

The Ranchos Independent



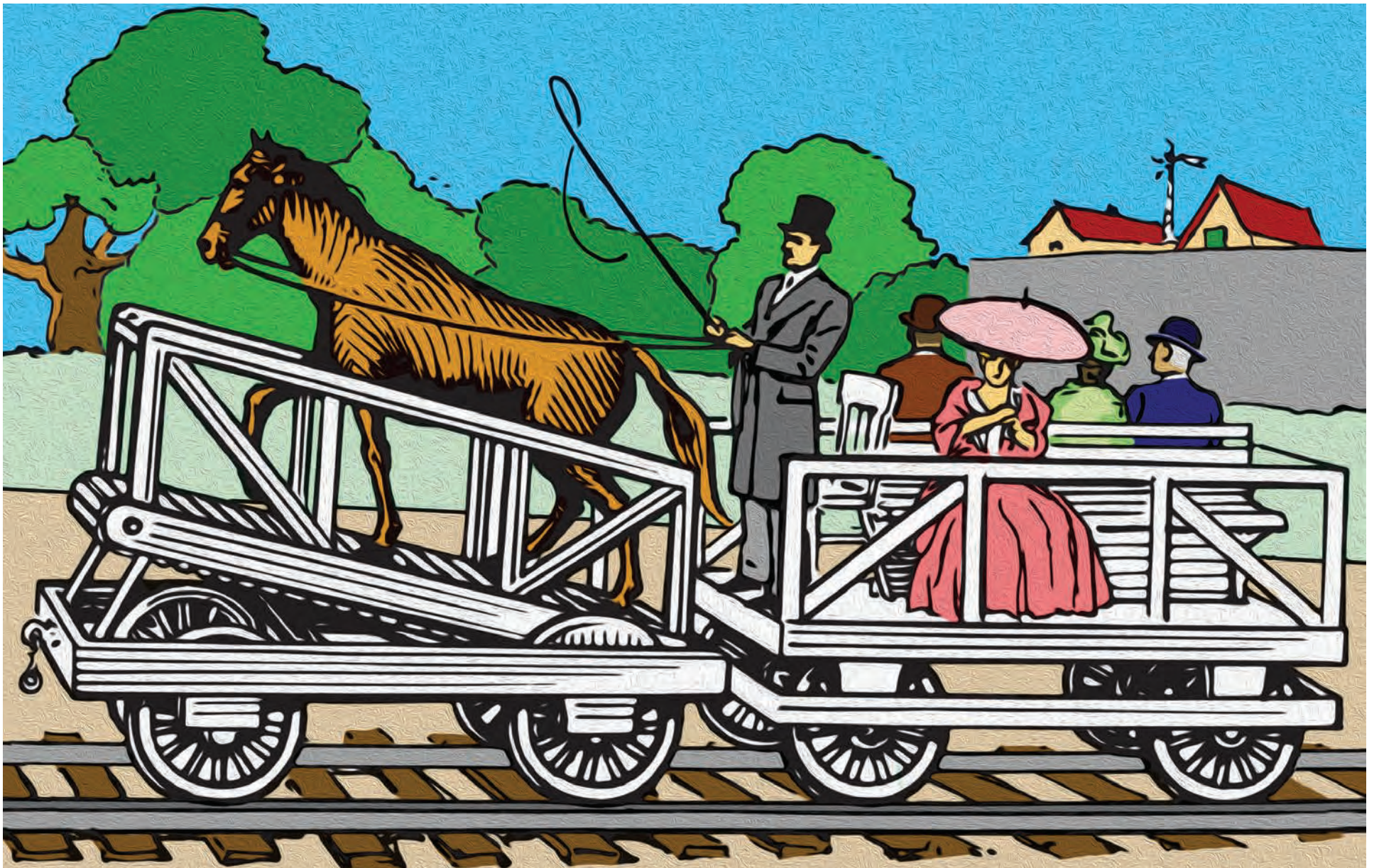
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Is High Speed Rail the “Bitterest Joke” of All?
By Ed Ring

In This Issue

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It sounded too good to be true, and it was. Travel from downtown San Francisco to downtown Los Angeles in two hours via high-speed rail. California voters in 2008 approved Proposition 1A, authorizing \$9.95 billion in general obligation bonds to build this so-called “bullet train.” They were told not only that the total cost would only be \$33 billion but also that the entire 500-mile system would be running by 2030.

Fat chance.

In March of this year, the California High-Speed Rail Authority released its latest progress report. The project is now projected to cost \$127 billion and there is no longer a projected completion date. The initial stretch of track, a 171-mile segment across the sparsely populated, pancake-flat San Joaquin Valley, is projected to be done by 2030 at a cost of \$35 billion.

These are staggering numbers, a testament to a staggering waste of financial and material resources. For this first segment of track, Californians are going to pay \$206 million per mile, and that’s if there aren’t any more overruns.

The financing alone — based on preposterously optimistic ridership projections for this segment of 6.6 million riders per year, and a 30-year-term at 5 percent annual interest — would work out to a cost of \$348 per ticket. Not exactly an easily affordable means of travel.

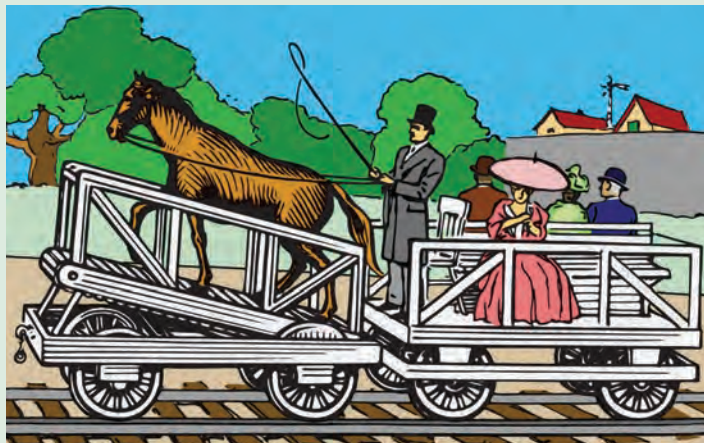
California’s high-speed rail project, in short, is a disaster. Everything about it fails any rational cost-benefit analysis. It will be a permanent financial drain on Californians, because in order for anyone to be able to afford to use the train for a daily commute, ticket revenue won’t even pay operating costs, much less pay back the construction costs.

From an environmental perspective, the California High-Speed Rail Authority boasts that the initial segment will reduce

total vehicle miles traveled in California by 183 million miles. That sounds like a lot until you take into account that Californians logged 340 billion vehicle miles traveled in 2022. High-speed rail by 2030 expects to reduce that total by 1/20th of one percent.

But the opportunity cost of blowing \$127 billion, and counting, on a train that will not significantly alleviate either traffic congestion or “greenhouse gases” is perhaps the bitterest joke of all. For \$127 billion, Californians could build infrastructure that would improve their quality of life for generations. Even in absurdly expensive California, \$127 billion goes a long way.

That much money could pay to raise the height of the Shasta Dam, build the proposed Sites Reservoir to its original 2 million acre-feet storage capacity, restore every aqueduct in the state, build new systems to harvest and store storm runoff, upgrade every major treatment plant in the state to recycle and reuse wastewater, refurbish the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant to last till 2050 or longer, build two additional nuclear power plants of the same size, and resurface and add lanes to every major interstate freeway.



Is High Speed Rail the “Bitterest Joke” of All?
By Ed Ring

For \$127 billion, even at ridiculously inflated California prices for public works, Californians could have abundant, affordable water and power, they could have a freeway system upgraded for the 21st century, and they would still have tens of billions left.

Corruption and Waste as a Way of Life

The problem with spending money on rational, practical solutions that lower the cost of living and improve the quality of life for millions of Californians is that this goal is inconvenient for the special interests that run California. On the other hand, pouring every spare bit of money, materials and labor into a make-

Please see **RAIL** on P. 3

Madera to Hold Pot Meeting

The City of Madera is holding a Community Meeting to receive public comment on two Social Equity Cannabis Business Permit applications as follows:

Cannabis Business Permit Social Equity Applicant – Nebrina Madera LLC

A Community Meeting to hear applicant presentations and public comment on a Cannabis Business Permit Social Equity Application. The proposal is to have a retail storefront for the sale of cannabis at 123 North D St.

Cannabis Business Permit Social Equity Applicant – California Connoisseur, LLC

A Community Meeting to hear applicant presentations and public comment on a Cannabis Business Permit Social Equity Application. The proposal is to have a retail storefront for the sale of cannabis at 100 South E St. The site is located at the southwest corner of South E St. and East Yosemite Avenue.

The Community Meeting will be held at the following location date and time:

May 4, 2023 at 6 p.m.

Pan-American Community Center
703 Sherwood Way
Madera, CA 93638

A Community Meeting is informal. Applicants will be given an opportunity to present their application at the meeting and the public is able to comment.

For information on this project, please contact the project manager James Troyer at 559-661-5476 or via e-mail at jtroyer@madera.gov.

Madera Ranchos Vets Thank Ranchos LibertyCafé Owner



Jack Allan, President of the Veterans of Madera Ranchos, presents a plaque to Fidel Bonilla, owner of the Ranchos Liberty Café, thanking him for providing the veterans with a location to meet on Monday mornings for coffee and conversation. The Veterans of Madera Ranchos meet every Monday from 9 to 10 a.m. All military veterans are invited to join.

Car Fatality on Ave. 12 & Rd. 35

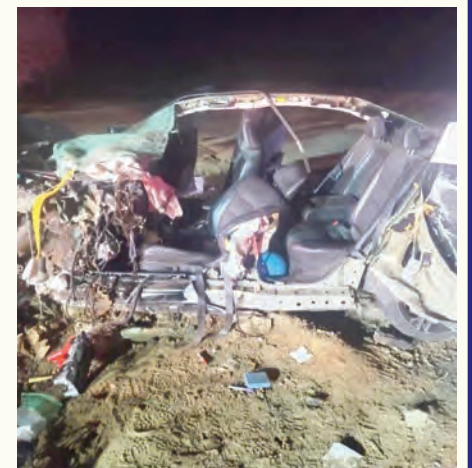
An automobile accident involving a Honda and a Ford truck on Friday, April 21 on Avenue 12 and Road 35 resulted in the death of the Honda driver.

The deceased driver was a 34-year-old man from Fresno who died after being ejected from his 2016 Honda. The incident, which is still under investigation, happened at approximately 9:15 p.m. Reports are that the truck was making a left turn and had come to an almost complete stop when it was hit by the Honda that had failed to slow down. The Honda was travelling eastbound on Avenue 12 when its left front struck the truck’s right rear.

In addition to the fatality, a 29-year-old woman who was a passenger in the Honda was injured and taken to Community Regional Medical Center with moderate injuries. The driver of the truck and

two passengers went to Saint Agnes Medical Center with minor injuries.

According to authorities, it is still unknown if drugs or alcohol were involved in the crash.



Click on “Local News” at

RAIL cont. from P. 2

work megaproject serves several hidden agendas.

The rationale for high-speed rail is to help save the environment, as if adding a 500-mile scar to the landscape, consuming millions of tons of steel and concrete in the process, is somehow preferable to simply upgrading the capacity of existing road and rail assets in the state.

