

# The Ranchos Independent

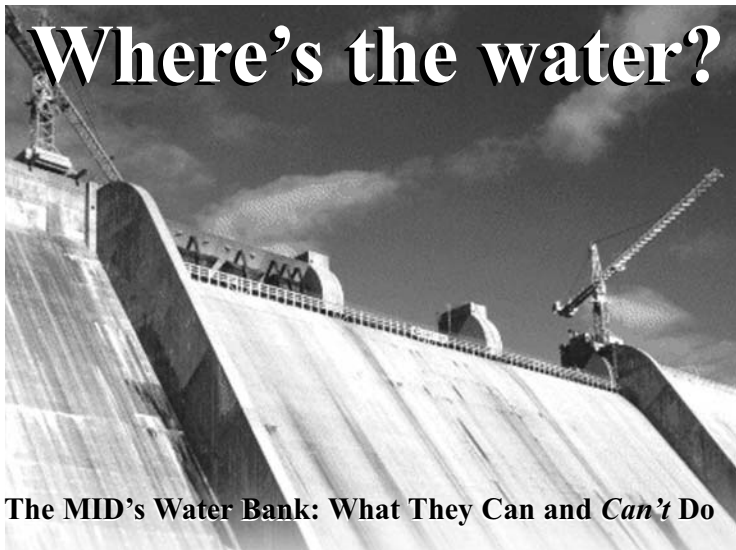


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35¢



## Where's the water?

### The MID's Water Bank: What They Can and Can't Do

By Don A. Wright

Because it is one of the elemental needs of life on earth, water is, has been and will be of great importance. The good news is; there is plenty of water in California; the bad news is it is in the wrong place. Two-thirds of the state's water is located north of Sacramento and two-thirds of the usage takes place south of the capital.

Most of the state's water goes out to sea and isn't used for cities, industry or farms. At one time the Central Valley, including Madera, relied on wells and pumping to meet its water needs. Groundwater was being depleted from the aquifers underfoot and another supply was necessary to keep the economy going. Farmers and other water users joined together to form special districts to secure and convey water.

Madera Irrigation District (MID) is one such district. Locals formed it under state law as an irrigation district (ID) as opposed to a water district such as Westlands Water District. The

difference is any registered voter living within an irrigation district is eligible to vote for an ID's board of directors. In a water district voters must be land owners. As a special district with elected officials, MID must adhere to state laws and codes. Meetings must be noticed, open to the public and closed sessions fall under the Brown Act. Closed session items are limited and include personnel matters, litigation and real estate transactions. However, the board must publicly report any action taken during closed session.

Back in the late 1920s/early 1930s, MID's growers saw the need for more surface storage and began plans for Friant Dam on the San Joaquin River. The Great Depression hit and the district ended up selling the dam site to the United States Bureau of

Reclamation in exchange for a water supply. There are parallels to that time and the situation Madera faces today.

Millerton Lake holds a little more than half a million acre feet of water and usually three times that amount passes through the dam in an average year as the lake fills and drains. An acre foot is about the size of a football field one foot deep in water and should be enough to supply a family of four for one year - depending on usage.

#### Water Banks are Needed

Increased competition from developers, environmentalists and population growth is putting a strain on Madera and the entire San Joaquin Valley's water supplies. A proposed dam on the San

Please see WATER Page 8

## Bonadelle Ranchos Drug Raid Scores Handgun, Pot and Meth



Adrian Leon, 29, (left) and Tisha Soliz, 24, have been booked on felony drug and weapons charges following a raid on their John Albert Drive home on March 25.

By Randy Bailey

During the calm, cold Saturday morning of March 25, at 7 a.m. a team of agents from the Madera County Narcotic Enforcement Team (MADNET) descended on a quiet house on John Albert Drive in the Bonadelle Ranchos area of the Madera Ranchos and when the

**The John Albert Drive location is perfectly located centrally between all of the schools serving the Madera Ranchos.**

dust had settled two people were in custody on felony drug and weapons charges.

Adrian Leon, 29, and Tisha Soliz, 24, were arrested in their Ranchos home after a half pound of Methamphetamine was discovered as well as 42 marijuana plants.

MADNET sources revealed that one of the rooms of the John Albert Drive house had been converted into a highly sophisticated indoor garden, complete with air filters, grow lights, timers and an elaborate watering system. Most of the marijuana plants were nearly ready for harvesting, the majority of which were fully budded. Agents estimate that had the marijuana made it to the street it would have produced sales of approximately \$126,000 for the couple. Agents further said that the half-pound of Methamphetamine had an estimated street value of nearly \$6,000. Also confiscated was a handgun.

The John Albert Drive location is perfectly located centrally between all of the schools serving the Madera Ranchos.

Apart from felony drug and weapon charges, the pair could also face animal cruelty charges. Agents said that along with the

Please see DRUG RAID Page 3

## Bombshell Dropped at Taxpayer's Association Meeting

By Don A. Wright

A bombshell of sorts was dropped at the April 24 meeting of the Taxpayer's Association of Madera County held at the Ranchos Senior Center. The Taxpayer's Association is involved in a lawsuit against Madera Irrigation District (MID) over MID's water banking project with Association President Jim Cobb vowing to "kill" any water bank project controlled by MID's current board of directors.

The tables were somewhat turned when MID president Ron

Pistoresi attended the meeting and handed out documents charging Cobb of offering to, "... drop the Taxpayer's Association's lawsuit against MID if MID agreed to his proposal."

According to the documents this offer was made by Cobb on Jan. 5, 2006 to Pistoresi at a private meeting requested by Cobb. Cobb's proposal included a nine-page contract between Cobb Ranch Development and MID to obtain water for use in residential, municipal and industrial development. Within the contract are agreements prohibiting MID from challenging the use of Riparian and Holding Contract water use for "...

municipal and industrial as beneficial and reasonable." MID balked at this use of San Joaquin River water for development.

MID asserted in further documents that Cobb's proposed agreement was, "... self-dealing and the misuse of a nonprofit organization. Sections 6104(a)(1) and 6104(d)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code provides that tax-exempt organizations must make immediately available for public inspection pertinent documents filed with the IRS and provides for sanctions for failure to do so."

MID asserts Cobb was personally served with a request for all documents regarding formation of the Taxpayer's

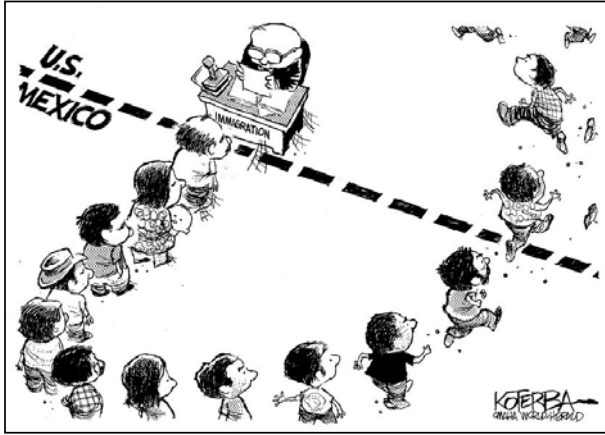
Association, including all by-laws and articles of incorporation, and annual returns filed with the IRS. To date MID hasn't received all the documents.

In the meantime Cobb has been saying MID hasn't been forthcoming with documents requested by the Taxpayer's Association. Association member Richard Johnson gave the Madera County Board of Supervisors a list of documents requested and titled the list, "Free the Madera 35," in reference to the number of documents. MID handed out a statement at the meeting that on April 19, 2006, "Cobb personally

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**Editorial**

*This was forwarded to me by a reader. With all of the clamor about illegal immigration (that's right, illegal immigration) I thought a perspective from Colorado might prove illuminating.*

*The Editor*

### One Teacher's View Of Illegal Aliens

By Frosty Woolridge

As a teacher, I sat dumbfounded last May 16, 2005, when the Rocky Mountain News inked a story, "What Happened?" to a stunned Denver, Colorado audience. In a five year study starting in 1999 in Denver Public Schools, 5,663 students started the eighth grade. Five years later, only 1,884 graduated from high school. That's a 65 percent drop out/flunk out rate! That's pathetic, if not frightening.

What was the cause? First of all, 30,000 illegal aliens, speaking 40 different languages, attended Denver schools. Our classrooms suffered thousands of kids functionally illiterate in English with parents functionally illiterate in English and Spanish. The classrooms featured so much incompatible diversity that it created horrific tension, stabbings and death. Thus, American kids suffered a profoundly dumbed-down educational process. One in five teachers quit or transferred out of those Denver classrooms every nine month cycle during those five years.

Last week, the Denver Post announced that 30 percent of teachers in Denver schools were not coming back next year. This is a nationwide travesty.

Why? As a teacher, I taught in the inner city in the 1970s. Its exasperating beyond understanding to walk into a classroom where children suffer learning disabilities, broken homes, teen pregnancies at 14, 15, 16, multiple languages and violent confrontations with other ethnic groups. Its impossible to teach. I left my idealism in the ghetto and escaped to a suburban school. But, today, teachers cant escape because over 1.5 million illegal alien students with more than 100 languages attend our kids' schools nationwide. We witness a national breakdown in education. Last week, Superintendent Roy Romer of Los Angeles public schools resigned in frustration and defeat. California schools match the violence of a war zone.

Can you imagine such a failure rate across the country? Can you imagine the consequences of an illiterate generation leading this Republic into the 21st century? Folks, this country won't make it.

It takes four aspects for a free and democratic society to maintain itself. It requires a highly educated population that can write, read, think and vote intelligently. It takes a similar moral code whereby everyone adheres to the common good. It requires a similar code of ethics whereby citizens adhere to honesty, doing what is right and maintaining those ethics throughout the social fabric. Finally, it takes a similar language that allows citizens to discuss, debate and resolve problems. We compromise all four with an invasion exceeding four million new people into the USA annually - 20 million illegals to date and climbing. We allow the disintegration of our nation without a whimper.

Last Monday, February 20, 2006, the

Please see **ILLEGALS** Page 16

**Random Notes**

Local candidate Hal Grant is running for the Madera County Supervisor position held at present by Frank Bigelow. He's just thrown his hat in the ring and he's gotten himself endorsed by former Fresno City Council member Chris Mathys. Look for where all *three* of the candidates stand on the issues in next month's *Ranchos Independent*.

The Madera County Arts Council is sponsoring a Multicultural Arts & Wine Festival at Madera Municipal Golf Course on Saturday, May 6 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. There's going to be everything from Celtic music to African drumming to the sacred Hmong ceremonial Qeej flute, let's just hope they're not all playing something different at once. Diversity is great, but harmony is better. If you need more information, call 661-7005.

A group is trying to get a memorial built over in Madera to honor peace officers who have fallen in the line of duty. The Madera County Law Enforcement Memorial Fund is planning a fundraising dinner on Friday, May 5 at St. Joachim's church in Madera from approximately 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. There's going to be a no host bar, dinner and live auction and it only costs \$25 per person. I can think of few more deserving charities. If you need information call Sheriff John Anderson at 675-7770, Stephanie Clark at 645-6062, or Ollia Ridge at 435-1643.

If you're not busy on Monday nights at 7:30, check out Valley Public Television. They've got a show on called *0 to 5 in 30 Minutes!* It's all about the first five years of a child's life and it's crammed full of information for a half-hour long show. Its focus this year is nutrition and with research showing that 10 percent of 2 to 5 year olds and 15 percent of 6 to 19 year olds being overweight, it's very timely. If you miss it on Mondays it repeats on Sunday nights at 10 p.m.

