year so you don't forget. Also, the planning meeting is always on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 12:30 p.m. We need everyone's input to plan upcoming events.

On Thursday, May 4 at the regular potluck, we are asking members to bring Mex-

ican food dishes. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Center so we don't get too many duplicates. I'm looking forward to this gastronomic event (I sure hope that is a real word). I think we are going to try to have a different ethnic themed dinner at least once a month. If you have a preference on this, let Joann, Phyllis or Verlaine know.

The tickets for the July 4th raffle are now available. The prizes are four tickets to Disneyland (a \$628 value), a fishing trip on Shaver Lake by Fish Box Charter (a \$250 to \$375 value) and one free large pizza a month for a year courtesy of the Ranchos Pizza Factory (a \$265+ value). We are asking that each member take three packets of six to sell. You can get your tickets from me, myself and I, Patti Groh, and I can be reached through the Center or 645-4859.

Tickets are also available at the Center for a chance to win the beautiful handmade quilt made and donated by our fellow member, Dot Husted. It is hanging at the Seniors Center and the drawing for it will be in December.

I wish you well and hope to see you at future Seniors' events.

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The Bookshelf

Spring's Here at the Ranchos Library

By Amanda Judd

Spring has sprung and our library is buzzing with activity. We are coming to the close of April and brining in the month of May with great anticipation. This is a very busy time for the library; it is very exciting.

Saturday, May 13 is the annual Flatlanders Day. There are still some vendor booths available for the Craft Fair. The Flatlanders Craft Fair will be held in the Maywood Shopping Center. If you are interested in being a vendor, don't wait until it's too

late. These spaces will be filled on a first come, first served basis. If you are interested in being a vendor please contact the library. Vendor booth applications will be sent via email and there are some printed packets available for pick up in the library during regular operating hours. Remember that vendors are assigned spaces on a first come, first served basis. Craft Booths are \$40 and Food Booths are \$60. Payment is required at the time the application is submitted. Madera County Environmental Health procedures will be strictly enforced for all food vendors.

May is also officially "Get Caught Reading Month." Get Caught Reading is a nationwide campaign to remind people of all ages how much fun it is to read. It was launched in 1999 and is supported by the Association of American Publishers. What better way to celebrate than attending the

Flatlanders Craft Fair, stopping by the Friends of the Ranchos Library Book Sale and stocking up on books. You can make the celebration last through the whole year. Grab some books, support your library and see if you can get caught reading.

Ranchos Library would like to extend a friendly reminder that PreSchool Story Time is held each Thursday at the Ranchos Library at 11 a.m. Mrs. Maxfield provides a wonderful learning experience each week that includes stories read aloud, craft/activity time, snack time and children get to exper-

ience singing and daily fun facts. It is an educational read, play and learn time that you really need to check out.

We have been gearing up for our Summer Reading Program. This year we will be

"Reading by Design." Our theme is inspired by the creativity of authors, artists, builders, inventors, architects and everyone who makes our world a more interesting, livable, accessible and beautiful place. We hope that it inspires readers to explore their own creativity and design new worlds for themselves and all of us. We are still taking donations for our Summer Reading Program. The entire program is funded by our non-profit organization, Friends of the Ranchos Library, and we depend on donations and sponsorships to make this event possible.

As always, the library staff is here to help you with any questions you may have and help you to find that particular book.

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Demand Full Repeal

By Betty Van Valkenburg

Republicans promised to totally repeal Obamacare but instead offered their own watered-down version called the American Health Care Act (AHCA) which would have kept many of Obamacare's onerous mandates and added a few of its own. Members of the House of Representatives Freedom Caucus refused to vote for that plan.

How dare they do such a thing?

How dare they honor the promise – on which they ran and were elected – to fully

repeal Obamacare?

How dare they oppose a bill that would retain some of Obamacare's worst provisions and add a few new ones?

How dare they choose their constituents' best interests over legislation hastily crafted behind closed doors?

After Speaker Ryan pulled the AHCA for lack of a sufficient number of votes, President Trump castigated members of the Freedom Caucus for not being "team players."

To my knowledge, the president and members of congress did not pledge allegiance to any political team. Instead they swore an oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America." How dare the Freedom Caucus take that oath seriously? Perhaps because they can find no constitutional authority for a complicated health care "system" putting the federal government between us and our medical and insurance decisions?

