

# The Ranchos Independent



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IN THE RANCHOS

Volume 18 Issue 8 2022

The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County

50¢

## MADERA COUNTY PROSECUTES VOTER FRAUD



*A San Diego  
resident tried to  
vote with her deceased  
mother's ballot from  
Madera County.*

***In This Issue***

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**T**he Madera County Registrar of Voters announced that last month, Elizabeth Gale, a resident of San Diego, pled guilty to committing voter fraud in the 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election.

“Ms. Gale made the unfortunate mistake of believing that though her mother had recently passed, that she could get away with voting her ballot, forging her signature, and claiming to have witnessed her mother signing the ballot,” stated Rebecca Martinez, the Madera County Registrar of Voters. “Fortunately for the people of Madera County, we have safeguards in place to detect these types of illegal activities, so Ms. Gale’s poor decision was discovered, and she was prosecuted.”

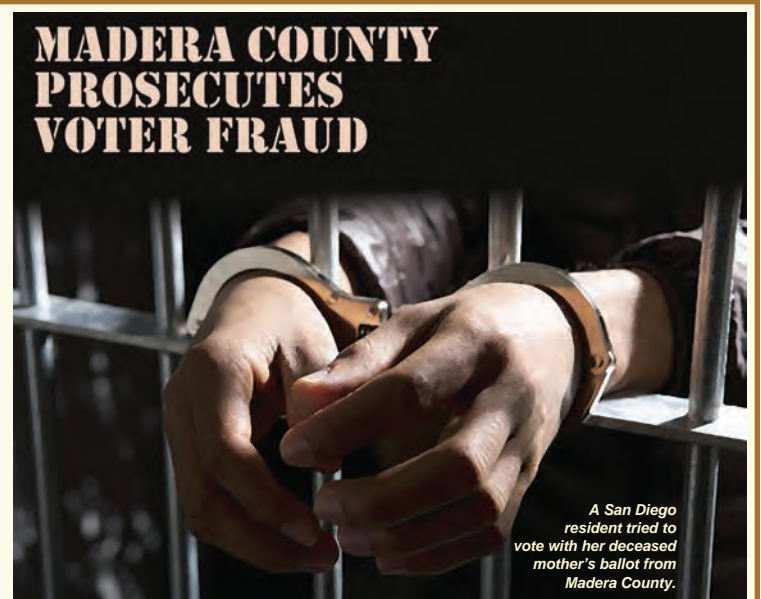
In August of 2021, the Registrar issued ballots to all Madera County voters for the Sept. 14, 2021, Statewide Gubernatorial Election. Within just a few days, the Registrar’s office was notified that the Defendant’s mother had passed away earlier in the year. The deceased voter’s ballot was immediately voided, making it non-votable. On Sept. 10, the deceased voter’s ballot was mailed back to the Registrar’s Office with what was determined to be an invalid signature of the voter.

Martinez notified Madera County District Attorney Sally Moreno of the suspected criminal act and an investigation was initiated. After a thorough investigation, the deceased voter’s daughter was charged with felony violations of the California Elections Code. Gale eventually pled guilty to a felony charge. As a result of her plea, a Madera County Superior Court judge sentenced Gale to two years of felony probation. The terms of her sentence required that Gale be booked into the Madera County jail and released, that she report to a probation officer, that she maintain gainful employment, not change her addresses or travel outside of California without prior consent, pay court fines and fees, submit to search and seizure and may not own or possess a firearm.

District Attorney Sally Moreno said, “Processes put in place by [Rebecca Martinez] for her office easily detected this fraud which was stopped before the vote was counted.”

“I take the responsibility of protecting our elections seriously,” Martinez said. “Madera County elections are fair, transparent and accurate. Ms. Gale attempted to cheat us all and I refuse to allow anyone to do that.”

“I appreciate the diligent efforts of my staff



who discovered the attempted fraud, the District Attorney’s Investigations Bureau that tracked down Ms. Gale in Southern California, the Deputy District Attorneys who ensured that she was held accountable and justice was served,” Martinez said.

“This should serve as a reminder to those who think they can compromise democracy, you will not get away with it. Not on our watch,” Martinez and Moreno said in a joint statement.

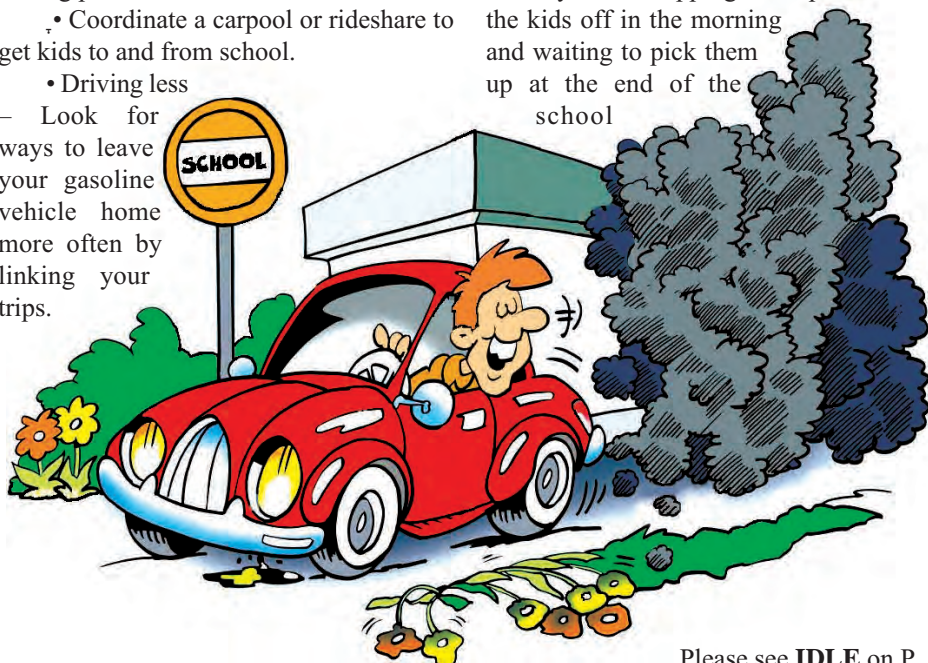
## Parents: Avoid Idling at Schools

As schools reopen for the fall session, air quality officials are asking parents across the San Joaquin Valley to consider student health and turn off their engines when waiting to pick up their children at the end of the school day. Limiting vehicle idling at schools will help to reduce air pollution and student exposure to vehicle emissions.

With school now back in session, increased vehicle traffic contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone. Parents can help reduce emissions and protect public health by incorporating some of the following practices:

- Coordinate a carpool or rideshare to get kids to and from school.
- Driving less
- Look for ways to leave your gasoline vehicle home more often by linking your trips.

- Walking your children to school when air quality allows.
- Keeping your vehicle running properly – A well-tuned vehicle pollutes less.
- Avoiding the use of drive-through services – Turn off your engine and go inside for food, coffee and other services instead of idling in the drive-through.
- Driving zero-emission or low-emission vehicles – The District offers a cash rebate that can be found online at [www.valleyair.org/drivecleaninthesanjoaquin/rebate/](http://www.valleyair.org/drivecleaninthesanjoaquin/rebate/) to go electric.
- Turning off your engine at school – When you are stopping to drop the kids off in the morning and waiting to pick them up at the end of the school



Please see **IDLE** on P. 3

## Liberty High Grad Newest CHP

A 2017 graduate of Liberty High School is the California Highway Patrol’s newest peace officer.

Bernavet Mendez Padilla of Madera completed cadet training at the California Highway Patrol Academy on Aug. 5. The new officer has been assigned to duty at the CHP’s San Jose Area office.

Padilla graduated from Liberty High School in 2017 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice at California State University, Fresno. In addition, Padilla served four years in the United States Marine Corp.

Prior to attending the CHP Academy, Padilla was a reserve deputy for the Fresno County Sheriff’s Office.

At the CHP Academy, cadet training starts with Nobility in Policing, a concept that stresses, “... greatness of character and high ethical qualities or ideals that serve a cause greater than self; faithfulness to a

higher calling or purpose.” Further, policing is taught as one of the most noble professions because officers, “... are the entrusted guardians of peace, justice and democracy.”

Also taught at the academy is leadership, professionalism and ethics, and cultural diversity. Cadets receive instruction on mental illness response and crisis intervention techniques. The training covers vehicle patrol, crash investigation, first aid, and the apprehension of suspected violators, including drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The cadets receive training in traffic control, report writing, recovery of stolen vehicles, assisting the motoring public, issuing citations, emergency scene management and knowledge of the California vehicle code, penal code and health and safety code.

The mission of the CHP is to provide the highest level of safety, service and security.



The California Highway Patrol’s newest officer is Bernavet Mendez Padilla who graduated from Liberty High in 2017.



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IDLE cont. from P. 2

day, please do not idle.

“Protecting the health of children is one of our greatest priorities,” said Samir Sheikh, the District’s Executive Director/Air Pollution Control Officer. “We urge the public to be mindful of their impact on air quality during this critical Back-to-School window and throughout the school year.”