But the true motivation to fund useless megaprojects is a desire to neglect California's essential water, power and transportation infrastructure, because by creating scarcity and high prices for these resources, public utilities and private energy producers reap larger profits. This plays out across several economic sectors.

For example, public utilities collect regulated profits, fixed at a percent of revenue. If renewable electricity costs several times more than conventionally generated power — and it does and always will if you do honest cost accounting and factor out the punitive permitting costs — then utilities make more profit. Ten percent of 40 cents per kilowatt-hour of renewable electricity at peak is a much bigger number than 10 percent of .04 cents per kilowatt-hour for clean natural gas-generated electricity.

With water, the higher the price goes, the easier it is for big agricultural corporations to outlast and buy out small family farms, consolidating the industry. It's also more lucrative for hedge funds that are buying land in California just for the water rights. The higher the price of water, the more valuable their investments.

One would think California's powerful unions would recognize the benefit that practical infrastructure investments would have for all working families in California, but they don't. As long as their construction workers have lucrative jobs on the high-speed rail project, there is no upside to them taking on the environmentalist lobby or the corporate and financial players that profit from scarcity and high prices. Nonetheless, California's construction unions could be a political wild card. If they want to demand projects that would generate positive economic benefits and help all working families, they have the political power to make it happen.

The Ripple Effects of Scarcity Policies

Affordable and abundant water and energy form the foundation for broad-based prosperity. They make home ownership more affordable, because the supply of homes cannot be significantly increased unless there is adequate water. They make electricity and gasoline affordable, which benefits households and businesses. And scarcity of water and energy are not the only essential resources that California denies its citizens.

Building materials, lumber in particular, need to be imported from other states and nations since California's state legislature has regulated in-state timber harvesting to less than 25 percent of what it was as recently as the 1990s. But rather than thin the forests with responsible revitalized logging, every year the firefighting industrial complex gears up to collect additional billions fighting cataclysmic fires in overgrown, mismanaged forests, and silences criticism with two words, "climate change."

California's overregulation of everything has led to its so-called housing crisis because it is now impossible for private developers to make a profit building homes that working families can afford. Instead, a host of special interests, collecting countless billions in money from taxpayers, have created a massively subsidized industry in low-income housing and "permanent supportive housing" for the homeless.

These projects waste stupefying amounts of money, but if regulations were loosened up to allow private development of homes people could afford, or if homeless people were humanely moved off the streets into supervised encampments where they could recover their sobriety and their dignity, the scams would come to a screeching halt.

Spending \$200 million per track mile on high-speed rail and over \$500,000 per unit of "permanent supportive housing" has nothing to do with saving the planet or helping the disadvantaged homeless. These insanely overpriced projects endure because spending that money wisely would create a competitive economic environment, threatening the margins and the market share of the special interests that run California.


Wasting billions on projects that will never yield the public benefits they promise but will nonetheless ensure permanent sources of profit and power for California's public sector bureaucrats, its environmentalist pressure groups, its public utilities, its hedge funds and pension funds, its corporations and its subsidized land developers is the business of California's elite now. All of them are determined to keep things just the way they are. Because for all of them, ongoing public failure is ongoing special interest success.

California's High-Speed Rail project is a failure. It is also a metaphor for a state that has turned its back on the ordinary, hard-working people who live there. The larger problem is that California is exporting this mentality into the rest of America, along with its propaganda and its corrupt, punitive economic model.


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When's the NEXT Chamber of Commerce Meeting?

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, Wednesday, May 10 at 6:30 p.m., 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C in the Maywood Center. Come join us and see what's going on in your community. Call us at 645-4001.

When's the NEXT Chamber of Commerce Mixer?



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Ranchos Middle School Takes 2nd At County Math Tournament

Dairyland Elementary School's 7th grade team and Sherman Thomas STEM Academy's 8th grade team won first place in the overall Madera County Math Tournament on Friday in their respective competitions. Ranchos Middle School came in second place in the overall

7th grade math competition and Wasuma Elementary School placed third. Mountain Home School Charter's 8th grade team placed second in the competition and Oak Creek Intermediate School placed third at the 8th grade level.

This year, 14 schools and more than 150 students participated in the Math Tournament hosted by Madera County Superintendent of Schools and Madera County Schools Foundation. Each grade competed in a separate competition. Students took four tests: Leap Frog, Circuit Training, Mad Hatter, and Relay Race at the Madera Center.

During the Circuit Training competition teams were given 20 questions and 2 1/2 minutes per question, moving through a circuit. Ranchos Middle School placed first in the Circuit Training 7th grade competition. Dairyland Elementary School and Desmond Middle School tied for second, followed by Sherman Thomas STEM

Academy in third place. Sherman Thomas STEM Academy won the 8th grade competition followed by a tie for second between Desmond Middle School and Ranchos Middle School. Raymond-Knowles Elementary School earned third place.

During the Leap Frog competition, teams of two students each answered 25 questions on their own, then switched tests and worked together to correct and complete their partner's test.

This year there was a tie for first place between Ranchos Middle School and Wasuma Elementary School. La Vina Elementary School and Sherman Thomas STEM Academy tied for second place, with Dairyland Elementary School coming in third. The 8th grade first place team was Mountain Home School Charter. The second place winner was Sherman Thomas STEM Academy followed by Thomas Jefferson Middle School.

Teams of two students answered 20 questions that were displayed on a screen in 45-second intervals during the Mad Hatter competition. Dairyland Elementary School earned first place in the 7th grade

Please see **MATH** on P. 15



The Ranchos Middle School 7th Grade team members include (from left) Brody Von Flue, Zeev Adler, Weston Hiatt, Timi Ilori, Gannon Koop and Rene Quintana, Jr. The team was coached by Reed Carbone and Daniel Miranda.

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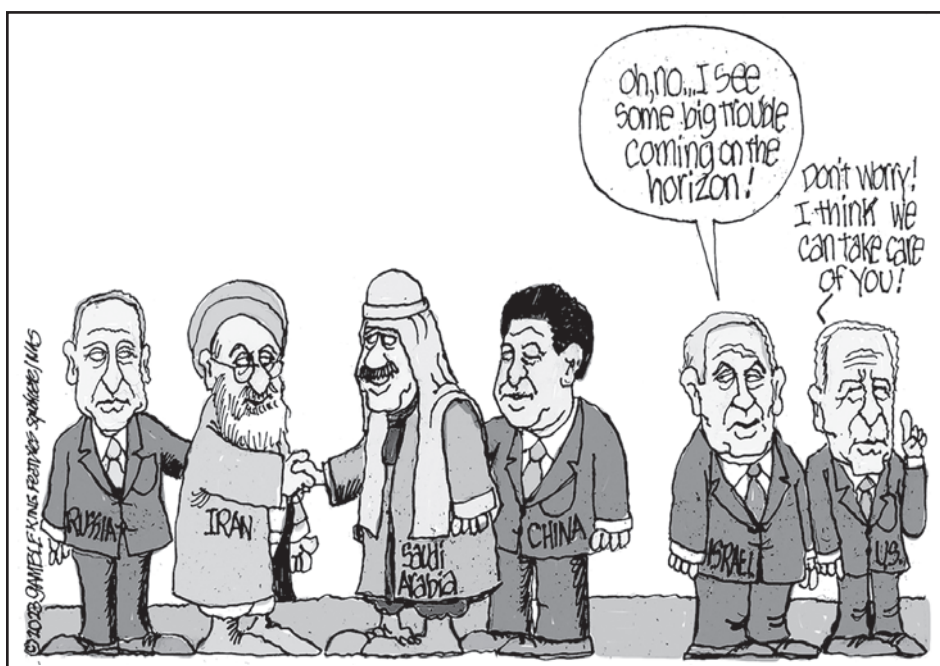
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Guest Editorial

Yes, We are Making Kids "Trans"

By Rich Lowry

We are going to look back years from now and wonder how we failed young girls so badly.

Between social media and fashionable gender theories, we are making teenage girls depressed, anxious, and trans.

In a Substack essay the other day, a mother wrote of her daughter: "She was among the last of her small group of biologically female friends to socially transition. It was mid-pandemic, and she spent most of her time with her best friend, who had, unbeknownst to me, shown her hours upon end of transgender entertainment on YouTube and TikTok."

Internet searches for anorexia in recent years have declined while searches for transgender have soared. There are transgender and nonbinary celebrities. Schools have started teaching kids gender ideology, and some will "transition" children without telling parents.

Of course, that is going to have an effect, although there is a massive effort to deny it among trans activists and in much of the media.

The Geico gecko can convince us to buy car insurance. Trump can post a meme on Truth Social, and it can convince someone to go take a base-

ball bat to Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg. Someone can use the wrong pronoun and it can convince a trans person to harm himself or herself. But what can't possibly happen, we are supposed to believe, is that the constant discussion and celebration of transgenderism might convince confused young people to decide they are nonbinary or trans.

Even some trans advocates are willing to admit this makes no sense.

Marci Bowers, president of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, told the progressive New York Times columnist Michelle Goldberg: "There are people in my community who will deny that there's any sort of 'social contagion'

-- I shouldn't say social contagion, but at least peer influence on some of these decisions. I think that's just not recognizing human behavior."

Bowers is an exception, though. It is taken as an article of faith among trans activists and much of the left that social contagion is a pernicious myth.

This denial is based on the idea that people, especially young people, aren't suggestible. As if what we are told, what our friends do and say, what signals we get from society aren't enormously important. And as if awareness and encouragement of transgenderism, nonbinary status, and heretofore unknown genders haven't increased dramatically.

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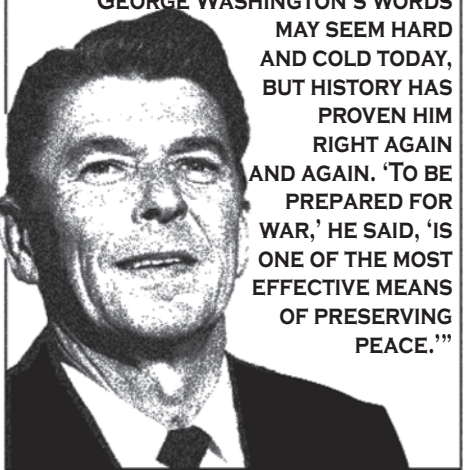
The trans advocates argue that a more permissive environment is simply allowing people to embrace their true identities, the same way more

Please see EDITORIAL on P. 11

THE RAY GUN

SHOOTING STRAIGHT TO THE HEART

"GEORGE WASHINGTON'S WORDS MAY SEEM HARD AND COLD TODAY, BUT HISTORY HAS PROVEN HIM RIGHT AGAIN AND AGAIN. 'TO BE PREPARED FOR WAR,' HE SAID, 'IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF PRESERVING PEACE.'"



RONALD REAGAN
 SAYING MORE IN ONE QUOTE THAN OTHERS SAY IN A LIFETIME

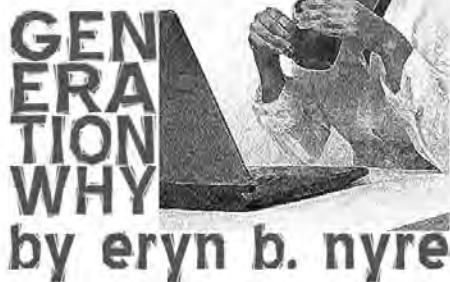
Are You Listening to Me?