Now President Trump and House Republicans promise to offer another bill. They have a second chance to get it right.

Will they dare to totally repeal Obamacare and refuse to replace it with more of the same? I fear not.

We were told that the proposed AHCA was only step one of the repeal and replace package because it must be passed under "reconciliation" (a House rule which is the subject for another day) and that there were two more steps to come. Step two promised that the Health and Human Services Secretary (not the written law) would deregulate the marketplace to stabilize it, increase choices and lower costs. Step three promised to "Rebuild the Health Care System." Sounds like more of the same to me.

Politicians just can't bring themselves to relinquish control.

To be fair, the proposed AHCA would have been "better" than Obamacare, but so is an ordinary headache better than a migraine. Both hurt, but one is more debilitating than the other; whether you effect a cure or make the condition worse depends on the remedy you try.

This is an unprecedented opportunity to reverse a disaster and reclaim control of our own health care decisions through free market principles, indeed to reclaim our rights as free citizens. It is too important to be left to politicians alone. We need to tell them what we expect and then hold them accountable. Here are just some questions I intend to ask my congressman about any future federal health care proposals:

What is the constitutional authority for federal involvement specified in the bill and any future steps?

Specifically, what will the next steps include?

Will members of congress exempt themselves in any way from this bill's provisions or from any to come?

Does this proposal get the federal government out of health care and return decisions to the states and individuals?

(Spoiler alert: Probably not.)

For information and resources, please visit www.teapartypatriots.org.

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When to Convert the Converter

Hello 93636,

Recently I received a rash of 93636 residents with emissions failures for which the catalytic converters were wrongly identified as the cause. Catalytic converter repairs can reach many thousands of dollars and a misdiagnosis can be very costly. I am writing this article so that anyone who follows this simple procedure will never become a victim of an incorrect catalytic converter diagnosis.

In theory, catalytic converters should last the life of the vehicle. Although it has no moving parts, it efficiently and effectively accelerates the chemical reactions within the converter without itself being affected. There is an internal "ceramic structure wash" coated with three different catalysts housed inside a steel outer shell. In my opinion, converter failures are a symptom of a cause, but not the cause itself.

The job of the converter is to convert harmful pollutants into harmless gasses before they exit the vehicle's tailpipe. A properly functioning converter stores free oxygen. When hydrocarbons (HC) and carbon monoxide (CO) enter the converter, their bonds are broken and those compounds are reduced to their simple elements, hydrogen, carbon and oxygen. When the hydrogen and carbon atoms are reconfigured with the free oxygen atoms, carbon dioxide (CO₂) and water vapor (H₂O) molecules are formed, the same thing we humans exhale. It's just chemistry.

There are two primary causes of converter failure apart from fuel contamination. Both causes stem from poor vehicle maintenance. Failure to maintain the engine's secondary ignition system (tune up) is a recipe for misfires. Failure to maintain the engine's fuel system increases the potential for under- or over-fueling. In either case, higher emissions are the result. The increased heat developed from the conversion of those emissions can overheat and destroy the converter.

The second cause of converter poisoning comes from another emission system: positive crankcase ventilation (PCV). When the engine's piston rings wear and they lose their sealing capabilities, combustion leaks into the crankcase. The PCV system vents those crankcase vapors and other oil vapors into the air inlet system. The inlet air carries those vapors through the cylinders and into the exhaust. When the oil vapors coat the catalyst and it is no

Please see **HANDS** on P. 16

SEMUCU *speaks*

Plans for the Near Future

By Igal Treibatch

Against all odds, SEMCU is continuing its good work and has been able to achieve some significant advancement with our past and present projects.

Last summer, 71 dry wells had been drilled throughout the Southeast Madera area. The feedback from the homeowners shows a resounding success. Areas that used to stay flooded long after the rains have mostly dried

out while recharging our aquifer. We expect to continue with more drilling at qualified sites this summer. A list of qualified sites is still being compounded so come and register.

The work on our grant applications and management is continuing with a new approved grant in process. The new grant is set to reimburse qualified residents of Southeast Madera \$350 for washing machines which are certified "Energy and Water saving devices." We are also working with the Department of Water & Resources on allowing us to use some of the grant money for qualified dishwashers as well.