The Valley has seen significant reductions in ozone, specifically in the summertime pollution levels over the past two decades. However, with the increase in wildfire activity over the last several years, it is more important than ever that parents and schools take steps to reduce students’ exposure to poor air quality while also reducing the creation of additional air pollution. The increase in severe wildfires over the past few years has resulted in smoke infiltrating the San Joaquin Valley at times during the late summer and fall. Smoke contains particulate matter and other pollution that can trigger asthma attacks, aggravate chronic bronchitis, and increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Those with existing res-

piratory conditions are especially susceptible to the adverse health effects of this form of pollution.

To help ensure continued progress and minimize pollution associated with school site vehicle idling, the District has partnered with hundreds of Valley schools through the Healthy Air Living Schools program, providing “no-idling” signs and other resources that remind parents to turn off their vehicle’s engine when picking up or dropping off students. Healthy Air Living Schools also includes training for school staff on using the District’s Real-time Air Advisory Network, which displays hourly air quality data, and corresponding outdoor activity recommendations to protect student health.

All Valley residents can find current, localized air quality data by visiting [myRAAN.com](http://myRAAN.com), [fire.airnow.gov](http://fire.airnow.gov) or by downloading the free Valley Air app from the Apple Store or Google Play.

To learn more about the Healthy Air Living Schools program, request a presentation or enrollment into the program, visit [www.healthylivingair.com/schools](http://www.healthylivingair.com/schools) or contact us at [healthylivingair@valleyair.org](mailto:healthylivingair@valleyair.org).

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## Fall is coming and Fernwood Gardens is in full transformation mode

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Our annual Spooky Gardens tour is coming back. These will be happening EVERY day in October from 7:30-9:30pm. In our typical fashion, it’s going to be bigger and better than ever. We are just DYING to see you there! Stay tuned for updates on our pumpkin patch and fall photo shoots.

Back by popular demand, our Succulent Pumpkin classes will be posted in our Facebook events soon. Call us to reserve your seat ASAP. Seating will be limited. • Stay up to date on all of the upcoming exciting things at Facebook @fernwoodgardensmadera.

We are so excited to bring to our community our fall tradition of kid/family friendly haunts.



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Letters

Dear Editor:

I don't think widespread mail-in voting is a good thing for three reasons.

The first is an uneasiness of having an agency of the Federal government handing ballots before they arrive at our county election officials. In the past, all ballots were cast locally and handled only by local election officials. The ballot went from my hand to a secured county-controlled container. Now, if mailed, it goes from my hand to a USPS office to be mixed with bulk flyers and PG&E bills, then is sorted and delivered to county officials. That extra step where USPS, a Federal agency, has their hands on the ballot worries me. It allows the Federal government direct control of ballots for some period of time. If the majority of "mail-in" ballots were only placed in drop boxes instead of via USPS, I would not have this problem. But in the last primary election I monitored the ballot flow using information posted on the Vote Madera website. In the race I was monitoring (5th District Supervisor) the morning after election day, there were a total of 5,243 votes cast, and only 526 were direct votes. Four days later an additional 854 ballots were counted. Those had to have been USPS delivered mail-in ballots because why would it take four days to count only 854 drop box ballots from election day? At the one week mark, the USPS ballots added only another 526 votes. Then it got weird. Ten days after election day a huge surge of 2,575 ballots came in from USPS. That was 1/3 of all the ballots cast for that race. Did 1/3 of the 5th District voters collectively de-

cide to all go to Nome Alaska to mail their ballots? What was USPS doing with those ballots for 10 days? I hope you can understand my suspicion.

That brings me to the second reason for disliking mail-in voting: The concept of secret ballot. Previously there was no way a local official, let alone a Federal official, could find out how I voted. Now, every ballot I cast comes with my name on the envelope with my signature. Do I trust that no Federal official has recorded my votes with my name? Not if the USPS has 10 days to deliver ballots out of view of the County election monitors I don't.

My last objection to mail-in voting is, strangely, that it is too easy. So easy that people who normally would have no time or interest in casting a vote *do* vote. This is especially troublesome in down-ballot local elections decided during high interest election cycles. People with no interest in local matters will cast coin flip votes just to fill out the ballot resulting in best-sounding-name-wins. Do we want that? I don't.

My hope is that Madera County will move away from all mailed ballots back to the previous election day-only voting with the rare absentee ballots. Remember, Madera County went to all-mailed ballots before COVID hit, so let's declare the mailed ballot experiment a failure and go back to election day voting, and more importantly, stable day after election result counts.

David Thorpe  
Madera



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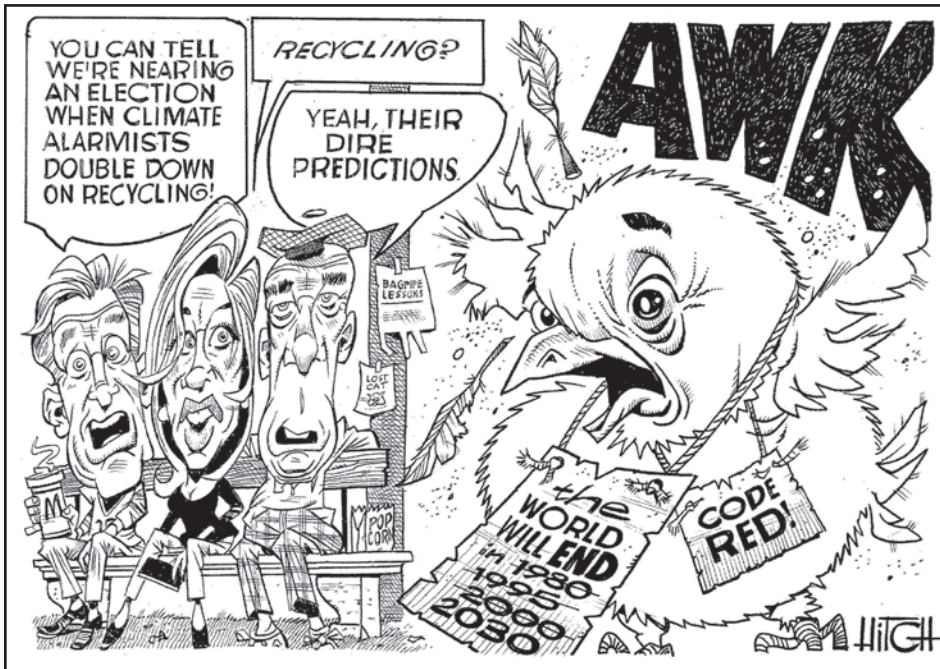
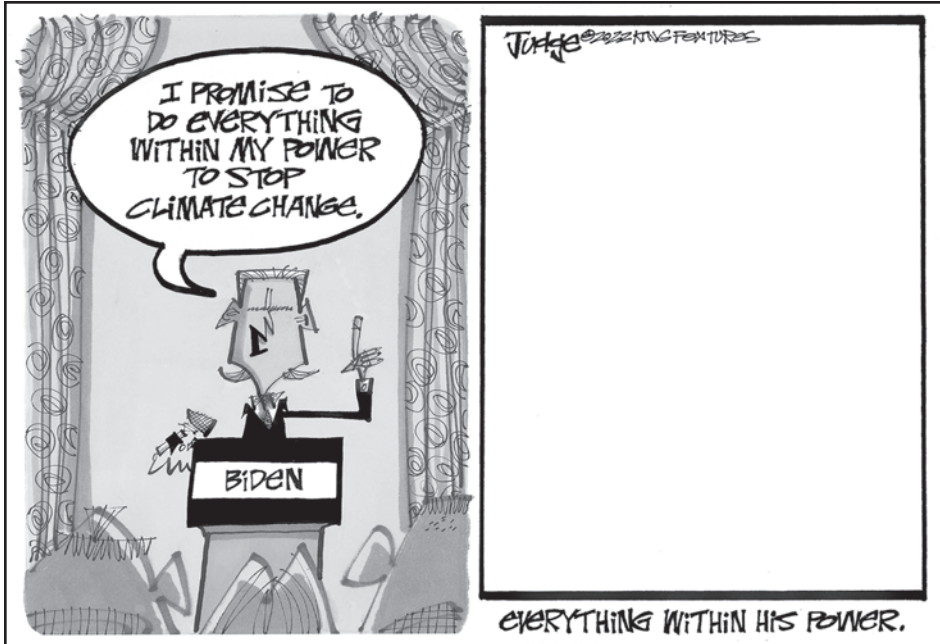
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## Editorial

# What Is A Woman? Or a Cat?

By Randy Bailey

The other night I had the opportunity to watch a documentary by Matt Walsh called *What is a Woman?*

On the surface, rational people scoff, roll their eyes and authoritatively look at you and say, "You *KNOW* what a woman *is*, don't you?" But Matt Walsh didn't spend two hours with rational people. He spent them with doctors, professors, psychologists and politicians, among others. People whom, prior to watching this film, I would have assumed were rational people. Not anymore.

The single most disturbing aspect of this film was how the simple question of "What is a woman?" flummoxed doctors, professors, psychologists and politicians. Several of them were turned into vacant, staring, babbling zombies. Others spent their entire time trying to change the subject.

One of my favorite current sayings is, "I would rather have questions that can't be answered than have answers that can't be questioned." On the surface it would seem this movie addresses the first part of that saying since obviously no one can answer the question.