As a person whose job it is to train and develop employees, I'm paid to be patient. Which is helpful because it is definitely easier to exercise patience when you are compensated for the effort. For the most part, I only struggle when someone is being deliberately difficult. I'm not talking about people who put in effort and are eager to improve but just aren't comprehending and need further explanation. No, I mean those who check out, don't follow instructions and expect you to hold their hand so they don't have to put the work in to actually learn something. That's when it's good that I get paid because otherwise I might be less inclined to avoid making them cry.

Not listening has the same effect on me in public that it has on me in the workplace. I can show all the patience in the world for crowded businesses and slow service because I know what it's like to be overworked and understaffed, but when I am dismissed or ignored suddenly all that patience I've spent a lifetime of developing goes right out the window. This week I've had an encounter where I completely lost my patience and it took a considerable amount of control not to lash out.

I had to take my car into the shop. It was making a noise when accelerating, especially when trying to pick up speed or going uphill. It's difficult to explain without benefit of audio, but the best I can come up with is that it sounded like the steam valve of a pressure cooker being released if that steam valve were also a slightly out of breath opera singer who was trying to hit a high note but couldn't find the key.

I made an appointment for that and some maintenance that needed to be done and went in to drop the car off. I explained the situation to the service advisor, who is the middleman between you and the technician who will actually be fixing the car. I made it clear that the noise kicks in when you are accelerating and the engine is revving, especially when going up a hill. Once you are maintaining speed on even road, the noise



stops. He appeared to have typed all of this into his little tablet.

Several hours later the advisor calls to tell me that they couldn't duplicate the sound and nothing showed when they ran diagnostics on the computer, so they think the maintenance performed actually took care of the sound. I asked if they test drove it and he said yes. I'd been coming to this shop the entire time I've had this car so I felt confused, shocked even, but confident. They hadn't failed me yet. I got a ride back to the garage, paid all the money, started the car and proceeded out of the parking lot. The moment I hit the gas to merge onto the busy street wouldn't you know it, the tired old opera singing steam valve made an appearance.

I immediately turned around and pulled straight back into the garage. The service advisor stared at me like I was a bad recurring dream, which I found peculiar since I was the one who didn't get what she asked and paid for. I told him I couldn't imagine the sound not happening when the technician test drove my car and asked if I could see my technician and have him listen to the engine.

When the tech came out, I went through all of it, what had been happening, what I told the advisor when I dropped the car off and the surprise I just had that the car had not been fixed as promised. We did a short drive around to prove I hadn't made up the sound and immediately he said he hadn't driven the car off the lot, he just took a turn around the parking lot and didn't hear anything. He didn't rev the engine. He didn't try to pick up speed or go uphill. He toddled along in the parking lot going at

Please see GEN WHY on P. 7

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GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

what I assume was a parade's pace due to how full the lot was and called it good.

He didn't know what the sound was offhand and said he'd have to look into it and figure out what's wrong, something I thought they had already been doing that day, but I guess not. He said he wasn't able to get to it right then because they were about to close. So now I have to leave my car with them over the weekend, find a ride home or rent a car, and wait to see what's happening next week all because someone didn't actually listen. Perhaps the advisor didn't type it in, perhaps the tech dismissed it because he thought he knew better; doesn't matter. The point is I explained the situation and I was clearly ignored. I was seething because either way someone didn't

listen to me and now I'm the one stranded without a car, but you all go home and have a delightful weekend.

I'm sure that by the time this is published I'll have my car back, but as I type this I'm still boiling. I wanted to tell them exactly what I thought of the entire experience. I wanted to call him incompetent and demand some sort of discount or gratis service. I wanted to yell, which is not only not my style but it never actually solves anything. I didn't though. I was angry but I kept it all in check, gave them back my key and made arrangements to get home. I'll have a calm and civil but serious chat with the service manager once my car is done. After all, my parents taught me never to mess with the people who make your food or fix your car. I may have lost my patience, but not my common sense.

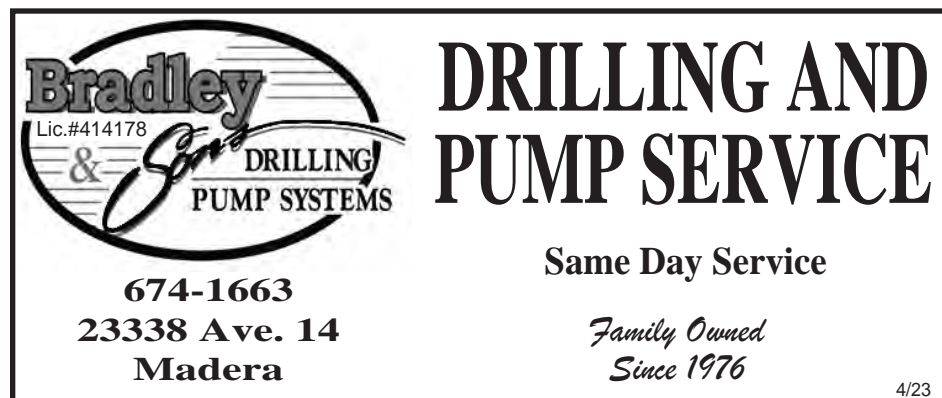


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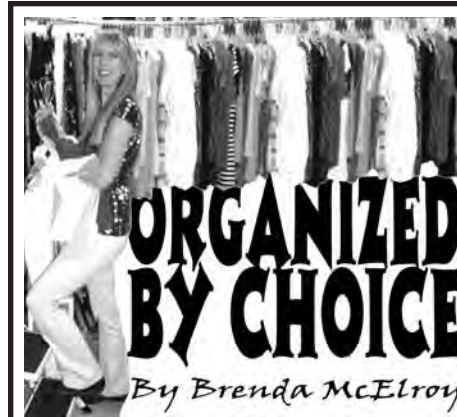


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Controlling the Past

Sometimes when writing an article, the title comes to me first. Such was the case today. While waiting for the rest to come, I Googled "Controlling the Past," curious what I'd find. Lo and behold, I came across this quote from Orwell's book 1984.

"He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past."

George Orwell
(1984)

I'm sure there are many layers to this quote that have nothing to do with organizing, but it serves as a framework for

today's topic. How we control our stuff in the present affects both our past and our future.

One of the more obvious applications is for seniors, although everyone should pay attention since we don't know the number of our days. What you do with your stuff today controls how your past will be remembered, and what will be required of others in the future.

PAST — Your stuff tells a story. If someone were to come into your home today and write your eulogy based solely on what they found, how would that read? Is it obvious what you value most? Do you have things that reflect or tell about people, events and experiences that impacted your life? Are they easily accessible and displayed in ways that demonstrate

their value? Are they stashed away in random boxes, buried under miscellaneous clutter?

I recall a client who had, among other things, a collection of corks from her father who died from alcoholism. Getting rid of the corks didn't change the past, but it removed that reminder. When you control the stuff from your past you control the narrative it communicates.

I'm not suggesting that you keep only things that paint a rosy picture. You have many items that trigger thoughts of battling through cancer or a job loss but remind you of the strength of character you developed or people who supported you through that time.

FUTURE — By controlling our past stuff we impact the future. I've worked with clients who were "gifted" houses, garages, shops and storage units full of stuff when their parents passed. Today I received a call

This isn't a quick and easy task, but neither is it for loved ones who must take vacation days to go through your stuff if you don't.

from a woman seeking help for her mother. Her grandmother recently passed away and her mom is trying to make space in her house for the grandmother's

things. I sensed the burden this woman felt knowing that in a matter of years, it would all be hers to deal with.

A greater gift is to leave behind only what you value most. Your family will appreciate the Reader's Digest version of the story your belongings tell.

PRESENT — It's never too early to look around your home and begin identifying your treasures while letting go of the superfluous. What's on your bookshelves, in your curio cabinets and stuffed into closets? Is there something in the garage or storage that you'd like to pull out and enjoy now, or make sure it's noticed when you're gone? No one knows better than you what you value. If everything's

Please see **ORGANIZE** on P. 17

Strawberry Time!

(April 2013)

Editor's Note: With the passing of Aunt Jean, I have decided to bring you a "Best Of" of her recipes over the past 10 years. Good recipes are timeless and I hope you enjoy them all over again.



will work). So in memory of Grandma Henderson here is my Mom's recipe:

Quick No-Cook Fresh Fruit Jam

2 qts. Ripe Strawberries
¼ C Lemon Juice
1 pkg. (2 oz) Jam and Jelly Pectin
1 C Karo Light Corn Syrup
4½ C Sugar

Fully crush fruit. It should measure 3¼ C. In a 4 qt. bowl stir together the fruit and lemon juice. Slowly add pectin, stirring vigorously. Set aside 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add corn syrup, mix well. Gradually stir in sugar until dissolved. Ladle into clean ½ pt. jars or freezer containers leaving ½" headspace. Cover tightly. Jams in use should be kept in refrigerator up to three weeks or

stored in freezer for up to one year. Makes seven containers. This recipe can be used with peaches or nectarines – using 2½ pounds ripe fruit in the place of the strawberries.

We get a newsletter here in the park I live and there is usually a recipe someone has donated. I guess someone was thinking along the same lines I was because in the April newsletter the following recipe was in it. I haven't made it, but it sounds good.

Special Strawberry Salad

¾ C sugar
1 8 oz. pkg. Cream Cheese – room temp.
1 C Chopped Nuts
2 Bananas – sliced
1 Large Can Crushed Pineapple – drained
1 10 oz. Frozen or Fresh Strawberries
1 Large Carton Cool Whip

If fresh strawberries are used, clean and slice and set aside. Mix sugar and cream cheese with elec-

tric mixer. Fold in nuts, drained pineapple, strawberries and Cool Whip. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

If you want to make a strawberry pizza, you really don't have to have a pizza pan. If you don't have a pizza pan you can use anything you have on hand. The last one I made, I used a deep dish glass pie plate, but you can use anything. Use your ingenuity and your imagination. If you want to impress company coming, make it in a spring form pan and when ready to serve, put it on a pretty cake plate and pipe some whipping cream around the bottom.

I used a pie crust recipe, using butter and adding a little sugar, but here again you can use your favorite crust. I went on line to see what was used, and believe me, just about anything can be used.

There were recipes using Bisquick, sugar cookie recipe, or even one recipe used a package of ready to bake sugar cookies. But the one I like the best was the one used for Republican Dessert.

Strawberry Pizza

1 C Flour
1 Stick Butter-softened
½ C Chopped Nuts (optional)
2 T Powdered Sugar (optional)

Mix together like pie dough. Press into pan with fingers and bake 10 minutes in 350 oven. Let cool before putting on second layer.

Second Layer:

1 Pkg. (8 oz) Cream Cheese – softened
½ C Powdered Sugar
2 C Sliced Strawberries
 In a mixing bowl, beat cream

Please see RECIPES on P. 11

What is your favorite sign of spring? Tulips and Crocus popping up out of the ground? All the beautiful trees blossoming? The wildflowers on the side of the road? April showers? Although I love the signs of spring I just mentioned, there is one thing I look forward to in spring and that is the strawberry stands going up in the strawberry fields. When we see them, we know it is strawberry season.