We are in the midst of the Free Low Flow equipment grant distribution. There are shower heads and sink aerators of various kinds for all of your home connections. Equipment can be picked up at the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce in the May-

wood Center.

SEMUCU is looking for candidates who qualify and would like to get reimbursed about \$500 for past or future installation of the new approved Madera County water meters. We have funds for 20 more units still available and will be given on a first come basis.

A conference meeting with Golden Valley Unified School District, SEMCU and all other associated parties regarding the Agricultural, Science and Water Demonstration School Addition Project took place recently and it looks as if it is moving forward. The discussions revolved around the type of buildings and what classrooms and shops they will include. It is looking really good.

SEMUCU will be meeting with Madera County District 1 Supervisor Brett Frazier to work on several planned recharge basins throughout Southeast Madera. There may also be

opportunities to include a small park as part of such basins.

SEMUCU will have a booth at the Flatlanders Parade where registration can take place and questions may be answered. We are always looking to our community to get involved and work on projects and our sustainable future. We meet only once a month on the third Monday of every month at the Ranchos Pizza Factory at 6 p.m. Come and be involved, it is your community and your voice is important.

Residents can also register their interest by contacting SEMCU on line at info@semcu.com or by calling 559-363-9095. You can also stop by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce at the Maywood Center.

Please call us at 559-363-9095 with any questions or visit our website at www.semcu.org.

HANDS cont. from P. 15

longer in direct contact with the emission gasses, the catalyst process is interrupted and the converter is inefficient. (Note: When you check your vehicle's engine oil level and it's no longer at the full mark, that missing oil passed through the catalytic converter unless it leaked.)

Do-it-yourselfers: only use the correct oil for your vehicle. Also, a good vehicle maintenance program does not cost, it saves money. Clean, fresh oil of the correct viscosity prevents wear, helps maintain the integrity of the engine's internal seals and decreases oil consumption.

Since the introduction of On Board Diagnostics II (OBDII) in 1996, catalytic converters have pre- and post-oxygen sensors. These sensors measure the free oxygen entering and exiting the converter. If the converter is storing oxygen properly, the amount of free oxygen exiting the converter will be much lower than the amount entering the converter. If the pre- and post-converter oxygen sensor output values are similar, it is inferred the converter is not storing oxygen and is therefore inefficient. I often use the oxygen sensor's algorithm to confirm an inefficient converter.

Do-it-yourselfers there is another way to diagnosis a defective catalytic converter and it's something you will have no problem doing. My preferred diagnostic procedure to verify a catalytic converter failure is using a "Lambda Calculator." The Lambda Calculator is one of the most powerful emissions diagnostic tools I have in my shop. I use this method more than any other because it's simple, it's extremely accurate and

it's FREE when you go online to SmogStats.com. If you failed an emissions test, simply enter the five tailpipe gasses (CO₂, O₂, HC, CO and NO) into the corresponding calculator box and push the calculation button. The lambda (air/fuel ratio) and catalytic converter efficiency results will be displayed. If you failed an emissions test and you were advised to replace your converter, STOP! Use the free calculator and you will NEVER guess and mistakenly replace a good converter.

The most important calculation is the lambda calculation. Here's what you need to know with regard to the lambda calculation: 1.000 means the air to fuel ratio is perfect. Exactly enough oxygen was provided to completely burn all of the fuel and no oxygen or fuel was left over to produce emissions. The closer the lambda calculation is to 1.000 the more likely the fuel injection system is functioning well and is not the cause of the emissions failure. If the calculation is less than 1.000, an over-fueling condition exists. If the calculation is greater than 1.000, an under-fueling condition exists. 0.985 means the system is 1.5% rich (.985 + .015 = 1.000). 1.015 means the system is 1.5% lean (1.015 - .015 = 1.000) It's just math. A catalytic converter should not be replaced if the lambda calculation is not between 0.985-1.015. Fix the cause first, not the symptom.

Do-it-yourselfers this is IMPORTANT!!! The vehicle's exhaust system can NOT have any leaks. If false oxygen is scavenged into the tailpipe emissions sample, the calculation will be skewed and misleading. Check for exhaust leaks if the oxygen test value was greater the 0.50%.

