

# The Ranchos Independent



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Volume 11 Issue 12 2015

The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County

50¢

## The Ranchos Independent

Volume 11 Issue 12 2015 The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County 50¢

### Brett Frazier

The Ranchos resident is the new supervisor for District 1

He opens up to the Ranchos Independent about his thoughts on District 1, the Ranchos and his vision for our future

By DJ Becker

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Volume 11 Issue 12 2015 The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County 50¢

### A Recall in the Ranchos?

AREA 1	AREA 2	AREA 4
NEAL	CRUMPTON	MOSELEY

Recent actions by the Golden Valley Unified School District Board of Trustees has many Ranchos citizens asking about organizing a recall election for Trustees Neal, Crumpton and Moseley.

Facebook is buzzing, there's a website at [avastrecall.com](http://avastrecall.com) and talk of the Madera County Grand Jury investigating. What's going on?

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### BRAINS & BRAWN

In addition to dominating academics in the Central Valley, Liberty High School is equally as fierce in athletics.

by Christi McKinney

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### Coming to a well near you ... like yours.

Madera County Board of Supervisors Take Action on the Brought - But is it Too Little Too Late?

By Karen Petryna

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### At Last!

The wellhead of the new Dublin Well is encased in a 5-foot cube of concrete in preparation for coming online in mid-June and offering relief to a thirsty community.

Photo courtesy of Karen Petryna

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### Man-Made Drought: A Guide to California's Water Wars

By Congressman Devin Nunes

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# Looking Back: Taking a look back at the top stories in the Ranchos for 2015

## The Ranchos Independent

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### RECALL ELECTION IS HERE

- absentee ballot in the mail Aug. 3
- what does your vote mean?
- who can vote?
- who's running?

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### ON THE EDGE OF MADERA'S WATER

Madera Irrigation District's General Manager, Thomas Greci (left) and Chief of Operations and Maintenance, John Bese, have a vision for the future of Madera's water and explain the Ranchos' role.

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### Ranchos Recall Landslide

Voters remove board members by 80% margin

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### MD-10a get a "do-over"

THIS time will the County get it right?

by Karen Petryna

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### FMAS the art of responsible pet ownership in Madera County

By Karen Petryna

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**In This Issue**

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## Ranchos Woman Charged with Murder of Her Daughter

By DJ Becker

Horroric allegations of child abuse, torture and murder have rocked the normally quiet community of the Madera Ranchos since the Nov. 25 arrest of long-time resident, 42-year-old Amy Louise Chavoya, on murder charges.

Shocked and appalled residents shook their heads in disbelief and wondered how such allegations, if true, could happen or go unnoticed here.

Chavoya has pled not guilty to the charge of murder, three counts of torture, three counts of willful cruelty to a child and dissuading a witness by force or threat. She is being held at the Madera County Jail without bail, according to Chavoya defense attorney Steven Geringer.

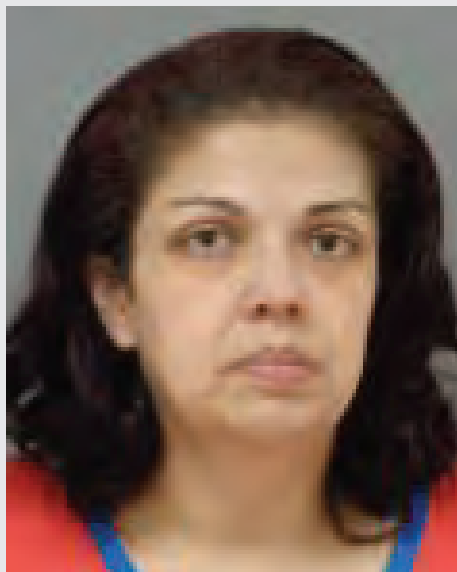
Chavoya is accused of physically abusing the two adopted children she and her husband had been foster parents of since 2011, along with at least three other children in their home, and inflicting the injuries that resulted in the death of her adopted 12-year-old daughter, Mariah Flores, on Oct. 10, 2014.

### Frightening Allegations

Allegations of scalding showers, beatings, starvation and the use of a stun-type gun as punishments at the hands of Amy Chavoya have been introduced by the recent testimony of the victim's 14-year-old biological brother – according to media reports – who also claims he was subjected to similar abuse along with other children in the home. The boy claims he was fearful to come forward with these allegations of abuse and of having to remain in the home, prior to the death of his sister. All remaining children in the home were removed from the home in March of 2015 by the department of Child Protective Services.

According to statements made by Madera County District Attorney David

Linn, his office may be seeking the death penalty for Amy Chavoya. Chavoya's husband, San Joaquin Sheriff's Deputy Gerardo Flores, may also soon face arrest on felony charges related to the case, according to Linn. Linn is also reportedly looking into whether a separate investi-



Ranchos resident, Amy Louise Chavoya, 42, has been charged by the Madera County District Attorney in the murder of her 12-year-old daughter, Mariah Flores.

gation is warranted into the handling of the Chavoya children's case by Madera County social services department.

Recent court testimony revealed that at least 20 calls had been made to the Department of Madera County Child Protective Services, along with four written reports, when Mariah's elementary school teachers had reportedly become concerned about the girl's high number of absences from school, her many unexplained black eyes, bruises and other injuries, consistently poor hygiene, underweight appearance and other unusual behaviors like food stealing and attempts at food hoarding while at school.

Amy Chavoya allegedly told teachers and investigators that the bruises and other injuries had come from sibling violence, self-injury or were attributable to the girl's mental disorder. At least a dozen significant dents were said to have been found in the dry wall of the Chavoya home by investigators, some of them overlapping and stained with blood and hair, including one in the girl's bedroom.

A local medical expert who subsequently reviewed the medical reports and autopsy reports for the preliminary hearing said he found indications of several older small circular burns and other possibly older internal injuries with the girl's body, and they were not consistent with self-inflicted injuries.

Defense attorney Steven Geringer said the cause of the girl's death had initially been ruled accidental and was only later treated as a homicide.

"At this point the court is not allowed to weigh testimony... during this preliminary hearing the court found the reasonable suspicion for a holding order, (to determine if) a murder took place, under the special circumstances of torture which makes it a potential death penalty case, or clearly life in prison without the possibility of parole. We are in the process of preparing her defense and are waiting to see what the district attorney does," Geringer said. "The forensic pathologist who did the autopsy on October 14th of 2014 issued his report listing the cause of death as a tear to the mesenteric (artery) which caused the internal bleeding."

Geringer said the pathologist does not make any determination other than the cause of death.

"From there it (went) to the Sheriff's Department for investigation. After their investigation ... her cause of death was

Please see **MURDER** on P. 3

## 2015 • Top Ranchos Stories

from the pages of the Ranchos Independent

### 1 Recall Election/February

• This was an on-going story that began in February then culminated in September with the successful recall of three sitting GVUSD school board members. Tempers flared on the subject but the final tally was a landslide against the three.

### 2 Murder Charges/December

• Murder is not something usually talked about in the Ranchos, and particularly not the murder of a 12-year-old child, but those are the charges being leveled by the District Attorney against Ranchos resident Amy Louise Chavoya. This story is just developing.

### 3 Dublin Well/May

• After what seemed like an eternity, the final steps of preparing the Dublin Well so that it could finally go on-line in June happened. After a season of dead lawns and landscapes, the community was relieved that at least one solution to the Ranchos' on-going water problems was done.

### 4 Brett Frazier/January

• The Ranchos' newest County Supervisor took office in January and sat down with the Ranchos Independent and shared his views on where we have been, where we are and where we're going. Frazier is the first Supervisor in a long time to be from the Ranchos.

### 5 Water Meters/April

• The State of California and Madera County have both decided that all new wells in the Ranchos area will be required to have water meters on them. You pay for the well, you pay for the electricity, but somehow the State and the County want a say in the process. We'll see.

### 6 Andy Alvarado/September

• Dismissal of the Golden Valley Superintendent in February was the flashpoint for the recall election of three GVUSD board members. When they were successfully recalled, one of the first acts of the new board was to reinstate Alvarado, to the praise of the community.

### 7 LHS Football/November

• With 1 second left, an Exeter field goal ended the Hawks' 3-year reign as Valley Champs on a cold November night. There's always next year.

## Another New Well for MD-10a — and It's For Free?

By Karen Petryna

On Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6 p.m., about 30 Ranchos residents met with representatives from the State and the County at the Ranchos Middle School cafeteria to discuss connecting the Valley Teen Ranch (VTR) water system to the Madera Ranchos Maintenance District-10a (MD-10a) water system in a consolidation project that would involve a brand new free drinking water well granted by the State. One of the State's representatives, Kassy Chauhan, a Merced District En-

gineer with the State Water Resource Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, said that due to a reorganization and other factors, her department had recently come under heavy pressure by the Environmental Protection Agency to replace VTR's arsenic-contaminated well as soon as possible with a new one. She said that her department was very pro-consolidation and their preference would be to connect VTR and their new well to MD-10a so that VTR would not have to maintain their own separate public water

system for VTR's 30 residents. And if a majority of MD-10a residents agreed, she said, they would benefit from a "once in a lifetime opportunity" for a free well.