According to a list of 25 low carb fruits, strawberries are second to lowest, only behind watermelon (believe it or not). Strawberries have 6.5g of carbs per half cup sliced serving and watermelon has 5.5g. Strawberries have lots of vitamins and minerals, so eat up.

Strawberries can be fixed so many different ways, and always good. There is strawberry pie or

"pizza," strawberry shortcake – those of you that went to the Crab Feed, how about that shortcake we had for dessert? (Ollie told me the cake part was muffins). There are strawberry waffles, and last, but by no means least, strawberry jam.

My niece Vicki's late Grandma Henderson made strawberry freezer jam and I was the benefactor of a jar or two from time to time. Delicious! I understand great niece Lauren has been moaning the fact that she misses Grandma's jam. Well dear, now is the time to learn how to make it and continue your Grandma's tradition. I went through my Mom's recipe cards and found a recipe (not sure if it is the same one Grandma Henderson made, but it

Although I love the signs of spring I just mentioned, there is one thing I look forward to in spring and that is the strawberry stands going up in the strawberry fields. When we see them, we know it is strawberry season.

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The Bookshelf

Mexican Food and Books Fundraiser

By Jerrica Edmundson

The Ranchos library has a lot of new and interesting things being implemented and new opportunities coming up to help us make even more happen.

Our seed library has over 75 varieties of seeds now available thanks to some amazing donations from High Mowing Seed Company, Baker Creek Seeds, True Leaf Market, Ferry Morse and Seed Savers. These are just a fraction of what we have received with more arriving on an almost daily basis. It's completely free of charge and all we ask is that you bring back any seeds from your harvest so our seed catalog can remain diverse and become a resilient reflection of what can grow in our own backyards.

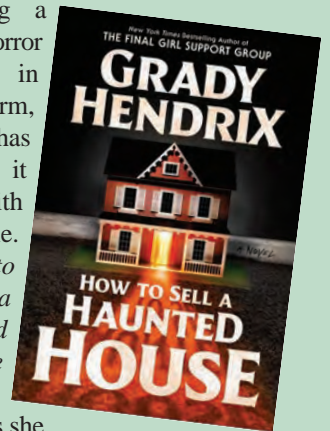
The Friends of the Ranchos Library will be having a fundraiser at Papi's Mex Grill located at 131 Riverwalk Blvd. South in the Riverwalk shopping center. Thanks to a generous partnership with the management there, a portion of sales toward food from 3 p.m. until closing on May 25 will go directly to the Friends of the Ranchos Library — the group responsible for funding our annual Summer Reading program

as well as many other library endeavors. Come out to grab some great dinner and show support for a great cause.

Speaking of Summer Reading, this year's program is going to involve a triumphant return to in-person programming, with many performers on the books already. We will start June 17 and have both in-person and "take and make" crafts happening. We hope that this creates a new hybrid style that keeps the fun coming all summer long. Keep an eye out on our Facebook page for details as we get things locked in place, as well as on our website at www.maderacountylibrary.org where you can find our events calendar and register for events if it is necessary.

Jerrica's Bookshelf: *How to Sell a Haunted House* by Grady Hendrix

I'm keeping up with the attempt at not reading complete fantasy novels and have found another book by the amazing Grady Hendrix. Hendrix is a pro when it comes to recreating a campy horror movie in book form, and he has done it again with this one. *How to Sell a Haunted House* follows Louise as she



receives devastating news that both of her parents have passed away in a car accident back home in Charleston. Louise has started her life over in San Francisco with her daughter, and immediately decides to go home to deal with the fallout because her brother Mark is not the one to rely on to take care of selling the house and keeping the affairs in line.

Louise and Mark's mother was an avid puppeteer, who took part in puppet ministry and had a borderline obsessive relationship with her puppets and dolls. As many a horror movie will attest, having such a strong emotional bond with an object can lead to some lingering feelings when that bond is abruptly broken, and Louise and Mark have to figure out how to cleanse the house and repair what is left.

This was a fun book that had some moments of sadness, but overall I really enjoyed the campy horror vibe that it gave and love being able to add this to the list of Grady Hendrix books I've read thus far.



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Senior Report

Seniors Planning Fall “American Musical Heritage” Tour

By Melanie Williams

Exciting activities are in the works at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. Spring, summer and fall trips are being planned now, so don't miss your opportunity to travel with friends and neighbors of the Ranchos community. The next planning meeting is scheduled for May 2, at 12:30 p.m. Come and find out more information about these trips and upcoming events.

We had a GREAT time at the Home and Garden Festival on April 1. It was the first annual fundraiser of the year for the Senior Center. A special thank you to Roger and Joy Guthrie, the owners of Chevron Ranchos at 37247 Ave 12 in Madera Ranchos, for their generous donation to support the event. Many thanks to the staff and members of the Golden Valley Baptist Church for their encouragement and donation to the Senior Center and the S & K Mini Mart on Ave. 12 continues to help with needed supplies for many of our events. We appreciate all the community support and participation this year, as well as previous donations supporting our fundraising events.

Thank you to Judy Sears for being in charge of recruiting and organizing vendor participation. The leading members of the team providing the BBQ at the Home and Garden Festival were Kandace Reeves and Juanita Williams. The master BBQ team members were Connie Prince, LeeAnn Fursman and Mike Fursman who manned the grill.

Many new ideas for publicity and community outreach in support of the Home and Garden Festival was instituted by Carrie Bennett. Mary Orcutt was instrumental in highlighting our vendors and their crafts on the internet on What's Up in



the Ranchos. Diane Maxfield was in charge of plants and questions about springtime gardening out in the Scout Garden this year. We appreciate all the wonderful volunteers and members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center who helped to make the 2023 Annual Home and Garden Festival a success.

The Hunchback of Notre Dame was a fantastic play the Senior Center members attended on April 16 in Oakhurst. The actors were wonderful, the set and costumes were beautiful and we enjoyed the play from our front row seats. If you

missed the trip to The Golden Chain Theater in April, the Senior Center is planning another outing in late June for the presentation of *The Angel of Calamity Gulch*. It is a fun melodrama about the Old West. The group sign up will be in May, so call the Senior Center at 559-645-4864 for more details.

Cruise Experts is sponsoring a trip for the members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. The America's Musical Heritage Tour is from Nashville to New Orleans, as well as a few other towns along the way. Many members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center are attending the 10-day escorted Globus Tour in October. This vacation includes top hit music right off the charts in Nashville's Honky Tonk Row and the Grand Ole Opry, right on to Elvis Presley's Graceland Estate. Travelers will be visiting New Orleans French Quarter listening to the blues and jazz. Joliene Mason, Acting President of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center, is the contact person for the America's Musical Heritage trip. Reservations are required to get

Please see SENIORS on P. 11

Stay Safe: Winter's Snow can Turn Deadly as Melt Swells Rivers

The rain and snow we received over the winter were good news for California's drought-stricken communities, but there's a potential problem just over the horizon. State officials have reported that the effect of that winter activity is potentially dangerous spring and summer conditions as snowmelt swells already overloaded rivers.

As of April 3, government officials reported our statewide snowpack is 237 percent of normal, one of the largest snowpacks in California's record books. While that's good for drought conditions, the melting snowpack has the potential to become quite dangerous when it starts melting and adds to our rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs.

“As the temperature rises, snowmelt-fed waterways can quickly induce incapacitating cold-water shock to even the strongest swimmers. We encourage everyone to follow the

advice of public safety officials and avoid entering waterways if asked to do so,” State Parks Director Armando Quintero said in a joint statement released by State Parks, the California Department of Water Resources and Cal Fire.

The best way to stay safe is to avoid entering any cold, fast-running water. If you do find yourself in dangerous, cold water, be

aware of the deadly “gasp reflex” that usually accompanies immersion in cold water.

“Sudden immersion in cold water can stimulate the ‘gasp reflex,’ causing an involuntary inhalation of air or water and can start the drowning process immediately,” Quintero said. “It can even trigger cardiac arrest, temporary paralysis, hypothermia and drowning.”



State safety officials have come up with three key guidelines for dealing with the potentially deadly water situation this year.

1. If a person needs rescuing, do not enter the water. It could result in two fatalities.
2. Officials say instead throw something that floats to that person and call 911.
3. Officials strongly advise against swimming alone and recommend always wearing a life jacket.

Officials did note that with the conditions this year being potentially so severe, that even with a life jacket on it could be treacherous.

“Be aware of fluctuating water levels,” Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth said. “We want everyone to always make safety a top priority when recreating.”

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SENIORS cont. from P. 10

the Senior Center discount price for the tour. Other trips are in the works with The Cruise Experts, because this October tour is almost completely booked.

The next Senior Paint Party is tentatively set for May 3 at the River Park Art Groove Gallery. The gallery's Grand Reopening was on April 20 with their fabulous Art Hop Event. If you are interested in attending this free beginners' art class with all paint supplies provided by the Art Groove Gallery, call us at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center at 559-645-4864 to sign up. The general public is invited to all the community events at the Art Groove Gallery at

Riverpark.

Our Monthly Sale is back on for Saturday, May 6 from 8 a.m. to noon. The Treasure House will be stocked full of newly donated items for Spring. If you are out for the local garage sales or a leisurely Saturday drive, swing by the Ranchos Treasure House and Boutique at the Senior Center.

Celebrations for the Month of May:

Cinco De Mayo is Friday, May 5

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 14

Memorial Day is Monday, May 29

Best wishes in celebration and remembrance from the members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

RECIPES cont. from P. 8

cheese and powdered sugar until smooth. Spread on cooled crust. Arrange sliced berries on top.

Top Layer:

1 C Sugar

¼ C Cornstarch

2 C Crushed Strawberries

In a large saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch and crushed berries. Bring to boil, cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.

Cool slightly. Spoon over strawberries. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Well, that does it for this month. I still like to hear from you about the things you've made from the recipes here, or just to get your comments. Call me at the office, or e-mail me at the paper. But most of all thanks for reading.

This article originally appeared in the April 2010 issue of the Ranchos Independent.
Editor

EDITORIAL cont. from P. 5

people admitted they were left-handed when the taboo against lefties gave way in the 20th century. That analogy falls down, though, since the spike in trans and other identification is particularly pronounced in areas that are particularly encouraging.

As Madeleine Kearns of National Review points out, young people in California identify as trans at roughly about a 40% higher rate than the national average. And in the Davis Joint Unified School District, in a heavily progressive city outside Sacramento, the rate is three times that of California as a whole.

Girls are particularly sensitive to peer pressure. This aligns with the trend. According to Kearns, there used to be more gender-dysphoric boys than girls by about a two-to-one margin. Now, there are more gender-dysphoric girls than boys by three to one.

Such suggestibility was evident in

the TikTok-driven phenomenon during the pandemic of teenagers developing strange tics. According to a Canadian study, The New York Times reports, "The adolescents were overwhelmingly girls, or were transgender or nonbinary -- though no one knows why."

In light of all this, other countries have pressed the brakes on aggressive treatment for trans-identifying minors. In urging that so-called gender-affirming care be used only in "exceptional cases," Sweden's National Board of Health and Welfare cited "the uncertainty that follows from the yet unexplained increase in the number of care seekers, an increase particularly large among adolescents registered as females at birth."

