

# The Ranchos Independent



PRSRT STD  
ECR  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
MADERA, CA.  
PERMIT NO. 61

**CELEBRATING  
17 YEARS  
IN THE RANCHOS**

Volume 17 Issue 12 2021

The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County

50¢

## The Ranchos Independent



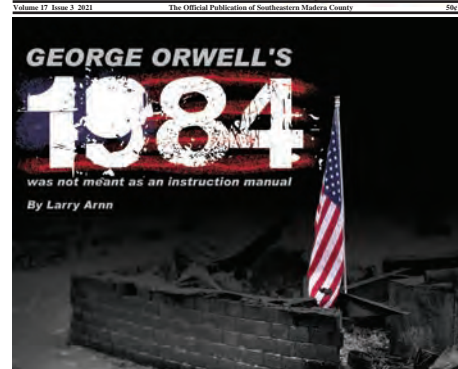
**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

# Looking Back: Taking a look back at the top stories in the Ranchos for 2021

## The Ranchos Independent



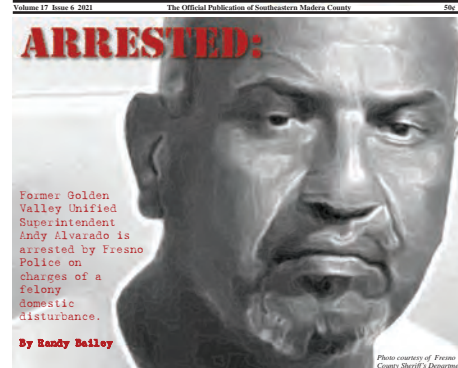
**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## The Ranchos Independent



**In This Issue** Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 16 / Fun Pages • Pages 18 & 19

# In This Issue

Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

## California Mask Mandate ... Again

With case rates increasing 47 percent since Thanksgiving, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) will require universal masking beginning Dec. 15 and running through Jan. 15 to increase protection to individuals, families and communities during the holidays.

The CDPH continues to monitor COVID-19 data in order to protect the health and well-being of all Californians. Since Thanksgiving, the statewide seven-day average case rate has increased by almost half (47 percent) and hospitalizations have increased by 14 percent. In response to the increase in cases and hospitalizations, and to slow the spread of both Delta and the highly transmissible Omicron variant, CDPH has issued updated guidance to curb the spread of COVID-19 and its variants.

Beginning Dec. 15, CDPH will require masks to be worn in all indoor public settings irrespective of vaccine status through Jan. 15, 2022, at which point California will make further recommendations

as needed in response to the pandemic.

Additionally, CDPH updated requirements for attending mega events, like concerts and sporting events. Prior to attending an event, attendees will now require either proof of vaccination, a negative antigen COVID-19 test within one day of the event, or a negative PCR test within two days of the event.

CDPH also issued a new travel advisory effective immediately to recommend that all travelers arriving in California test for COVID-19 within three to five days after arrival, regardless of their vaccination status.

“Our collective actions can save lives this holiday season,” said Dr. Tomás J. Aragón, CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer. “Starting Wednesday, Dec. 15, California will require masking in all public indoor places during the holiday season regardless of vaccination status.”

For more information about COVID-19 go to [COVID19.CA.GOV](https://www.California.gov).



## Abandoned Baby's Hero Killed

By Randy Bailey

In a bizarre and terribly sad turn of events, the young man who was featured in the February 2019 issue of the *Ranchos Independent* who found an abandoned newborn baby on a Ranchos road, has been killed.

The man was Aurelio Fuentes Jr., of Madera. He died on Monday, Nov. 29 after being hospitalized from being hit by a car on Nov. 23. He was 24.