### Better System is Net Effect

The Dec. 9 meeting opened with District I Supervisor Brett Frazier who said that all the residents of MD-10a had received a notice of the meeting in the mail. Ahmad Alkhayyat, the County's Interim Public

Please see **FREE WELL** on P. 13

**MURDER** cont. from P. 2

ruled accidental by the office of the Sheriff/Coroner's office in February 2015. There is a death certificate that says this death is accidental," Geringer said.

**Mariah Reportedly Collapsed at Home**

"The records show this girl collapsed, on October 10th, 2014. They called 911. The fire department showed up, EMS showed up and then law en-

forcement showed up. Her father gave her CPR until the fire department arrived and they continued CPR. She was taken to the hospital, but she was never revived," said Geringer. "In layman's terms, this young girl was injured by a blow or blows that caused a tear internally, that caused bleeding. The doctor that did the autopsy could not even locate the tear. He knew the area, but not the (location of the) tear itself. He has no idea how large or how small it is. So there was no way of

knowing how fast (or long) the bleeding took. This tear could have been caused in a number of ways. It did require a certain amount of force but it did not have to be an adult. We have no way of knowing when the fatal blows took place. The doctor that did the autopsy also noted she was adequately nourished," he said.

Juvenile records of all the foster children are sealed, also making the process lengthy and more difficult, Geringer said.

"But that will come out in the trial," he said. "This is going to be a highly document-intensive case. Medical records, school records, adoption records, law enforcement records. And six children (in the home) and their records ... it's a marathon, not a sprint. But we want to get this going to trial," Geringer said. "No one ever wants to see a child abused, in any way whatsoever. That's just outrageous. But we will just have to wait and see what really took place."

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Letters

Dear Editor:

I would like to discuss the important topic of bringing Career Vocational Training (CVT) to Golden Valley Unified School District (GVUSD). During the last several years, I've had the opportunity to discuss this issue with many in our community. Our community overwhelmingly supports CVT. We realize and understand not all students desire to enter a four-year college program. Some, like me, prefer to use their brains and their hands and would be better served by GVUSD if a CVT program were available. At present, Liberty High School does have some electives that qualify as CVT and I am in no way trying to minimize those, but what I'm talking about is expanding CVT to include traditional trades like automotive, construction, manufacturing, welding, ag and so on. We need to increase student opportunity by increasing electives, offering more programs and more choices. From the beginning it was a dream of this community to build a comprehensive high school district. Liberty High is now 15 years old and that dream is incomplete. Just like everything else in GVUSD, CVT will not happen by accident. It will take effort, sacrifice and making hard decisions to advance the ball. We have an opportunity before us now but that window is closing. In my opinion, it's time. Let's GO!

The greatest obstacle to CVT and other new programs is obviously how do we pay for them. I'd like to start the

conversation by offering a few options.

The first option is to create a school facilities district that would allow us to create a new additional tax dedicated to GVUSD. Back in the early 70's, Doc Buchanan asked Clovis residents to pass a city sales tax to provide additional financial support for Clovis Unified to build state-of-the-art sports venues and cultural centers. It passed. I think most of us have been on a Clovis campus and are familiar with the success of that joint effort. However, I'm not sure if there is enough commerce in 93636 to generate enough sales tax revenue for that program to be successful here. I'm thinking it would need to be a parcel or property tax.

The second option is to grow our student population. The more students, the more revenue. This is where I see an immediate opportunity. New development is here and along with it comes new students. The current strategy of GVUSD is for developers to build their own new schools in their own new developments for their students. If that strategy were to change and those new students were directed to Liberty High School and Ranchos Middle School, that could generate the increased revenue needed to create more opportunities and programs like CVT. All students would benefit. The reason developers are building in southeast Madera County is to be included in GVUSD. Developer fees can be redi-

Please see **LETTERS** on P. 17

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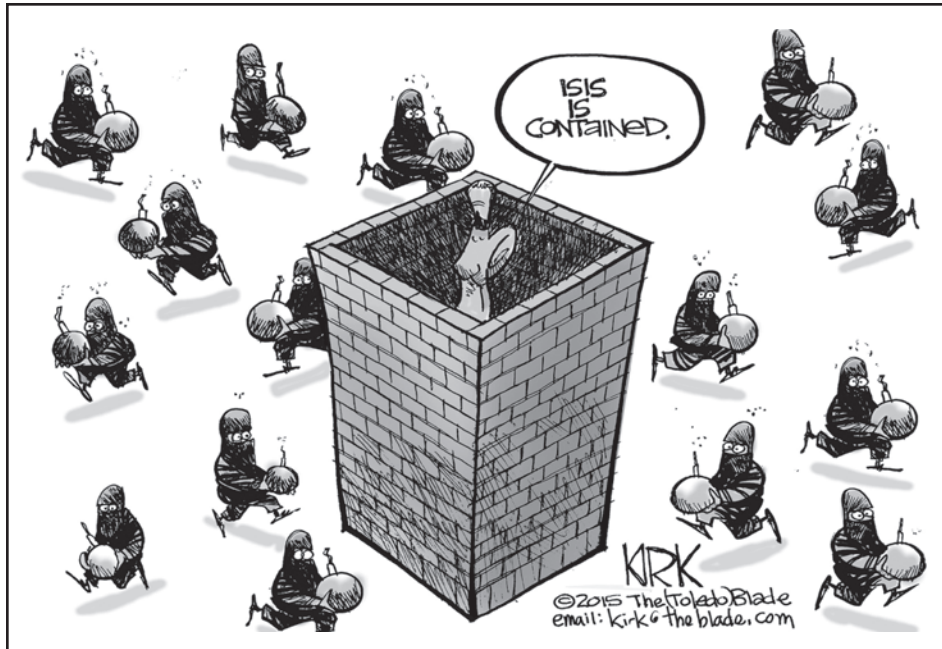


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Editorial

# Another Year in the Books

By Randy Bailey

I've always been a fan of December. There's of course Christmas and New Year's Eve. Football. I love the generally cooler weather. That's right -- I love cooler weather and I live in Central California. Go figure.

Eleven years ago December took on a new meaning for me. It was December of 2004 that a business partner and I made the decision to buy the Ranchos Independent from Bill Bell, the second owner of this little community newspaper. I like to tell the story that the way I met Bill was I had written a letter to the editor (hmm, imagine that) and had included my name, address, phone number -- you know, all of the stuff you're supposed to include when you write a letter to the editor -- and Bill failed to remove that information when he published my letter. You can imagine my surprise when I got my copy of the Ranchos Independent with my controversial views in it and there was my address and everything published where any aspiring psycho could find it. I was not in a good mood when I stormed into Bill Bell's office to demand some satisfaction.

He couldn't believe what he had done. He seemed genuinely sorry for what had happened and by the time I was ready to leave we were laughing

about it and talking about our similar views on a bevy of topics.

It was a few months later that I found out from Jim Cobb that the Ranchos Independent was for sale. "You ought to buy it," Jim said.

So I did.

I didn't know it at the time but Bill was dying of cancer. I bought the paper in December of 2004 and on the following St. Patrick's Day, Bill passed away. I found out later that other people had offered to buy the paper from him but he didn't feel they were the right "fit." He had a love for the Ranchos and the Ranchos Independent and, cancer or not, he wasn't going to give it to the wrong person. I hope I didn't let him down.

I've met some great people over the last 11 years -- and some not so great ones. My business partner took off for Washington state about eight years ago and has nothing to do with publishing anymore. I find it hard to believe that the Ranchos Independent beat it out of her but who knows?

All I know is that I love it. I love starting out each month with a bunch of blank sheets of paper and by the time I'm done I have something of which I am quite proud. Looking at the cover of this month's paper is a rush for me as I look back on last year's issues. I remember how important (or fun) each issue was at the time and how I tried to convey that to you, the readers, through an interesting, thought-provoking cover and some well-written articles.

It must be working.

I'm still here 11 years later.

The majority of people I run into that discover I put out the Ranchos Independent tell me that they love the paper. I know they could just be blowing wind up my skirt but they seem to genuinely like it. And many of those who disagree with me philosophically have told me that at least I always present news down the middle. Then of course there's that fringe that you just can't please. They'd complain if you hanged them with a brand new rope.

I'm going to keep doing this until I get tired of it or you guys run me out of town, neither of which I see on the horizon.

Thank you all.

# The Ranchos Independent

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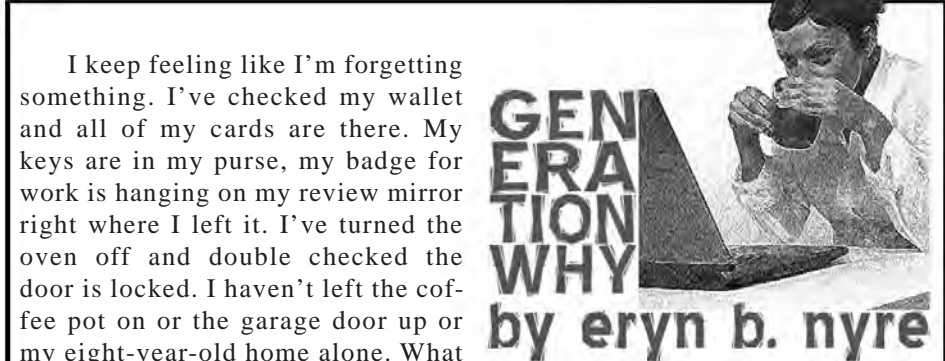
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# Truly Enjoying Christmas



I keep feeling like I'm forgetting something. I've checked my wallet and all of my cards are there. My keys are in my purse, my badge for work is hanging on my review mirror right where I left it. I've turned the oven off and double checked the door is locked. I haven't left the coffee pot on or the garage door up or my eight-year-old home alone. What am I missing? Oh ... I know. It's a week before Christmas and I'm not out among the hordes out searching for gifts and stocking stuffers.