But that's not it.

This really is a movie about answers that can't be questioned. Those

"answers" form the narrative and agenda of a specific group of people in our society today who don't want a definitive answer. That would destroy their narrative. So in choosing between reality and the narrative, you know which is the winner.

It used to be a simple matter of biology -- and still is for the rational ones -- wherein a woman is defined as an adult, female, human being. End of story. But then along came post-modernism. Post-modernism basically states that "truth" cannot be known. Truth is different for everyone. That was a theme heard repeatedly in the film. The reason why what a woman is can't be defined is because it's different for everyone -- in post-modernistic speak, that is.

To illustrate their point in the movie, learned professionals made the case that men could menstruate, get pregnant and deliver a baby. How? Because women who now "identify" as men and call themselves "men" can do all of those things. See how simple it is? They still have all the plumbing to do those things and *their* "truth" is that they're now men and therefore these "men" can do all of the things physiologically that women can do. Of course, the rationalists would say, "Sure you can. You're a *woman*." Anything is possible if you redefine the terms. That's how Captain Kirk beat the Kobayashi Maru.

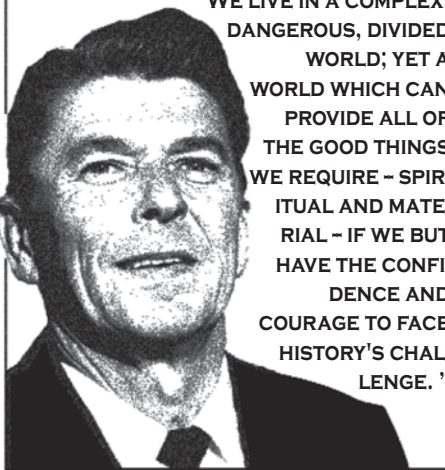
In one of the most poignant scenes in the movie, Walsh asks a man on the street in San Francisco what a woman is and the man's response was that only a woman could know that. Walsh then asks if the man was a cat, to which he said he wasn't. Walsh then asked if he could tell him what a cat was. In a split second you could see all the color drain from the man's face. He realized the folly of his argument because using his own logic, only a cat could know what a cat was. You could see the wheels turning in his head, torn between a way out of the argument and wondering if he truly -- possibly -- was a cat. Ultimately the man walked away without looking back muttering, "This is actually a genuine mistake. I'm sorry I even came up here."

I felt for the man. He started out not knowing what a woman was and walked away not sure what a cat was.

Thinking is hard.

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

# Bat-ting One Thousand

So ... there was a bat in my house. No, not a bat in the belfry, an actual living bat in my real house in the middle of the day when I had mistakenly thought bats were soundly sleeping in their coffins. Of all the things I've had in my house that I've had to remove or un-alive, this was the first bat. I did not handle it well.

Allow me to set the stage. I was standing at my kitchen counter that looks out into my living room. I was watching a little TV while chopping some zucchini for dinner when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw some movement. I didn't imagine it was any kind of animal and early evening isn't usually prime serial killer hours, so I dismissed it as my imagination.

But then I saw it again. It was a medium sized lump of something sailing eye level through my living room and toward the stairs. Now, my first thought was how did a bird get in the house? I'm not a fan of birds. My willingness to have living creatures in my home is limited to dogs and cats. I'm even picky about the humans I let through the door. Birds are not on the guest list. As I was pondering how a bird got into my house and what in the actual hell I was going to do to get it out, the creature decided to do a Top Gun style fly by my face and I caught a nice close up of those wings. May-day, mayday, this was not a bird.

My initial instinct was to hide under the table and wait for it to learn how to open the front door and let itself out. Instead, however, I just watched it fly around my house in petrified awe while I tried to come up with a plan. Burning the house down was appealing, but I didn't think homeowner's insurance covered pyrotechnic pest control. What I needed was a man. Men can fight bats, right? I think they teach that in middle school.

With my eyes absolutely cemented to the winged intruder I called my neighbor across the street, who didn't answer his phone. Someone isn't getting a Christmas card this year. Next, I tried a friend who lives really close thinking she could drag her husband here and have him battle the flying mammal. She didn't answer either. My Christmas card list was getting smaller by the minute.

With catlike reflexes I didn't know I had, and I doubt I could access

**GEN  
ERA  
TION  
WHY**  
by **eryn b. nyre**



again, I bobbed and weaved around the menace who had taken to flying in panicked zig-zag patterns that I couldn't predict. My life was flashing before my eyes. My third call was another friend who lives close, but he also couldn't be bothered to answer his phone. My last desperate call was to a friend who lives too far away to be reasonable, but not so far that I felt a single drop of shame in calling him and begging him to help me. He answered, surprisingly, but if you can believe it, told me he had no idea how to get a bat out of the house and it was too far to drive down and attempt it. Rude. I thought about calling animal control, but I couldn't imagine being high on their list of priorities. So, I decided to channel my inner Buffy and slay the thing myself.

I'd like to paint you a picture of me summoning some deeply suppressed superhuman courage and strolling up to the bat like the boss babe I am and simply catching it in a towel and disposing of it, but that would be a lie. Instead, here is what I did: First, I donned my woolen winter beanie complete with a poof on the top of the head, ear flaps with long tassels and Mickey Mouse images all over it. Are you picturing it? Stop laughing. This was to make sure the bat didn't fly into my hair and take up residence. My weapons of choice were a broom and a dustpan. I opened the back door and began gesticulating wildly at the bat. Here was my thought process: If I appeared to be a bigger, nastier predator then it would fly away from me rather than at me. If I could anticipate which way it would fly, then I could push it right out the door. This first resulted in what could only be described as the Keystone Cops chasing Charlie Chaplin in ill-formed, slapdash circles at about one-eighth speed. Eventually, though, the

Please see **GEN WHY** on P. 13

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**ORGANIZED BY CHOICE**  
 By Brenda McElroy

*Nail the Landing*

I was never more thankful for air traffic controllers than when visiting our son and family while they lived near LAX. It's fun watching the huge airliners make their approach, knowing they have an exact spot assigned. Imagine if landing planes was a willy-nilly activity without an intentional system. As the plane descends, the pilot chooses the first flat surface he sees and says, "I'll just put this here, for now."

Sound a little familiar? Flat surfaces around our homes beg for things to be placed on them and we, willy-nilly, comply often thinking it's "just for now." While the results may not be a matter of life or death, it's often a matter of peace or chaos.

**Clutter breeds clutter.** The first couple "just for now" things don't seem like much. Then, since there's already stuff on it, why not? Before you know it, the counter, table, bed, nightstand – any or every flat surface – has a pile.

*Clutter causes stress.* First

there's the stress of seeing a pile sitting there, waiting to be gone through. There's the fear of someone stopping by. The fear of things getting lost when we "clear the counter" into a box or the housekeeper moves stuff to clean.

**Clutter wastes our time.** With random piles the items we're searching for could be anywhere. Things we can't find we re-purchase wasting time and money.

**Clutter complicates relationships.** Arguments over who's stuff it is. Blaming family members for lost items. Not having a clear space for family meals, or the confidence to invite friends over.

The biggest pile contributors are things that need a temporary home. Unfortunately, our homes don't come with a control tower advising us on where to land what's in our hand. If you've determined that the cost of clutter is not worth the benefit of randomly laying stuff on the first flat surface, then it's time for an intentional system.

Set aside aspirations of a Pinterest-perfect outcome. That can stop you in your tracks. Let go of the idea that you're leaving things out so you can see them; you can't. Start simple.

**Papers:** As you sort through your piles, you'll find papers that you didn't want to put away because they need action. Get an open-topped bin/basket (at least 12"x9"x5") and label it "Papers That Need Action." If desired, first place the papers in labeled

Please see **ORGANIZE** on P. 9

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## Food for 1 (or 2)

(August 2012)

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



### A Reader's Suggestion

One of our readers came into the office to ask me to do an article on cooking for one or two. She said her son is getting all the leftovers. I don't even know these people, but I don't want the son to be upset with me because his leftovers may stop because I answered her request.

Following a recipe for one or two servings is somewhat foreign to me. Ever since I started cooking beside my mom and learning what to do, there has always been a large family for which to cook. When I was in high school, since both my folks worked, it was my job to come home from school and get dinner started. There were seven in the family, so we didn't just cook a couple of potatoes or a thigh and wing of a chicken.

When I started living alone and doing my own cooking, I had to adjust the way I cooked. I am not that fond of some leftovers and never more than a day or two and then that is enough for me. I have learned to cook just what I will need for the day or two. However I do still make a whole pot of spaghetti sauce but I put it in two or three Ziploc bags and freeze it until I want to make spaghetti for dinner again. I only cook one or two pork chops or a couple of pieces of chicken at a time. I do buy frozen vegetables in the one pound bag and use what I need for each meal, and fold the bag up and hold it with a rubber band in the freezer until I need it again. The little boxes are fine for one or two, but I find the bags a lot more economical.

For those of you that read my article last month concerning my complaining about the apricots not being picked in the orchard belonging to Fresno State, I found the answer.