He found the baby girl when he was on his route as a Fresno Bee delivery person. Three years later, he was working as an Amazon contract driver and had just gotten off work around 6 p.m. near Cedar and Florence in Fresno and was leaving the Amazon facility when he was struck by a car being

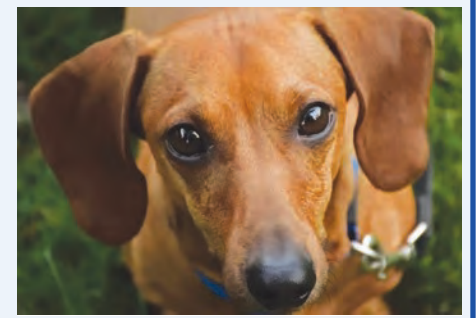


driven by Israel Douglas, 23, who was not injured in the collision. Three other people who were riding with Douglas were treated for minor injuries. Fresno Police said they detected alcohol on

Please see **HERO** on P. 16

## Too Cold for You? Ditto for Pets

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or the ASPCA, has a series of tips to keep your pets comfortable this winter. Exposure to winter's dry, cold air and chilly rain, sleet and snow can cause chapped paws and itchy, flaking skin, but these aren't the only discomforts pets can suffer.



Please see **PETS** on P. 16

## 2021 • Top Ranchos Stories

*from the pages of the Ranchos Independent*

**1 Madera County Drug Bust/April** • That people do drugs and often get arrested is hardly news, but this time it was the **LARGEST** bust in Madera County in a decade ... and it was approximately 10 miles from the Ranchos. Things happen around our safe little community. Be aware.

**2 Child Porn in the Ranchos/November** • In a short period of time in October, four cases of trafficking in child pornography surfaced in southeast Madera County, with two of them being in the Ranchos. Equally as unsettling was that three of the four arrested were teenagers.

**3 Andy Alvarado Arrested/June** • Many in the community were shocked when it was learned that former GVUSD Superintendent Andy Alvarado had been arrested in Fresno on charges of spousal abuse. However by August, all charges were dropped.

**4 Liberty Cafe Owner Arrested/August** • Reported in August, Ranchos Liberty Café owner Fidel Bonilla was arrested by Fresno Police in July for allegedly committing a “lewd act on a child under the age of 14.” Although charges have been filed, there has not been a trial yet.

**5 Auction House Fire/September** • A fire quickly burned out of control on the frontage road of Highway 41 and Avenue 11 in September. When the smoke cleared, it was the Public Auction R Us facility. Owner Kirk Vartanian said, “... everything ... was destroyed.”

**6 Traffic Deaths/May & November** • Two head-on car accidents in the Ranchos, seven months apart, claimed three lives in the Ranchos in 2021. The accident in May happened on Avenue 15, while the accident in November happened on Avenue 12.

**7 COVID Masks/May & July** • With many people tired of wearing face masks, and improved COVID numbers, the State of California lifted the mask mandate in May. But less than two months later they were back and have been on-again, off-again ever since.

**8 COVID Impact on Kids/February** • One of the side effects of the pandemic has been its impact on our kids, particularly at the high school level. There, college opportunities and preparedness seemed to vanish like toilet paper at WalMart.

**9 Energy Bill Jump/November** • No matter where you live, including the Ranchos, your energy costs are going up. This article points out the problem and its possible causes, but doesn't offer any solutions. Maybe the message is “forewarned is forearmed.”

**10 Madera County Vaccine Payday/October** • With only 50.2 percent of Madera residents fully vaccinated for COVID, the County came up with this interesting incentive plan. Get vaccinated, get a wristband and then go to specific local businesses for discounts. Win, win, win!

all stories can be found at  
[www.TheRanchos.com](http://www.TheRanchos.com)



Best Wishes for a  
*Merry*  
**Christmas**  
*And a*  
**Happy New Year!**

©WishesMsg.com

From your friends & neighbors at the  
*Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce*

37167 Avenue 12 Suite 5C - 645-4001  
GoldenValleyChamber@yahoo.com

**Sierra Shadows Joins  
the Mission of  
Samaritan's Purse  
Operation Christmas Child**

By Katherine Talley



As you know, families around the world fall short on the joy of gifts on Christmas morning. Samaritan's Purse created an amazing movement that gives those children and families a great opportunity to take part in the holiday cheer. Their mission is to spread the word to communities around the world that we can help them out. It's as simple as visiting their website, printing a label, filling a shoe box with goodies and shipping it out. Sierra Shadows managed to get together 27 boxes to send to kids all around the world in need. Even the simple things mean the most. If you would like to participate next year, the link is [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org).



The Jingle Jangle is up and coming. The Jingle Jangle is a great event put on by the Gonzalez family where you get to walk around their festive neighborhood and enjoy all the beautiful lights. The members of Sierra Shadows decorate their own trees for each group project they are in, (swine, baking, hiking, poultry, outdoor adventure and more). It's a definite way to brighten your holiday season.