The Madera County Board of Supervisors has the responsibility of appointing members to Madera County's advisory boards and committees, and from time to time vacancies occur on these committees. As we speak, appointments are available for the Alcohol & Drug Advisory Board, Civil Service Commission, Community Development Block Grant-Loan Committee, Eastern Madera County Water Oversight Advisory Committee, Fish & Game Fine Committee and the Madera County Arts Council. If any of these committees sound interesting to you, you need to call our Supervisor, Frank Bigelow. You can find out more about these and other vacancies by contacting Frank at the Madera County Board of Supervisors office at 675-7700.



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Letters

Dear Editor,

As a resident of the Ranchos for nearly 20 years, I'm very well acquainted with the political climate out here. This is a far-right pocket in an already far-right area of the state. Conservative, pro-Republican, pro-Bush. I am a Democrat and outspoken Progressive, and I've sometimes paid a price for that. And while I've often written to the Fresno Bee, I've become so accustomed to the blatant and obvious conservative slant of the Ranchos Independent that I've learned to usually just grin and bear it. But the political cartoon in this last edition touched an unusually raw nerve with me and deserves a response.

Yes, it's true that most Democrats voted for the ironically-named "Patriot Act." I take no pleasure in admitting to that, but it's a fact. It is also a fact, however, that the Patriot Act was pushed through by this administration in great haste, immediately after the Sept. 11 attacks and approved by nearly all members of Congress without most having fully read it nor being completely aware of its contents, at a time when anyone not voting for it would have been branded a virtual traitor. Remember Bush's infamous quote, "You're either with us, or you're with the terrorists." In such an environment it is a small wonder that most on both sides voted for its passage.

It is also a fact that many Republicans, as well as most Democrats, now question certain parts of this badly written legislation and its effect on the Constitutional rights and civil liberties of ordinary American citizens. Rather than criticizing them now for doing the very jobs they were elected for - protecting the interests of their constituents - they should be applauded for it. Instead, right-leaning publications such as yours cannot seem to spend enough time beating up on them for it.

Perhaps someday someone will explain to me exactly where this presidential administration's support base comes from. Exactly what is it about these people that so appeals to today's "so-called" conservatives? Traditional conservative values include fiscal responsibility. This administration has run up the largest national deficit in American history while continuing to spend recklessly and giving obscene tax breaks to millionaires and the same corporate special interests who are ripping us all off on a daily basis (how DO you like spending nearly three bucks per gallon to fill your tank? And what was your last propane bill?). And remember that they started with a substantial projected surplus. In addition, this president has borrowed more from other nations during his time in office than all previous presidents combined.

Traditional conservatives believe in shrinking the size of government. This president has grossly bloated and enlarged the size and reach of the federal government to unprecedented levels.

Traditional conservatives believe in keeping the government off of our backs. But the federal government has never before been so intrusive into the personal lives of every American citizen, from the Patriot Act with its numerous abuses, to holding people without charges or benefit of legal council, to secretly spying on American citizens without warrants or court approval - which, despite this president's claims to the contrary, is not only illegal but also unnecessary under existing law.

Traditional conservatives have strong moral values. This president has lied to us repeatedly - about things that actually matter - including lying us into an illegal and unnecessary war of aggression in which many thousands of Iraqi citizens and over 2,000 brave American soldiers have died, and as such is unquestionably the single most immoral president in our nation's history.

I'm all for freedom of speech and of the press - I'll fight for your right to any editorial stance you choose or any political cartoon you wish to print. But there comes a time when people on both sides of the fence have to face facts. And the simple

fact is that this is indeed the worst - most corrupt, dishonest, secretive, self-serving and outright dangerous - presidential administration in American history.

Sincerely,  
Rick Hodgson  
Madera Ranchos

*PS - Please don't print my address or phone number. I'm a little tired of having my house and car egged by all of those good, God-fearing, moral, Christian conservatives.*

Dear Editor,

I'm writing in response to *Samaritan Steals Dog while Victim Convulses* in the February 2006 issue. This was an overwhelmingly nearsighted view of the events as they unfolded on Feb. 6, 2006 on the corner of Verde and Road 38. There were many good Samaritans that came to assist and protect this young man as he lay convulsing on the side of the road for 45 minutes.

My husband came upon the scene shortly after 7 p.m. when another neighbor had his car angled in the roadway with headlights on to shield Mr. Arhens from oncoming traffic. My husband, who was bringing dinner home to his family, called at 7:15 to say he was going to stay with this young man until help arrived. Another Samaritan who had driven by earlier and had gone home to call 911, returned to help in any way possible. Coats were taken off and blankets were provided to keep Mr. Arhens safe, warm and protected. It should also be noted that none of these Samaritans, nor the authorities that finally arrived at around 8 p.m., could find any identification, medic-alert bracelet, or military dog tags on Mr. Arhens to alert others to his identity or his chronic medical condition. Furthermore, the dog had no collar or ID on him either.

My husband left and returned to our home shortly after 8 p.m. We sat at our dinner table that night and included this young man in our prayers hoping that he received the medical attention he required. The next day, with the situation still weighing heavy on our hearts, my husband called on the police officers to find out which hospital this young man went to so that he could personally visit him and see how he was doing. He was surprised to find out that when Mr. Arhens "came to," he refused medical attention and the authorities released him.

At that point we went on about our daily routines as there was no way to provide any further help to Mr. Arhens. That's when things really started happening in our quiet corner of the Bonadelle Ranchos. News quickly go out that Mr. Arhens, his brother and a female companion (I assume is named Vicki according to the missing dog

Please see LETTERS Page 12

**DRUG RAID** Continued from Page 1

Agents said that along with the drugs and weapon, they recovered a dozen roosters and seized other not-revealed evidence leading agents to suspect the couple was also involved in cock fighting.

Leon and Soliz have been charged with possession of a controlled substance for sale; cultivation of marijuana; possession of marijuana for sale; and possession of a firearm in the commission of a drug-related felony. The two remain booked at the Madera County Department of Corrections with bail set at \$1 million each.

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The Bookshelf

# Flatlander's Day and the Library: Marching Hand in Hand

By Ellen Mester

Get ready Madera Ranchos! It's almost time for Flatlander's Day! This is our big community event on May 13, 2006 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., hosted by the Friends of the Ranchos Library and the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. All proceeds go to the Friends of the Ranchos Library. There will be The Flatlander's Parade at 10 a.m. with awards following. You won't want to miss the craft and information booths, cars and tractors, and of course yummy food that will be there. This year we will have books for sale in front of the library rather than at the Golden Valley School District lot. Plenty of your favorite authors at bargain prices in paperback and hardbound will be for sale. If you have crafts to sell please pick up an application for a space at the Ranchos Library. The donation is \$30. If you would like to be a part of the parade contact the Chamber of Commerce office. There is no cost to be in the parade. We hope everyone will come for the fun and support our library.

April 17-22 was National Library Week - another excellent time to come to the library and check out our new books, CDs, DVDs and videos. We have newly released fiction by popular authors such as Tami Hoag, Jonathan Kellerman, Ann Perry, Danielle Steel and many more. Our new hours offer you 12 more hours a week to use our library to locate the reading material or information you need. We have Storytime with Mrs. Anderson every Monday morning at 11 a.m. and Story and Craft Night the third Thursday evening from 5 to 7 p.m.

Mark your calendars kids, for the Summer Children's Program, "Paws, Claws, Scales and Tales." We have lots of entertainment lined up each week, plus reading rewards, Dragon Drawing and contests. We will keep you posted as June draws nearer.

Our volunteer of the month is Mary Ann Meyer. She has donated not only her collection of seasonal artifacts from her years of teaching, but she also volunteers her time to read to children. Thanks Mary Ann and all our volunteers for helping to make our library a special place for everyone.

**Book Recommendations**

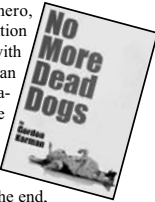
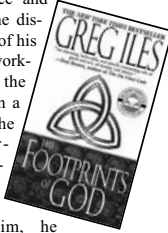
**Adult Fiction Book:** *Footprints of God* written by Greg Iles. This fast-paced thriller combines a super computer, medicine, ethics and human character, bringing you right to the edge in a suspenseful conclusion. Dr. David Tennant, one of the scientists on Project Trinity, is the only pres-

idental appointee and ethicist. When he discovers the body of his friend and co-worker, he realizes the project has taken a turn toward the self-empowerment and aggrandizement of one man. As more is revealed to him, he becomes afraid for his own life and barely escapes assassination by rogue NSA operatives. On the run his every move is anticipated by the supercomputer that downloaded all his memories. He must outsmart his own mind and save the world from total domination by the supercomputer. You won't be able to put this one down.

**Adult Non-fiction:** *Freakonomics* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner. If you think you know how the world works, think again. These two authors explain how our perceptions often become what we think are facts, when truly the facts are something entirely different. The forces driving the economics of politics, real estate and drug gangs are surprisingly the same. The book jacket describes it well: "If morality represents how we would like the world to work, then economics represents how it actually does work." If we took the time to really investigate the basis of what we believe to be true about the world, we might turn 180 degrees in our thinking. This book will challenge you to THINK!

**Juvenile Fiction:** *No More Dead Dogs* by Gordon Korman. When Wallace Wallace, a middle-school football hero, has to serve detention by helping out with the school play, an amazing transformation occurs. The play, originally based on a book about a dog that inevitably dies in the end, becomes a proving ground for Wallace and others who in the past had sneered at the drama kids. The ensemble rewrites the play with more contemporary music and dialog and changes the inevitable death of Old Shep, the dog. It is fresh and quirky and will certainly make you laugh.

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



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### Parade Day: May 13, 2006

Group  Individual  Business

Group or Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Individual entry or responsible person's name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Theme of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Will youngsters walk with the entry?  Yes  No

Will entry make noise?  Yes  No

Approx. number of participants \_\_\_\_\_ Approx. length \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Entry Category (select ONE which most closely suits your entry):

Horses (single)  Horses (Group)

Floats (band)  Floats (Non-profit)  Floats (Business)

Floats (Non-business)

Children's Groups (Non-floats)

Dance Groups

Single Entry (Children)

Single Entry (Adult)

Novelty (Description) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Parade begins at 10:00 AM Sharp!  
Registration of entries begins at 8:30 AM  
Parade route: Topper along Ave. 12 to Eddings

*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*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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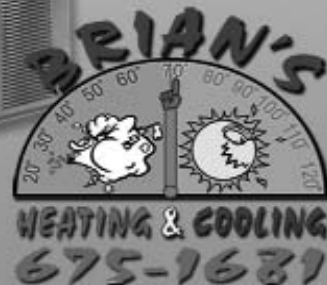
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# Alleged Ranchos Burglars Caught

*Off-duty deputy makes arrest 5 miles from scene of crime*

While a Ranchos family attended church on Sunday, March 19, a 19-year-old Clovis man accompanied by a 12 and 13 year old broke into a home on Charlton Avenue, stole the family's SUV and was then captured 5 miles away from the scene of the crime by an off-duty Madera County Sheriff's deputy.

Jacky Vang, the 19 year old from Clovis, remains in custody and is booked on a variety of charges including first-degree burglary. The two others also face burglary charges but their names cannot be released due to their ages.

Shortly before 2 p.m. on the day in question, plain-clothed deputy Ryan Lutz was off duty and heading home in a Sheriff's patrol car as part of the department's "take-home" car policy. Lutz was listening to the police scanner when he heard a description of the three males believed to be behind a break-in at the home on Charlton Avenue. Frighteningly, Lutz further heard that the suspects had stolen the family's 2005 gray Chevrolet Avalanche which the owner revealed had

a loaded gun inside of it.

Approximately 5 miles from the crime scene, Lutz quickly found the gray Avalanche with three passengers matching the description from the scanner. Lutz pulled the SUV over and radioed his sergeant that he had three in custody: A 19-year old Clovis man as well as a 12 and 13 year old, both from Madera.