According to Mike Mosinski, Fresno State interim farm manager, "Back in March, when we had the storms come through, this particular orchard did get the hail damage." An insurance adjuster came out and found 80% of the crop was damaged. "We are getting an insurance claim on the damaged fruit. And then at that point economically, to try to go through and pick only what looks good

just wasn't a good business decision for us. So basically the fruit had to fall to the ground"

Allowing people to come in and pick the apricots wasn't possible because of a host of liability issues and university officials said that the price of apricots has dropped so much that this will probably be the last crop they grow with the orchard probably being pulled out by this fall.

What a shame.

Also in my last month's article, I said I had never heard of grilled artichokes. I was talking to my sister-in-law later, and she told me that at different family dinners both of her daughters brought grilled artichokes, each with a different sauce on them, but both delicious. So, I stand corrected and am anxious to try grilled artichokes.

*One of our readers came into the office to ask me to do an article on cooking for one or two.*

Do you use margarine, cottage cheese or even cream cheese in the tubs? Don't throw them away yet. Wash them out and store until you can use them again. Be sure to let them dry completely before stacking. They make perfect containers for leftovers. When you go to a family dinner and know there might be leftovers to bring home (like Thanksgiving dinner), have your cleaned out containers ready. Or the last time I made spaghetti sauce I used two of the containers to freeze the sauce until I would use it. But listen to the voice of experience, they DO NOT microwave! If you don't put them into the refrigerator to defrost, put them in a little warm water until the food

can slip out into a pan to heat.

After this reader asked me to do this article, I went online and found some recipes she might use. The first one is for chicken pot pie that makes three - of course, that depends on how much you eat.

### Easy Chicken Pot Pie

½ C canned cream of chicken soup  
¼ C milk  
1 C frozen mixed vegetables  
½ C cut up, cooked chicken breast  
½ C Bisquick  
¼ C milk

Heat oven to 400. In ungreased 1-quart casserole, stir together soup and ¼ C milk, stir

Please see **RECIPES** on P. 9

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**RECIPES** cont. from P. 8

in vegetables and chicken. Microwave uncovered on high 3 minutes, stir.

In small bowl, stir remaining ingredients until blended. Pour over chicken mixture. Bake uncovered about 20 minutes, or until crust is golden brown.

Bake 18 to 20 minutes on a cookie sheet in oven. Or grill 10 to 12 minutes in covered grill.

**Baked Chicken and Potato Dinner for Two**

2 boneless skinless chicken breast halves

2 T Dijon Mustard

½ C Bisquick

¾ pound small red potatoes cut into fourths

1 small red or green bell pepper, cut into ½ inch pieces

1 small onion, cut into 8

wedges

Cooking spray

2 T grated Parmesan cheese, if desired.

½ tsp. paprika

Heat oven to 400. Spray 13x9x2 inch baking dish with cooking spray.

Brush chicken with 1 T of the mustard, then coat with the Bisquick mix. Place 1 chicken breast half in each corner of pan. Place potatoes, bell pepper and onion in center of pan, brush vegetables with remaining mustard. Spray chicken and vegetables with cooking spray; sprinkle evenly with cheese and paprika. Bake 35 to 40 minutes, stirring vegetables after 20 minutes, until potatoes are tender and juice from the chicken is no longer pink when centers of thickest pieces are cut.

**ORGANIZE** cont. from P. 7

folders that identify the action needed — Bills to Pay, Calls to Make, Checks to Deposit, Events, etc. This is also where mail can temporarily reside, but if at any point the bin is full, then it's time to get busy and process mail and papers. Now, you have ONE PLACE to look for all the papers that need action. The rest—shred, recycle or file in a file cabinet.

**Projects:** Label another bin "Projects." Place only the projects from your piles that will fit comfortably in the bin and that you plan to do within the month. Make a list of too large and overflow projects. Place the list in the bin with a note saying where they are being stored. Relocate the overflow projects to the designated closet or cabinet. Now, you have a

manageable project load and just TWO PLACES to look when searching for a project.

**In 'n Out:** The third temporary home is for items coming and going — purses, wallets, backpacks, keys, etc. Install hooks near the door for the items that can hang. For others, use another open-topped bin. Be careful to use it only for "In 'n Out" items. Those may be sunglasses, library books, dry cleaning, things to return to stores or take to the office. Place it near the door. Now you have ONE AREA to look for your "In 'n Out" items.

Celebrate each time you nail a landing. You've earned it.

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**Senior Report****Scout Garden at Senior Center**

By *Melanie Williams*

The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center has quite a history since it was established in 1989 within the Madera Ranchos Community. The many working parts within the Senior Center serve the good of the community and older adults living in the surrounding area.

In the back area of the Senior Center property, next to the Treasure House, we have the Scout Garden. The previous owner of the property owned a nursery, so it seemed a natural transition to develop a nonprofit plant center. In the 1990s, local members Olan and Norma Williams developed the garden space to house and sell donated plants to the community. With help from Nina Lackey, they developed a network of companies who donated plants to the Center and in the past the garden area housed hundreds of potted plants and local nurseries and their owners were generous with plant donations as well.

Then the laws changed, and large companies could not donate their unwanted plant inventory to the Senior Center anymore. Now, the Center relies solely on donations from family-owned nurseries, Senior Center members and the community.

When the garden space needed to be remodeled, local Boy Scout Troop 118 stepped up to help. Under the leadership of Scout Master Loren Lee, the first three Eagle Scout projects were completed at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center in 2014. The garden area was cleared of old debris and new decomposed granite was laid down by Eagle Scout Henry

Coulthard. The solid foundation bed of granite allowed our team of gardeners safe walking paths to water and work with donated plants.

The next Eagle Scout project was to build repotting tables, courtesy of Eagle Scout Garrett Lee and a third Eagle Scout project was to build a support structure and shade covers over plants to protect them from direct sunlight. Eagle Scout Jacob Little welded the steel supports and set them in the ground.

Finally, in 2019, Eagle Scout Gregory Reitz designed a beautifully crafted solid wood sign for the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The Senior Center was very grateful for the hard work and dedication of the Eagle Scouts and their troop leaders. It was decided by the Senior Center members to name it the Scout Garden after Boy Scout Troop 118.

The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center hosts the Annual Home and Garden Show every April where plants are showcased for sale in the Scout Garden. Gardening supplies for the Scout Garden, like potting soil, fertilizer, pots, plants with roots and gardening tools, are always needed and encouraged to be donated.

"We are desperate for dirt or any gardening supplies," Senior Center member Fred Knorr said.

The Treasure House, Boutique and Scout Garden will be open on Saturday, Sept. 3 from 8 a.m. to noon during the Labor Day weekend.

Happy Labor Day from all the members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

Thought for September: "I like gardening — it's a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself." Alice Sebold



*Diane Maxfield inspects plants at the plant nursery in the Scout Garden at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.*

# SEMUCU speaks

By Igal Treibatch

## Applying for Grants for the Benefit of Our Community.

There are always community projects that we all want to see brought to fruition. Some examples may be a park, more help for the library, school staff and educational support and sports projects. Other examples include traffic and safety projects and projects thought of by you, our community. These projects keep our young focused, interested in learning and progressing themselves.

SEMUCU is a nonprofit organization working for the benefit of our community. It has a mission and an obligation to our people. Donations

are always helpful, but nonprofits can't always depend on the generosity of others. As the famous saying goes, "You can't always wait for the rain." SEMUCU's commitment to the community means we must be proactive and seek other means to cover the community's needs and challenges. This is a time in which grants have been helping us along the way. As a nonprofit, SEMUCU has opportunities to reach out and apply for grants on behalf of our community. SEMUCU offers to pay the tuition for any person willing to take a course in grant writing offered by a university, college, or legitimate entity for the use of helping Southeast Madera County.

Most Federal and State grants have a management fee budgeted into the grant. This could be as much as 20 percent of the grant awarded. That means a \$200,000 grant may have a \$40,000 management fee available to the grant manager. This is a great incentive for a person to look at helping our community while making

money. This type of collaboration is beneficial all the way around.

Grant projects generally may address any community needs and come in all sizes. They can be for \$1,000 or \$10 million. The difficult part is identifying which organizations offer the grants and how to qualify for them. Grants are written in a persuasive method that tells a story and highlights statistics that support the need expressed. A grant is only a part of a proposed solution. There must also be a budget showing the way the money is to be spent and description of expected outcomes. The most difficult part is to submit all the requirements that are important to the Grantor. That is where the grant writing skills are valuable. Understanding the intent of the grantor will help direct the grant application to its approval and funding. Once the project is awarded the grant, the work begins. Next, regular administrative documentation and financial statements are often required. Many grants include a budget for administrative charges by the grant manager/administrator, as mentioned earlier.

If you are interested in taking a grant class, check with us. After approval of the class, you may bring the completion certificate and SEMUCU will reimburse you for the tuition paid.

We at SEMUCU invite you all to come up with ideas for projects that our community needs and let us know your thoughts. We would love to help our people in any way we can.

For more information about anything related to SEMUCU, call 559-363-9095 or email us at info@semcu.org. You can also visit our website at www.semcu.org. Please join us for the once-a-month meeting and see what SEMUCU can do for you and your community. Our SEMUCU meetings take place virtually on the third Monday of every month and last about an hour. Next meeting is on Monday, Sept. 19 at 6 p.m. If you would like a link to the virtual meeting, please give us a call and provide your email address. To join by phone, call 312-757-3121 and use access code 715-657-949.