Usually around this time I'm running from store to store like a rabid squirrel trying to finish my Christmas shopping. For the first time in my adult life I have managed to purchase every item for every person on my list, including the Secret Santa exchange at work, before the first tree was lit.

At the beginning of every New Year I swear to myself that I will not have a repeat of the previous Christmas. I vow that I will avoid the crowds and complete all of my Christmas shopping early enough to enjoy the season without succumbing to the frantic commercialism that always seems to drown out the spirit of the Christmas as we move through the advent calendar.

Not this year. I was bound and determined not to spend the last days leading up to Christmas stuffed into packed department stores in a spending haze. This was going to be the year I changed my ways. I was determined. I was resolute.

I had completely forgotten by May.

I purchased my first Christmas gift completely by accident. Summer was coming to a close, back to school sales were everywhere and there it was: The perfect present. I could see it, wrapped up in brightly colored ribbon tucked under a glowing tree. Sill I hesitated. Christmas was still several months away and no one in their right mind would buy a Christmas present this early – but then I heard my own voice ringing in my head: "I will be finished with my Christmas shopping before Thanksgiving this year." It was a sign, so I bought the present and tucked it away. It felt so good I repeated the process. The next time I happened to be at a store I kept

my eyes peeled for something that someone I knew would love. Over the next two months, without breaking the bank, I had amassed a nice pile of gifts. Let me tell you, it's a lot easier on the budget to spread the gift purchasing over a few months.

Just before Halloween I crossed off the items I had already purchased and I could barely believe my eyes. I was almost done. Not only was I going to achieve the thus far unachievable dream, I was going to do it in record time. I kept with my pattern well into November and I managed to complete all of my Christmas shopping before my deadline of Thanksgiving.

The down side is that without the stress of last minute shopping I've been wandering around in a sort of haze. I'm not sure what to do with myself. The other day I happened to be at the store watching people shuffle from aisle to aisle and filling their carts and I became almost nostalgic. They were rushing about and yelling at each other. Do you think she would like the pink or the purple better? Would he rather have a new sweatshirt or some sneakers? It's strange but a part of me missed it. Of course, that feeling faded fast as I watched the lines of grumpy patrons grow from my expedited, self-check-out lane. It's hard to locate the Christmas spirit in a Walmart a week and a half before Christmas.

I smiled as I walked through my front door, turned on my favorite Christmas movie and made a big cup of hot chocolate. Finally, I was able to just enjoy the season, bask in the decorations and not worry about how I was going to find time and the money to pick up that last present. As I stared at my beautiful Christmas tree I felt a sense of pride and accomplishment. Of course, I still have to wrap everything, but that's a resolution for another year.

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12/15



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## Another Home Lost; Lack of Water

By DJ Becker

Another home was lost for lack of water in a recent structure fire, this time in north Madera County. The family lost everything from a fireplace fire that smoldered overnight in the 28600 block of Rancho Avenue. No one was home at the time the fire erupted. Neighbors reported smelling smoke and seeing flames from the back of the older 1,800-square-foot ranch house on Wednesday, Dec. 16 just before 5 a.m. The owner, who requested privacy, said she had been away and staying overnight with family in Fresno when she got the shocking call from neighbors her house was on fire.

"We just lost everything. All our Christmas stuff, my son's presents, clothing, furniture. I still can't believe it. I had found some good bargains too," she said with half smile, as she fought back tears. "We loved it here and had just replaced the floor tile, done some painting ... were getting it all fixed up to stay here for a long time. But we are thankful nobody was hurt, that's what counts. We have insurance, and we'll recover and manage somehow," she said.

Madera County CalFire Battalion Chief Matt Watson said the fire appeared to have started in the area near the base and back of the fireplace and estimated at least 60 per cent of the home was destroyed, along with almost all of the contents.

"We had three Madera County fire engines – 1, 3 and 19 from Madera Ranchos, and myself initially on scene, for a total of four firefighting personnel. They had made a good knock down of the fire, but then we ran out of water (carried on the engines). So I sent two of the engines back to Madera for water. I had requested five engines and only got the three paid and staffed engines. We dispatched six water tenders but only got two. One from a volunteer station at Cedar Valley above Bass Lake and one from a volunteer station at Ahwahnee, with probably about an hour and a half travel time for water tenders (to arrive)," Watson said.

Engines typically carry about 500 to 600 gallons of water on board for grass and spot fires. The over-an-hour-long water tender response time did affect the ability of fire crews to stop the progress of this fire, he said.

"We were out of water, until the CalFire (wildland) engine from Raymond showed up on scene," Watson said. Horrified area residents and fire crews had to watch the house burn, until more water arrived.

Inadequate fire funding and staffing of County engines is also a serious issue, which critics and residents alike have com-

plained about for decades. Several county homes, some very close to fire stations, have been complete losses in the last five years due to the lack of fire personnel and the unavailability of trained water tender drivers. A home three doors down from the Madera Ranchos fire station burned severely in 2014 while the water tender sat full, waiting for a driver, in the station yard. That family was home at the time of the fire.

"The county is currently able to fund only one paid person, the (fire engineer) driver, on any Madera County fire engine, with any remaining assistance being supplied by paid call volunteers, who often are away at their day jobs," Watson said. "More local fire volunteers are needed. The County has started a recruitment program. Staffing is the number one issue and number two is water. We have added three new volunteers (able to drive water tenders this year), but they work and are often not available.

"This is a 30-year-old situation. The (economic) downturn was hard ... we are actively looking for all (funding) solutions. The board of supervisors and CFO Eric Fleming have been very helpful and are looking at everything to try and improve this situation," Watson said. "Had we had more personnel at this scene, we wouldn't have been there (a total of) 12 hours and the house would have had less damage."

Watson also said public safety is impacted when fire crews are not initially able to make safe entry into a burning house to check for trapped or injured occupants until more fire personnel arrive.

"The first firefighters on scene made an external check for occupants, pounding on doors and windows, but were not able to enter and sweep the house until later," he said.

Critics and residents alike wonder if someone has to actually die in a house fire before supervisors will take the funding and staffing situation more seriously, and finally remedy it.

"Maybe the supervisors have to see that on the six o'clock news before something will get done about it," said one resident.

"We had another fire in the City of Madera tonight, in the 300 block of Stinson. It was about a 1,200-square-foot house, with the fire involving two rooms and the attic. With the City response and the County engine response, we had eight paid people on scene within five minutes. We saved the house and were in and out of there in an hour. But we had a hydrant in front of that house. The cause of that fire was a makeshift fireplace inside the home, being used for heat by the residents," Watson said.

## Christmas Fun

Before I start my article, I want to thank the Sierra 4-H group for the two pans of their homemade cookies they brought into the office. We served them at the Chamber of Commerce Christmas mixer and the cookies were a big hit. I invited the group and their leader, Mrs. Christofferson, to give me some of their recipes and I would dedicate the whole article to their group. I am really looking forward to that.

Do you fix a big dinner for Christmas afternoon or do you fix a big breakfast and then spend the afternoon relaxing after a hectic few weeks getting ready for Christmas or spend the afternoon visiting friends and family that are shut-ins and can't get out? I've talked to people this week that are going to relax Christmas afternoon and serve appetizers or sandwiches instead of a big dinner.

My niece Rachael makes a dip that is yummy and usually goes fast.

### Rachael's Spinach Dip

1 Box (10 oz.) Frozen chopped spinach, cooked, cooled and squeezed dry.  
 1 container (16 oz.) Sour Cream  
 1 C mayonnaise  
 1 pkg. Knorr vegetable mix  
 2 or 3 ribs celery, chopped  
 2 or 3 green onion, chopped (optional)

1 loaf round French bread

Combine all ingredients except bread and chill for at least 2 hours. Cut the top off the bread and hollow out, saving the bread to use as dippers. When ready to serve put chilled dip in hollowed bread loaf and serve with the reserved bread that has been cut into bite size pieces. When the dip is gone, tear up the "bowl" and eat it.

Have you ever made pinwheels – easy to make and delicious.

### Pinwheels

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese  
 1 (16 oz.) container sour cream  
 1 pkg. ranch dip (dry)  
 Chopped bell pepper (any color)  
 Chopped olives  
 Chopped green onions (optional)  
 1 lb. sliced deli meat – ham, turkey or beef.

8 large flour tortillas.

In large bowl mix together cream cheese, sour cream and dry ranch dip mix. Beat until smooth. Spread a thin layer of mix on each tortilla. Sprinkle chopped peppers, olives and onion if you are using any of them on the mix. Top with a layer of the meat. Roll each tortilla up tightly and wrap with plastic wrap. Refrigerate



until ready to serve. When ready to serve, using a serrated knife, cut each roll into 1/2 inch to 1 inch slices. Place on serving platter.