**Golden Valley Baptist Church**

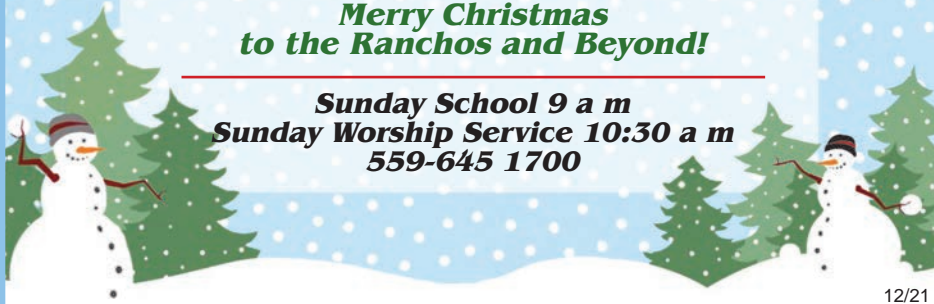
**Come celebrate  
the birth of Christ at our  
Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service**

**December 24, 2021 @ 6:30pm  
12414 Road 37 - Madera Ranchos**

**"For unto you is born this day  
in the city of David a Savior,  
which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11**

**Merry Christmas  
to the Ranchos and Beyond!**

**Sunday School 9 a m  
Sunday Worship Service 10:30 a m  
559-645 1700**



12/21

**Merry Christmas from  
The Ranchos Independent**

**How do you get free tank rent  
for the first year, prompt  
friendly service, a free  
initial leak test and  
competitive prices?  
You call ...**



**VALLEY PROPANE**

**559-645-5324**

**the ONLY locally owned  
propane company in the  
Madera Ranchos**

12/21

**GO  
HAWKS!**

**Join us in supporting our  
LIBERTY HIGH HAWKS  
this season and all year long**

**VALLEY PROPANE**

*"Service you can trust at prices you can afford"*

**645-5324 • 37221 Ave. 12 #1D  
Madera Ranchos • Maywood Center**



Editorial

# And They Said it Wouldn't Last

By Randy Bailey

What were you doing 17 years ago? Seventeen years ago my now 31-year-old daughter was turning 14. Seventeen years ago we lost one of my favorite presidents -- and the only president whose hand I got to shake -- Ronald Reagan. What was I doing 17 years ago? Oh yeah ... buying a newspaper.

It's hard to believe that 17 years later we're still plugging away at it here at the Ranchos Independent. That headline, "... and they said it wouldn't last ..." is more than just me trying to be funny. I cannot tell you the number of people who tried to impress upon me all those years ago -- and many times since then -- that newspapers were a dying breed. Like buggy whips and high-buttoned shoes or dodo birds. "They" told me all I had to do was look at the shrinking size of the L.A. Times or the San Francisco newspapers, and what about the Fresno Bee? Years before Joe Biden said it, "they" were all saying, "C'mon man! Get real!"

Well, I'm not one to stick my head in the sand. I figured -- after I had bought it -- that maybe I had better check out what "they" were saying.

My research showed that "they" were right about the L.A. Times and the San Francisco papers and the

Fresno Bee. Right on the money.

But what my research also showed me and "they" conveniently missed, was that small town newspapers, by and large, were doing great. It seemed that all the stories that the bigger papers covered were much more important than someone's son earning his Eagle Scout rank. Or someone's daughter starting a local shelter for abandoned animals. Or a local organization that was specializing in helping people whose loved ones were suffering from Alzheimers.

But a local paper could do all of that.

The other thing that "they" kept beating me over the head with was that everything was going digital. Nobody reads newspapers or books or magazines any more.

Well, I do.

I live and die by my computer. It's how I put this paper together every month. I love that I have the world's most exhaustive research library at my fingertips. I can look up in seconds what used to require exhaustive trips to the library to find.

But going completely digital? I don't think so.

I remember being told that with my cell phone I could now watch blockbuster movies anywhere, anytime. I looked down at my 2 1/2 by 5 1/2 inch screen and thought, "I'm going to watch Star Wars ... on *this*?"