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## Three Blind Mice and a Squirrel

By Betty Van Valkenburg

One might expect Joe Biden's Democrat handlers and Democrat-elected officials to occasionally stumble across and institute a policy that is good for the country. Even a blind squirrel finds a nut now and then. But the Democrat party's three blind mice who control the entire federal government – President Joe Biden, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Leader Chuck Schumer – have botched every major policy decision inflicting misery on American citizens through crushing inflation, product and food shortages, sky-high gas prices, rampant violent crime and lawlessness, misguided lockdowns, school closures, insane Covid policies and an invasion of the southern border adding to crime and drug-related deaths. Meanwhile, America itself is losing influence on the international stage and some say we're becoming the laughingstock of the world.

### Disasterous Decisions

Not only has their every decision been disastrous, but they seem to have taken pains to insure the very worst outcomes. First, from a pool of millions of qualified American citizens, they chose Kamala Harris as their vice-presidential nominee, perhaps the only person in America as clueless and inept as Biden himself.

They ignored sound military advice and the shameful Afghanistan evacuation of just one year ago was a deadly and costly disas-

ter, leaving desperate American citizens and billions of dollars of American military equipment behind. CNN – of all places – pointed out the absurdity of events, saying: “The [military] equipment is now in a country that is controlled by the very enemy the U.S. was trying to drive out over the past two decades: The Taliban.”

They intentionally opened the gates to a migrant invasion across our southern border. According to the New York Post, “The number of migrants arrested at the US-Mexico border ... is on pace to top 2 million for the first time ever.” That is the number of those arrested and does not include “got-aways.” Those 2-million-plus migrants include drug and sex traffickers and criminals of all stripes.

They cancelled successful Republican-instituted policies that had been slowing the migrant influx: Construction of the border wall and the Remain in Mexico agreement. Fentanyl, most of which comes across the border with migrants, is now the number-one cause of death for Americans ages 18 to 45 – surpassing suicide, Covid-19 and car accident-related deaths. Shame on Biden, Pelosi and Schumer – Mickey, Minnie and Dopey!

Their energy policies are of course proven disasters. While delivering on Biden's ridiculous promise to do away with fossil fuels, based on the lie of “climate change,” his Mickey Mouse crew has unfortunately – and predictably – destroyed the former Republican administration's good economy as well.

Canada has been our primary foreign oil supplier; but on day one in office, Biden revoked the permit for the Canadian XL pipeline extension which would now be carrying 830,000 barrels per day of heavy oil-sand crude to the United States, and he curtailed domestic gas and oil production while forcing energy companies to pay higher royalties for the oil and gas they extract from the newly leased land – adding

more to prices at the pump. The predictable and expected results have been skyrocketing gas prices and inflation in general, a tanking economy and dependence on unfriendly countries for oil and gas needed to live our lives – while making those countries richer and our country poorer. Even a blind squirrel should have seen this disaster coming.

To add more insult to more injury, good ol' Joe announced that he would release more than 180 million barrels of oil from the U.S. strategic petroleum reserve; oil that is stockpiled for national emergencies here at home. But, lo and behold, the oil is being sold to our adversary, China. Can the deaf, dumb and blind “mice” be charged with treason?

### Why are they purposely wrecking the country?

OK, we know that powerful Democrats and some Republican RINO cohorts, purposely or not – and we suspect that their actions are purposeful – are working overtime to turn America into a third-world country or dictatorship. Why? How can Americans spend so much time, money and effort to gain the nation's highest offices and then make decisions guaranteeing destruction of our beloved country? This writer, being a strict conservative constitutionalist who jealously guards every freedom, I cannot imagine a single plausible answer. But there does appear to be a concerted political effort to bring down the country, perhaps to rebuild it as a dictatorship or into some other entity more to the would-be rulers' liking.

We do know that the World Economic Forum's “Great Reset” is designed to completely change the global economy and is embraced by Joe Biden and his America-Last circle, and we will cover it in coming articles. Meanwhile, you can research the Great Reset through quick internet searches. It is neither a secret nor a “theory.” Its proponents are intent on changing the world, and they proudly publish their plans. It is up to us to take heed.

## \$12.9M to Valley For Clean Trucks

The California Air Resources Board has granted Valley Air District funds to replace heavy-duty trucks with the cleanest technologies

On Aug. 18, the Valley Air District Governing Board unanimously voted to accept \$12.9 million in additional California Air Resources Board funding to replace heavy-duty trucks through the Valley Air District's highly successful grant program.

“Grant funds such as these recognize the importance of partnerships to expedite emission reductions in the San Joaquin Valley,” stated Samir Sheikh, Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. “With these funds the State is acknowledging the Valley's unique challenges, and we appreciate these much-needed resources.”

Reducing emissions from mobile sources is key to the San Joaquin Valley meeting federal ambient air quality standards. Heavy-duty trucks, like the ones targeted under this funding, are the single largest source of Nitrogen oxides and diesel particulate matter in the Valley, and are critical to ensuring that goods are moved throughout the State and nation. Emissions from heavy-duty vehicles are primarily under the regulatory jurisdiction of state and federal government, and voluntary incentive programs are critical to transitioning fleets to the next generation of cleaner technologies and achieving reductions needed to meet air quality standards.

The District's successful truck incentive programs have repowered, retrofitted, or replaced over 7,300 heavy-duty trucks with cleaner alternatives. A complete list of program requirements can be found at [www.valleyair.org/grants](http://www.valleyair.org/grants) or by calling program staff at 559-230-5800.

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## "Why should I join the Chamber of Commerce?"

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2. Because the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is a close-knit organization in which members support each other's businesses.
3. Because the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce requires financial support in order to perform its job of increasing the economic prosperity of the Ranchos.
4. Because the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce unifies the public spirit of the Ranchos and directs it into useful and constructive channels that are not limited to business.
5. Because I feel a sense of personal obligation to improve the quality of life in the Ranchos.

### New Member

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

**Jordan Wamhoff**

## "When's the NEXT Chamber of Commerce Meeting?"

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, Wednesday, September 14 at 6:30 p.m., 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C in the Maywood Center. Come join us and see what's going on in your community. Call us at 645-4001.

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## The Bookshelf

# Be a Friend of the Library Today

By Jerrica Edmundson

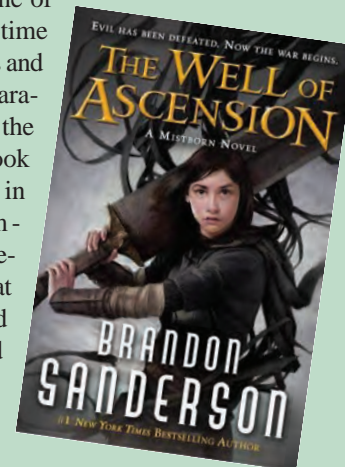
August brought our third Friends of the Library conference room takeover, where they convert our conference room into an expanded book sale each quarter, giving access to a much larger selection of books to look through. If you missed this chance to go through the sale room, don't worry – it will be back in November. Any and all donations acquired during these book sales go straight to the Friends of the Ranchos Library and they turn right around and put that money to use right here at the Ranchos Library, helping out with programs and improvements around the branch. The Friends of the Ranchos Library have been directly responsible for getting us our awesome iPad setup for the kids, adding to the furniture purchased to create our seating areas at the new branch and even supporting the Summer Reading Program to allow us to have the "take and make" crafts and prizes each year. Our Friends group has been going strong since the original setup of the library and still meets the first Thursday of each month (with slight exceptions at times) to go over how best to help here at the library. We love our Friends. If you would like to join the Friends of the Ranchos Library, let us know and we can get you any needed information.

On a much sadder note, I must officially announce that this month will be our last with Brian here at the branch. He will be leaving as of Aug. 19, and I am very sad to see him go — but he is just shifting gears so he can dedicate more time to his schooling, and I support that one hundred percent. We are still accepting applications for volunteers to help, and they will absolutely be needed during this transition time, so if you have the time, we absolutely have the need for help with things like shelving and organization around the branch. Stop in for an application at our reference desk any time during business hours.

Now for the fun part: **Jerrica's Book-**

**shelf:** *The Well of Ascension* by Brandon Sanderson

This is the second book in a solid re-read of the *Mistborn* series for me. This series is one of my all-time favorites and in preparation for the new book coming in November I decided that I needed to read through the entire series (just like I did



with Harry Potter back in the day). The *Mistborn* series is written by Brandon Sanderson which means that it has one thing guaranteed that you can't be so sure of in any other fantasy series: There is no profanity, no indecency and no positive portrayals of drug or alcohol use. There is a moderate amount of violence, as there are fight scenes, but even that is not excessive or brutal in nature. I am proud to be able to suggest these books to nearly anyone, as there aren't any potentials for inappropriate material.

The series specifically follows a young girl named Vin, who is a street urchin in the city of Luthadel. She has an uncanny ability to negotiate with people and succeed merely by urging them with her mind. One day she runs into a man named Kelsier who informs her that she is innately using an ability called Allomancy to "burn" the traces of brass in her drinking water to soothe the emotions of people around her. The story continues with their development and builds a truly incredible world with an amazing storyline that I can't suggest enough. If you like fantasy, you need to read this book series.

GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

stupid thing found the wide-open door and made its escape.

I immediately slammed the door then locked it along with every other door and window in the house because it might suddenly grow opposable thumbs and want to get back in. I kept the beanie on and the broom and dustpan close, you know, just in case. Once I managed to catch my breath, I

called my dad. His first concern was to make sure I didn't grab a shotgun and blast a bunch of holes in the walls. I wanted to be insulted, but as I seriously considered baptizing the bat by fire, I decided to let it go. In the end I did manage to calm down. The bat was gone. I was alive. I even cracked my bedroom window that night to get a little breeze; I slept with the shotgun though.

Let's not get silly.

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# Classified

## Carpet Cleaning

**Pinnacle Carpet Care and Upholstery** - "Dries in hours, not days." BBB A+ rating. Golden Valley Chamber member. **Call Bruce today for a free estimate. 559-676-0760.**

## Chimney Sweep

**Paul the Chimney Sweep Guy**- 29 years of experience. Wood stove inserts, pellet stoves and fireplaces. Also clean clothes dryer vents. **REMEMBER: THINK SAFETY, BURN SAFELY! Call 559-908-9332.**

## Construction

New construction, remodels, room additions, barns and patios. Lic. #719500. **Call 559-970-4476.**

## For Sale

For sale -- Large bird cage. 20"x20"x28" high. Rolling stand 27" high w/shelf. White. Like mew. \$250. **Call 559-312-0891 and please leave message.**

## Help Wanted

Reliable person to clean horse corral every other weekend. Training for work will be provided before starting. Approximate work time is one hour. \$20. Need two references. **If interested, please call 559-312-0891. Leave message.**

## Housecleaning

**Over 40 yrs of experience - References available -** Lupe's House Cleaning, residential, one-time service, move-ins/move-outs, windows, construction clean up. **LupePrado25@yahoo.com. 559-916-1528 or 650-771-2915.**

## Recyclables Pick Up

**KEEP IT LOCAL - FREE RECYCLABLE PICKUP - KIDS 4 RECYCLING** offers pickup of all recyclable materials including newspaper, shredded paper, containers, plastic, glass, aluminum and cardboard. **Call Diana at 999-6832. Funds support Ranchos community organizations.**

## Tractor/Trenching Services

**BOBCAT WORK - DRILLING POST-HOLES**- Trees - Trenching - Clean Up. **TRACTOR WORK** Discing - Rototilling - Mowing - Scraping - Stump Grinding. **Call John at 908-1066.**

**Tractor Work** - House Pads, lot leveling, driveways, trenching, concrete work and underground utilities installed. Lic. #719500. **Call 559-970-4476.**

## Window Cleaning Services

**Most windows \$5 inside/out** - Screen, track, sills. Remove hard water stains on home windows, shower doors and car windows. Cobweb removal too. Fully insured. **Call Nick at 285-1723. Free estimates.**

• M.F. in Washington writes: "For taking to a party: Melt vanilla chips in the microwave, adding by handfuls and heating for about 15 seconds at a time. After 15 seconds, stir and repeat until chips have melted. Then dip small clusters of green grapes into the melted vanilla chips." • "I read your tips in a Rochelle, Illinois, newspaper. The paper is sent to me by a friend, and I love the tips. Here is mine: For homemade spray and wash, mix 2 cups of water, 2 tablespoons of white vinegar, 1 tablespoon of baking soda and 1 tablespoon of dish soap." - K.W. in Tennessee • When purchasing school supplies, remember that paper, pencils, etc., typically aren't on sale mid-year, so stocking up is a good idea. Just make sure the deal you are getting is a good one. Then put it away for distribution later! • I lay out my school clothes and even my hairbrush and stuff to get ready. I put my shoes and socks by the front door. I am always ready before my sister, and I get to watch TV while she is running around. -- R.G. in Florida • Pint-size water bottles are great for refilling with milk. The milk boxes at the grocery store are so expensive, and this way, I can control how chocolate the chocolate milk is. -- C.C. in Oregon

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

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The Ranchos Independent classified rates are **crazy** cheap and **crazy** effective!

**TO ADVERTISE call 559-645-0634**

## SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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## GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

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

	÷		+					9
+		×		÷				
	-		×					5
÷		-		+				
	+		-					10
3		4				10		
1	3	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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# STOP THE PAIN!

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D.O.T. Physicals • Drug Testing  
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& rehabilitation center

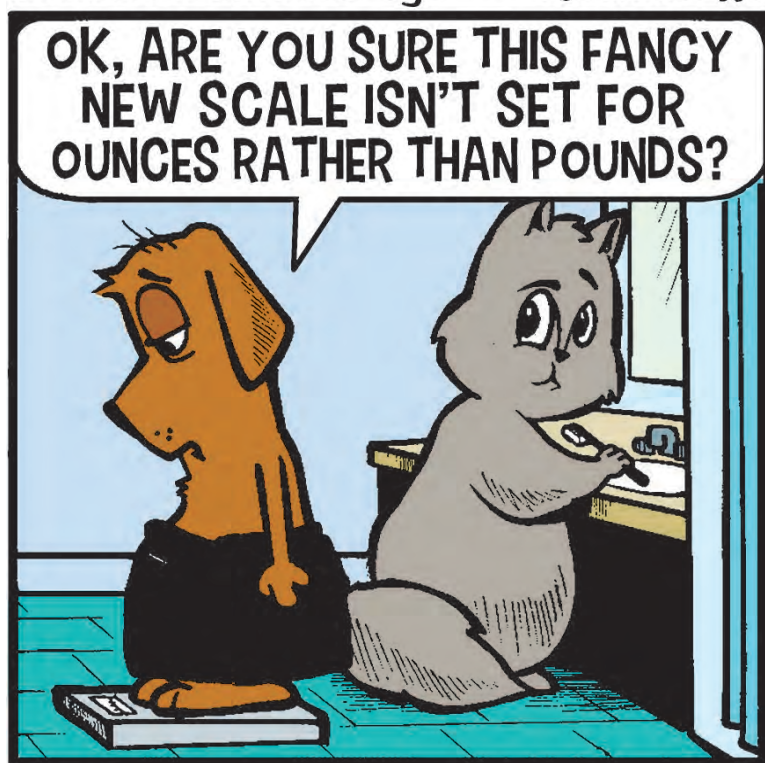
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Specializing in  
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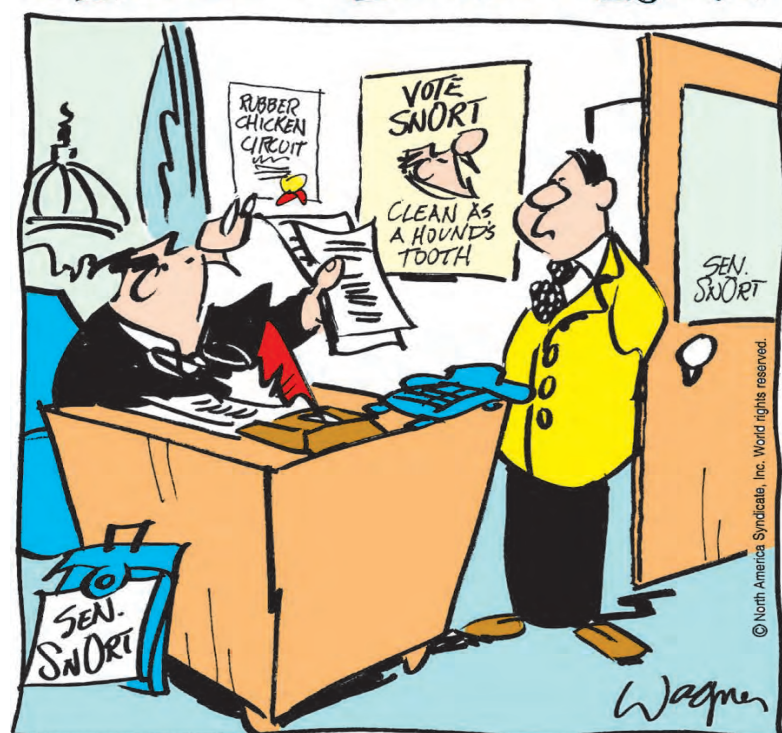


Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

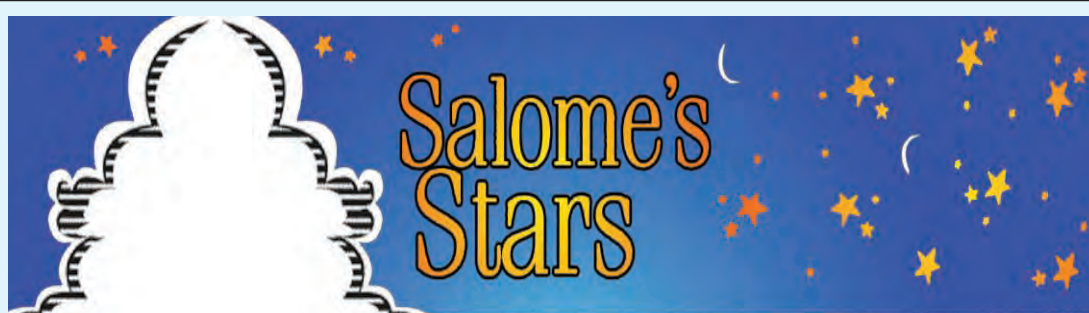


ADS  
LOGOS  
PR  
MARKETING  
645-0634

GRIN and BEAR IT Wagner



"How do I feel about this proposal, Figby?"