Last year I made a dip that was extremely easy. It only takes two ingredients and unless you want to serve it in a fancy bowl, microwave it in the bowl you will serve it in and you only have one bowl to wash. It is a little warm with spice, but we all enjoyed it.

### Two Item Dip

1 lb. Velveeta, cut up into 1 inch cubes

1 can (10 oz.) Ro\*Tel diced tomatoes and green chilies (Do not drain!)

In a microwave safe bowl combine cheese and tomatoes. Cover and microwave on high for 5 minutes. Stir it after cooking 3 minutes. Be Careful, dish will be extremely hot! Use hot pads to take out of microwave. This can also be made on top of the stove by placing cheese and tomatoes in medium pan and cooking over medium heat until cheese is melted and mixture is combined (about 5 minutes). Be sure not to have the heat too high and stir often to avoid scorching. Serve warm with tortilla chips or raw vegetables – zucchini, broccoli or cauliflower would be good choices.

And of course you will want something sweet on your table. How about a bowl of sugared walnuts? My aunt and uncle who lived in Hanford had a huge walnut tree in their front yard and every year after the walnuts were harvested she would bring a big bowl of sugared walnuts when they came to our house. They are really simple to do.

### Sugared Walnuts

1 C Sugar  
 7 T milk  
 2 or 3 cups shelled walnuts

Prepare a pan or cookie sheet by covering with a sheet of wax paper. Boil the sugar and milk 4 minutes. Pour mixture over the walnuts and stir to coat the nuts. Spread on the wax paper. Let cool then break in bite size pieces.

Regardless of what you serve for dinner or snacks, I want to thank each of you for being loyal readers and thank you for your comments, suggestions and recipes. I pray that you and your families have a Blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!

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### *Maintain Me*

Hello again 93636,  
Lately I've heard a lot of radio commercials stating how the advertiser can change your vehicle's oil and filter, perform a visual inspection and get you back on the road in less than 30 minutes. If you went to your physician for your annual checkup and physical, how confident would you be that your checkup was comprehensive and accurate if you were in and out in less than 30 minutes? An oil change and inspection should be your vehicle's checkup time. It's not a race! It's an opportunity to check the state of health and condition of your vehicle and its systems also. The inspection should include a test drive, active load tests on the electrical and cooling systems as well as a comprehensive visual inspection. The inspection should be designed to prevent break downs, educate the customer, answer questions and communicate concerns and/or recommendations. At my NAPA AutoCare Center, we also look at the vehicle's history and compare it to the manufacturer's recommendations. We evaluate the vehicle's current condition, future concerns and make recommendations accordingly. We also perform our inspections digitally so we can email or text a colorful detailed report with pictures of any faults or concerns we find.

In the U.S., the average vehicle is driven 15,000 miles per year. My recommendation is 4,000 mile service intervals. For the average vehicle that's 3.75 times per year. It's easier to remember it as "once per season." Many manufacturers today recommend EXTENDED maintenance and service intervals for their vehicles. Here's why. If you have ever purchased a new vehicle (I have not) you will notice the estimated vehicle maintenance and service costs for the first 100,000 miles included on the window sticker. That information is required by law. In order to decrease that estimate, many manufacturers have increased service intervals and deferred costly maintenance and services until 105,000 miles. Many have eliminated the more costly services altogether. Generally new vehicle warranties expire after three years or 36,000 miles so there

is little or no risk for the manufacturer. The manufacturer's priority is to build a vehicle that drives 100,000 miles reliably with as little maintenance cost as possible then sell you a new one. My industry's priority is to take your vehicle from 100,000 to 300,000 miles reliably and save you the expense of purchasing that new vehicle. I question the wisdom of extended intervals as a long term cost savings strategy for the benefit for the consumer. I think it's more of a short term strategy for the benefit of the manufacturers.

GM, for example, was recommending a regular service interval for some vehicles at 7,500 miles. They have since revised that (not included in the original maintenance cost estimate) to every 5,000 miles. If you are driving a GM vehicle, make sure you make that correction or you may soon be dealing with a premature timing chain failure. Some manufacturers, like BMW, extend all the way to 15,000 miles for some vehicles. With extended service intervals, many times synthetic oils and long-life oil filters are required, not to mention the inspections that were not performed. This increases cost per service and the potential for failures.

Another cost benefit to regular 4,000 mile service intervals is the vehicle can be more accurately monitored for wear and tear so maintenance and repair costs can be better managed. Let me give you an example. If I see a vehicle every three months, I may let the brake pads wear down to 5 percent before I recommend replacement. If I only see that vehicle once a year, I'm inclined to recommend replacement at 20 percent to prevent the potential for greater damage and higher costs. Same with belts, hoses and air and fuel filters. Waiting can save money if managed properly.

Consult your vehicle's Owner's Manual for specific information and maintenance schedules. Follow it, except for a couple of recommendations from my experience. If you drive a Ford pickup with a Triton engine (especially the 5.4L three valve), do not wait until 100,000 miles to replace the spark plugs. Although they will perform fine, the plugs can become seized in their bores and often break coming out. If that happens you will need a special tool to extract them. Get 'em out at 60,000. It will save you money. If they are stuck, try using penetrating oil and work them back and forth. **DO NOT FORCE THEM!** Take your time. Replace with Motorcraft Spark Plugs. I also recommend you serv-

Please see **HANDS** on P. 10

*Senior Report*

## Plans for a New Year at Senior Center

By Patti Groh

What a great December it has been. We've had rain and beautiful sunshine. It is great to live here in Madera Ranchos.

The Ranchos/Hills Seniors welcomes four new members to our group: Thomas Baum, Jo Chase, Rita Selmon and Sheila Marrs.

The Seniors' Thanksgiving dinner was a culinary delight. The turkey and gravy (prepared by Rigo) was terrific as were the potluck items. I had some corn pudding which was out-of-this world.

I hope you enjoyed this year's Christmas boutique on the first two Saturdays of December. There were a lot of pretty things for sale at great prices. Thank you to everyone for supporting the Center with your saleable contributions, your buying and your volunteering. Remember, we can always use new merchandise for the Treasure House and boutique.

We had a wonderful Christmas party on Dec. 14. We had ham and potluck items and it was a lot of fun. There were 10 tables and 10 different members provided the centerpieces. They were just beautiful with different colors and lights. The guests voted on their favorites and first place went to Carol Wood, second place to Nancy Palazzo and third place to Eva McAtee. Speaking of beautiful, the Christmas tree was just gorgeous, donated by B&D Trees and decorated by members. Thanks to you, B&D. The highlight of the evening was a singing program by The Mitchell Sisters (Gerri, Celetta and Alice). These women sing professionally and are also members of Ranchos/Hills Seniors. A huge thank you from all of us. The winner of our 50-50 is the woman who says she never wins anything, Shirley Tickel.

Many of the Seniors contributed to the

Madera Ranchos Chamber of Commerce drive to provide Christmas gifts to veterans at the VA Hospital. The feeling one gets from giving to others is almost better than receiving yourself. It gave me a nice, warm feeling. I know our help is appreciated.

New Year's Eve will be celebrated at the Center (before 12 o'clock), then New Year 2016 will be here with the usual monthly events. The monthly board meeting will be the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. (Jan. 5). The monthly general meeting has been changed to the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 (Jan. 12). The planning meeting has been changed to the fourth Tuesday of the month at 12:30 (Jan. 26). Please bring ideas for what you would like to see happening at the center. Please see the Newsletter for Center activities, times, birthdays and anniversaries of members. It is available at the Center (37330 Berkshire Drive) and at business locations throughout the Ranchos.

A fundraising luncheon is planned for January 30 to raise funds for solar shades re-insulating the roof. We plan on a full luncheon with wonderful food and service from members. We will be providing more information and tickets for sale shortly. Please check at the Center, talk to a member and read your email, if you have one, for all the details.

If you don't want to fix yourself lunch and would like the companionship of eating with others, you are invited to the Center every Monday through Friday at 11:30. The only requirement is that you let Joann know you are coming the day before, calling her before 11 a.m. on the previous lunch day at 645-4830. There is no membership requirement for this.

The Center will be closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 18. I hope to see you soon.

**HANDS** cont. from P. 9

ice cooling systems, automatic transmissions and gears every 100,000 to 150,000. Do not accept manufacturer's "No Service Needed" recommendations for those components. All components need service if you want them to last.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If your vehicle is less than eight to 10 years old, has less than 100,000 miles and driven responsibly, you shouldn't need much in the way of maintenance or repairs besides tires, brakes, brake fluid exchange, wiper blades, oil and filters. If your vehicle is more than 10 years old or has more than

100,000 miles, preventive service and maintenance is very important. I own and drive four trucks on a regular and semi-regular basis. Their mileage ranges from 186,000 to 331,000 miles. Regular service and maintenance is the key and helps avoid breakdowns while mitigating time and costs.

Please send any comments or suggestions to the Ranchos Independent or email me at [complete\\_car\\_care@hotmail.com](mailto:complete_car_care@hotmail.com).

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### The Bookshelf

## Reflections on the Past 12 Months

By Amanda Judd

Reflecting on my past year in the Ranchos Library, a lot has happened during these past 12 months. I have made some really great friends. Ranchos Library has some really amazing patrons. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be a part of your lives and embracing me in your (our) community.