The two juveniles were transported to Madera County Juvenile Hall while Vang remains behind bars with bail set at \$30,000. He faces charges of vehicle theft; attempt to buy and or sell stolen property; criminal conspiracy; first degree burglary; and driving without a license.

"What makes this arrest particularly stellar [is] it was done while our Deputy was off duty - heading home from work," said Sheriff John Anderson. "Whether in uniform or in plain cloths, deputies who are a part of our department's take-home car policy know their job doesn't always end when their shift ends - and this case is proof positive that it works in combating crime."

**BOMBSHELL** Continued from Page 1

picked up" the documents from MID's counsel in Sacramento. MID claims to have given the Taxpayers Association approximately 78,000 pages of documents requested to date.

A further statement by MID read in part, "When MID would not give Mr. Cobb the proposed agreement, which would personally benefit Mr. Cobb and

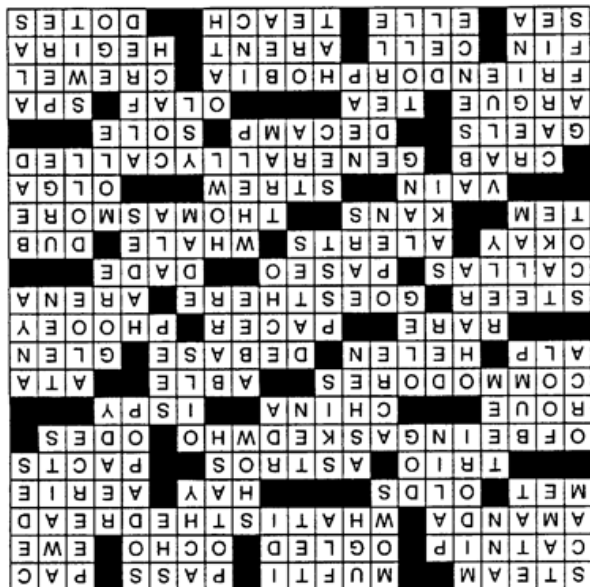
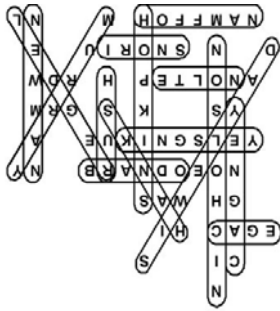
the Cobb Ranch Development, as a condition for the Taxpayer's Association to drop the lawsuit, it became clear that MID needed to disclose this proposed agreement to the public."

In response Cobb said, "I haven't read the documents but if what I've heard is true - that I agreed to drop the lawsuit if MID signs the agreement - that is totally false."

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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*The Stock Report*

**STAR Tests, THEN Build Your Float**

By Audrey Stock

Hi neighbors,  
As I sit at my kitchen table and look out my backdoor, the phrase "April showers Bring May Flowers" comes to mind. My mother always said this to me when I complained about the rain. I like sunshine! Well, this year I have tulips, iris, pansies and California poppies to look at while the rain keeps falling. I don't know about you but I am tired of the rain. Yet I thank GOD that my house is on high ground and not where the rivers are flooding people out of their homes.

It has been four weeks since I last wrote this column and a lot has happened. Easter break is over and the teachers and students are back to school. Now it is time to get ready for the California Star Test. Star testing starts Tuesday, April 25 and continues through the rest of the week. It is very important that all students make a special effort to attend school during this week. The teachers should be reviewing concepts that students will need to know in order to do well on these tests. It is a time for parents to help their students to get ready physically and mentally for this testing. Make sure that your student gets a good night's sleep each night before the tests are given. Try to get your students to eat breakfast. I know that every-

one is busy but if a parent can sit down and eat breakfast with their student it will often encourage their student to eat breakfast before he or she goes to school. Success in school and good nutrition are linked together. Eating before school helps your student wake up and be more alert at school. If any of your students wear glasses, be sure that they have them and that they wear them to school during the Star testing. Encourage your children to do their best on these tests.

All Golden Valley students who have Perfect Attendance from Aug. 15, 2005 thru May 15, 2006 will be treated to a day at a Fresno Grizzlies Baseball Game on May 24. The event will include a ticket to the game, a hotdog and lemonade. The game starts at noon. Students will be transported by school bus to the game and back to their school site afterward. Perfect Attendance for a whole school year is a real accomplishment and certainly deserves a reward.

I have been attending Health and Wellness meetings. A committee has been working on a Health and Wellness school board policy. We talked about the need of buying new computer software for our cafeteria that will help the staff comply with the student wellness board policy. The Governing Board recognizes the link between student health and learning and desires to provide a comprehensive program promoting healthy eating and physical activity for all district students. When

from Liberty High is in charge of putting together the various pieces of Liberty's first Career Fair with the help of Career Technical committee members. New technical courses were discussed with Principal Andy Alvarado. There was talk about what kind of classrooms and facilities would be needed for certain classes. Each year that Liberty High has been in business, a few more Career Technical classes have been added. I am not sure which new classes will be added to the 2006-2007 school year.

Are you ready to make a float for the May 13 Flatlander's Day Parade? This year there is an "Open Theme" which means you can put together a float that means something special to you. There will be 34 trophies given, so get busy and come up with a great idea for a float. Stop by the Chamber office and pick up your entry form.

By the time you read this, the Madera County Taxpayers' Association will have had a meeting April 24 with guest speakers talking about water issues in the mountain communities. This meeting is of particular concern because the Madera Irrigation District has put in place an Environmental Impact Report that will allow the sale of the snow pack water from the San Joaquin River that originates in our mountains. Madera mountain communities have had severe water shortages. The selling of this water will undoubtedly be a major issue in this upcoming election.

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**WATER** Continued from Page 1

Joaquin River upstream from Friant at Temperance Flat is decades away. But we need the water now.

A big threat to Madera's water supplies is an 18-year-old lawsuit brought by the Natural Resources Defense Council against the Friant Water Users Association that could take a third of the San Joaquin River water used by the Valley's economy and send it downstream to revive salmon runs. That's why MID is building a new water bank – to help ensure supplies during dry years.

Water banking has been going on in California for many years. One estimate is 95 percent of the Valley portion of Kern County sits over banked water. Fresno Irrigation District is constructing a facility called Waldron Pond which augments its agriculture supplies and helps the Cities of Fresno and Clovis.

There is a lot of misunderstanding about MID's Madera Water Enhancement Project. Part of this is because of the dichotomy of the situation. Water law is very complicated and it is easy to base claims that on further inspection don't pan out as truth. However, water banking itself is very straight forward – water is put in the ground during wet years for use in dry years.

The water bank is almost 14,000 acres located southwest of Madera. In wet years like we are experiencing currently, more water flows down the San Joaquin and Fresno



*The beginnings of a water bank. Suitable land covered in water that remains beneath the soil until it can be pumped out during water shortage periods.*

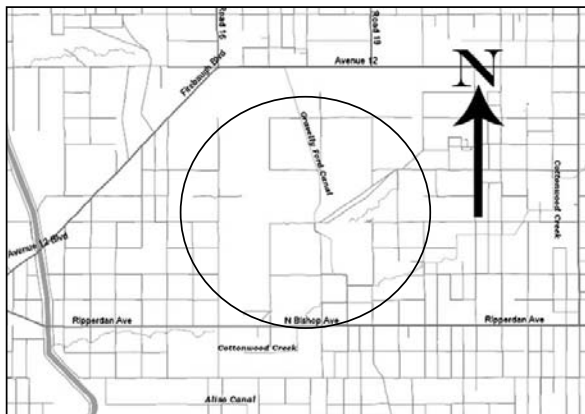
Rivers than can be stored. Under existing contracts, portions can be diverted through MID's existing conveyance system to the ranch for percolation underground. This is a gravity feed system and the canals are already in place – paid for by MID farmers over the past 80-plus years. When the water is needed it can be pumped back into MID's canals for use on land within the county.

There is no doubt some people don't want the following information exposed – and don't be surprised if a clamor arises from the publication of these facts. A previous incarnation of a water bank project is being used to cloud the current issue. A comparison of the old Azurix plan and MID's project is helpful in clearing up some misunderstandings.

**Two Major Differences**

Under the Azurix plan, ownership and control of the water bank would not be local. The project would have been owned and controlled by out-of-state corporations and could be sold to who-knows-who. Now, MID owns the property and the bank is controlled by locally elected people who live in Madera County. MID formed an oversight committee to ensure the operations of the project won't harm surrounding landowners and strict guidelines are met.

Among its duties, the oversight committee monitors the amount of water going into the bank (recharge) and the amount of water leaving the bank (recovery). It also monitors groundwater quality and is a check to prevent the possibility of future MID boards



*The location for the proposed MID water bank will be in this area of southwestern Madera County.*

changing the project parameters. The committee is made up of five elected MID board members, three surrounding landowners, one board of supervisors member and one "at large" representative. It's important to note the committee doesn't determine who gets to store recharge water and who buys the recovered water. It is also important to note any major change to operations requires more than five votes to bring about.

The other major difference between Azurix and MID's plan is the complete elimi-  
Please see **WATER** Page 10



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**VOTE JUNE 6 • ELECT HAL GRANT**  
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**PUBLIC NOTICE • NOTICE OF HEARING**

**MADERA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION GIVING NOTICE OF HEARING**

The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) will hold a Public Hearing to take testimony regarding transportation needs within Madera County. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at 3:00 p.m., in the Chambers of the Madera County Board of Supervisors, 209 W. Yosemite, Madera, California.

Under the California Transportation Development Act (TDA), this hearing opportunity is provided annually to take testimony on potential unmet transit needs within the region. The Commission must, subsequent to the hearing, make a determination whether the needs presented are "reasonable" to meet. After all "reasonable" needs have been met through the expansion of existing services, or the creation of new transit systems, the Commission may release remaining TDA funds for street and road purposes (repair, reconstruction, etc.).

The public, interested agencies, and civic groups are encouraged to appear and state those transportation needs, which they feel, are not currently being met by existing transit services. Testimony should be as specific as possible with regard to those citizens, or groups of citizens, not currently served by transit, the requested type and amount of transit service, the geographic area in which service is needed, and any other supporting evidence of information that will help in the evaluation of the "reasonableness" of the requested service.

Those wishing to speak are encouraged to contact Ms. Sarah Ross, MCTC, Transportation Planner, at 1816 Howard Road, Suite 8, Madera, California, 93637. The MCTC telephone number is (559) 675-0721. A request to speak need not be scheduled, individuals may simply appear at the hearing and request to be recognized, however a scheduled appearance is encouraged to help organize the testimony.

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The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce knows that the Madera Ranchos is a great place to live, but what truly makes it such a special place are the people here who call it home. Many of those people - your neighbors - are business owners here as well. Business is the backbone of a growing community and these are the people and businesses that are helping to make our community thrive.

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## If you're not a member of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, what are you waiting for?



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**WATER** Continued from Page 8

nation of any conveyance between the ranch and the Mendota Pool. Under Azurix a large capacity canal was going to be built linking the water bank to the Mendota Pool. High quality Sierra snow melt water from the rivers would be pumped out of the bank and sent to the Mendota Pool. From there it could be transferred to several locations throughout California and other western states. Lower quality water with higher levels of salt could be brought in from the Mendota Pool down the canal and stored in the ranch's aquifer.

Now, under MID, the project is "land locked" with a closed system. There is no canal and there is a legally binding process that prevents a conveyance system,

whether canals or pipelines, from linking the ranch to the Mendota Pool. As stated, the water stored underground is pumped back into MID's canals and distributed to lands along that system. The project has no physical means to send groundwater from the ranch out of the county. It doesn't exist.