The second calculation available with

the Lambda Calculator is the catalytic converter efficiency calculation. It speaks for itself. Anything below 25% and I'm likely to recommend a converter replacement, but only if the lambda calculation is between 0.985 - 1.015. Hope this helps everyone. It has never failed me and I use it religiously almost every day.

I'll see you all at the Flatlanders Celebration on Saturday, May 13. I will take a cut-away converter with its ce-

ramic structure exposed.

If you have questions or comments, I can be reached at complete_car_care@hotmail.com or Facebook me at Complete Car Care.


God Bless America and God Bless 93636

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Due to the weed regrowth and the continual hazard throughout the summer HAZARD ABATEMENT MUST BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE FIRE SEASON. This may require REDISCING/HAZARD ABATEMENT MORE THAN ONCE AS WEEDS AND HAZARDS MAY RETURN.

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8. Parsley
9. Romaine lettuce
10. Collard green

Source: CDC

Click on "Local News" at

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 | | + | | 18 |
| + | | - | | ÷ | |
| | x | | ÷ | | 16 |
| x | | x | | + | |
| | x | | + | | 17 |
| 18 | | 15 | | 10 | |

1 2 3 5 6 7 8 9 9

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SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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SAY YOU SAW IT IN
the Ranchos Independent

Strange BUT TRUE

- It was beloved poet William Wordsworth, best know for helping to launch the Romantic age in English literature, who made the following sage observation: "The best portion of a good man's

life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

- The world's largest bird, the ostrich, may not be able to fly, but that doesn't mean its wings are useless. As the fastest bird on land, the ostrich uses its wings for balance while slowing down and making turns as it runs at speeds of up to 45 mph.
- In 1994, a man named Robert Puelo started cursing and shouting at employees in a convenience store. When the employ-

ees (understandably) threatened to call the police, the man stole a hot dog and ran out. The police were called, and upon arrival, they discovered Puelo outside the store, unconscious and turning purple. Paramedics were called, but by the time they arrived, it was too late; the man had choked to death on his stolen sausage.

- Some gourmets say the most delicious meat they've ever eaten is roast monkey.
- Light doesn't always travel at the

speed of light; it has been recorded traveling as slow as 38 mph.

- The word "widow" comes from the Old English word "widewe" which comes from a Sanskrit term meaning "empty."
- Thought for the Day: "The great thing about getting older is that you don't lose all the other ages you've been."

-- Madeleine L'Engle


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-- Madeleine L'Engle

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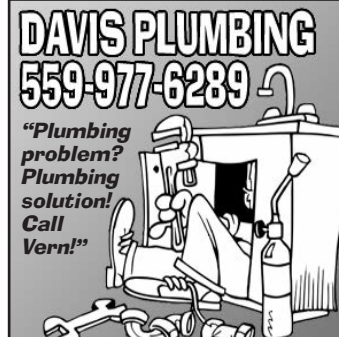
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by Dave T. Phipps

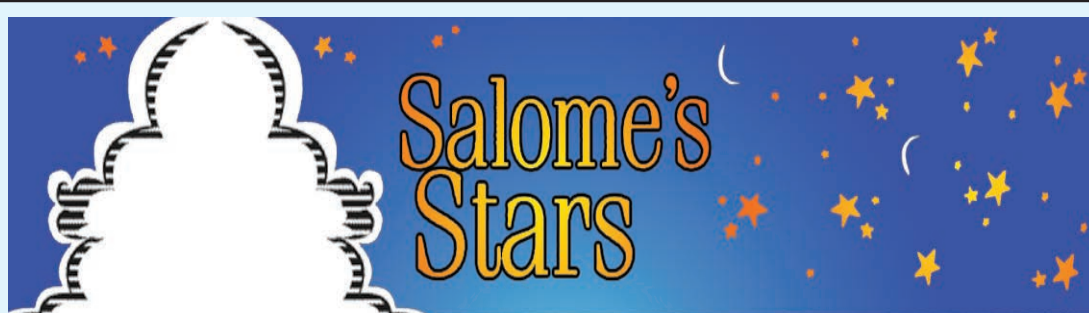


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"I THINK this is how this drug is spelled."