We have brought in some really great titles this past year. Remember that we always take donations of new bestsellers. If you have questions about donations, please contact the library. Please don't leave donations in the book drop or unattended outside of the library.

What an astounding group of volunteers the library has. These incredible individuals come in and do whatever it takes to help keep this library looking good and running efficiently. I am thankful for each and every one of you and your commitment to making the Ranchos Library the very best that it can be.

I had my first taste at Flatlander's – what a whirlwind. It was really some-

thing special to watch this big empty parking lot turn into a hub of activity that was buzzing with energy.

Our summer reading program was extraordinary. I was amazed at the volume of participants that completed the program. This fall it was refreshing to see the excitement toward returning to school and obtaining those Accelerated Reading points.

We have such a wonderful time during our Preschool Story Time each Thursday at 11 a.m. Thank you Mrs. Maxfield, you make Thursday mornings an event to be looked forward to and we appreciate you.

On an ending note, I want to thank you all for your continued support of the Ranchos Library. Thank you for making our library a successful entity. Continue to come in and check out all of the new things that are coming through. Continue to support the Ranchos Library through our SHARES program, donating recycles, donations of new best sellers, Bucks for Books and Amazon Smiles rewards.

The Ranchos Library wishes you all a Healthy and Happy New Year!

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### Your Chamber at Work



With the community's help, over 100 bags of needed supplies for our veterans at the Fresno VA hospital were collected and distributed as the result of the Chamber's Annual Christmas Tree lighting event. Find out how you can be a part of this vital Ranchos group. Call 645-4001.

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The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, always the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C. Call us at 645-4001.

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**FREE WELL** cont. from P. 2

Works Director, since the October departure of Johannes Hoeverstz, introduced himself and invited residents to contact him with their concerns. Norman Allinder, Planning Director for Madera County, also introduced himself and said, in referenced to the proposed consolidation project for VTR and MD-10a that the, "... net effect is a better system."

Alvina Prakash, Engineer I with Madera County Public Works Department, Municipal Services Division, then gave a brief summary of recent efforts by the County for the MD-10a — VTR Consolidation Project, the MD-10a Pipeline Replacement/Water Meter Project and a potential project to consolidate the Golden Valley Unified School District (GVUSD) water system with MD-10a's that was also reported on in the August 2014 issue of the Ranchos Independent ("Water Hose" Offered to MD-10a). Regarding a MD-10a — GVUSD consolidation, she said that since MD-10a would not be eligible for grant funding, the County would not pursue an application. But she had been told by the State on Dec. 9 that if GVUSD applied, they would be eligible for grant funding.

One Million Gallon Storage Tank off the Table for Now

Prakash, who provided a two-page summary hand-out on the three projects, said that

the MD-10a — VTR Consolidation Project had gone through much iteration since its inception in June of 2014, including being transferred from VTR to the County as the lead agency and potentially including a 1 million gallon storage tank for the consolidated system. But, Prakash said, the State does not currently have a program to include such a tank. (The potential tank was previously part of an incentive program through the California Department of Public Health, which is no longer managing the State Revolving Fund of grant monies for infrastructure improvements). Prakash also said that by itself, MD-10a does not qualify for grant funding but only low-interest loan funding because, according the U.S. Census, the Median Household Income of MD-10a residents is \$75,480, which is well above average for the State of California, and therefore cannot be classified as a disadvantaged community based on income.

**MD-10a System Status**

After Prakash spoke, Kassy Chauhan, with the State Board, introduced herself and also quickly covered some of the history of the State's recent reorganization and funding mechanism machinations, which she acknowledged were quite confusing. Chauhan then gave a report on the status of the MD-10a water system. Referring to her own two-

Please see **FREE WELL** on P. 14

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**FREE WELL** cont. from P. 13

page hand-out, she said that her agency, the State Board's Division of Drinking Water, regulates MD-10a and that it had issued a revised Water Supply Permit in November 2015, which has several special provisions with which the County must comply, including ongoing water production monitoring of the system's four active wells – New Fender, Charlton, Kensington and Dublin – to ensure that both maximum day demand and peak hour demand, in gallons per minute (gpm) are being met. In 2015, during Stage 3.5 water use restriction, MD-10a had a peak hour demand of 1,481 gpm. This, she said, was just slightly less than the system capacity, minus the highest producing well of 1,490 gpm. But, in 2014, without water use restrictions, the peak hour demand was 2,300 gpm, far above the high well-absent system capacity.

Chauhan gave all the background and system details to say that, despite its new Dublin Well, MD-10a would likely fall out of compliance with its permit conditions should one of the four higher-producing active wells go down. And that could result in enforcement actions from the State such as prohibiting further system connections or development. The simple and nearly costless and risk-free solution, Chauhan said, was to allow Valley Teen Ranch, with its 30 residents, to connect its upcoming new well to the MD-10a system.

Joel Greathouse, Associate Sanitary Engineer and Region 3 Project Manager who works for the State Board in Fresno in the Division of Financial Assistance, answered

a question from resident Jeff McGrath to say that the State has provisions to cover overages on what has been estimated to be a \$2,955,000 project to install a new 800 gpm well and lay about two miles of distribution pipe. MD-10a would not be held liable should any overages in the projected budget occur, he said. And while both Greathouse and Chauhan acknowledged that the County would need to continue to assess its rates to ensure adequate funds to operate and maintain the water system, they said there would be very little additional maintenance but a great many benefits associated with a new well.

**Everyone Benefits**

For Valley Teen Ranch, a facility located two miles west of the Ranchos off Avenue 12, the benefits would be having a consistent source of clean water and no longer being responsible for maintaining its own water system. Considered a disadvantaged community, or DAC, VTR has been guaranteed a new drinking water well, with or without consolidation with MD-10a, at no cost. According to John Adams, a resident of the Ranchos who works at VTR, the facility is made up of three buildings each of which house 10 boys and contains two bathrooms, two showers, two toilets and a dishwasher.

Please see **FREE WELL** on P. 16

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**SUDOKU**  
 by Linda Thistle

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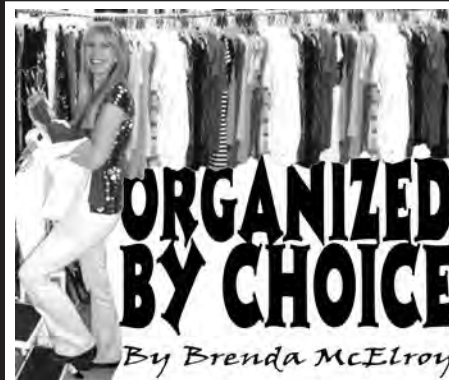
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By Brenda McElroy

**Embrace What?**

You know the warning printed on your car's side-view mirror: "Objects in the mirror are closer than they appear?" Well, I think our calendars should come with a December warning: "Dates on the calendar are closer than they appear."

I know this is nothing new. It sneaks up on us every year — but really. Where did October and November go? Here we are getting very close to Christmas and some are getting very close to crashing. Before you crash, may I recommend something that may help save your sanity? Embrace imperfection!

Which is better — to relax with your company when they arrive, or to have spotless blinds and baseboards with you frantically getting ready at the last minute? Which is better — to have your gifts wrapped and ready a week before Christmas, or fighting the crowds still looking for the "perfect" gift on Christmas Eve? When perfection is the goal it slows and sometimes even stops progress. We don't realize that we can control the pressure and reduce the stress simply by embracing imperfection.

If you're preparing for company, make a short list of the non-negotiables — the stuff you feel absolutely needs to be done. Such as: De-clutter the living room; clean the guest bath and kitchen; and prepare the table and food. Schedule specific times for the tasks you've deemed essential. Consider *done* is better than *perfect*. I can almost guarantee no one will be putting a white glove on your blinds or baseboards.

Don't be afraid to temporarily hide a mess. Yes, I said it. If de-cluttering the living

room means cluttering a closet, laundry room or bedroom, do it and close the door. Of course I don't recommend you leaving it that way indefinitely, but the holidays mean extra stuff like bags and bows and boxes of decorations that we didn't have time to get to. Remember, we're not going for the perfect house award; we just want to enjoy our family and friends, so let it go.

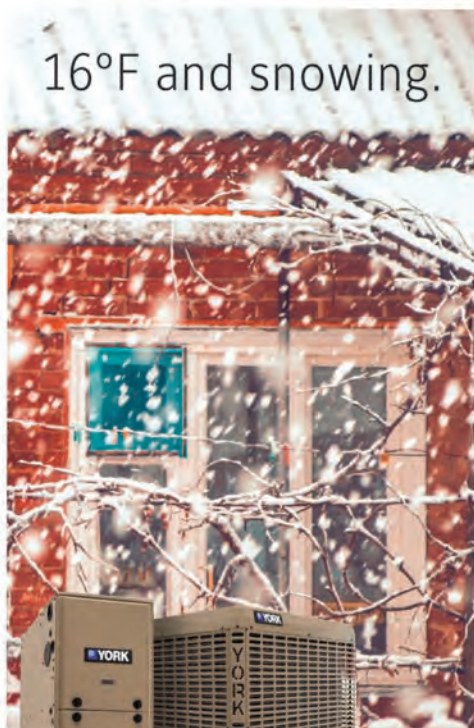
Get others involved. I know the saying, "If you want something done right, do it yourself," but I'll let you in on a little secret — you can't do it all, at least not with a good attitude. Believe me, I've tried. I'm preaching to myself when I say, "Delegate."