There are several other operational differences between the two projects. The amount of water stored has been reduced from 600,000 acre feet to 250,000 acre feet. This will protect surrounding landowners from possible root zone intrusion of vineyards, orchards and row crops. Ten percent of all water recharged must remain to help offset the 100,000 acre feet. Please see **WATER** Page 21

## Madera County and MID Settle Water Bank Legal Differences

By Randy Bailey

On Tuesday, April 18, the Madera County Board of Supervisors and Madera Irrigation District (MID) announced that they had reached an agreement to settle the lawsuit the county had brought against MID concerning specific details of MID's water bank plan.

Specifically, the county had brought a suit under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regarding MID's certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

"The thrust of the litigation was the inadequacy of the description of the project as it was presented in their EIR," said Madera County District 1 Supervisor, Frank Bigelow. "The county believed that there were going to be uses other than agricultural purposes."

At the heart of the issue, according to Bigelow, was that the people of Madera County had to be guaranteed first rights to any water stored in the projected water bank before any excess water could be sold to any other communities outside of Madera County.

The way the plan is structured, thanks to nearly a century of water rights legislation, litigation and arrangements, is that MID has the right to a large percentage of the water that comes out of Friant Dam for the purpose of satisfying its water customers. If MID wants to store its water in a water bank prior to delivering it to its customers, it's fully within its rights. What the County of Madera has been able to successfully procure is the first rights to purchase the storage capacity of the water bank before anyone else. "If we're not able to purchase that capacity, they go to the next buyer," Bigelow said. "We procured the first rights to that capacity."

The guarantee that MID will be held to these terms in the future is that if MID elects to use the stored water for any use

other than irrigation, such as a sale to developers or to a specific subdivision, they will be required to file a new EIR addressing that use. Then, the whole process of public scrutiny and comment will begin anew.

With this agreement, the county and MID are both satisfied that their respective concerns have been met.

Bigelow further stated that one of the additional positive elements of the settlement was MID's agreement to some guiding principles, namely creating a nine-person oversight committee for the project. One of the elements within their guiding principles that they have to abide by is the provision that any exportation of water outside the county will require a 9-0 vote.

A pretty tall order even on a good day. Madera County was granted a full voting member seat on that committee, increasing it to 10 members, and now a 10-0 vote is required to sell any Madera water outside of the county.

"You'd need a 10-0 vote to export it, and you'd be pretty hard-pressed to get that," Bigelow said. He further noted that, knowing all of the parties involved and the degree to which Madera County has made it clear about its thoughts on exporting Madera water, the likelihood of someone stepping up to the committee and shipping off Madera's water would be extremely doubtful.

"As a board we've been looking at 'What's good for the community as a whole?' and that's what's been achieved here," Bigelow said. "Number one thing that I heard from everyone was, 'Make sure the water doesn't leave our community.'" Bigelow paused and said, "Deal done."

"Make sure we have a say in the matter," Bigelow paused again. "Deal done."

"Make sure that we have ample options to comment in the future," Bigelow paused a final time. "Deal done. What everyone wanted has been delivered and I believe this is a good deal."



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# Who gets YOUR vote for Madera County District Attorney?

Sometimes even bad people do good deeds to appear philanthropic - just look at Enron. The incumbent District Attorney for Madera County says that he enjoys his job, but do you want to elect a politician that continues to cost you money, while abusing his position and bullying law-abiding residents? Or, do you want to elect a qualified representative of the People? What does your heart tell you?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

The incumbent Madera County District Attorney states that he is tough. Perhaps he can tell you - if he is tougher than tough - WHY rapists, sexual predators and other violent criminals are allowed to plea bargain in violation of the Penal Code and are not required to register as sex offenders? Do you know whether a sex-offender lives next door to you? Why not?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

The incumbent Madera County District Attorney says he enjoys his job, but did you know that his enjoyment cost taxpayers more than a half million dollars? Why? Because he violated the law and was reprimanded by the State Bar of California and then failed to take responsibility for his actions.

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

Did you know that if you made a political contribution to support the incumbent Madera County District Attorney's bid for re-election that you also paid his Bar dues, gave him more than a \$6,000 personal loan and paid for his attorney fees? I thought politicians weren't supposed to take advantage of their constituents. What about you?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

The incumbent Madera County District Attorney says he did nothing wrong, but U.S. District Court Judge Anthony W. Ishii says the DA has committed the same offenses routinely. Lack of remorse and the failure to accept responsibility are reasons that criminals go to prison. Can you afford four more years?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

Associate California Supreme Court Justice and former 5th District Court of Appeals Judge Marvin Baxter, and other Court of Appeals Judges, have said that the incumbent Madera County District Attorney has misled courts, judges, juries and opposing counsel. The DA has cost Madera taxpayers unnecessary thousands of dollars for his personal gain. He enjoys the distinction of being the only Central Valley District Attorney to be reprimanded by the State Bar for ethical violations. As a politician he wants four more years. What's left in your wallet?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

Rape?  
Homicide?  
Vehicular Manslaughter?  
A million dollar theft from the School District?  
All of these crimes and many more went without any investigation because the incumbent Madera County DA claimed he was too busy - but he wasn't too busy to extort \$500, costing the taxpayers more than a half million tax dollars. Now he wants four more years?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

When was the last time someone dropped \$280,000 in your lap? How often do you spend \$287,000 on your attorney? How often have you been responsible for a \$1,400 fine for withholding evidence? After all this, the incumbent Madera County DA says he wants four more years. What do you say?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

Shakedown Lawsuit Settled!  
Ethics Violation Case Settled!  
Madera County DA Pleads to Violating Ethics Code!  
Madera attorney Steve Geringer says, "Wild West operations not isolated events!"  
And now the Madera County DA wants you to return him for four more years!  
When do you say, "Enough is enough!"

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

The California Penal Code states that enumerated violent crimes cannot be plea bargained. The incumbent Madera County District Attorney has ignored the Penal Code and has allowed violent criminals to plea bargain in violation of the Penal Code and failed to take responsibility and blamed his plea bargaining on the "busy" judges. Can you believe that?

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

Are you wondering why so many individuals who once supported the incumbent Madera County District Attorney have now joined the more than 50 practicing attorneys in the Central Valley supporting the challenger? Don't vote in the blind when you can know the truth! Visit [www.criego4maderacountyda.org](http://www.criego4maderacountyda.org)

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA!**

Right Man, Right Choice,  
Right Now!  
**Franz Criego**  
Madera County  
District Attorney

**JUST ONE MORE REASON TO VOTE CRIEGO FOR DA! - [www.criego4maderacountyda.org](http://www.criego4maderacountyda.org)**

# Vote CRIEGO for Madera County District Attorney June 6

LETTERS Continued from Page 3

poster printed in the paper) started making calls and going door-to-door accusing various neighbors of having the dog. At one point, Mr. Arhens or his brother called our neighbor at work posing as an attorney threatening to get the sheriff to search his house because they knew he had their dog. Our neighbor immediately called his wife and cautioned her about going home because he doubted that authenticity of the call and wasn't sure what the people making the call would do. The sheriff was called at that time to report the threatening call and to find out what they should do if anyone did approach their home. It should also be noted that the neighbor that received this call wasn't even home the night of Feb. 6 and had no idea what had occurred.

Several neighbors have additional accounts of the threesome driving around our block accusing them of having his dog in their possession. No one in our neighborhood has an account where they were approached in a non-threatening manner. All that I spoke to were unnerved and concerned as to what this threesome was capable of doing. It also needs to be addressed that our primary concern was for the young MAN who was clearly in an acute and serious situation. Some questions that still await answers are: Why was Mr. Arhens not carrying ID or wearing a medic-alert bracelet? Why was he out walking alone carrying a bag with several changes of clothes? Why didn't this beloved dog have a collar, a leash, and/or tags? Finally, why didn't Mr. Arhens and his brother and friend simply ask around as to the whereabouts of this dog without the threatening phone calls and accusations?

The article's account of what occurred leaves the reader with the impression that we, as neighbors, stood inside our nice warm homes, called 911 and couldn't care less about a man seizing on the street. Nothing could be further from the truth. My husband came home genuinely concerned for this young man. He also said that if anything ever happened to him medically, to put him in the car and take him to the nearest hospital because the sheriff did not "race to the scene" as the article stated. He, who wasn't the first on the scene, stood and waited for 45 minutes until help arrived.

I am sorry that Mr. Arhens hasn't located his dog, but as a pet owner myself I go out of my way to ID my animals if they do get away. I realize that pet tags frequently fall off collars, so I take an inexpensive Sharpie pen and write our phone number on all our pets'

collars so that they can be returned to us. Furthermore, if I had to pick a neighborhood to have a seizure in, it would be ours. We have great neighbors who go out of their way to help someone in need. We have collectively searched for lost dogs, rounded up escaped horses, returned lost dogs/cats to the owners who are listed on the tags, watched each others' homes when on vacation, cooked meals for those having babies or having surgery, and generally supported each other in good times and bad. We do not appreciate threatening phone calls or threats made in person. There is a more neighborly approach that Mr. Arhens and his companions could have taken and not caused such a disturbance in our neigh-

borhood. I am appalled that no one has addressed Mr. Arhens responsibility to ID himself and his pet and that the article's account of what had occurred was completely one-sided and failed to mention all that Mr. Arhens and companions did after the night of Feb. 6. If they are going to bring the story to the attention of the community at large, they should be forthcoming with the whole truth!

Sincerely,

Proud wife of one of the good Samaritans.

(Name withheld upon request.)

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by Linda Thistle

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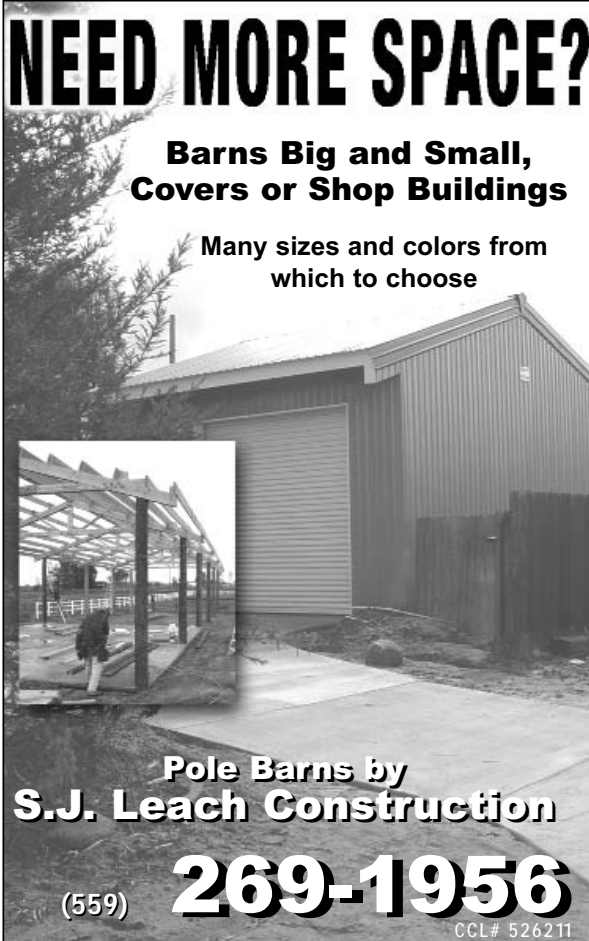


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## Who's Placing Limits on You?

By Ken Cooksey, Jr.