If Sweden can acknowledge reality, so should we.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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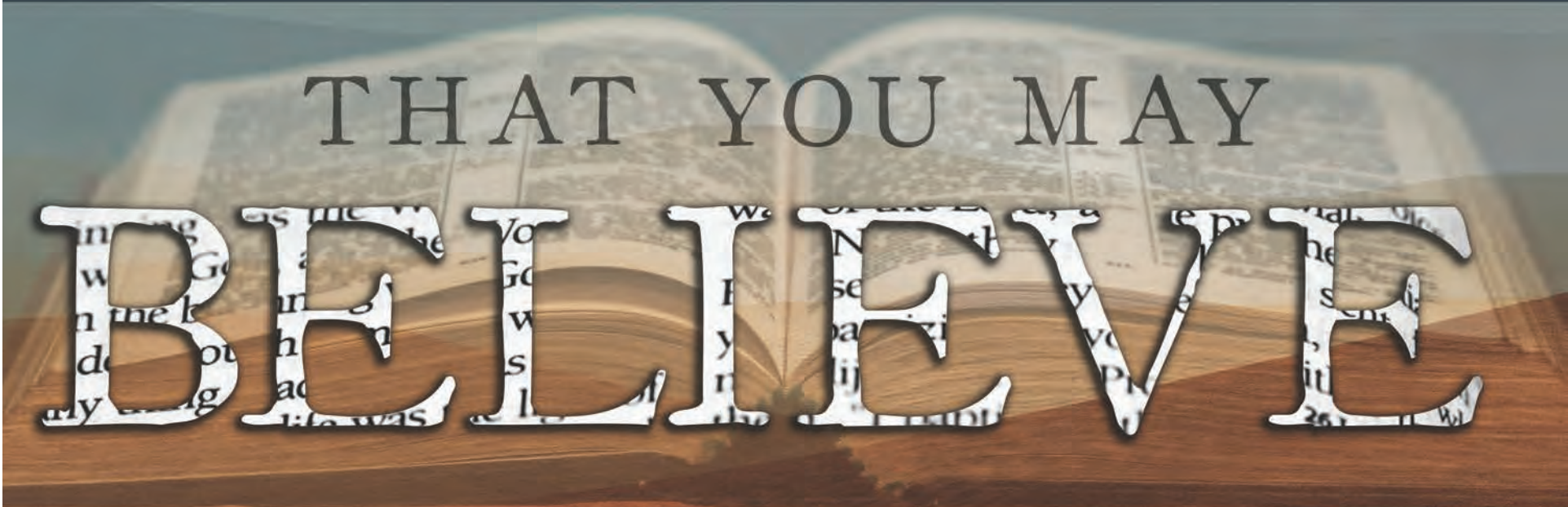
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SEMUCU speaks

By Igal Treibatch

Don't be fooled! Our "drought" is not over!

The effects of the drought on Madera County, its economy and agriculture, will be manifesting its negative impact for years to come.

The establishment of Madera began in the late 1800s as a small community. In its beginning, for more than 50 years the fortunes of Madera were inextricably bound to lumber production. From 1876 to 1933, the town was nourished by timber. To a large degree, it was the resiliency of that industry that kept the town alive. By the time the death knell sounded for the lumber men, the farmers – who already had been contributing to the economy for many years – stood ready to fill the gap. Diversified agriculture took up where lumber left off, and today Madera city and Madera County harbor a rich farming economy.

Since the establishment of Madera

in the 1870s to 1970, Madera County's population increased to approximately 40,000. Today, 50 years later, the census shows a population of approximately 156,000. Since the 70s, Madera County's population growth was driven by agriculture and availability of water, good soil, sustainable weather and farmers investing in the land. The drastic change Madera County experienced when the lumber industry was lost (due to fires and a struggling economy) may be happening again today due to loss of water availability. The agriculture economy which has been driving Madera's success is now on the brink of failure.

Today, Madera again is on the precipice of change. Without getting into the politics of water or the blame game, I'm simply looking at our potential future and changes to come in Madera's future. Many farmers are being pushed out of business and the agriculture tax-based economy is changing, creating a vacuum. How will Madera chart its future creating and adding to the County's economy while losing a significant part of its character and tax base? The County will have to work on and boost the diminishing tax base and it looks like it will come through new urban developments.

What will Madera County look like in 50 years with the potential of population increase to 250,000? Will we be good Stewards of the land and our heritage? Will we work together toward compromises and help the growth of Madera and our children's future in it? Can we develop parks, recreation facilities and better commuting arteries?

We all must work together and find solutions to our community's predicaments which are not going away. It is up to us, the living souls of Madera, to chart the course. SEMCU has been working toward that goal of sustainability for many years. We at SEMCU need the community's involvement in charting the future of our area and neighborhoods. How will retiring folks and our children fare? Our own Golden Valley Unified School District is already looked at as a superior education element which we all need to support. The local library, the fire department, the Sheriff as well as our artery to businesses, the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, should be supported. After many years of the library folks and the Golden Valley Chamber operating the

"Flatlander's Parade," they had to give up and scrap the whole event. What a loss for us all. It is all happening due to lack of community involvement. Can we gather strength and work on next year's parade and make it happen? Will people come forward and help?

The public is invited and encouraged to offer ideas for projects to help our community. SEMCU convenes for only one hour on the third Monday of every month, starting at 6 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, May 15. For the foreseeable future, instead of convening our monthly Board Meetings at the Pizza Factory, we will hold our board meetings via telephone conferencing. To participate in the board's conference meeting VIA telephone or VIDEO, call 312-757-3121 and you will get prompted to input the access code 715657949#.

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Madera County Starting Trash Talk

Madera County has launched a comprehensive study of the County's solid waste management program. The study will be conducted by an independent consulting firm and informed by input from Madera County stakeholders and community members, which aims to provide an in-depth analysis of current solid waste practices and identify opportunities for improvement.

The study will also analyze the economic and environmental impacts of current practices and evaluate the feasibility of alternative waste management strategies.

Chairman David Rogers said, "This study will provide us with valuable information to ensure the County complies with state regulations and manages waste in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible manner that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community."

The study is expected to take approximately six months to complete, and its success will hinge on input from various stakeholders and the community, including county residents, businesses, advocacy groups, and waste management professionals.

MATH cont. from P. 4

competition. Sherman Thomas STEM Academy came in second and Ranchos Middle School and Wasuma Elementary School tied for third. Sherman Thomas STEM Academy won the 8th grade competition. Mountain Home School Charter and Oak Creek Intermediate School tied for second. Ranchos Middle School and Raymond-Knowles Elementary School tied for third.

Students raced to answer questions during the Relay Race. La Vina Elementary School placed first in the 7th grade competition. Dairyland Elementary School placed second and Wasuma Elementary School placed third. Sherman Thomas

STEM Academy's 8th grade team came in first in the relay race. Mountain Home School Charter placed second in the 8th grade competition and Raymond Knowles Elementary School placed third.

"We were happy to host the Math Tournament again this year! Our competition is growing and it was great to see all of the students and come together for a day to have fun and celebrate math," said Tricia Protzman, Assistant Superintendent, Madera County Superintendent of Schools. "It's such an exciting day, with fun team competitions, outdoor activities, and a lot of math!"

The event was held at the Hillside Elementary School and schools were allowed 11 students per team.

- In 2009, six geologists were convicted of manslaughter for failing to predict a deadly earthquake in Italy. Though exonerated, they faced high levels of shame from the general public afterward.
- Compared to average shoppers, chefs are more likely to buy generic store brands for sugar, baking soda and other common kitchen staples.
- Lacrosse descends from a version played by Native Americans in the 17th century. Matches could last several days with as many as 1,000 players per team, on a field with goals up to six miles apart. Game sticks were so treasured that they were often buried with the athletes after death.
- Thomas Edison attempted to create ghost-hunting equipment, and an assistant died while testing it.
- Measles can deplete previously acquired immune memory for up to two years in adults.
- The state of Texas keeps a database of more than 500 executed inmates' last words, going back to the 1980s.
- Ever been annoyed by the decibel level of a rooster's morning wake-up call? You're not the only one who finds it loud: When the birds crow, they lean their heads back, covering their ear canal, which acts as an earplug to protect themselves from being deafened by their own vocalizations.
- After plagiarizing work for his directorial debut, actor Shia LaBeouf plagiarized a public apology from a Yahoo! answers question about ... plagiarism.
- You can buy a room on a cruise ship and live on board for an annual fee.
- In the 1800s, bananas were seen by some as an "immoral fruit," due to their shape. Fruit companies combatted this perception by issuing postcards of women eating bananas to advertise that they weren't taboo.

**Strange
BUT TRUE**

By Lucie Winborne

Thought for the Day: "Extraordinary things are always hiding in places people never think to look." -- Jodi Picoult

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Kiwanis Korner

Madera Ranchos Kiwanis Working on Liberty High Scholarship Program

By Sally Rowden

Our focus this month is our donations coming in for our John Minney Liberty High School Scholarship Awards. The requesting donation letters went out to individuals and businesses in our Golden Valley Unified School District community a few weeks ago. Telephone calls have also been made and I've had the pleasure of talking to many of you. Your donations in supporting our local Liberty High School Scholarship Awards are extremely validating for you, our students and our community. Continue sending your donations as we sincerely would like to be able to award our students deservingly. You can mail in your donation to Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos – Marie Cameron, Treasurer – 12443 Fernwood Drive – Madera, CA 93636. Or for further questions, please call Sally Rowden at 559-908-7073.

Other happenings on our calendar were our assistance with the Kiwanis Club from East Fresno in a Clean-Up Day at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo and Storyland. Started early on a Saturday morning of April 1 and we worked at Storyland with the Fresno Unified School District - Leavenworth Elementary School K-Kids and their advisors. Very successful day with the Kiwanis of the East Fresno Club providing a welcomed lunch for all volunteers. Lots of activities and events are open to families at Storyland. Go to storylandfresno.com to find all of its happenings. Playland is to open April 29 with lots of exciting changes and fun for all.

The Kiwanis Key Club Students of Liberty High School ran the Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos Meeting on Thursday, April 13. Presiding as Vice-President was Oscar Briceno Ferrer; Secretary, Blanca Saenz; Treasurer, Juliana Gonzalez; Webmaster, Kay Griggs; and Community Member, Jenna Martinez. All of the officers and the community member handled the meeting with successful professionalism. It's a huge pleasure to see these young people display their expertise. At this same meeting Michael Grossman, Principal of Rancho Middle School, gave an insightful overview of daily happenings, highlighting several of the elective

classes being offered.

Also, this month, the Torch of Excellence event honoring scholar athletes in the State Center Community College District of Fresno and Madera took place. This event was scheduled for Monday, April 24 at the Clovis Veterans Memorial Building and six Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos members attended.

In May our Character Counts Bicycle Giveaway at Sierra View Elementary, Stone Creek Element-

tary and Webster Elementary gets underway. Honoring students at the elementary level who display the Six Pillars of Character, which are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Two bicycles, along with helmets, will be given away at each of the Golden Valley Elementary schools.

Closing thought ... "Do one act of kindness each day of the year and change 365 lives." Anthony Douglas Williams."



Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos Members (from left) Jolene and Rod Mason, Leslie Carella, Marie Cameron, Bev Delk, Richard Wayne, Mona Diaz and Ollia Ridge, followed by Liberty High School Key Club Members Oscar Briceno Ferrer, Blanca Saenz, Kay Griggs and Juliana Gonzalez.