The kids can vacuum and dust, or if you have a cleaning service, don't clean after they're done (I know some of you do). Maybe someone else can make Grandma's pecan pie recipe this year, or just send out an email and have people sign up to bring what they want. Make a list of last minute things that need to be done so that as your guests arrive you're prepared to enlist their help. Maybe the forks won't be positioned perfectly by the plates, but remember our new mantra — done is better than perfect.

Same with gift giving: Most of us would prefer sharing a Christmas celebration with a loved one who didn't arrive home exhausted at midnight Christmas Eve because they were still searching for the "perfect" gift. If you have that perfectionist tendency, consider giving a gift card with a coupon for a shopping day with you. That way you know they'll get what they want and you can be part of it without all the stress. Or give them the gift of peace and productivity — an Organized by Choice gift certificate.

When it comes down to it, there is really only one perfect gift. It's a one-size-fits-all. "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son ... thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" Merry Christmas!

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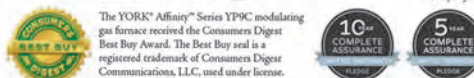


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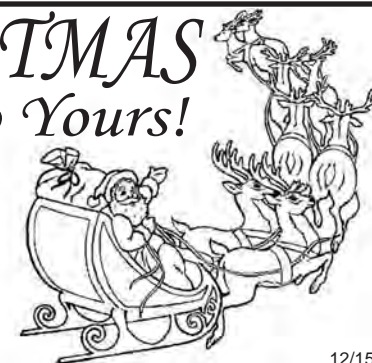
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**FREE WELL** cont. from P. 14

VTR has no plans to build, expand, accept new residents or to begin irrigating, he said. Therefore, they would need only about 10 percent of the capacity of a new 800 gpm well.

For MD-10a, the benefits of consolidating with VTR would include a new well, a 25 percent increase in system capacity and increasing the buffer for risking an exceedance of maximum day demand and peak hour demand and any associated penalties or enforcement by the State. An additional benefit for MD-10a, Chauhan said, would be to have funds earmarked for a new system well available for other purposes.

Supervisor Frazier said that the MD-10a residents would soon vote, according to Proposition 218 procedure, in a simple election as to whether or not to accept the State's offer of a free well in conjunction with consolidating with VTR. The steps prior include a further analysis on the best location for the well and also a rate analysis for operations and management and capital improvements. After the studies are done, a notice will go out and voting will be conducted 45 days thereafter. Both County and State representatives at the meeting agreed that all of this could happen as quickly as in three-month's time.

Some residents at the meeting remained skeptical and concerned about the State's offer. Although Frazier said, as he had in October during the two meetings he held for residents of MD-10a, which were reported on in the October issue of the Ranchos Independent (MD-10a Ratepayers get a "do-

over") that there will have to be a rate increase regardless, Seth Thomas, a Ranchos resident present at the Dec. 9 meeting expressed concern that his fellow MD-10a ratepayers would not accept a rate increase together with consolidation with VTR, even if the two things were not related.

Chuck LaRue, another Ranchos resident, expressed a great deal of concern about the County, due to a high attrition rate of its employees, the current state of the MD-10a system and budget, and the relative newness of the current County employees involved. LaRue asked the State representatives if they could provide some kind of guarantee in writing and also urged them to thoroughly analyze the pros and cons of installing a new well at the VTR site versus within the current MD-10a assessment boundary where up to six lots previously earmarked for wells remain available.

In response, Greathouse and Chauhan said that the State would ensure that only qualified contractors with adequate insurance and performance bonds would be used, the State would oversee the expenditure of funds and that a new well would be an insurance policy in and of itself for MD-10a, adding the State would consider installing the well in the Ranchos. Another Ranchos resident, Linda Bresee, said that she had attended many such meetings in the past for MD-10a, none of which had accomplished anything and would like a summary of the meeting. Chauhan responded by saying the benefit of the project is an insurance policy of additional capacity with little or no risk —

Please see **FREE WELL** on P. 17

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## FREE WELL cont. from P. 16

the only risk being the possibility of a slight increase in operations and management cost. Also in summary, John Adams of VTR characterized the project as getting "another horse to pull the cart." Supervisor Frazier then said, "With a pebble added to the cart." In closing, Chauhan said, "Hope to see you at the Proposition 218 hearing."

(Editor's Note: The MD-10a Ratepay-

ers get a "do-over" story in October's issue of the Ranchos Independent contained an error on page 3 in stating that Engineer I Alvina Prakash gave an update about the Liberty Village Development Project. In fact, former Public Works Director Hovertsz and Deputy Public Works Director Jared Carter summarized that project at the two October meetings, respectively. Any questions about the Liberty Village Shopping Center should be directed to the Planning Department at 675-7821.)

## LETTERS cont. from P. 4

directed to build out Liberty High School and Ranchos Middle School. This option is closing quickly and we need to act NOW if we want to preserve this chance. According to my mentor, Doc Buchanan, it takes 2,400 students to generate the revenue needed for a comprehensive high school.

I'd like to explain the Clovis Model, if I may. Each module (there are five) has one four-year high school (2,400 students) supported by one two-year middle school (1,200 students) and six elementary schools (600 students each). When a module is full, 7,200 students, they start a new one. Here's how the Buchanan/Clovis model works: Each elementary school has six grades with 100 students in each grade. Every year 600 sixth graders graduate to the middle school. The middle school has two grades, 7th and 8th, each with 600 students. Each year the middle school graduates 600 students to the high school. The high school has 600 students in each grade for a total of 2,400 students. If 2,400 students at one school sounds like a lot, we can modify the model but it won't be a comprehensive high school. We would have to financially supplement the district if

the goal is comprehensive schools.

The third way is to utilize the district revenue we already receive more efficiently. At present, 85 percent of the district's revenue is spent for labor costs. If we can decrease our labor cost as a percentage of budget by 10 percent, for example, that would free \$1.4 million per year at present levels. If we can supplement that with available grant money, I think we can create many real, new opportunities for our students while keeping our school enrollments low.

The fourth option I see is any combination of the three. I think I can support any of the four options if it's the community's choice. The only option I cannot support is DOING NOTHING.

93636, if you know of another or better way to bring CVT and/or other opportunities to GVUSD, please take the time to write a Letter to the Editor and explain. I'd like to start a community dialog concerning this topic with the intent of advancing the ball. I'm looking for suggestions and advice. Any help is appreciated. If anyone would like to contact me directly, please email me at [complete\\_car\\_care@hotmail.com](mailto:complete_car_care@hotmail.com).

God Bless 93636

Warren Parr  
Madera Ranchos

# ANSWERS

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1 3 4 5 6 7 7 8 9

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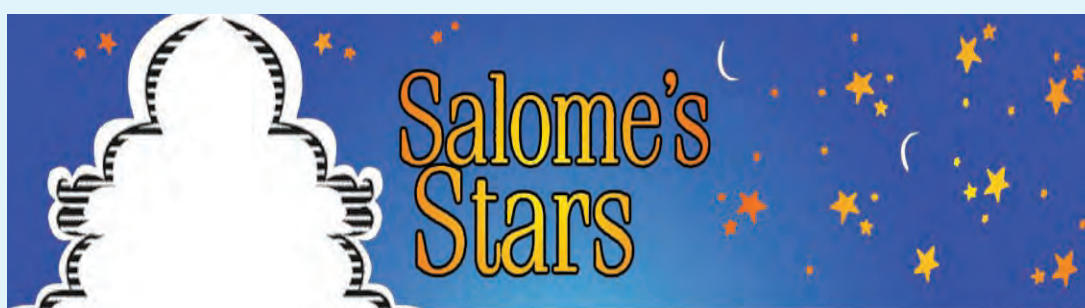
12/15

## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) At this time you might want to resist that otherwise admirable Aries penchant for getting to the heart of a matter quickly. Keep in mind that a delicate situation calls for patience.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) Your aspects favor more diplomacy and fewer direct confrontations when dealing with a relationship problem. Avoiding hurt feelings can help in your search for the truth.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) Positive aspects are strong this week. Although you might still have to deal with some problems caused by a recent period of turmoil, importantly you are making progress.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) A family matter could benefit from your counsel. But don't come into it unless invited, and don't stay if you feel uneasy. Just remember to reassure one and all that you'll be there for them.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) As the truth about an ongoing situation emerges, you could find that you were right to defer judgment before you had all the facts. Now would be a good time to move on to other matters.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) Your plans to take control of a personal situation because you feel you are best qualified could create resentment. Best to hear what everyone else involved in the matter has to say about it.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) Uncovering some surprising background facts about that ongoing personal matter could make you reconsider the extent of your involvement. A neutral family member offers advice.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Religious or spiritual themes start to dominate your aspect this week. This can serve as a counterweight to the mounting effects of the season's growing commercialization.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Taking on that recent challenge impressed a lot of important decision-makers. Meanwhile, proceed with your holiday plans, and don't forget to include you-know-who in them.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) Disagreeing with an opinion you can't accept could be dicey, and your motives might be questioned. Best to wait to mount a challenge until you have support for your position.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) Getting involved in helping others in this increasingly hectic period not only makes the generous Aquarian feel good, but you could also gain a more substantive benefit from your actions.