We live in a place in time where it seems to be limitless. We have more available to us now than any other generation before us ever imagined. We have at our fingertips the ability to tap into the world around us via the World Wide Web. We are able to view the lives of our neighboring nations, the weather anywhere in the world, or the latest gadget working its way into our everyday lives. Perhaps all these are good to a degree, but I can't help but wonder if what we think is getting us closer and closer to one another is in reality causing us to become more and more secluded from one another. Has the time in which we live become limit-less, or has it caused us to become a people of limits?

We in the Madera Ranchos are a unique people in that we seem to be a more closely knit community, but even so there are times when I will sit at one of our local restaurants or walk into one of our local businesses and walk right pass someone that I think I know but I may not say a word to them; I simply walk by them and think to myself, "I should know that person." I know you would never do such a thing or at least admit it, but I'm sure if you would be honest you would agree that you too have been in this very same situation a time or two. Why is it that in a time of limitless opportunities we choose not to make that personal contact with a stranger, who probably is our neighbor? Why do we limit our lives to just those who we know, or to what we know.

Have we guarded ourselves so well from the world around us that in doing so we have imprisoned ourselves in our own self-made sanctuaries? Are we so intellectual now that we no longer have need of a God? If so, what kind of limits have we set for ourselves? Where will this course we've made for ourselves take us? If we become a god unto ourselves and have no need of the one true God, where - or in whom - does our hope lie? In ourselves? I shiver at the thought.

I am 48 years old now and if I have learned one thing, I have learned that I can't put my hope or trust in my own thoughts and emotions much less anyone else's. I have learned that there has been but one true anchor in my life, and that has been the Bible. God has been there when no one else could or would. I have learned to trust in the one true voice of truth (the Bible) to find my way when it seemed as if there was no way, and when all those around me believed there was no way. Because I have done what the Bible

said to do, I have discovered how to truly take the limits off of what I think is right and true. The Bible says to live, I must lay down my own life. Does this mean I have to physically die in order to find true happiness and peace? Absolutely not. It does mean however, that my life must take on the priorities according to God and not according to me. It means that I must seek Him and not seek after everything and anything that simply pleases me and me alone.

I have discovered that true happiness and peace of mind only comes from doing what is pleasing to God. Helping others find Him, tending to the physical needs of those around me, seeking to know the one who knows us better than we know ourselves, the creation seeking and having a relationship with the creator. How can one truly be at peace with himself without this relationship in place? Without God in our lives we create limits we can't even see or of which we are even aware. The Bible says, "... seek first the kingdom of God and all these other things will be given to you." You see, without the "God factor" in our lives, we cannot attain the ALL!

I'm not sure how you feel about the limits in your life, or if you have even stopped to think about it, but I don't intend to live my life with all the limits my own thoughts, actions and feelings have - and will - produce in my life. I know that God never intended for me or you to live a life with such limitations on it because I know what His word says about it. His word says that He came to give us life and that more abundantly. So how do you get this more abundant life? You must do what God's word says to do in order to get what God's word says you can get.

Let me encourage you to find out how you can take the limits off of your life and have this more abundant life without limits of which I've been speaking. We here in the Ranchos are fortunate to have such wonderful churches in our area that teach exactly what I've been talking about. Go to one of them and ask them to show you how you too might have this new life, this life without limits; this freedom you thought was unattainable is right there at the threshold of a new beginning for you.

Limits are a man-made situation, not a God-made life. He, whom the spirit sets free, is free indeed! Take the limits off and be free to love God, love your neighbor, and love yourself as God always intended for you to ... without limits!

*Ken Cooksey, Jr. is the pastor of the Ranchos' newest church, Liberty Worship Center, located at 37275 Ave. 12.*

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# Sober Grad Needs Your Help to Help YOUR Kids Stay Safe After Graduation

Alarming, high school graduation is statistically one of the most dangerous nights in the life of the average young person. Increased use of alcohol mixed with the liberation from 12 years of school often proves to be a deadly combination.

SOBER GRAD is a program through the California Highway Patrol that provides fun for the big night, but in a sober atmosphere so that there's a day after graduation for our young people.

Liberty High's SOBER GRAD 2006 is going to be held Thursday night, June 1 at the Liberty High School Cafeteria from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., Friday morning. Planned for the event is James Kellogg,

Jr., a comedy hypnotist and magician. There is also going to be gladiator jousting, a bungee run, a bounce house, a basketball tournament, Super Smash Brothers, card games and much, much more.

A raffle is planned all night long to raffle off many items, and at 4 a.m. the bidding begins for the "dorm room." Grand Prize. The seniors will be bidding for different items from their winnings at the various gaming tables. In addition, pizza, hot dogs, hamburgers, hot wings, meatballs, cookies, brownies, popcorn and snow cones are scheduled to keep the newly emancipated stuffed. At 4 a.m. a breakfast of pancakes and

bacon will be served.

Sound great? Well the SOBER GRAD people still need your help.

Items are desperately needed for the raffles and auction. Each family of a graduating senior is being asked to donate two \$25 items. They can range from movies tickets to gift cards from Best Buy or Starbucks or Jamba Juice or Target or Fashion Fair ... you get the idea. Gas card are timely, or anything your child would like to have. If you'd prefer, just write out a check made out to Liberty High Sober Grad for \$50 and the SOBER GRAD volunteers will do the shopping for you. Donations for the raffle need to be

received by Friday, May 19.

You can also donate your time. Parents are needed to work the following shifts:

- 1) 10 p.m. to Midnight
- 2) Midnight to 2 a.m.
- 3) 2 a.m. to 4 a.m.
- 4) 4 a.m. to 6 a.m.

Please remember that this is a small price to pay for keeping our graduating class safe on what could be one of the most dangerous nights of their lives.

Keep our 2006 graduates safe!

If you have any questions, please contact Sandra Carter at 645-0505 (home), or 209-974-4829 (cell).

## ILLEGALS Continued from Page 2

Rocky Mountain News reported "Mile-High Drug Hub" making Denver the leading center for drug distribution in the United States. It's part of MS-13 Gang's dispersal of \$128 billion in drugs crossing our border with Mexico every year. Ironically, Congress guards South Korea's border with 37,000 troops with our billions in tax dollars, pats down gray-haired ladies at our airports, spends \$80 billion annually on the war on drugs, but leaves our border unguarded allowing that \$128 billion in drugs to cross year after year. Additionally, terrorists from any country can walk over the Mexican border with a 99 percent chance of succeeding.

With a growing illegal alien population exceeding 300,000 in Colorado, the state House legislators on Wednesday of last week defeated six bills to stop illegal alien migration. One particular bill, HB 1134, would have given cops the ability to arrest, detain and deport illegals. It was soundly defeated after dozens of citizens, including this Coloradoan, testified to support the bills passage.

I demanded, "We are tired of being collateral damage for illegal aliens. We're tired of being raped, killed, robbed and our schools being trashed by multiple languages while our medical systems take better care of illegals than our own citizens."

Representative Francesca Natividad Coleman remarked that it was a Federal issue. I retorted, "We're the ones getting killed and raped here locally and we're tired of it." Last year, three Coloradoans were killed by illegals; Greeley, Colorado suffered 270 hit and run car accidents alone; eight rapes by illegal aliens in Boulder and thousands of robberies.

To top off the crisis in our Denver schools, the Rocky Mountain News reported the next day, February 21, 2006, "Welfare Surges 45%" with an increase of 4,743 cases. They said it was tough job hunting, but neglected to mention that 300,000 illegal aliens in Colorado stole jobs from Coloradoans in every sector: drywall, construction, landscaping, fast food, house painting, janitorial, paving and dozens of other jobs formerly worked by Coloradoans.

Denver Mayor Hickenlooper hired illegal aliens long before he was mayor and one of his illegal employees, Raul Gomez-Garcia, killed Denver police officer Don Young last May. Hickenlooper stood in direct violation of federal laws and could have been fined \$2,000.00 per illegal alien hired (estimated at 70 working in his restaurants) and he could have gone to prison for five years. Governor Owens actually endorsed a booklet showing illegal aliens how to imbed themselves in Colorado. He aided and abetted illegal

aliens, but didn't receive a slap on the wrist.

Since it's happening in my state with 300,000 illegal aliens, can you imagine what is happening in California with three million? Or, North Carolina with one million? How about Illinois with one million illegals? How about Texas with 1.5 million? I know Texans pay over \$4.1 billion annually for educating their massive load of student illegals.

We're being colonized with over 9 million illegal alien Mexicans crashing our schools, medical systems, language, culture, parks, tax and welfare systems. One look at the headlines of major newspapers across the country echoes and mirrors the Rocky Mountain News.

It stupefies me beyond comprehension that Americans sit back and watch this invasion of their country without any outrage. Worse, without any response! More than that - without a concern for their own kids' future! Even more horrific, the line of immigrants from Mexico (and the world) shows no sign of stopping, as the number of Mexicans grows from their current 106 million to 200 million in this century.

As I open this can of worms weekly; as I expose this accelerating national crisis weekly; as you experience its quickening day by day - I would think the outrage would reach fantastic levels. But it is not! In fact, Bush, Congress and governors of all 50 states not only watch it happen, they actively aid and abet it. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania wants to add another one to two million legal immigrants annually. Senators John McCain and Ted Kennedy want to give amnesty to 20 million illegals and add more in a guest worker program. Utah's Chris Cannon welcomes millions of Mexicans as he encourages their takeover of our country. His sidekick Senator Orrin Hatch mirrors that sentiment. Representative Joe Baca of California actively promotes the takeover of California by Mexico as he endorses "Reconquista of Aztlan." As Mark Twain said, "Suppose you were an idiot; and suppose you were a member of Congress; but then, I repeat myself." Twain got it right.

While 85 to 95 percent of the American public wants our borders secured, they stand around quietly sucking their thumbs while doing nothing. However, the outrage and arrogance of millions of illegal alien migrants in America advances like Paris, France's, recent experience with immigration. Ten thousand fire-bombed cars and a month-long conflagration! We watched stupidly as if it won't happen to us. Think again! Of the thousands of emails I receive, the worst and the most frightening ones are from citizens who tell me, "Keep your powder dry!"

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## Business, Educators give Awards



Madera Unified School District Superintendent Julia O'Keefe (far left) and Madera County Compact Chairperson Steve Mindt (far right) congratulate Crystal Tower Award winners (from left) Steve Cholewa of S&J Lumber, Steve Levake of Evapco, and Jill Cholewa of S&J Lumber.

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### Evapco West and S&J Lumber receive Crystal Tower Award, but Madera County schools and students benefit.

Evapco West and S & J Lumber received the Crystal Tower Award April 5 at the Third Annual Business and Education Shareholders' Luncheon. Both businesses were recognized for their partnerships with Madera County schools.

Accepting the award for Evapco West was general manager, Steve Levake. Evapco was nominated by Sierra Vista Elementary School's principal, Sherri DeFina. Levake allows employees one hour each work week to volunteer at Sierra Vista. Each volunteer goes into the classroom and works directly with the students.

DeFina credits her students' achievement to Evapco West's volunteers spending time in the classrooms. "The one thing that will help them [students] more than anything else is time," said DeFina.

Steve and Jill Cholewa, owners of S & J Lumber, accepted the second Crystal Tower Award. They were nominated by Dr. Terry Kershaw, vice chancellor of the North Centers, State Center Community College District.

The Cholewa's have donated money to build an athletic field, a state-of-the-art fitness center and aerobics/dance studio at the Madera Community College Center.

"We're here to support them all because it's important to Madera," said Jill Cholewa.

The Cholewa's are also actively involved with Madera Unified School District. They were instrumental in supporting passage of Measure B and annually participate in mock interviews at Madera High School.

A special award was given to Madera Unified School District's Superintendent, Dr. Julia O'Kane. O'Kane will be retiring with Madera Unified after having worked

with the school district for 34 years and serving as superintendent for the past eight years. She was recognized for her service in promoting educational partnerships with new and established businesses in Madera Unified.