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What's Happening
93636

MARCH 2023

Median Listing Price
\$529K

Median Days on Market
19

Median Sold Price
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Median Price/SF Sold
\$260

Data based on the Fresno County MLS

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4/23



Climate Change Duplicity

By Betty Van Valkenburg

This column has chronicled the ridiculous progression of the global warming hysteria to the global cooling hysteria to the climate change hysteria. The narrative has changed with each iteration of “the sky is falling.” In 2019, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez told us, “The world is going to end in 12 years if we don’t address climate change ...” British science writer Nigel Calder stated in 1975, “The threat of a new ice age must now stand alongside nuclear war as a likely source of wholesale death and misery for mankind”.

The goal of climate change fanatics is and always has been total control of our lives by faceless bureaucrats and power-hungry elected officials – and lining the pockets of the elite climate-change alarmists, some of whom have been

preaching catastrophe for over five decades.

One real monumental climate change lunacy might be the California high-speed rail project which was to save the planet by getting us out of our gas-guzzling cars and onto rapid transit. As a Railway-Technology.com headline asks: “Will California ever get its high-speed rail? The project continues to receive attention. But where is it now and what can we expect next?” Then the site traces the process from the year 2008 to today, and it isn’t a pretty picture. It’s a train wreck. A \$35 billion-dollar-plus train wreck – for a shortened route – that exceeds secured funding by \$10 billion.

The high-speed train debacle is the most noticeable, but through the years of hysteria we’ve seen many facets of our lives changed to accommodate the lie of “stopping global warming ... or cooling.”

Now the latest EPA headline is:

“Biden-Harris Administration Proposes Strongest-Ever Pollution Standards for Cars and Trucks.”

Yes, trucks.

According to the EPA article, “the proposed standards are also projected to accelerate the transition to electric vehicles.” They propose standards for “delivery trucks, refuse haulers or dump trucks, public utility trucks, transit, shuttle, school buses, and trucks used to haul freight.”

Now the lunatics in charge plan to

ban your gas stove.

This latest absurdity is chronicled by the Tea Party Patriots at teapartypatriots.org/action-items. They state:

“Recently, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) - yet another unelected regulatory agency that most Americans know nothing about - announced that they may move to ban gas stoves. Yes, everyone’s favorite kind of stove. When outrage ensued, CPSC announced they may instead ‘regulate’ them to make them safer. – Safer? The stated

goal is to eliminate the gas stoves and therefore save the planet, not to make the stoves safer. When was the last time your gas stove attacked you? – As a reminder, it was a 2013 rule by the Obama Administration that made dishwashers completely inefficient, frustrating Americans for years.

CPSC is spouting falsehood after falsehood and the Biden Administration is pretending this isn’t happening. Meanwhile, the American people are once again waiting to see if the people working in the shadows of their government make good on their threat to intrude on the kind of stove with which we choose to cook.

If you agree that this is an outrageous overreach, use the Tea Party Patriots activism tool to submit a ready-made comment, or send your own message in support of gas stoves. We have provided a draft statement for you, or you can also make your own changes.”

You are encouraged to use the Tea Party Patriots website tool as a simple way to send your opinions to the powers that be. It’s the least that can be done to try to stop the latest insanity ... and then you can go cook up something delicious on your great gas stove while you’re still allowed to own it.

And if you are so inclined, you might read “Agenda 21,” available at bookstores, for an eye-opening history and explanation of the climate change misinformation.

4H Happenings
4H Happenings
4H Happenings
4H Happenings
Sierra Shadows 4H Club



By Sarah Morgan

The Ranchos Senior Center community service was held on April 1. Community service is when you do something very big and kind, but don’t expect anything in return, and that is what the Garzon and Crandall families did for the elderly.

What did they do? They took weeds out of their garden and brought different types of plants to people’s cars. Why did they do this? They did this because the Center said that they needed some help with their garden, and they were wondering if there were any volunteers to help out.

These two families wanted to help, so they did. Who did this project? The volunteers’ names are Hunter, Griffin, Iris, Jacob, Annelise, Jamie and all of the parents that came that day. All of the helpers also thought that doing this was very fun and helpful.

There was also an interview with the volunteers. Hunter said, “It was fun to help out the elderly.” Griffin said, “It was very fun.” Jacob said, “It was fun. It’s good to get experience in community service.” Annelise said, “It was very inspiring to me, and I love to help others that are in need.” And lastly, Jamie said, “It was fun because we also got to learn what some of the plants were, and we got to take a plant of our own home.”

These people all worked very hard to help others. Everyone had a lot of fun there at the Senior Center and we all thank you very much for being such a great help to the seniors.



Students who volunteered at the Senior Center were, from left, Annelise Crandall, Jamey Crandall, Griffin Williams-Smith, Jacob Garzon, Iris Garzon and Hunter Williams-Smith.

ORGANIZE cont. from P. 7


precious, nothing’s precious.

Can a photo of you doing your hobby or sport tell the story just as well or better than the items you no longer use? Give yourself permission to let them go, remembering what that does for your loved ones in the future. In the process, don’t be hurt if people don’t want your stuff. Remember — it’s your stuff. Donating usable items is a great way to get it into the hands of someone who will treasure it.

This isn’t a quick and easy task, but neither is it for loved ones who must take vacation days to go through your stuff if you don’t. If it feels overwhelming, I can help. Remember: He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past.

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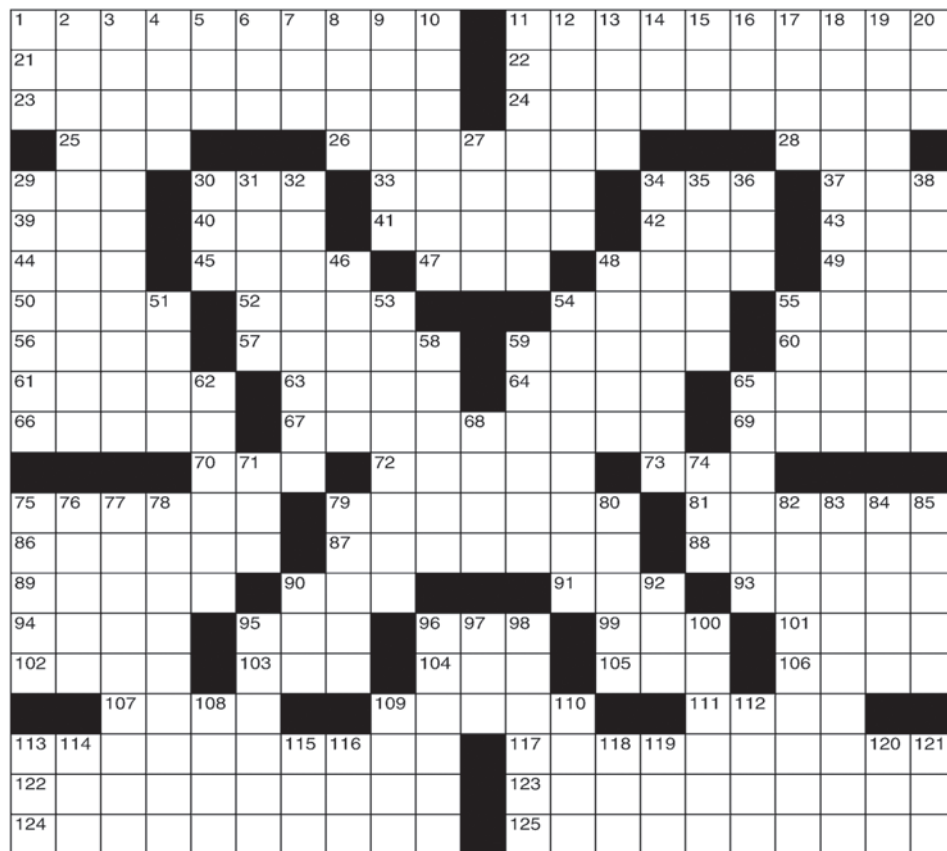
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WORD SEARCH

	6	5		11	
1	9	÷	8	+	1
	-		-		X
4	3	+	7	÷	7
	X		+		+
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WORD SEARCH: Find the words listed below in the grid.

ACROSS: 6. SHIP, 7. SHINOBI, 8. TALE, 9. HORSE, 10. ROSE, 11. SHIP, 12. TALE, 13. HORSE, 14. ROSE, 15. SHIP, 16. TALE, 17. HORSE, 18. ROSE, 19. SHIP, 20. TALE, 21. HORSE, 22. ROSE, 23. SHIP, 24. TALE, 25. HORSE, 26. ROSE, 27. SHIP, 28. TALE, 29. HORSE, 30. ROSE, 31. SHIP, 32. TALE, 33. HORSE, 34. ROSE, 35. SHIP, 36. TALE, 37. HORSE, 38. ROSE, 39. SHIP, 40. TALE, 41. HORSE, 42. ROSE, 43. SHIP, 44. TALE, 45. HORSE, 46. ROSE, 47. SHIP, 48. TALE, 49. HORSE, 50. ROSE, 51. SHIP, 52. TALE, 53. HORSE, 54. ROSE, 55. SHIP, 56. TALE, 57. HORSE, 58. ROSE, 59. SHIP, 60. TALE, 61. HORSE, 62. ROSE, 63. SHIP, 64. TALE, 65. HORSE, 66. ROSE, 67. SHIP, 68. TALE, 69. HORSE, 70. ROSE, 71. SHIP, 72. TALE, 73. HORSE, 74. ROSE, 75. SHIP, 76. TALE, 77. HORSE, 78. ROSE, 79. SHIP, 80. TALE, 81. HORSE, 82. ROSE, 83. SHIP, 84. TALE, 85. HORSE, 86. ROSE, 87. SHIP, 88. TALE, 89. HORSE, 90. ROSE, 91. SHIP, 92. TALE, 93. HORSE, 94. ROSE, 95. SHIP, 96. TALE, 97. HORSE, 98. ROSE, 99. SHIP, 100. TALE, 101. HORSE, 102. ROSE, 103. SHIP, 104. TALE, 105. HORSE, 106. ROSE, 107. SHIP, 108. TALE, 109. HORSE, 110. ROSE, 111. SHIP, 112. TALE, 113. HORSE, 114. ROSE, 115. SHIP, 116. TALE, 117. HORSE, 118. ROSE, 119. SHIP, 120. TALE, 121. HORSE, 122. ROSE, 123. SHIP, 124. TALE, 125. HORSE.