I'm not a Luddite. I'm a big fan of technology. I just don't believe it's the end-all, be-all to everything. "They" also point out that every home has a computer and everyone has a cell phone, but I point out that they're not all "on" the same thing at the same time. When the Ranchos Independent goes out once a month, in that instant it's 100 percent in every home and business in the Ranchos. It's like Tommy Lee Jones says in *The Fugitive*: We're in every "... warehouse, farmhouse, henhouse, outhouse and doghouse ..." in the Ranchos. And there we are with stories about you and your kids and your neighbors and what Madera County might have in store for you or the State of California or sometimes what Washington might want you to do. All with a local flavor.

I've enjoyed these 17 years and I'm looking forward to 17 more. Feel free to come along.

# The Ranchos Independent

The Ranchos Independent is published by Five and Two Publishing.  
 All contents of this publication are copyright 2021, all rights reserved. Reprinting without the permission of the copyright holder is forbidden by law.  
 All articles are submitted as the opinion of the author, who remains solely responsible for the content. The information gathered for this publication is from sources that are considered to be reliable, but are not guaranteed. Opinions expressed in advertisements or articles remain the opinion of the writer.

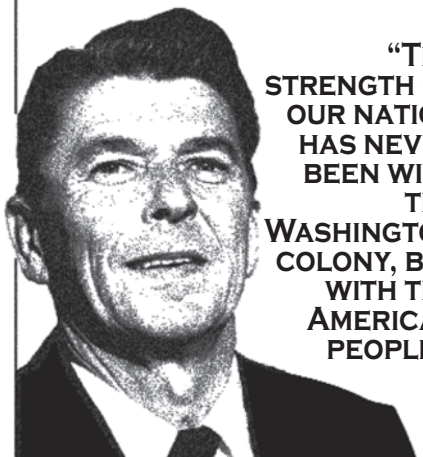
**Randy Bailey.....Publisher/Editor**

Jean Briner -- Columnist, Advertising Sales Emeritus

**559-645-0634** 37167 Ave. 12, Suite 5C • Madera, CA 93636  
**ranchosnews@yahoo.com**

www.TheRanchos.com

## THE RAY GUN SHOOTING STRAIGHT TO THE HEART



**"THE STRENGTH OF OUR NATION HAS NEVER BEEN WITH THE WASHINGTON COLONY, BUT WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE."**

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

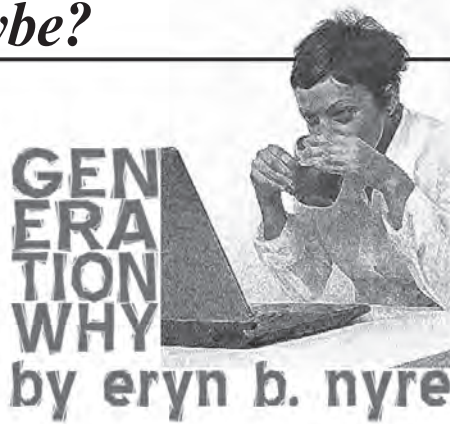
# Happy 2022 ... Maybe?

On the one hand, I'm ready for this year to be over. On the other hand, I'm a little afraid of what 2022 has in store for us. Though, in fairness, it's not so much the year itself that's the culprit, rather our radical leftist government trying with all their might to turn us into the next failed socialist country. And if that's not enough, no matter where you turn, the media is either trying to scare you into giving up your freedoms or make you feel ashamed for having independent thought or differing opinions. It's been a rough year.

Still, there's always a sense of renewal this time of year; the season of perpetual hope. We honor the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We surround ourselves with light and color and decorations while spending time with the people we love. Sometimes it's difficult to focus on the good things when there's so much negativity and hatred surrounding us, but I refuse to give into that mindset. This article is going to be about the good things that have happened this year.