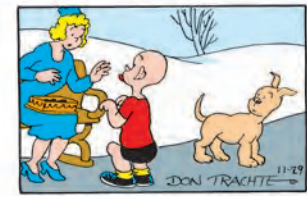
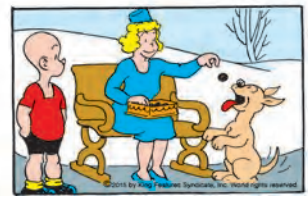
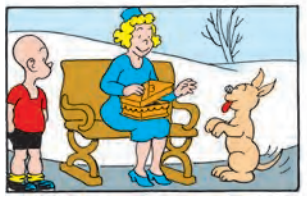
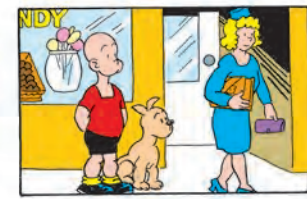
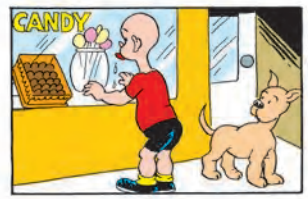
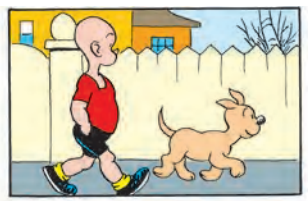
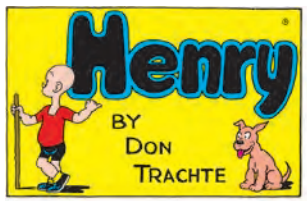
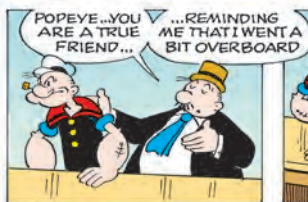
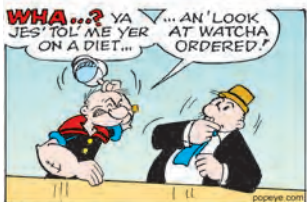
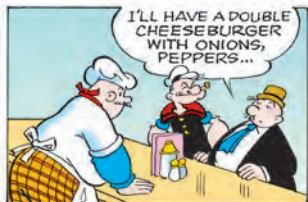
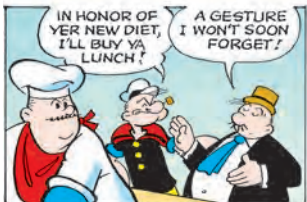
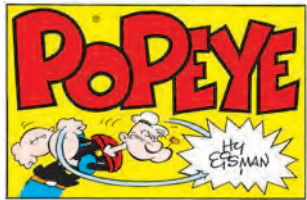
**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) The Piscean way of thinking clearly and objectively helps you resolve a complex situation without creating any ill will. Don't be surprised if your counsel is requested on another matter.

## Born this Week

You have a way of persuading people to look at the positive possibilities that make up any choices they might face.

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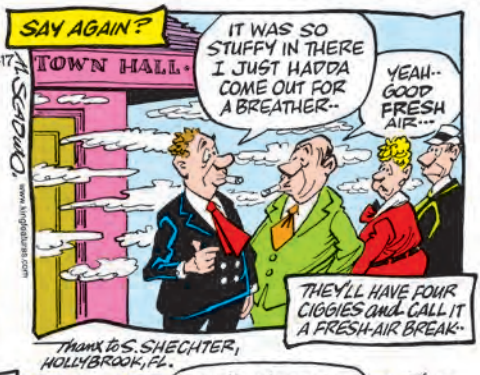
# FUN PAGES



## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

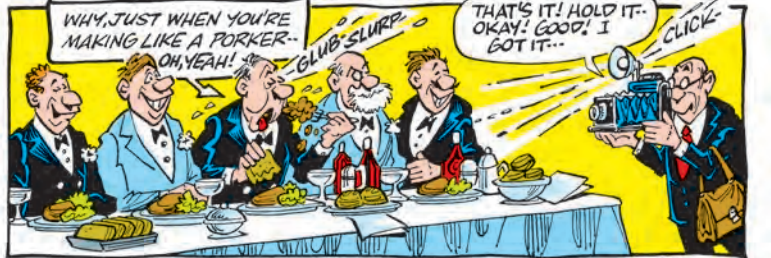


## BY AL SCADUTO



IT TAKES THOSE BANQUET PHOTOGRAPHERS A WHILE TO GET READY... SO YOU WAIT IT OUT... AND WHEN DOES HE SNAP IT?

Thank to P. ENSIG, CHICAGO, ILL.



## Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman

CHANGE SEASONS! Are you more partial to warmth than cold? Here is a simple way of switching seasons without getting out of your chair. Note the word WINTER appears diagonally in the diagram at right. Just rearrange the order of words from top down and you can change the word WINTER to SPRING.

How quickly can you complete this transformation?  
Time limit: 2 minutes.

Top down: Sitter, Pepper, Horseradish, Ketchup, Mushrooms, Onions, Peppers, Double Cheeseburger, Latte with Whipped Cream.

ZOO DO! Challenge: Rearrange all 10 letters of the word HIBERNATES to form three short words appropriately applicable to a seasonally dormant zoo animal. What are the words?

THE BEARS' N. W. 11-29

WEIGHING IN WHEN Joan, Beth, Eileen and Donna all gave birth in the same hospital on the same day, nursery crib tags on their newborns indicated the following:

- Joan's baby, Emmaline, had a birth weight of six pounds, 11 ounces.
- Beth's baby, Bruce, had a birth weight four ounces less than Emmaline.
- Eileen's baby, Dianne, weighed four ounces less than Donna's baby, Dan.
- Donna's Dan weighed two ounces less than Emmaline and two ounces more than baby Bruce.

How much did baby each weigh?

20 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100

SLIP-SLIDE! Now you see him, now you don't. Slip bottom strip one hat space to left and Santa at right disappears.

## Wishing Well

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

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

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

Agassi	Federer	Sabatini	Serena
B. J. King	Graf	Sampras	Tilden
Connors	Lendl	Seixas	Venus
Evert	McEnroe	Seles	

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FOOTLOOSE! "Let me help," says the nice young man above. Add colors by number. Code: 1—Red, 2—Lt. blue, 3—Yellow, 4—Lt. brown, 5—Flesh tones, 6—Green, 7—Dk. brown, 8—Dk. purple.

**SPELLBINDER**

SCORE 10 points for using all the letters in the word below to form two complete words:

BOUNCIER

THEN score 2 points each for all words of four letters or more found among the letters.

Try to score at least 50 points.

## TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

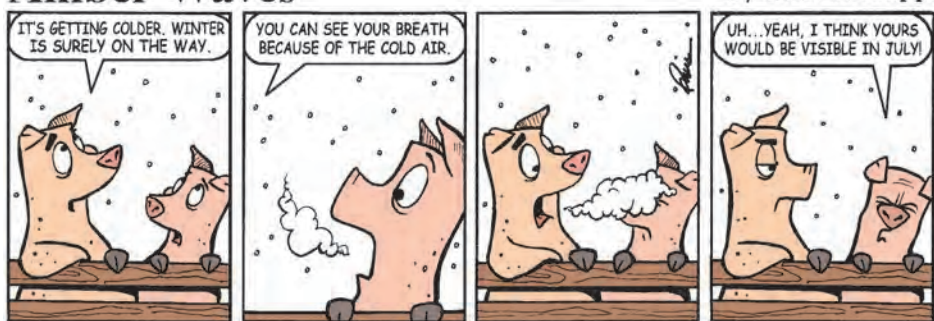
- MOVIES: What was the 1953 film for which Frank Sinatra received a Best Supporting Actor Oscar?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is a natatorium?
- FAMOUS QUOTATIONS: Who once said, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work"?
- CHEMISTRY: What is the symbol for the element copper?
- LITERATURE: What was the name of the captain in Jules Verne's "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea"?
- MUSIC: What pop artist had a No. 1 hit with "Escape (The Pina Colada Song)"?
- GEOGRAPHY: What is the highest point in the United States east of the Mississippi River?
- AD SLOGAN: What company's product was featured in ads with the slogan "the ultimate driving machine"?
- FOOD & DRINK: What flavor is the liqueur Cointreau?
- LANGUAGE: What is a courgette?