DOWN: 1. SHIP, 2. HORSE, 3. ROSE, 4. SHIP, 5. HORSE, 6. ROSE, 7. SHIP, 8. HORSE, 9. ROSE, 10. SHIP, 11. HORSE, 12. ROSE, 13. SHIP, 14. HORSE, 15. ROSE, 16. SHIP, 17. HORSE, 18. ROSE, 19. SHIP, 20. HORSE, 21. ROSE, 22. SHIP, 23. HORSE, 24. ROSE, 25. SHIP, 26. HORSE, 27. ROSE, 28. SHIP, 29. HORSE, 30. ROSE, 31. SHIP, 32. HORSE, 33. ROSE, 34. SHIP, 35. HORSE, 36. ROSE, 37. SHIP, 38. HORSE, 39. ROSE, 40. SHIP, 41. HORSE, 42. ROSE, 43. SHIP, 44. HORSE, 45. ROSE, 46. SHIP, 47. HORSE, 48. ROSE, 49. SHIP, 50. HORSE, 51. ROSE, 52. SHIP, 53. HORSE, 54. ROSE, 55. SHIP, 56. HORSE, 57. ROSE, 58. SHIP, 59. HORSE, 60. ROSE, 61. SHIP, 62. HORSE, 63. ROSE, 64. SHIP, 65. HORSE, 66. ROSE, 67. SHIP, 68. HORSE, 69. ROSE, 70. SHIP, 71. HORSE, 72. ROSE, 73. SHIP, 74. HORSE, 75. ROSE, 76. SHIP, 77. HORSE, 78. ROSE, 79. SHIP, 80. HORSE, 81. ROSE, 82. SHIP, 83. HORSE, 84. ROSE, 85. SHIP, 86. HORSE, 87. ROSE, 88. SHIP, 89. HORSE, 90. ROSE, 91. SHIP, 92. HORSE, 93. ROSE, 94. SHIP, 95. HORSE, 96. ROSE, 97. SHIP, 98. HORSE, 99. ROSE, 100. SHIP, 101. HORSE, 102. ROSE, 103. SHIP, 104. HORSE, 105. ROSE, 106. SHIP, 107. HORSE, 108. ROSE, 109. SHIP, 110. HORSE, 111. ROSE, 112. SHIP, 113. HORSE, 114. ROSE, 115. SHIP, 116. HORSE, 117. ROSE, 118. SHIP, 119. HORSE, 120. ROSE, 121. SHIP, 122. HORSE, 123. ROSE, 124. SHIP, 125. HORSE.

Say you saw it in the Ranchos Independent

- ACROSS**
- 1 One of Chrysler's K-cars
 11 Imaginary
 21 Lack of refinement
 22 Open to discussion
 23 * Golf format not based on the number of holes won
 24 * Part of an internal-combustion engine
 25 Take an ax to
 26 Ornate wardrobe
 28 Nice 'n Easy product
 29 Shin locale
 30 Stumblebum
 33 Austrian cake
 34 Up on the latest
 37 "Binary" singer DiFranco
 39 S. Amer. country
 40 Much like
 41 Calculus pioneer Leonhard
 42 Hot temper
 43 Scanned ID in a market
 44 Cartoon pic
 45 Twist, as in a hose
- 47 Dark deli loaf
 48 City haze
 49 The Browns, on sports tickers
 50 Volunteer's response
 52 Star pitchers
 54 Getz of jazz
 55 List-curtailling abbr.
 56 Brief letter
 57 Roofing material
 59 Like an old apple's consistency
 60 Bit of a script
 61 Fear greatly
 63 Longtime operating system
 64 Spanish pot
 65 Blackthorn fruits
 66 Supplement
 67 Word that can precede the starts of the answers to the five starred clues
- 69 Trousers
 70 Car navig. aid
 72 Owner of WordPerfect
 73 Cato's "I love"
 75 Brainteaser
 79 Sacred spots
- 81 Soviet spacecraft series
 86 "Lord Jim" novelist Joseph
 87 * Buyer's final figure
 88 Membrane covering a lung
 89 Creole cooking pods
 90 Temporarily stylish thing
 91 Take to court
 93 Leash, e.g.
 94 Tony winner Schreiber
 95 Roofing material
 96 "It's so-so"
 99 Winter illness
- 101 Director Preminger
 102 Roof part
 103 Mine car load
 104 Yoko of art
 105 Shark part
 106 Sped
 107 Genesis twin
 109 Small stream
 111 "Smooth Operator" singer
 113 * Vessel for crustacean fishing
 117 * Removes tenderly, as a lover's tears
- 122 City in central Illinois
 123 Hawaii's nickname
 124 Super-corny
 125 Occupancy levies
- DOWN**
- 1 Talk smack to
 2 Like official public statements
 3 Freed from federal restrictions
 4 Give off light
 5 "Look, micel!"
 6 Ripen
 7 Lil Jon's genre
 8 Around H'wood, e.g.
 9 French card game
 10 Actress Jane
 11 One asked to attend a party
 12 Less remote
 13 Eye creepily
 14 Thanksgiving mo.
 15 Summer, to Jeanne
 16 Form a lap
 17 Tough
 18 Many a virtual bidding event
 19 Ork, Krypton or Melmac
- 20 Lion's home
 27 Paris airport
 29 "Righteously" singer Williams
 30 Desk wood
 31 Pseudonym
 32 Groups for devotees
 34 Vast Asian mountain system
 35 Satirical device
 36 Tent securer
 38 Straight up, in a bar
 46 Reeves of "The Matrix"
 48 Fair booth
 51 Straight up, in a bar
 53 Sutured
 54 Like altruists
 55 Singer Fitzgerald
 58 Obtain by threatening
 59 Singer Rita
 62 Church teachings
 65 Film holders
 68 Rock's Clapton
 71 Launching platform
 74 Star athlete, for short
 75 Place to learn, in Lyon
 76 Smartphone company
- 77 The opposite way
 78 Cemetery plot
 79 Animal trap
 80 Pack full
 82 Information group for analysis
 83 Big name in car cleaning products
 84 Speechify
 85 "Thwack!"
 90 Remote
 92 Moniker for a Yale student
 95 Coverer of a bald spot
 96 Unlike gods
 97 Brian of Roxy Music
 98 Pipe with a flexible tube
 100 Open, as a Ziploc bag
 108 Band blasters
 109 Renege (on)
 110 Drug bust unit
 112 Mgr.'s helper
 113 "Wait a —!"
 114 "In your face!"
 115 Actor Saget
 116 Singer Rita
 118 Topping sort
 119 That girl
 120 Supped
 121 "Definitely!"

Classified

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whiten socks or washcloths, try boiling a pot of water and adding a sliced, juiced lemon. Soak the items for at least an hour, and then pick out the lemon and add the pot -- water and all -- to a load of wash. • If there are crushed cookies in a pack I purchase, I set them aside in a plastic baggie in the freezer to use on ice cream. Yummy! -- R.L. in Alberta, Canada • If you have been cooking in the oven and have a pan that's got cooked-on food, you can get it clean without all the scrubbing. Immediately after cooking, while the oven is still hot, add enough water to cover the bottom of the pan and a little dishsoap. Put it in the oven until the oven is cool. The residual heat will work on the stuck-on food while you are dining, and it'll wipe right out. -- W.O. in Minnesota • When washing out stockings, add a tablespoon of vinegar to the rinse water, and they will retain their elasticity better. • Wintergreen oil makes a lovely room freshener. Put two drops on a cotton ball and tuck it into the cushions of your couch, or hide it under a lamp pedestal ... anywhere out of the way. The scent drifts over a week or so. -- G.T. in Delaware

Send your tips to *Now Here's a Tip*, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803
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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.

	+		÷		2			
+		+		×				
	÷		+		4			
×		-		-				
	+		÷		1			
11		5		6				
1	3	4	5	6	7	7	8	9

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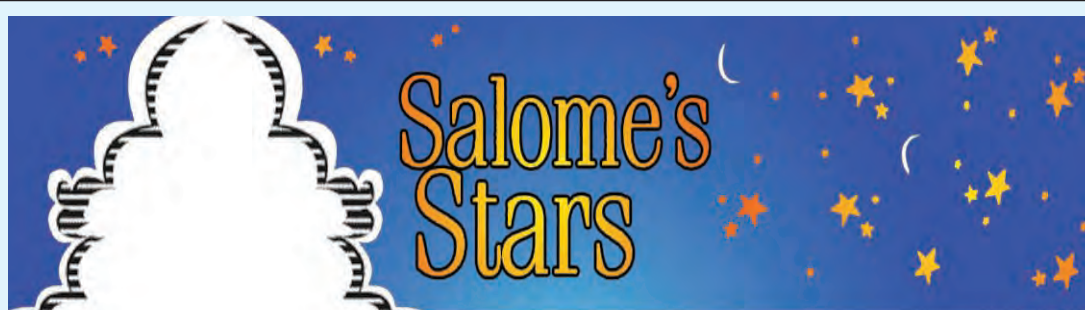
4/23

Click on "Local News" at

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Change is still dominant for Rams and Ewes, both in the workplace and in their private lives. If it's one of your goals, this is also a good time to look at relocating.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Doing things for others is what you do well, but don't forget that Bovines thrive on the arts, so make some time for yourself to indulge your passion for music and art.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) While the Romantic Twin considers where to go for an upcoming vacation, the Practical Twin will start making travel plans now to take advantage of some great bargains.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your sensitive nature helps you deal with an emotional situation. Be patient and continue to show your sincere support wherever (and for whomever) it is needed.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) You're making progress as you move through some unfamiliar territory. And while there might be a misstep or two along the way, you're heading in the right direction overall. Good luck.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Some good news arrives -- and just in time to remind you that you're making progress. Perhaps things aren't moving as quickly as you'd prefer, but they're progressing nevertheless.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) This is a good week to step back and assess the facts that have recently emerged, to see where they can be used to your advantage. Also, don't hesitate to make changes where necessary.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You should begin to experience some support from those who now agree with your point of view. This should help counter the remaining objections from die-hard skeptics.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Don't let your aim be deflected by trivial matters as you try to resolve a confusing situation. Take time to find and thoroughly assess the facts before making any decisions.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) The possibility of moving to another location has come up. But, before you dismiss it as unworkable, it's worth checking out just in case it does have some merit after all.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) New relationships, personal or work-related, show mixed signals. Best to assume nothing. Let things play themselves out until you have something substantive to work with.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Your ability to make needed changes without causing too much, if any, negative ripple effect comes in handy when dealing with a sensitive matter either on the job or in the family.

Born this Week
 Although you like things to go smoothly, you're not shy about making waves when you believe the situation calls for it.

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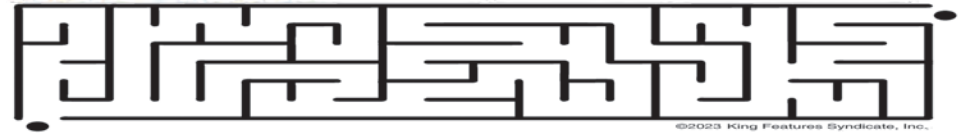
FIVE TWO ADVERTISING
 ADS
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 645-0634



"Hmmm ... Miss Figby, bring me the industrial-strength tongue depressors."