The luncheon highlighted various extra-curricular student activities from different schools in Madera County.



The program began with the Liberty High School Cadet Corps and the presentation of colors, followed by the National Anthem sung by the Yosemite High School Chamber Singers. Students from Madera South High School of Agriculture, Science and Engineering were the keynote speakers at the event, speaking about their experiences in the career school and how business partnerships have encouraged them to achieve their goals.

Robert Poythress, manager of Citizens Business Bank in Madera served as the Master of Ceremonies and the luncheon was hosted by the Madera County Compact and sponsored by Florestone Products, Georgia-Pacific, State Center Consortium and Wilkins Enterprises.

The Madera County Compact is a group of business, community and education leaders working collaboratively to support efforts to improve the quality of life in Madera County. They promote business partnerships with schools to improve the achievement levels and skills of students and prepare young people for the increasing demands of society and the workplace.

Past recipients of the Crystal Tower Award include A/Dolphin Associates, Bridge Store, FMC FoodTech, Mowers Plus, Madera Community Hospital and Sierra Telephone.

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## FORE! Liberty Golf Tourney Nears

Liberty High's Athletic Department is getting ready to tee off with its 4th Annual Golf Tournament on Saturday, May 20 at Riverbend Golf Course.

Liberty High's Principal, Andy Alvarado, has been named this year's tournament director and he's looking for duffers in the Ranchos.

This year's tournament is being held at beautiful Riverbend Golf Course and is limited to the first 100 players who sign up. There will be a "shot-gun start" at 1 p.m. for this four man scramble tournament and entry fees include cart and green fees, two raffle tickets, tee prizes and dinner - not to mention some great support for Liberty High athletics.

Alvarado says there are still some tournament sponsorships available, varying for different

levels of participation.

Since space is limited and since the entry fee is only \$100 per person, teams need to get in as early as possible. If you'd like to sign up, or if you just need more information, contact Suzie Dunnat Liberty High School at 645-3500. You can also get more information from their website at [www.gvusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.gvusd.k12.ca.us). You can also fax your entry to 645-4769 and if you're a huge fan of the U.S. Postal service you can mail your entry to:

**Andy Alvarado**  
**Tournament Director**  
**C/O Liberty High School**  
**12220 Rd. 36**  
**Madera Ca. 93638**

Deadline is May 12, so get those entries in. *FORE!*

# Home & Garden Shots

Some candid shots of the Ranchos/Hills Senior's Home & Garden show.



The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center came alive April 1 at the 14th Annual Spring Home & Garden Festival where attendees got great buys on a variety of plants.



In addition to plants, the Seniors also had a bake sale, barbecue and full-blown rummage sale.



A big hit for the little ones was the Discovery Toys booth featuring toys for children of all ages. Photos : Tina Shannon

## Academic Pentathlon, Super Quiz At Liberty High Awards Ceremony

More than 100 junior high students were scheduled to test their knowledge of "The Chemistry of Matter" in the 2006 Academic Pentathlon Super Quiz held on Tuesday, April 25. Students from 11 schools were to participate in this last event of the 22nd annual five-event academic competition, which unfortunately was not completed by press time.

In this event, each student was to answer 15 questions out of 30 as part of this team competition. At the end of 30 questions, the 7th grade and 8th grade teams with the best overall score won.

"The Super Quiz is such a great event because the score is a team effort, and the event challenges students to work together to achieve success," said Cyndy Dolph, Educational Services Division Administrator for Madera County Office of Education.

The event at Liberty High School awarded first, second and third place

winners from the other four events as well as the night's winners.

"The middle school students in Madera County put so much time and effort into studying for these events, they should really be commended," said Dolph. "The awards ceremony is our way to recognize the efforts of our 7th and 8th grade students."

Schools participating in the Super Quiz include Chawanakee Academy, Coarsegold Elementary, Dairyland Elementary, Jack G. Desmond Middle, Howard Elementary, Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle, North Fork Elementary, Ranchos Middle, Raymond-Knowles Elementary, St. Joachim and Thomas Jefferson Middle Schools.

The other Academic Pentathlon events included a speech competition, an Essay/Literature test, an event called Destination Imagination and the Math Tournament.

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# Home & Garden Festival Hits a Home Run with Ranchos Residents

By *Eleanore Burchell*

The big news this month was our 14th Annual Spring Home & Garden Festival that was held on Saturday, April 1. Even the sky was on our side with the sun shining brightly all day even though showers were predicted. We were so thankful for this! Our fearless Home & Garden leader, Whitney Johns, planned and executed another wonderful and productive event. This took hours of his time and much energy on his part. Thank you Whitney, as

many, many bargain seekers came out to enjoy our sale, to bask in the nice weather and buy. The trees in the nursery section left by the truckload. Yes, we had an extremely successful plant sale. Both the pancake breakfast and the lunch hamburgers and hot dogs sold out. Thanks also to most of our membership who worked hard in other areas. There are others members who have a willing heart and mind, but not a willing body. We appreciate them too!

There were two particular points of interest to me personally at the sale. One was seeing the little boys' eyes shine after they sat in the cab and were being lifted down from the Fire Engine on display by

our local Fire Department employees. The children were given a badge to stick onto their shirts and a coloring book. Thank you, Firemen, you did a good job! My second thrill was visiting the taxidermist's stall and seeing the wolf with his beady eyes and long claws.

Sorry if you missed our sale – you might also have found something, such as I did, that you will keep thinking about for days.

The next monthly sale will be held on Saturday, May 6. If you need a tree or two, come in and check out the varieties. Spring is the time the flowering plants start to come in. The Treasure House has been gearing up for this sale with many, many new items.

The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center's St. Patrick's Day Corn Beef and Cabbage Dinner held Friday, March 17 was a huge success thanks to the cooks, Jean Barrow and Ruth Baker. Eighty-one meals were served and enjoyed by both Senior Center members and guests from the community. Corrine Harms playing her keyboard and filled the evening with music. Don Burchell sang two Irish songs. Fifteen door prizes were given away. The 50/50 raffle was drawn and Harry Tomaino was the lucky winner of \$111. A great time was had by all!

The March Birthday and Anniversary get-together was held March 25 at the Madera IHOP with 29 celebrants in attendance. The April celebration is planned for Saturday, April 22 at 2 p.m. at the Madera Perkos.

We don't want you to get out of the habit of coming in to see us on weekdays

so remember the produce, plant and boutique sections are available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays from 6 to 9 p.m., and Thursday evenings between 6 and 9 p.m. The produce section now has oranges, grapefruit, lemons, tangerines, etc. Just drop in to see us and check out what's new or different.

### More Facts and Fun

A nutritionally balanced lunch program Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. Suggested price for 60 years and older is \$1.75. Reservations are needed a day in advance so remember to call Joann at 645-4864. There is still room in the well-attended exercise class on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. You need not be a member to attend these classes. The attendance has been growing but there is always room for one or two more – you and your friend! Remember Line Dancers meet on Thursdays at 1 p.m. It is another way to exercise but still have fun. Joann is still trying to book an AARP 8-hour driving instruction class 55 ALIVE. Believe me, this is a busy place and there are times we need an extra day or two in a month to fit in all of these things. A six-week watercolor art/painting class started on April 5, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Please accept my apology for not sharing this information in last month's article, but the news was just received. These classes are open and free to Ranchos Community adults. No prior watercolor experience is needed. The instructor can be reached by calling 645-

Please see SENIORS Page 24



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## Business Profile



The crew at Ranchos Mortgage are ready to help you with that next loan. From left are Jean-Ann Ward, Loan Officer; Stephanie Fursman, Loan Officer; Jorge Miranda, Loan Officer; Patty Grissom, Owner/Loan Officer; and Debbie Kelley, Loan Officer.

### Financing the American Dream Now at Ranchos Mortgage

By Randy Bailey

Necessity truly is the mother of invention. With the booming real estate market exploding all around California, and in the Ranchos specifically, Patty Grissom of Ranchos Mortgage took the classic entrepreneurial path: She saw a need and filled it.

"We needed at least one mortgage company out here," Grissom said as she reflected on the many real estate offices in the Ranchos, but the noticeable lack of any brick and mortar mortgage companies.

Ranchos Mortgage is only about one month old and is located in the Maywood Center on Avenue 12. It came about after Grissom got her feet wet working for some other mortgage companies and after a brief stint of working

out of her home, here in the Ranchos. She has set up Ranchos Mortgage to be a full service mortgage company fully capable of handling purchases, refinances, construction loans, lot loans and even commercial loans.

To make sure that all of her Ranchos customers are handled with the utmost care, Grissom has a staff of four full-time and four part-time employees.

"We're open Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 5 o'clock," Grissom said. "But we're available weekends and evenings by appointment. We know that most people work during the week."

From her location behind Fergie's Diner, Grissom is pleased with her new operation, her staff and her choice to make Ranchos Mortgage the newest business in the Madera Ranchos. From 37193 Ave. 12 she reflects on why she chose our neighborhood.

"Because this is a good area ... and I like the community," she smiled.

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WATER Continued from Page 10

of annual overdraft of Madera County's aquifers. The number of recovery wells have been reduced from 100 to 40 and they are now located in the middle of the property to prevent neighboring wells from being drawn down.

About 10,000 acres of the ranch have never been tilled and remains in the same condition it was in before the Valley was settled. This is the largest remaining contiguous block of land on the Valley's floor that has never been farmed. It is home to rare plants and animals and is located in the middle of the upland recovery corridor. The land is crisscrossed with swales - natural depressions where water flows. These swales have tremendous recharge capabilities and thousands of acres of recharge basins won't have to be carved from the land. In order to get governmental approval for the project MID had to submit an Environmental Impact Report for comment. Not one environmental group challenged the EIR. Not the Sierra Club, not even the NRDC.

**Other Issues**

Some members of the community have claimed MID's project is a front to sell water out of the county and some of these people supported the Azurix plan and stood to make a lot of money brokering water. Others have urban development plans of their own, but not the water required by law to begin building.

There isn't any channel for banked groundwater to leave the county, however, there is the issue of surface water. Under MID's project the water saved in the bank will be used on lands within MID's area first. With an additional EIR this will free up MID's surface water stored in Millerton Lake that could be used for areas in Madera County such as the mountain communities of Oakhurst and Coarsegold. MID's canal system runs through the middle of southeast Madera County. It would be an understatement to say the Madera Ranchos and the proposed Rio Mesa development areas' water table has dropped dramatically since 1950. The extra water produced by the additional storage of MID's water bank could help alleviate the severe over draught of groundwater in parts of the county with the greatest water deficit.

One group opposed to the water bank

project has made claims that the water of the people of Madera is at stake, however this is misleading. The water that falls as rain and snow and ends up in the rivers and reservoirs actually belongs to the government - or at least if you want some of it you have to buy it from the government. The citizens of Madera County do not collectively have a contract with the United States Bureau of Reclamation for water from Millerton Lake. And if they did, how would it be conveyed from the lake for their place of use? Eastern Madera County citizens are looking at ways to form a special district to finance the piping of water from the San Joaquin River to the mountain communities, just like farmers formed MID in the past.

All of the water in the San Joaquin River was allocated long ago and as a settlement in the Friant/NRDC lawsuit comes to a close, a huge amount of the water already under contract will be taken from the area.

MID has contracts for water and the canal system to move the water to where it is needed. Not the county or the chamber of commerce or the supervisors. MID and most of the water and irrigation districts in California have what could be called "the ways and means" to get water to where it's needed when it's needed and that has been done with huge investments in infrastructure, cooperation and management; often despite governmental red tape.

Another concern that has been addressed many times is how the water bank will be financed.