### Answers

- "From Here to Eternity"
- Building containing an indoor swimming pool
- Thomas Edison
- Cu (Latin "cuprum")
- Captain Nemo
- Rupert Holmes
- Mount Mitchell, North Carolina
- BMW
- Orange
- Zucchini

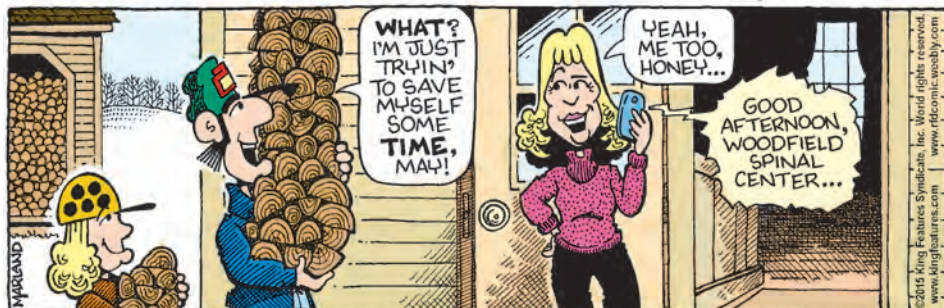
### Amber Waves

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 BOLTIKOFF

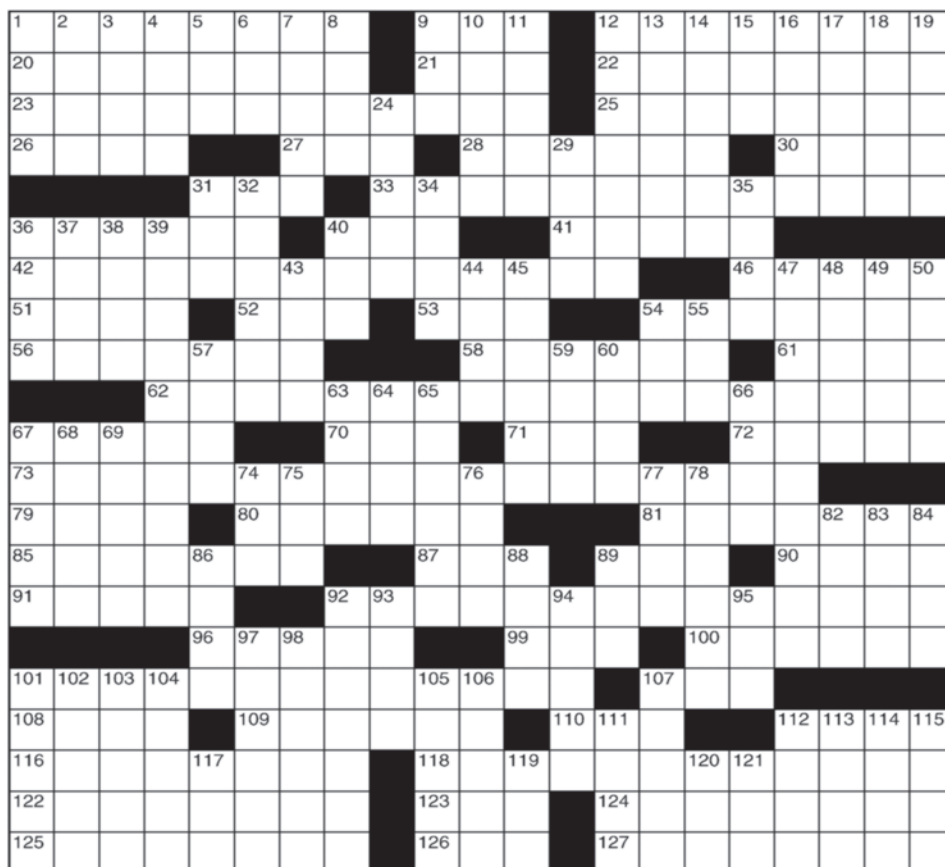
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Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Jewelry rack is missing. 2. Left is shorter. 3. Feathers are missing. 4. Pendant is missing. 5. Shirt is different. 6. Sign is different.

www.TheRanchos.com

## Super Crossword




- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                                     | <b>46</b> Vast, grassy Argentine plain                            | <b>91</b> Muscle jerk                         | <b>DOWN</b>   | <b>39</b> Iquitos natives, e.g.         | <b>82</b> Stirred to life                                     |
| <b>1</b> Pink bird                                | <b>9</b> — -jongg   | <b>12</b> Return                              | <b>20</b> Spray types                                     | <b>21</b> Simian beast                  | <b>22</b> The college world                                   |
| <b>23</b> Displayed collection of choice coffees? | <b>25</b> Lawfulness  | <b>26</b> Spanish for "those"                 | <b>27</b> Displayed collection of animals                 | <b>28</b> Certain Nebraskan             | <b>30</b> Most draftable                                      |
| <b>31</b> Brew for a Brit                         | <b>33</b> Group of connected electric generators?                 | <b>36</b> 2012 Robert Pattinson film          | <b>40</b> Las Vegas' state: Abbr.                         | <b>41</b> Stale-smelling                | <b>42</b> Period when some buttercup-family plants are grown? |
| <b>51</b> Actress Wynter                          | <b>52</b> One day — time  | <b>53</b> Biol., e.g.                         | <b>54</b> One driving too fast                            | <b>56</b> Touchdown area                | <b>58</b> "Neon" tank swimmers                                |
| <b>59</b> Tree with acorns                        | <b>61</b> Daddy deer  | <b>62</b> Group overseeing quadrennial games? | <b>67</b> Cartoonist Bill of "The Family Circus"          | <b>70</b> "It's — -brainer!"            | <b>71</b> Wee one   |
| <b>72</b> Beijing locale                          | <b>73</b> Engine fuel sold all over the country?                  | <b>79</b> Razor option                        | <b>80</b> Lampon  | <b>81</b> Combo punches                 | <b>85</b> Things that destroy                                 |
| <b>87</b> Cousin of a 401(k)                      | <b>89</b> Austrian peak   | <b>90</b> Inner Hebrides isle                 | <b>92</b> Slammer used by a global crime-fighting agency? | <b>96</b> En — (all together)           | <b>99</b> Tree with acorns                                    |
| <b>100</b> Rate Netherlands before 1939?          | <b>101</b> The "Ooh —!"   | <b>108</b> "Ooh —!"                           | <b>109</b> Name of 11 pharaohs                            | <b>110</b> Actress — Dawn Chong         | <b>112</b> Generic dog  |
| <b>116</b> Radiating heat or light, say           | <b>118</b> Entertainer Rita did a pressing job?                   | <b>122</b> Greatest                           | <b>123</b> "... man — mouse?"                             | <b>124</b> Came into, as debt           | <b>125</b> People going "Achoo!"                              |
| <b>126</b> — degree                               | <b>127</b> Their names are hidden in eight answers in this puzzle | <b>1</b> Stardom                              | <b>2</b> Most August-born folks                           | <b>3</b> Western U.S. oil giant         | <b>4</b> — scale of hardness                                  |
| <b>5</b> "It — far, far better ..."               | <b>6</b> Yuletide beverage  | <b>7</b> Doughnut coating                     | <b>8</b> Capital near Lillehammer                         | <b>9</b> West of film                   | <b>10</b> Cook's tie-on                                       |
| <b>11</b> 2002 #3 hit for Cam'ron                 | <b>12</b> Actor Rory  | <b>13</b> Liner locales                       | <b>14</b> Refrigerator stick-on                           | <b>15</b> Writer LeShan                 | <b>16</b> Under   |
| <b>17</b> — acid                                  | <b>18</b> Person quoting  | <b>19</b> Inuit canoe                         | <b>24</b> Metallic veins                                  | <b>29</b> Bullets, e.g.                 | <b>31</b> Dr.'s gp.   |
| <b>32</b> Tedious list                            | <b>34</b> YSL part  | <b>35</b> Variety                             | <b>36</b> A-F link  | <b>37</b> Joie de vivre                 | <b>38</b> — a hand  |
| <b>40</b> Supersecret org.                        | <b>43</b> News note   | <b>44</b> — part (play on stage)              | <b>45</b> Noontday nap                                    | <b>47</b> Principles of artistic beauty | <b>48</b> Cato's 1,503  |
| <b>49</b> The Evita of "Evita"                    | <b>50</b> Soccer site   | <b>54</b> Cul-de- —                           | <b>55</b> It follows chi                                  | <b>57</b> Margarine                     | <b>59</b> General — chicken                                   |
| <b>60</b> — -tiller                               | <b>63</b> Ark unit  | <b>64</b> Prefix with 72-Across               | <b>65</b> Redact jointly                                  | <b>66</b> Oxy target                    | <b>67</b> Tree knots  |
| <b>68</b> Accept avidly                           | <b>69</b> Skylit courts   | <b>74</b> It airs "Fresh Air"                 | <b>75</b> "How — I to know?"                              | <b>76</b> Whirl                         | <b>77</b> Hang laxly  |
| <b>78</b> Like a live ball                        | <b>88</b> Middle name of Elvis                                    | <b>89</b> Just swell                          | <b>92</b> Compound variants                               | <b>93</b> Guitarist Cline               | <b>94</b> Italian father                                      |
| <b>95</b> Sugar ending                            | <b>97</b> Make it there   | <b>98</b> Schick tool                         | <b>101</b> Members of the masses                          | <b>102</b> Japanese noodle soup         | <b>103</b> Beethoven's "Für —"                                |
| <b>104</b> Offscourings                           | <b>105</b> Yellow fruit   | <b>106</b> Of — (in some way)                 | <b>107</b> Helmsley or Lewis                              | <b>111</b> "There's — in the air"       | <b>112</b> Citadel  |
| <b>113</b> Concerning                             | <b>114</b> Moose, e.g.  | <b>115</b> 10:1, e.g.                         | <b>117</b> "— who?!"                                      | <b>119</b> Stadium cry                  | <b>120</b> Here, in Haiti                                     |
| <b>121</b> Stocking flaw                          |   |   |   |   |   |

# FUN PAGES

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