First, I actually think some positive things have come out of this dumpster fire of an administration. Not any of the policies or executive orders, don't

be silly. No, I mean that I think that the actions of this administration have caused some people to open their eyes to the tyranny of the left. The democrats have demonstrably become more authoritarian and less tolerant, which I wouldn't have thought possible. The left's policies are destroying the economy, erasing the middle class and making it necessary to choose between filling your gas tank or eating dinner. Let's not forget the border crisis, people losing their jobs due to vaccine mandates, skyrocketing inflation and container ships floating in open waters leaving our store shelves bare. Sure, there are still plenty of people being hoodwinked by the lies inundating us by the media, but I actually think we've seen some leftists hop the fence and some undecideds swing right. So, despite the fact that I wish Santa could bring us a different president, and a different House and Senate while we're at it, I think that this kerfuffle of an administration has caused



a significant number of people who were asleep at the wheel to wake up, pay attention and walk away from the democratic party. So, that counts as a good thing in my book.

For me, another good thing has been working from home. I know this started in 2020, but many companies, mine included, have seen the benefit to a virtual workforce where possible and left those policies in place. The best part? Getting at least two hours back in my day because I don't have to commute. Having that

time back helps alleviate stress and allows me the opportunity to do things like make healthy lunches and dinners and even exercise more. It also means I don't start my day off with road rage, and that's a good thing for everyone. I'm additionally

thankful for this opportunity as I watch gas prices continue to rise. When I had to work in the office, the long commute coupled with my car's tiny tank and mediocre gas mileage meant that I was already spending a lot of money on fuel and filling up at least twice a week. Working from home not only saves me miles on the odometer but keeps me from spending at least a hundred bucks a week on gas. That's definitely a win.

This year also allowed me to check off an item on my bucket list. A group of friends and I went to Florida for the first time. We visited a couple of famous theme parks, the beach and a swamp. I spent a week galivanting with a giant mouse, some rebel soldiers and a few witches and wizards. I even got to perform a little magic myself with a wand I still can't believe I talked myself into buying. I won't tell you how much it cost, I'll

Please see **GENWHY** on P. 16

*Sometimes it's difficult to focus on the good things when there's so much negativity and hatred surrounding us, but I refuse to give into that mindset. This article is going to be about the good things that have happened this year.*

Let us compare your insurance rates

INFINITY Auto Insurance TRAVELERS Insurance. In-synch. KEMPER Safeco Insurance. A Liberty Mutual Company PROGRESSIVE MERCURY INSURANCE Pacific Specialty THE HARTFORD FOREMOST INSURANCE GROUP Nationwide

call Mark Crawford • 559-225-1435  
CrawfordInsuranceGroup@yahoo.com  
25-Year Ranchos resident • 30+ years experience  
Lic. #OE52033 & 0800722

CRAWFORD INSURANCE GROUP, INC.  
auto • home • commercial • workers comp

Now Is The Time To Shed Those Unwanted Pounds

## Look Good and Feel Great

• Nutritional Counseling & Menu Included  
• AM PM Medications  
• Diet Injection

**LOSE WEIGHT AND INCHES TOO**

**WE KNOW LOW CARBS! \$20 OFF 1st visit only**

**DIET WORLD MEDICAL GROUP**

"We Are Very Affordable" **224-6744** OPEN: Monday - Friday 9:00 AM until 5:30 PM

4844 N. First, #101 • Fresno, CA 93726 • Between Shaw & Santa Ana

## BEDROCK ENGINEERING

A solid foundation for your next project  
Land Surveying • Civil Engineering • Consulting

For a free consultation, visit our Madera Ranchos office!  
10878 Highway 41  
559.645.4849  
www.bedrockeng.com

### INVEST IN YOUR EXISTING PROPERTY!

- Save money on flood insurance with an elevation certificate
- Verify your property line locations with a boundary survey
- Reconfigure your property lines with a lot line adjustment
- Improve your property with a grading and drainage plan
- Divide your property with a parcel map

Dedicated to serving the land surveying and civil engineering needs of Madera Ranchos and the Central Valley

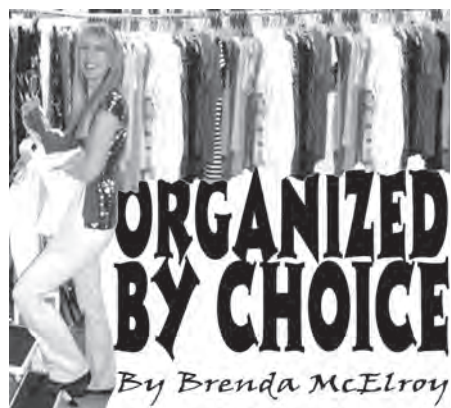
www.chadstrucking.com

**Chad** TRUCKING  
CA #441782

ARENA SAND • SAND & GRAVEL • HORSE FOOTING • CRUSHED ROCK • LANDSCAPE MATERIAL • FILL DIRT • TOP SOIL • HUMUS • BARK • CHIPS • RIVER ROCK • BASE ROCK • ROCK DUST • COBBLE STONES • DRIVEWAY BASE • CONSTRUCTION CLEANUP •