MID has issued bonds. Not the county, not private interests, but MID issued the bonds based on its ability to obtain the credit necessary to do so because of its sound financial base. This has not been done in secret. As a public agency MID is held to legal requirements to notify its agendas and disclose its actions. Bonds have been used to finance government and corporate projects since before the United States had 13 colonies. The documents are public, the meetings held were open. This is a matter of public record backed up by signed affidavits.

MID's farmers saw the need for Friant Dam 80-plus years ago and once again MID is looking to secure more storage and a reliable supply of water for the next 80-years.

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# Calm before the Next Perfect Storm

By Assemblyman Mike Villines



An open letter from California State Assemblyman Mike Villines

Like the convergence of cold air from the north and warm air from the south creating the perfect storm, that's how it felt the last two weeks before the deadline to get the Governor's infrastructure bond package on the June ballot. A clash of political ideologies that created policy waves, which no matter what side of the debate you were on, left many in the Capitol feeling like they had just survived the perfect storm. The atmosphere in Sacramento has calmed a bit, but only long enough to gear up for committee hearings and the next perfect storm – the annual state budget debate.

California is a state with vast-reaching policy issues and an economy that is the fifth largest in the world. The policy considerations faced by elected representatives have far reaching impacts on the daily lives of all Californians. So much so that I believe a careful long-term approach to planning for our state's needs should be the process we adopt.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. The legislative and budget process in Sacramento is a fast paced, short term approach of trying to address budget and policy problems that currently exist versus carefully planning for and avoiding these problems before they arise. The current one-year budget cycle lacks an organized structure to develop and adopt long-term strategic planning for the annual investment of more than \$100 billion in state resources.

This begs the obvious question: "Should the Legislature adopt a two-year budget cycle and limit the number of bills introduced for the purpose of developing long-range policies and plans for California's future?" I say that is exactly what we should do! That is why I have jointly authored ACA 19, which would require the state to adopt a two-year budget; require the legislature to meet solely to pass a budget during the first year of the biennial session; require the legislature meet for all other purposes in the second year of the biennial session and; impose a limit on the number of bills, constitutional amendments, or resolutions that may be introduced to 25 for Senators, 20 for Assembly members, 30 for budget committees and five for policy committees.

The current budget process doesn't lend itself to program evaluation or accountability because the programs are focusing on short-term needs for spending authority rather than the effectiveness of

the program. As a result, the Legislature is unable to determine whether or not the investment of state resources should continue as a priority. Establishing a two-year budget cycle would create a better process for long-term planning and program review and accountability.

By splitting the biennial session into budget and policy sessions, all Legislators would participate and focus solely on budget issues during the first year. In the second year, all Legislators would focus and participate on policy matters rather than splitting limited time between both functions as is currently the process. Under the current process, Legislators often find themselves trying to attend budget hearings and policy hearings simultaneously. In the end, neither committee benefits from this chaotic process and the biggest losers in the process are the California Taxpayers.

In addition to the broken budget process, the Legislature suffers from an avalanche of silly bills each year. Over 5,000 bills are introduced per session, including proposals to address such issues as voter outreach to prisoners, permission for teenagers to use tanning beds, regulation of the delicacy foie gras and making sure state buildings follow the principals of feng shui. The non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office estimated that each bill costs the taxpayers an average of \$18,600 to consider. Despite serious problems with water supply, energy, infrastructure and education, some legislators still shy away from the difficult-to-tackle issues in favor of chasing headlines.

A splitting of the biennial session between budget and policy debates would concentrate the attention of legislators and staff on higher priority proposals, instead of spread thin over a plethora of half-baked bills.

Assemblyman Villines represents the 29th Assembly District, which includes the Madera Ranchos.

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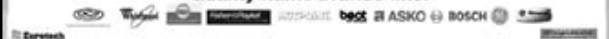
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## Gardening Tips

### Time to get Garden Serious at Last!

By Thea Fiskin

The much anticipated spring has arrived. Finally we can plant just about anything we want without fear of frost. When buying seedlings in six-packs or small pots remember bigger is not always better, quality is what is important. Look for dark green leaves, a thick stalk, no yellowing or shriveling. Don't throw those Easter lilies or chrysanthemums away, when they are done blooming remove from their pot and plant in a sunny location of the garden.

#### What to Plant

**Annuals** – Alyssum, blanket flower, cleome, cockscomb (celosia), coleus, cosmos, impatiens, lobelia, love-in-the-mist, marigold, moss rose (portulacas), nicotiana, marigold, periwinkle (vinca), petunia, salvia, sunflower and zinnia. Not snapdragons, pansies or primroses, or any other cool-season annual as their season is over.

**Bulbs** – Spring is the time for planting caladium, callas, cannas, dahlia, gladiolus and tuberose. Stagger the planting of gladiolus over several weeks to lengthen the bloom period.

**Perennials** – Sow seeds or plant seedlings of baby breath, candytuft, carnation, coneflower, coreopsis, dianthus, hollyhock, statice, verbena and wallflower (erysimum).

**Herbs** – Hooray! It's time to plant basil, as well as, cilantro, chives, curly or Italian parsley, lavender, oregano, sages and thyme. These herbs don't just belong in a tiny herb pot – many are very ornamental. Try purple basil with white cone-flower or trailing rosemary around the feet of roses.

**Veggies** – In early April there's still time for beets, lettuce and radishes. In late April plant only the heat lovers: beans, corn, cucumber, eggplant, melons, okra, peppers, summer squash and tomatoes. Once again be sure to check out seed packets for varieties not available as seedlings.

#### Garden Chores

**Fertilize** – Plants grow at a phenomenal rate in the spring. Feed lawns, roses, shrubs and trees (just about everything) with a balanced fertilizer. Use acid fertilizer on azaleas, gardenias and rhododendrons after they flower. When daffodils and other spring bulbs finish bloom and before leaves wither, give them a shot of fertilizer for next year's flowers. If citrus leaves are looking a little yellow, then

spray them with a liquid chelated iron/zinc mixture. This is great for gardenias and many other iron chlorotic shrubs too!

**Pinch/Prune** – Pinch annuals and perennials for dense growth and more bloom. Prune spring flowering shrubs, such as azaleas, camellias, forsythia and lilac, when they finish blooming. Since they bloom on year-old growth they will have an entire year to develop new wood. Azaleas don't need to be pruned every year, just remove any long shoots to keep them compact. A good "rule of thumb" when pruning any shrub or tree is prune them to shape and don't remove any more than 1/3 of the growth. Do not trim or braid foliage on bulbs until it has turned completely yellow to allow plants to store nutrients for next year.

**Crater control** – It's not too soon to control mosquitoes. Drain any standing water and add mosquito fish or goldfish to ponds. Bait or handpick slugs and snails. Do you have white blobs of foam on your plants? There is a little bug in the center of that foam called a spittle bug. Just wash the foam and the bugs off with the hose.

**Citrus Woes** – Citrus leaves may turn a little yellow this time of year so give them an application of nitrogen. Spread the fertilizer evenly over the entire root zone and water well. During the period of March through July it's normal for citrus trees to drop leaves, so don't panic. Bud and small fruit drop is also normal. However if the leaves are stippled you have a spider mite infestation. If the leaves are crinkled you have thrips. Sooty leaves are a sign of a problem with aphids, scale or whitefly. Blast plants with a jet of water from a hose. That's right; a strong spray will dislodge and drown pests such as aphids, mites and whiteflies. Don't forget to spray the undersides of leaves. If infestations are heavy, try using an insecticidal soap. Ants protect aphids from the natural insect predators that feed on aphids. Wrap sticky barriers to trees to prevent ants from protecting the aphid infestation in your trees.

*Thea Fiskin is a UC Master Gardener with Tulare/Kings County. Master Gardeners are members of communities who are trained by UC Cooperative Extension experts in different aspects of plant science and then volunteer to extend that information to their community. The mission of the Master Gardener program is to provide research-based information for gardening practices and technologies of home horticulture, integrated pest management and environmental resource conservation.*

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## Madera Ranchos Flood Report 2006

The exceptionally wet winter and spring weather has made its presence known throughout all of California, and the Ranchos is no exception. While the seemingly never-ending rain fell throughout the Ranchos community, several people were heard commenting on how bad the incessant rainfall was and how much destruction had to be befalling Ranchos homeowners.

In the Ranchos, the job of responding to flooding situations and attempts at education and prevention falls squarely on the shoulders of the local volunteer fire station. Chuck Hoover is the volunteer fire captain at the Ranchos' Madera County Fire Station 19, located at 35141 Bonadelle. According to Hoover, the only damage from flooding this year was minimal.

"Other than the homes that are in low-lying areas, where there's nothing you can do for them, the only damage this season was a washed out driveway at John Albert Drive and Road 36," Hoover said. "The Ranchos did great this year."

One area of concern was the increased creek activity this year. "It came from the tabletops across 41 this year," Hoover said.

According to Hoover, it appears that the excessive water collected in the tabletop mountains just east of Highway 41 reached a saturation point and the excess water just began to flow, filling dry creek beds that had been present since ancient times with a full, steady flow of water. "The water was not coming from the subdivisions," Hoover said, stressing that subdivision water was moving as it should and was not causing problems. "It travelled across the flatlands and gradually built up around Road 36."

There at 36 near Avenue 15 the water covered the road at least a couple of times at the height of the rainfall. It was there that the water built up the most and caused the damage to the driveway. "It's not an unworkable situation,"

Hoover said, pointing out that two other homes to the west of the damaged property had no damage, even though they all share a common ditch. "They reinforced their driveways and there was no damage."

Each year the fire station makes sandbags available to the community, with empty bags available for free and piles of sand sitting nearby awaiting your elbow grease. "This year Valley Teen Ranch volunteered to fill sandbags for people," Hoover said. "The filled over 100 bags and did a real good job."

When questioned about homes in low-lying areas, Hoover said he had heard about one; a mobile home occupied by a handicapped person in the backyard of a home. "They used over 20 sandbags and the water never got past the bags," Hoover said.

Area resident Bill Whyman said that a common problem is the misuse of sandbags during flood conditions. "You see pictures on TV of sandbags piled up around a doorway as the water comes but that won't do a thing," Whyman said. The secret is to apply heavy sheets of plastic to the openings of your home and then use the sandbags to anchor them. "It's the plastic that keeps the water out, not the sandbags."

Hoover said that as development comes to the Ranchos the water flooding problem should diminish more and more.

"More development will mitigate the problem," he said, suggesting that development would bring with it the necessary grading and water runoff considerations as found in Fresno and Clovis.

Since December of last year, nearly 11 inches of rain has fallen in Madera County, an area where annual rainfall is usually 12 inches. In other words, nearly as much rain has fallen in 4 1/2 months as usually falls in a year.

"With all of the water that came through, we did real well with it," Hoover said. "To our knowledge, no one else called."

### SENIORS Continued from Page 19

1137 if you want to call about a late enrollment.

Remember bingo is held every Tuesday evening from 5:30 to 9 p.m.

### Up and Coming Events

April 18, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Madera County Health Department Nurses Health Screening.

April 22, 2 p.m. Birthday and Anniversary Dinner, Madera Perkos, 1825 W. Cleveland.

April 27, 6 p.m. Monthly potluck with Oriental Foods theme, then Hand and Foot or Pinochle.

May 6, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The next monthly sale. Be sure to visit us!

### Weekly Events

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

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

Tuesday, Pinochle, noon until ???

Tuesday, BINGO, 5:30 to 9 p.m. (Hot dogs, hamburgers, desserts and more available).

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

Wednesday, Card BINGO, noon to 1 p.m.

Thursday, Line Dancing, 1 p.m.