**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Aspects favor socializing with family and friends, but a workplace situation could intrude. No use grumbling, Lamb. Just do it, and then get back to the fun times.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) There's still time for you Ferdinands and Fernandas to relax and sniff the roses. But a major work project looms and will soon demand much of your attention through the next week.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) Your enthusiasm persuades even the toughest doubters to listen to what you're proposing. But don't push too hard, or you'll push them away. Moderate for best results.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) Your energy levels are rising, and you feel like you can handle anything that the job requires. While that's great, don't isolate yourself. Keep your door open to your workplace colleagues for sound advice.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) A workplace change could lead to that promotion you've been hoping for. But you'll have to face some tough competition before the Lion can claim his or her share of the goodies.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) Your rigidity regarding a difficult workplace situation could be the reason your colleagues aren't rushing to your assistance. Try being more flexible in your demands.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) That uneasy mood could be your Libran inner voice reminding you that while it's great to be with your new friends, you need to take care not to ignore your old ones.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) A sudden spate of criticism could shake the Scorpion's usually high sense of self-confidence. Best advice: You made a decision you believed in -- now defend it.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Your reluctance to help restart a stalled relationship could be traced to unresolved doubts about your partner's honesty. Rely on a trusted friend's advice.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) The capricious Sea Goat is torn between duty and diversion. Best advice: Do both. Tend to your everyday chores, and then go out and enjoy your well-earned fun time.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) Cutting back on some of your activities for a few days helps to restore your energy levels. You should be feeling ready to tackle your many projects early next week.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) A co-worker might secretly be harping on about your work to your mutual colleagues. But some associates will come to your defense, and the situation will ultimately work to your advantage.

Born this Week

Your ambition makes you a success at whatever you choose to do -- especially if it's in the world of the performing arts.

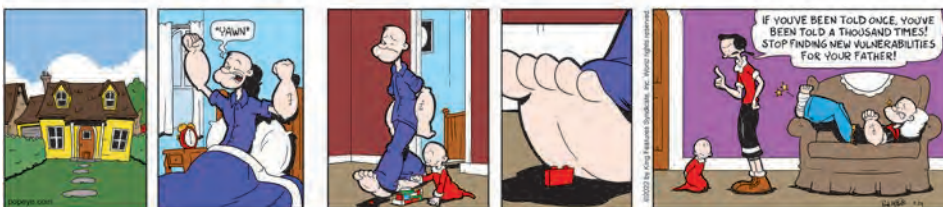
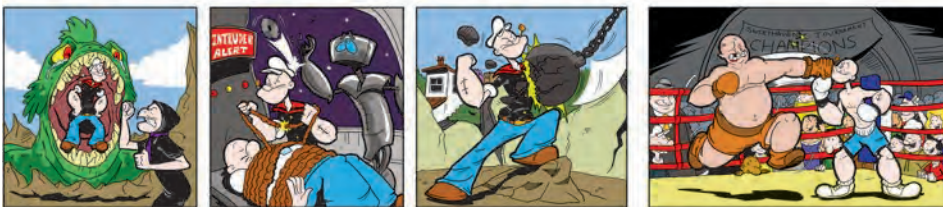
# FUN PAGES

## Kids' Maze



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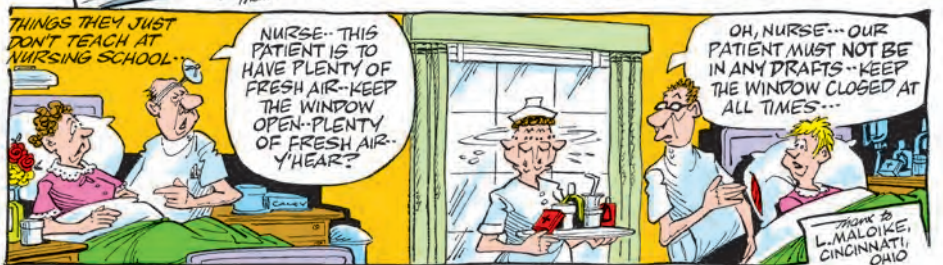
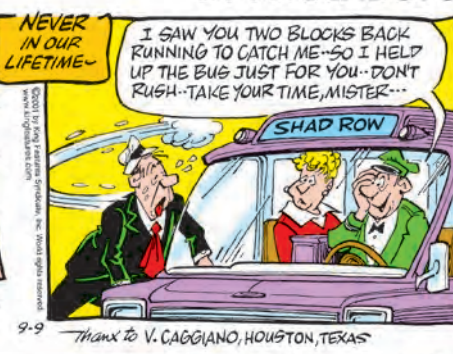
## TIGER



## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



## BY AL SCADUTO



**FIND TWINS!** Our viewer friend claims that two of the 12 fish in this tank look enough alike to be twins. Which two?  
One twin is at bottom left corner.

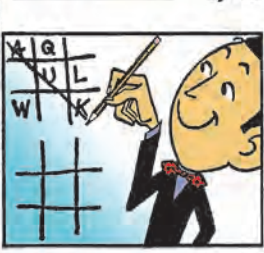
**SAY WHAT!** Financial circles may say this or that, and folks may not pay attention. But there are financial circles to which attention is paid every day. What are they?  
Half dollars, quarters, dimes, nickels and pennies.

**SQUARE DEAL!** Challenge: You are asked to insert digits 0, 1, 2 and 3 in the diagram at right in such a way that each three-number row across, vertically and diagonally totals six.

Properly distributed, each of the four digits will appear in all vertical and diagonal—but not in horizontal—rows.  
Present numbers remain in place.  
Time limit: 60 seconds.

## Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman



### APPLY NEW TACTICS TO TICK-TACK-TOE

**YOU CAN** have some fun playing this challenging variation of tick-tack-toe.

Here's how:  
Two players take turns inserting letters rather than X's and O's in an attempt to complete a three-letter word in a straight or diagonal line.

Words may read either left or right, up or down.

Opponents, of course, try to block formation of words at every turn. First player to complete an acceptable three-letter word wins.

Any letter of the alphabet may be used. Proper names are excluded.

Make up your own rules if necessary.

0		0
	1	1
	2	2
3		3

## Wishing Well

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

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

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**MAGIC MAZE** ● ASSOCIATED WITH CROWDS

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: OPPOSITE OF CHEERING

Applause	Marching	Queue	The wave
Audience	Mass	Riot	Throng
Cheering	Mob	Stampede	Troop
Horde	Multitude	Surge	

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## TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

- AD SLOGANS: Which product's advertising slogan is "Look, Ma, no cavities!"?
- MOVIES: The movie "300" is based on which famous historical battle?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: How many presidents have served more than two terms?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: How far can a skunk's spray reach?
- GEOGRAPHY: What is the southernmost major city on the continent of Africa?
- LANGUAGE: What is a funambulist?
- HISTORY: Who was the first woman to complete the Boston Marathon (unofficially)?
- TELEVISION: What was the name of the cruise ship on the sitcom "The Love Boat"?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Which colors make up the five-ring Olympic symbol?
- FOOD & DRINK: Which plant produces cacao beans, which are used to make chocolate?

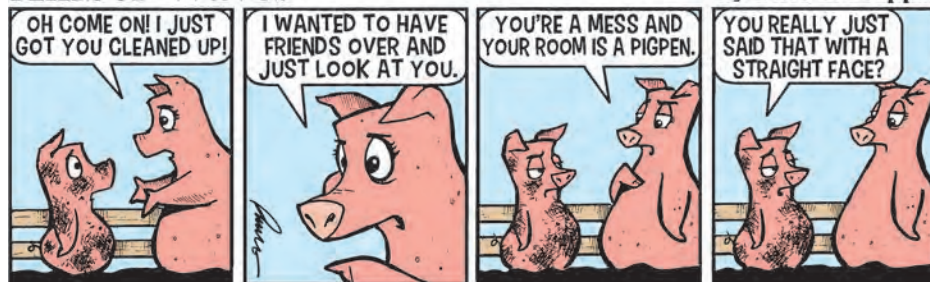
### Answers

- Crest.
- The Battle of Thermopylae.
- One, Franklin D. Roosevelt.
- About 10-20 feet.
- Cape Town.
- Tightrope walker.
- Bobbi Gibb, 1966. The race was opened to women in 1972.
- Pacific Princess.
- Blue, yellow, red, green and black.
- Cacao trees.