LANDSCAPE DIRT & DRIVEWAY

**559-645-5363**



### Memory Makers & Keepers

Christmas decorations. Those two words activate a wide array of feelings. For husbands asked to pull boxes from the attic: dread. For busy moms squeezing in time to decorate: stress. For children walking into Grandma's house: delight. For families competing in outdoor contests: unleashed. For those who have lost loved ones: sadness. For we, sentimentalists: nostalgia.

Part of our decorating tradition is me adorning the tree while my husband watches football. Seriously, he considers that a tradi-

tion. Graciously, he mutes the game and allows Christmas music to accompany my part.

### Memory Keepers & Makers

Through the years we've collected an assortment of ornaments. The golfing golf ball from the driving range in Sonora. The Hope Angel from my dear friend Devonia. The Coleman Lantern in memory of another dear friend, and more. Each represent meaningful places, events and relationships. I call them Memory Keepers. I'm reminded of the significance of each one while hanging them on the tree.

Sometimes decorations double as Memory Makers, like the musical angel ornament that one year began randomly playing when no one was touching it. We discovered it became home to a colony of ants who were feeding on a nearby candy cane ornament, causing the musical connection as they moved about inside. We res-

cued the angel, but not the music.

### Memory Keepers Risks

One of the risks of collecting Memory Keepers is that over time you may end up with an overwhelming number. This year, just when I thought I was done decorating, I realized I hadn't yet hung our picture ornaments. If you, like me, still have ornaments left in the bin when you're finished decorating, it's time to make some choices.

I've decided to put picture ornaments on a separate, smaller tree next year. But there were others left in the bin as well. A few Memory Keepers I want to see, if only once a year

*I encourage you to include in your Christmas décor, that which brings to mind the memories of people, places and experiences you treasure and the best gift of all – Jesus.*

when I look into the bin. The rest will find their way to other people's homes through a donation.

My favorite Memory Maker is the Advent Wreath we began using when our youngest was a toddler. This tradition helps us pause and

focus on the true meaning of Christmas each week in December.

Not all the Advent memories are sweet quiet times of reflection around the candlelight. For several years the challenge was simply to keep our son away from the burning candles. One year, an attempt to instill charity in the hearts of our children for those with less, ended with tears as we practically pried some Miss Piggies from our girls' hands to donate. Memories made that we laugh about now. Our kids acting out the Christmas story and birthday parties for Jesus are memories made to treasure.

There is value and pleasure in decorations that are beautiful without being linked to a memory. But I encourage you to include in your Christmas décor, that which brings to mind the memories of people, places and experiences you treasure and the best gift of all – Jesus.

Contact Organized by Choice at P.O. Box 26152, Fresno, CA 93729, call 559-871-3314 or email [info@organizedbychoice.com](mailto:info@organizedbychoice.com). You can visit [www.organizedbychoice.com](http://www.organizedbychoice.com) when you go online.

## TRACTOR WORK

- House Pads • Lot Leveling •
- Underground Utilities Installed
- Septic Systems Installed •
- Concrete Work
- Driveways •
- Trenching

Call Sonny at **559-970-4476** Lic. #719500 S.G.E.