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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Temper your typical Aries urge to charge into a situation and demand answers. Instead, let the Lamb's gentler self emerge to deal with a problem that requires delicacy.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You are aware of what's going on, so continue to stand by your earlier decision, no matter how persuasive the counterarguments might be. Money pressures soon will ease.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) By all means, have fun and enjoy your newly expanded social life. But don't forget that some people are depending on you to keep promises that are very important to them.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You need to wait patiently for an answer to a workplace problem and not push for a decision. Remember: Time is on your side. A financial matter needs closer attention.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) You now have information that can influence that decision you planned to make. But the clever Cat will consult a trusted friend or family member before making a major move.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Good news: You're finding that more doors are opening for you to show what you can do, and you don't even have to knock very hard to get the attention you're seeking.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Your gift for creating order out of chaos will help you deal with a sudden rush of responsibilities that would threaten someone less able to balance his or her priorities.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Congratulations. Your energy levels are coming right back up to normal -- just in time to help you tackle some worthwhile challenges and make some important choices.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) The sage Sagittarian should demand a full explanation of inconsistencies that might be cropping up in what had seemed to be a straightforward deal.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) A conflict between obligations to family and to the job can create stressful problems. Best advice: Balance your dual priorities so that one doesn't outweigh the other.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Don't guess, speculate or gossip about that "mystery" situation at the workplace. Bide your time. An explanation will be forthcoming very soon.

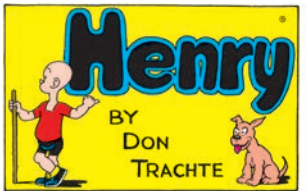
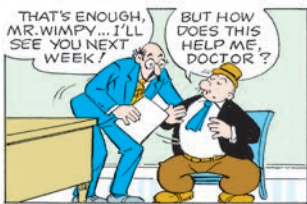
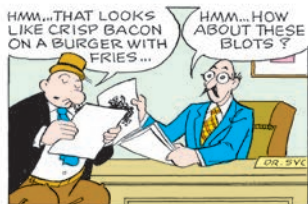
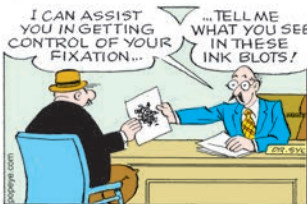
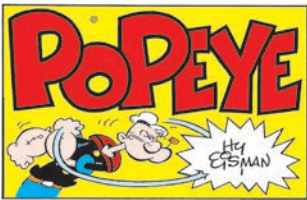
PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Boredom might be creeping in and causing you to lose interest in a repeat project. Deal with it by flipping over your usual routine and finding a new way to do an old task.

Born this Week

You can warm the coldest heart with your lyrical voice and bright smile. You find yourself at home, wherever you are.

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FUN PAGES



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

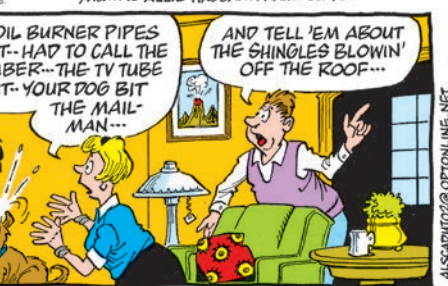
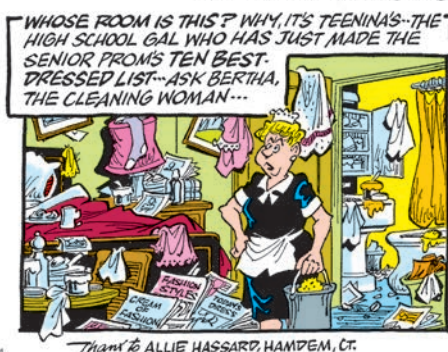
AND MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY...



HOME SWEET HOME DEPT. MOM AND DAD RELAXED ON THEIR TRIP BECAUSE DAUGHTER AND SON-IN-LAW WERE MINDING THE HOUSE...



BY AL SCADUTO



Riddle Card

1. What insect lives on nothing?
2. What land do babies like best?
3. Why is "O" the noisiest of vowels?
4. How is a balloon like a vagabond?
5. Which travels faster — heat or cold?