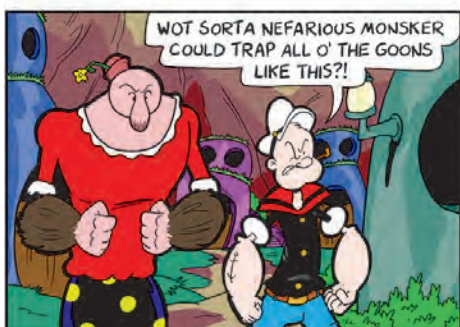
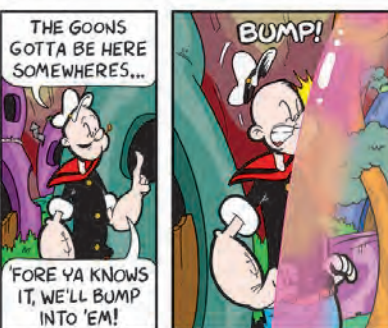
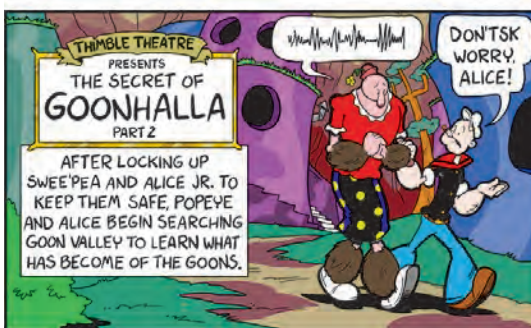
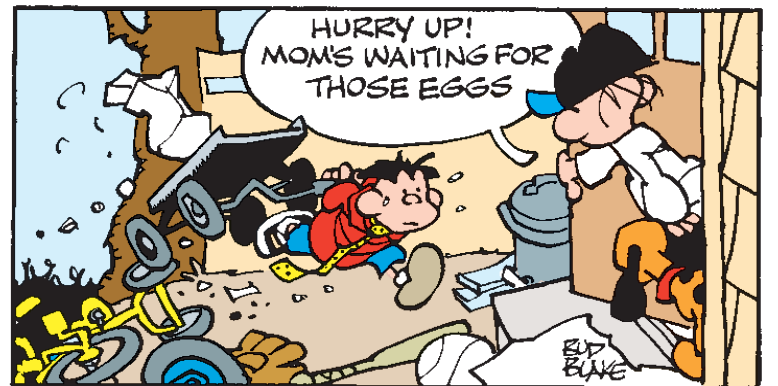
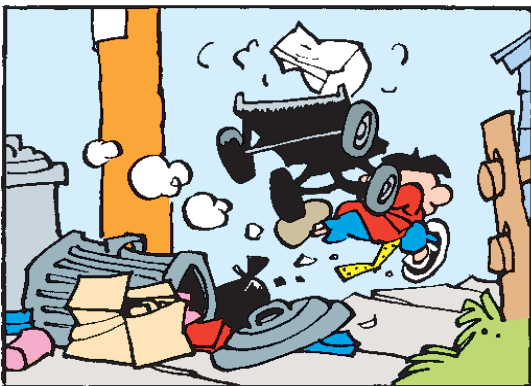
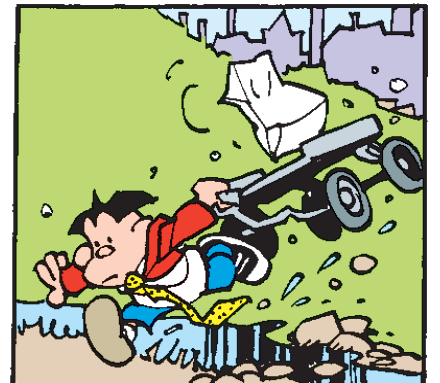
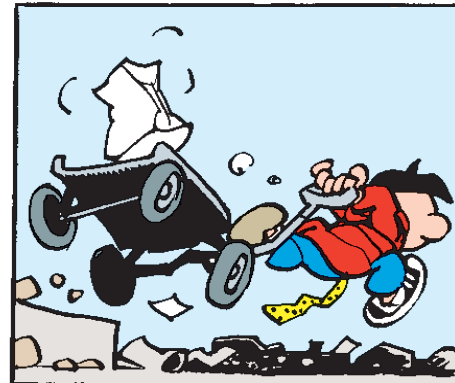
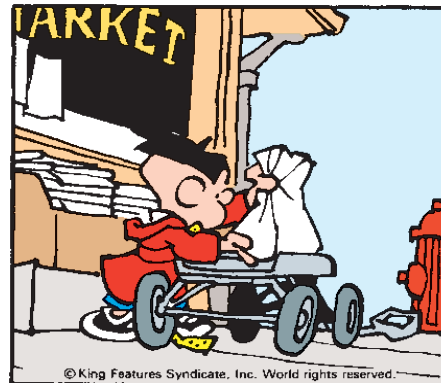
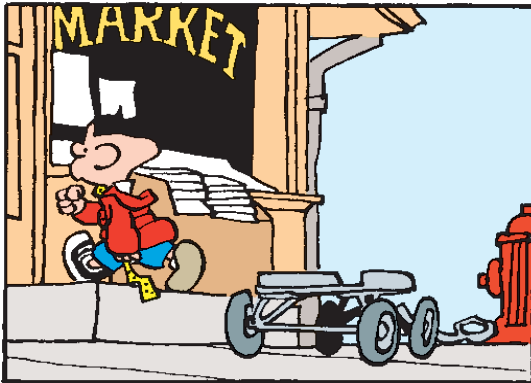
FUN PAGES

Kids' Maze



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. **AD SLOGANS:** Which company was advertised with the slogan, "Think Outside the Bun"? 2. **TELEVISION:** Which TV show spawned the spinoff sitcom "Mama's Family"? 3. **U.S. CITIES:** In which city would you find the USS Arizona Memorial? 4. **ANATOMY:** What are the bones that make up the spine known as? 5. **GEOGRAPHY:** What is the lowest point in the United States? 6. **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:** What is the traditional material in a 40th anniversary gift? 7. **MOVIES:** What is the name of the tow truck in the animated movie "Cars"? 8. **CURRENCY:** Which former president is depicted on the U.S. \$50 bill? 9. **LANGUAGE:** What does the texting acronym SMH mean? 10. **LITERATURE:** Where do Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends live?

1. Taco Bell.
2. "The Carol Burnett Show"
3. Honolulu, Hawaii (Pearl Harbor).
4. Vertebrae.
5. Death Valley, California.
6. Ruby.
7. Mater.
8. Ulysses Grant.
9. Shaking my head.
10. Hundred Acre Wood.

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Click on "Local News" at

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



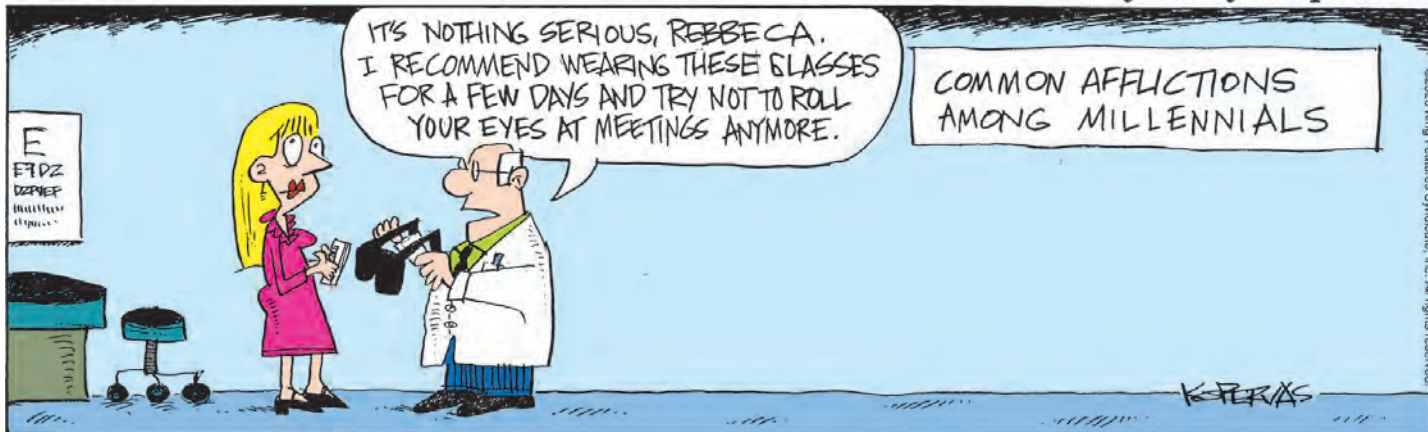
Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



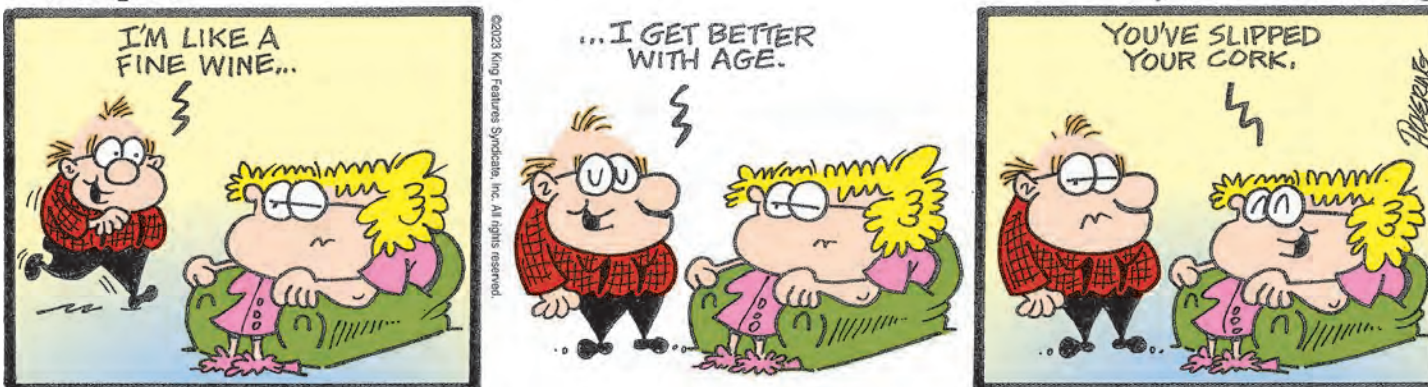
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Wishing Well®

4	6	3	4	6	5	8	6	2	4	3	7	5
A	W	B	B	A	F	A	R	L	O	E	C	U
7	6	8	3	8	4	6	7	4	7	4	3	2
O	M	N	C	A	L	F	M	D	F	E	O	O
6	8	6	7	6	5	2	8	7	8	2	4	8
E	L	E	O	L	N	O	Y	R	Z	K	R	E
6	3	8	5	8	3	4	5	4	7	6	4	6
I	U	E	A	M	R	O	F	U	T	N	T	G
7	8	4	7	6	4	8	7	4	8	5	8	2
A	O	L	S	O	T	S	O	I	T	O	F	
8	3	8	5	7	2	4	2	7	5	3	7	5
N	A	S	E	U	O	K	R	R	R	G	E	H
7	3	5	2	5	2	3	2	3	5	3		
D	E	O	W	U	A	R	O	D	U	S		

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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MAGIC MAZE ● THINGS THAT WEAR OUT

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
 Unlisted clue hint: CLOTH FLOOR COVERING

- Boots
- Brake pads
- Gloves
- Hip joints
- Horseshoes
- Knees
- Old jokes
- Parents
- Pillows
- Relationships
- Sandpaper
- Sneakers
- Socks
- Tires
- Toothbrush

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SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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FUN PAGES

SEM CU

south east madera county united

Wildfire Safety Measure Offered to Our SEMCU Residents



If you would like this done, please call 559-363-9095 to sign up for **FREE discing of your residential lot boundary. Or email info@semcu.org and include your name, phone number, address and any specific instructions.**

Until further notice, the regular SEMCU meetings will take place via teleconference.

Our next meeting is Monday, May 15 at 6 p.m.

**The teleconference number is 312-757-3121
and the Access Code is 715-657-949.**

Please let us know if you have any questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

559-363-9095 • www.semcu.org • info@semcu.org