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

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

We have shared information about our Senior Center with you in mind in order to acquaint you with us. We welcome you to come and be one of us as our organization offers and promotes social, educational and civic activities which provide a better quality of life for all senior citizens. You have received an invitation. Hope to see you soon?

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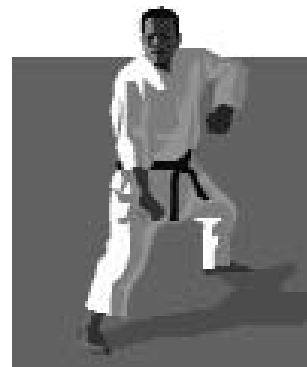


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# Flatlander's Grand Marshal Named

The 10th Annual Flatlander's Day Parade is coming Saturday, May 13 to the Madera Ranchos for a day of fun, food and foolishness as Avenue 12 once again gives way to clowns, fire trucks and hot rods from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m.

This year the parade is letting your creativity run wild with its "open" theme. Anything (within the bounds of good taste, of course) goes.

This year the Grand Marshal of the 10th Annual Parade is Bob Naden. Bob was born in 1930 and was raised on his parent's ranch in northeast Clovis. He attended Nees Colony Elementary school and graduated from Clovis High School in 1948.

Bob worked in construction and spent six years in the Army Reserves Transportation Corps. In 1955 he met Vera and they were married in 1956. The Naden family moved to Madera County in 1967 and the marriage was blessed with two children; a daughter Lynn who resides in Alaska and a son Brent who resides in Fresno. Bob and Vera celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in January of this year.

In 1956 a partnership was formed

between Bob and Bob Wilson and that was the start of Steel Structure Inc. in Fresno County. Steel Structures Fabricating Plant moved from Fresno to Madera in 1978 and Bob retired from Steel Structures and continued with Steeltile Company (a roofing product) located in the Brickyard Drive Industrial Park on Ave. 10. Bob was key to the growth of the Brickyard Drive Industrial Park, a project that he has developed over the years and continues to develop.

Bob is a charter member of the Madera County Ag Boosters; honorary member of the Madera FFA, member of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, Madera County Tax Payer's Association and St. Peter's Men's Club.

All of that experience will be waving at you on the 13th.

In addition to the parade, there will be booths in the Maywood Center selling everything from trinkets to food and beverage items.

Remember that all of the money raised for this event goes to the Ranchos Library through the Friends of the Library organization. A very worthwhile group.



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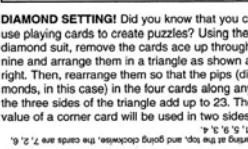
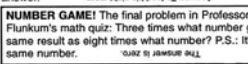
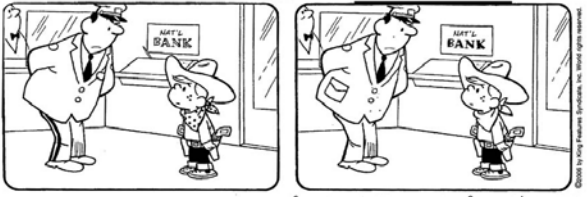
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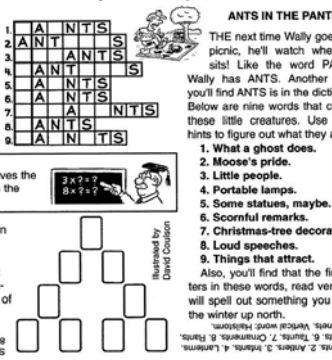
### The Spats



### HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF

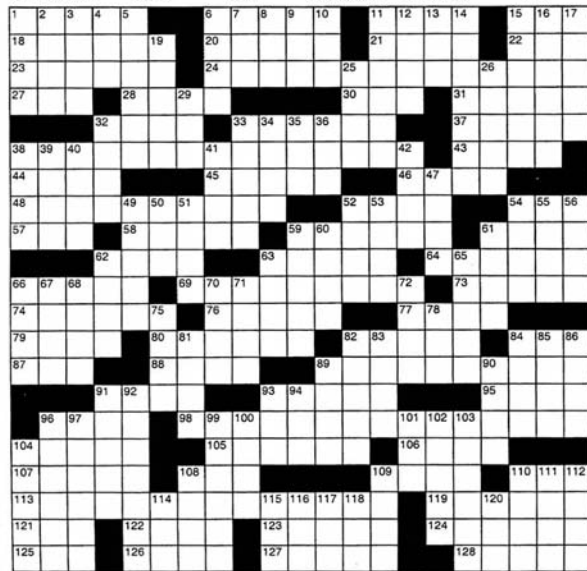


### Junior Whirl by Charles Barry Townsend



## Super Crossword ON GUARD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Cook clams
  - 6 Civvies
  - 11 It came from Montana
  - 15 Part of PST
  - 20 Looked like Lothario?
  - 21 — Rios, Jamaica
  - 22 She's a singer
  - 23 Plummer or Pays
  - 24 Riddle: Part 1
  - 27 Encountered Caddie
  - 28 Competitor
  - 30 Flicka's food
  - 31 Cliff hanger?
  - 32 The Chipmunks, e.g.
  - 33 Houston athletes
  - 37 Covenants
  - 38 Riddle: Part 2
  - 43 Pindaric poetry
  - 44 Libertine
  - 45 Lo mein land
  - 46 Culp/Cosby series
  - 48 "Three Times a Lady" group
  - 52 Competent
  - 54 — stands still
  - 57 High peak
  - 58 Paris' prize
  - 59 Adulterater
  - 61 From Montana
  - 62 Hard to find
  - 63 Certain
  - 64 "Rats!"
  - 66 That's no bull!
  - 69 Riddle: Part 3
  - 73 Stadium
  - 74 Diva Maria
  - 76 Stroll
  - 77 Miami's county
  - 79 Hunky-dory
  - 80 Warns
  - 82 Plankton
  - 84 Insert
  - 87 Pro — (for now)
  - 88 Sunflower
  - 89 "Utopia" author
  - 91 Self-smitten
  - 93 Broadcast
  - 95 Gymnast
  - 105 Pack up the tent
  - 106 Boot part
  - 107 Crassini
  - 108 Indian export
  - 109 Hockey's Kolzig
  - 110 Health club
  - 113 Answer to riddle
  - 119 Type of embroidery
  - 121 Porgy part
  - 122 Room without a view?
  - 123 Common contraction
  - 124 622 event
  - 125 Poseidon's domain
  - 126 Model
  - 127 Share
  - 128 Acts like a grandparent
  - 1 Con game
  - 2 Subdue
  - 3 "L — c'est moi"
  - 4 Sheridan or Sothern
  - 5 Violin
  - 6 Trims the turf
  - 7 "Not spinach again!"
  - 8 Neighbor of Ga.
  - 9 Asian holiday
  - 10 A mean Amin
  - 11 Fertilizer ingredient
  - 12 Rose
  - 13 Haggard
  - 14 Fountain offering
  - 15 Tenor Jan
  - 16 Expects
  - 17 Turns over
  - 18 Michael's Monty Python
  - 19 Tail's partner
  - 20 Prepared
  - 21 Westminster winner
  - 22 Swarm (with)
  - 23 Wan
  - 24 Goes downhill fast?
  - 25 Decimal base
  - 26 Nutritional abbr.
  - 27 77 Richard Harris film
  - 28 Mislead
  - 29 Speed —
  - 30 "God's Little —"
  - 31 k.d. of country
  - 32 Baby beagle
  - 33 Wolf wall
  - 34 Strauss' "—"
  - 35 Ken, or Chucky
  - 36 Couturier
  - 37 Cassini
  - 38 Brazelet bit
  - 39 Mine car
  - 53 Comic Roseanne
  - 54 — vera
  - 55 "American Bandstand" viewer
  - 56 Novelist
  - 57 Seton
  - 58 Gorp
  - 59 Ingredients
  - 60 Narcissus' nymph
  - 61 Skirt shaper
  - 62 Depend (on)
  - 63 "Yo!" at the library
  - 65 Brother of Zeus
  - 66 Glasgow
  - 67 gaily
  - 68 receipts
  - 69 Jack of "Rio Lobo"
  - 70 Dentist's directive
  - 71 Head set?
  - 72 Cheeseboard choice
  - 75 Literary pseudonym
  - 78 Chicken — king
  - 79 Dolores — Rio
  - 80 Miller's creation
  - 81 Bonanza material
  - 82 Arthur of "Maude"
  - 83 Stateside Ltd.
  - 84 Bracelet bit
  - 85 Mine car
  - 90 Burrowing critter
  - 91 Ruark's "Something of —"
  - 92 — makes the heart . . .
  - 93 Wine word
  - 94 — ia-ia
  - 95 Stephen King book
  - 96 "Salve —"
  - 97 Swimmer
  - 98 Gertrude
  - 99 Tide type
  - 100 Fashion monogram
  - 101 Teach a nuckle
  - 102 Teach a boy
  - 103 Noyes or Nobel
  - 104 Fish hooks
  - 105 Commuter's charge
  - 106 "M\*A\*S\*H" Emmy winner
  - 107 Fili's father
  - 108 pseudonym
  - 109 Cry of concern
  - 110 Dolores — Rio
  - 111 Miller's creation
  - 112 Bonanza material
  - 113 Arthur of "Maude"
  - 114 Stateside Ltd.
  - 115 Bracelet bit
  - 116 Mine car



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### TRIVIA TEST By Fifi Rodriguez

- LITERATURE: Which mystery writer created the character called Lord Peter Wimsey?
- HISTORY: When was the first American "dime novel" published?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Canola is a type of what?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: The Rhodesian Ridgeback is a type of what?
- SCIENCE: The Ptolemaic System says what?
- ANATOMY: Where would platelets most likely be found in the human body?
- MOVIES: Which comedy team starred in the 1941 movie "Buck Privates"?
- RELIGION: The Maronites are a part of which larger religious group?
- GEOGRAPHY: On what continent is the nation of Tunisia?
- POLITICS: How many votes in the Electoral College does Florida have?

### Answers

1. D. P. Joyce
2. 1868
3. Oil
4. Dog
5. The Earth is the center of the universe
6. Blood
7. Abbott and Costello
8. Christianity
9. Africa
10. 27

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- Cagney Hopkins
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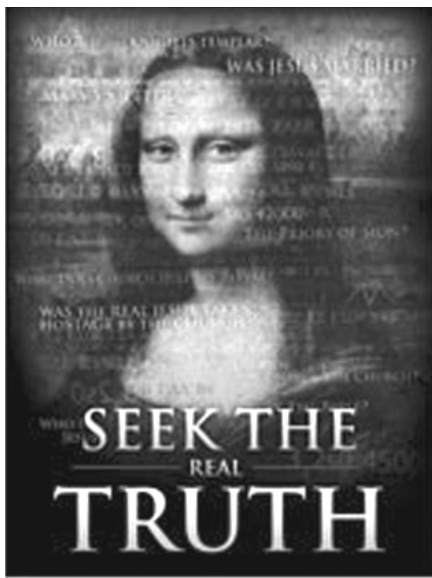
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2 yr. old on 2.3 ac., Lrg. great room w/ granite faced fireplace/heater, Lrg. kit. w/ granite countertops, breakfast bar & lots of cabinets, walk-in pantry, isolated master, cross-fenced pasture, RV hook-up w/ power, water & septic, storage shed.

Calling listing office for all the amenities

**3 Bed 2 Ba.**  
**\$469,000**

36692 Blanca

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5/3ba., 2400 sq. ft., Large home & pool, home is vacant, lockbox. Bonus room could be used for guests, it has its own private bathroom. Almost 2 acres, 3 car garage, easy access to Freeway 41, minutes to Fresno, shopping and Valley Children's Hospital. Zoned for large animals. Owner is a licensed Real Estate Agent.

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