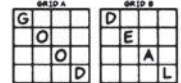
Answers: 1. A moth, because it eats holes. 2. Lapland (because the rest are "in a dingle"). 3. Because the rest are "in a dingle". 4. Because it has no visible means of support. 5. Heat, because you can catch cold.

A ROMAN WAGER!

Layout out seven toothpicks as shown in fig. 1, making an incorrect equation (2 equals 6). Challenge your friends to make it correct by moving one toothpick to a new position. Fig. 2 shows the answer (1 equals the square root of 1).

WORD POWER IS A "GOOD DEAL"! Pictured below are two puzzle grids for you to fill in. Hints are given for each word. The words in grid A contain the same letters as the corresponding words in grid B.

1. Former college student.
2. Chrome _____ (sl.)
3. Tiny particle.
4. To give high praise.



1. Type of race.
2. A musician's tape.
3. Usually full of water.
4. Having a double purpose.

Answers: 1. Grad-drag 2. Dome-demo 3. Atom-meat 4. Laud-dual

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6 2 7 6 2 8 3 7 2 4 3 8 3
 Y A J O D T L O V U O R V
 4 5 2 8 2 7 4 8 2 5 7 3 7
 S W I U S B E T E I A I D
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 D H E N O U C I H S G R N
 3 2 8 7 6 5 2 5 3 8 7 5 2
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 8 6 8 6 5 6 2 3 6 3 6 4 6
 E V A E U O R I P E T A I
 2 8 4 5 6 4 8 7 8 5 4 7 3
 S L U G O T E N D H I C N
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MAGIC MAZE ● — CASE

DBYVSQNKHEBYWTR
 OLGEBYWURPPNKE
 IGDBZXVMSQOMITV
 KIGECAYUWUSQTLI
 PNLWJKHMBRIEFFS
 ECAYONXMVIRHUS
 QPNORDIYMAECMKE
 JHBF AENLGT PALES
 CBZYEXWIOSPTIUS
 VUTRGQCOWIUTFPO
 OMLKIHGELEVARTP

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|------------|--------|
| Attache | Film | Possessive | Travel |
| Book | Gear | Slip | Upper |
| Brief | Lower | Stair | Window |
| Cigarette | Mummy | Suit | |

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Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

A "KEY" WORD TEST!

The grid to the left has room for nine words, and they all contain a "key." Try to find them before the "turnkey" wakes up! The following hints should help.

1. Slang for jail.
 2. Hit the wrong note.
 3. Every mouse needs one.
 4. A restrained style.
 5. A modern door opener.
 6. The main political speech.
 7. Exaggerated or foolish talk.
 8. Tampered with something.
 9. Slavish, obedient people.
- Answers: 1. Pokey 2. Off-key 3. Keynote 4. Low-key 5. Keycard 6. Keyed 7. Malarkey 8. Monkeyed 9. Funkeys

TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. THEATER: What was the name of the Wicked Witch of the West in the play "Wicked"?
2. ANATOMY: Where in the human body is the scapula located?
3. GEOGRAPHY: How many U.S. states border Wyoming?
4. LANGUAGE: What is a solidus?
5. FOOD & DRINK: Mr. Pibb was created to compete with what similar-tasting soft drink?
6. ENTERTAINMENT: What are the stage names of the Marx brothers?
7. ART: Chartreuse is a combination of which two colors?
8. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the ornamental shaping of plants called?
9. HISTORY: What is the oldest college at Cambridge University?
10. U.S. CITIES: What U.S. city once was a Spanish settlement called Yerba Buena?

- ### Answers
1. Elphaba
 2. Shoulder
 3. Six (Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, Utah and Idaho)
 4. A forward slash or stroke
 5. Dr. Pepper
 6. Chico, Harpo, Groucho, Gummo and Zeppo
 7. Green and yellow
 8. Topiary
 9. Peterhouse
 10. San Francisco
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IN ADDITION

FREE Low Flow equipment
is **STILL** available at the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce

**Grant monies are awarded to SEMCU, by the Department of Water Resources, (DWR), to help our community members within the 93636 zip code better manage and conserve our water resources.
(Estimated reimbursement amount based on participation)*

For more information Email: info@semcu.com or Call: (559) 363-9095
SEM CU meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of every month at The Pizza Factory

By the Community, For the Community!!!

****As soon as details are approved with the State we will follow up with those on the lists.**