Click on "Local News" at

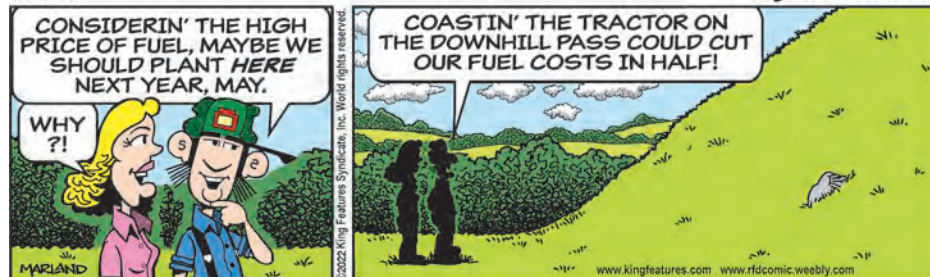
### Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



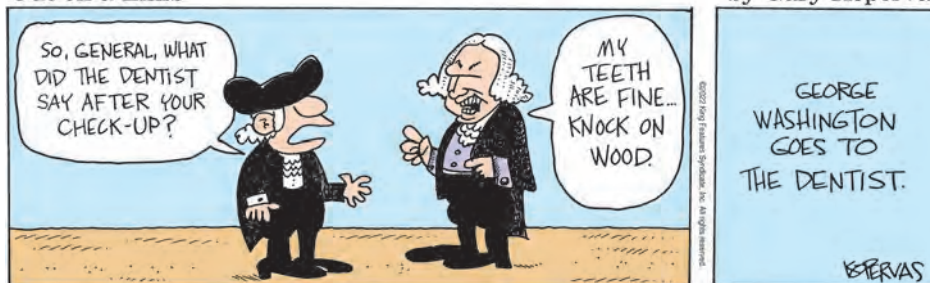
### R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



### Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



### The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



### Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



### HOCUS-FOCUS

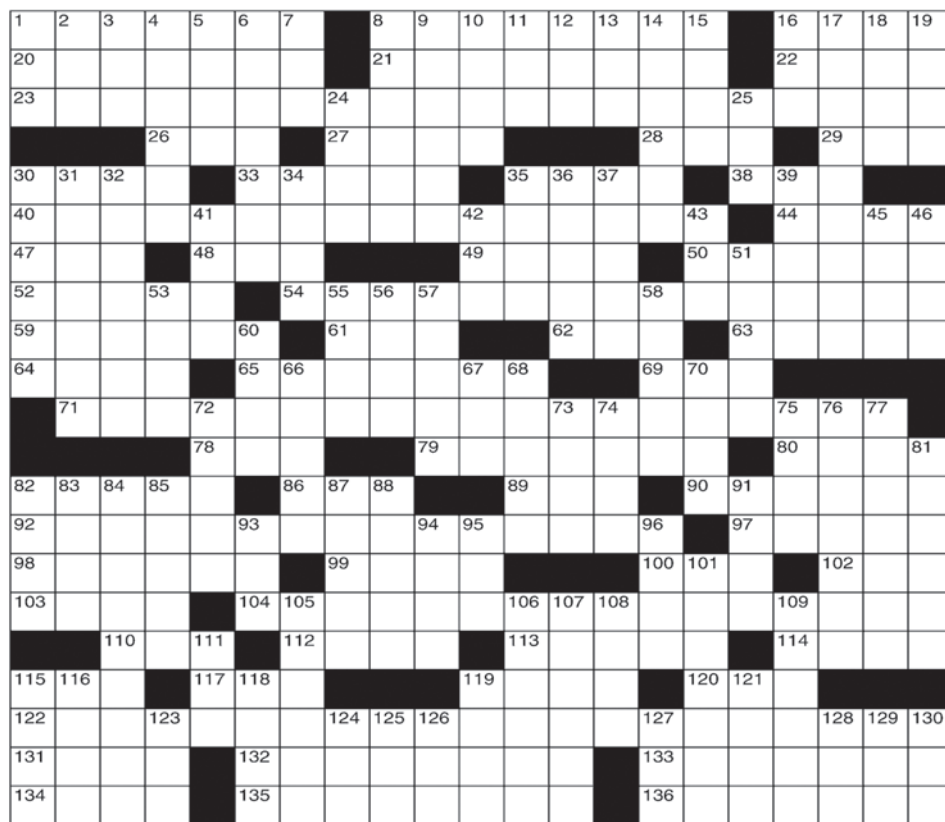
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Neckline differs. 2. Shoes are missing. 3. Towel end is missing. 4. Sneaker is shorter. 5. Trunks differ. 6. Net is smaller.

## Super Crossword



#### ACROSS

- 1 Capital of Kenya
- 8 Cleared up some space
- 16 Link up
- 20 Brought into harmony
- 21 Sign of a warm welcome
- 22 Meara of comedy
- 23 Start of a riddle
- 26 Cock-a-doodle- —
- 27 Safecracker, informally
- 28 Vinyl albums, for short
- 29 Chose, as on a survey
- 30 Batman player West
- 33 Peter of "Casablanca"
- 35 Stare in disbelief
- 38 Baby's cry
- 40 Riddle, part 2
- 44 Filmdom, in France
- 47 Stephen of "Utopia"
- 48 Old Russ. state
- 49 Spring flower
- 50 Downhiller's gear holder
- 52 Humane U.S. org.
- 54 Riddle, part 3
- 59 Routine-bound
- 61 Tic-tac-toe winning row
- 62 Waikiki souvenir
- 63 Rejoinder to "Not so!"
- 64 Capital of Qatar
- 65 In Minnesota or Montana
- 69 Extra NHL periods
- 71 Riddle, part 4
- 78 Supersecret govt. group
- 79 Tetley tidbit
- 80 Quote a long time
- 82 Fine violin, informally
- 86 Stage design
- 89 New Year in Hanoi
- 90 Election turndown
- 92 Riddle, part 5
- 97 Allow entry
- 98 "Ha! I was right!"
- 99 Thailand, formerly
- 100 Pal, in Caen
- 102 — -Magnon
- 103 French WWII battle city
- 104 End of the riddle
- 110 "Wolf" cable channel
- 112 Followers: Suffix
- 113 "You beat me"
- 114 Gum globs
- 115 Facility with hot tubs
- 117 Gamble
- 119 Subpoena, e.g.
- 120 Go fast, quaintly
- 122 Riddle's answer
- 131 Atoll unit
- 132 Trip in a "stretch" car
- 133 Stacked messily
- 134 It may grow on a rock
- 135 Reduces to a fine mist
- 136 Capable of being stretched out
- 1 Rural refusal
- 2 Sports-related: Abbr.
- 3 Suffix with Seattle
- 4 "Walk This Way" rap trio
- 5 Aware of
- 6 Looks upon
- 7 Suffix with cyan-
- 8 Lawn-Boy products
- 9 Orbital point farthest from Earth
- 10 C-H linkup
- 11 Suffix with butyl
- 12 Jogged
- 13 Hobbit's foe
- 14 Brunch staple
- 15 Abbr. on a new car's sticker
- 16 Face part
- 17 Being displayed
- 18 Pertaining to
- 19 Require
- 24 Novice
- 25 Chicago-to-Memphis dir.
- 30 Frightened
- 31 Fails to
- 32 Plains tribe
- 34 — vez (again, in Spain)
- 35 Teri of "Tootsie"
- 36 Disney mermaid name
- 37 Old hat
- 39 Etchers' liquids
- 41 Jacob's twin
- 42 Bake-off entry
- 43 That, in Oviedo
- 45 Small iPod
- 46 Big name in waffles
- 51 Jewish deli treat
- 53 Rugged cliff
- 55 Zero
- 56 Way in or out
- 57 Most awful
- 58 New York county
- 59 whose seat is Owego
- 60 Syllables of rebuke
- 66 Lunar stage
- 67 — kwon do
- 68 Hilton rival
- 70 Texter's "Catch ya later"
- 72 Not finish later than
- 73 — Three Lives"
- 74 — pot (sinus clearer)
- 75 Roof feature
- 76 "Yeah, understood"
- 77 Turned in
- 81 Spanish men
- 82 Some NCOs
- 83 Hit the horn
- 84 Routines to determine who's present
- 85 Append
- 87 Snaky letters
- 88 Be snaky
- 91 Mishmash
- 93 7'6" cager Ming
- 94 "Witness" actor Lukas
- 95 Novelist Tan
- 96 Dits' partners, in Morse code
- 101 Biofuel option
- 105 Birdbrain
- 106 Fiery lecture
- 107 Antipasto morsels
- 108 Carry
- 109 Annoying sorts
- 111 Pistons' org.
- 115 Be fishy?
- 116 Coin of Cali
- 118 Fitzgerald of song
- 119 Phenom
- 121 Tehran's land
- 123 French article
- 124 Spanish for "I love"
- 125 — Kippur
- 126 — Lanka
- 127 Plum center
- 128 Half of VI
- 129 Pipe fitting
- 130 Visualize

# FUN PAGES

# **SEM CU**

**south east madera county united**

## **Anyone with Domestic Well or Water Quality Problems**



**If you are experiencing domestic well or water quality problems, contact “Self-Help Enterprises.” Qualified people may have a water tank installed or have bottled water delivered. Call Drought Support at 559-820-1685 or contact them at [droughtsupport@selfhelpenterprises.org](mailto:droughtsupport@selfhelpenterprises.org).**

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

**Our next meeting is Monday, September 19 at 6 p.m.**

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

**Please let us know if you have any questions.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**559-363-9095 • [www.semcu.org](http://www.semcu.org) • [info@semcu.org](mailto:info@semcu.org)**