12/21

SENIORS | FAMILIES | WEDDINGS | REAL ESTATE | MATERNITY

## STUDIO 318 PHOTOGRAPHY

EVENTS | RODEO | SPORTS TEAMS | HEAD SHOTS | EDITORIAL

[pc318photo@gmail.com](mailto:pc318photo@gmail.com)**(559) 288-6975**[www.studio318photo.com](http://www.studio318photo.com)

12/21

## Sago Key Palm Plantation!

More than 20,000 Palms & Sagos in stock. We also have a wide selection of Shade & Fruit trees.

call Juan and Maria at **559-268-6650**

6700 E. Central Ave. • Fresno • [www.sagorey.com](http://www.sagorey.com)

12/21

## DRILLING AND PUMP SERVICE

Same Day Service

Family Owned Since 1976

**674-1663**  
23338 Ave. 14  
Madera

12/21

# Say you saw it in the Ranchos Independent

## Watch the Sugar, Sugar!

(December 2011)

*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.*



20 oz. no sugar added cherry pie filling  
 1 pint fresh raspberries  
 2 oz. topping, whipped cream pressurized (optional)  
 ¼ cup Splenda sweetener – granulated

Preheat oven to 425. Remove one crust from pouch. Place on a cutting board or flat surface and roll out lightly to a 10-inch diameter. Using a 4-inch round cutter, cut out six rounds. Set scraps aside and repeat with second crust.

Lightly press the pastry rounds into 12 muffin cups pressing into bottom and up sides to create pastry cups. Prick cups with a fork and bake for 5 minutes.

In a medium bowl, mix together the cherry pie filling and the sweetener. Gently fold in the raspberries. Spoon about 3 tablespoons of the filling into

each crust lined cup.

Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until the edges and sides of the cups are browned and the filling is bubbly. Let cool slightly and serve warm or cool. Garnish each cup with a dollop of topping if desired.

112 Calories, 16.1 g. carbs and 3.2 g. sugar each cup.

Do you forgo a piece of pumpkin pie because there are just too many calories, or it just has too much sugar in it? How about a sugar free –

### **Creamy Instant Pumpkin Mousse**

1 8 oz. tub topping – thawed  
 1 small package sugar free instant butterscotch pudding mix.  
 ¾ C low fat milk  
 1 tsp. cinnamon

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

Are you or someone in your family a diabetic? Or have you been told by your doctor that you are borderline diabetic? You feel like it is the end of the world. For those of you that have just been diagnosed, I know exactly how you feel. When I was diagnosed almost 20 years ago and was told that I couldn't eat sweets any longer, I

felt for sure Mars Candy Company, makers of Snickers, my favorite candy bar, and Baskin and Robbins ice cream, Pralines 'n Cream that I loved, would for sure go bankrupt because I couldn't have their products any longer. But they survived as did

*There you have it – three recipes that should let you have dessert and not destroy your sugar count. I sincerely hope you are able to keep your glucose under control because we all know what can happen to you if it gets out of control.*

*Good luck!*

I. I can honestly say I have not had a Snickers in a long time, although I will admit to having one of the little miniature bars a few times and I can't remember the last time I had some Pralines 'n Cream.

For those of you that need to, if you stop eating anything with sugar long enough you will get so used to it that after a while you will get to the point that sugar will taste so sweet to you that it is yucky, believe me!

I receive an e-mail from a couple of sites that help the diabetic still have some good-tasting desserts and help keep your sugar level down.

The first recipe is pastry cups, filled with fruit.

### **Cherry Berry Pie Cups**

1 refrigerated pie dough (1 top and 1 bottom crust)

Create a gift from the heart

**Ranchos Crafters' Studio & Gifts**  
**559-824-6336**  
 37164 Ave. 12 #102 (behind Subway)

**Appointment Only -- Give us a call!**

Visit us at [www.RanchosCraftersStudio.com](http://www.RanchosCraftersStudio.com)  
 and Facebook "What's Up in the Ranchos"  
 Contact us for SPECIAL GROUP PARTIES  
**NEVER a sitting fee • Walk-ins ALWAYS welcome**

Arts & Crafts Studio • Bisque • Wood Items

**Rodents destroying your property?**

Over 15 years of experience  
 Licensed by Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
 Cal. Dept. of Pesticide Regulation  
 Nuisance animal trapping

**CALL FOR AN INSPECTION TODAY!**

**ALLIED RODENT CONTROL • 312-5441**

**TIRED OF PAYING FOR FLOOD INSURANCE?**

Lenders' requirements vary, but an Elevation Certificate could reduce the cost of flood insurance (or eliminate it completely). You can't afford to wait any longer, so contact the professionals today at

**Michael Sutherland & Associates, Inc.**

645-4730 • Fresno 447-5815  
 36691 Avenue 12 • Madera Ranchos

**www.theranchos.com**

Visit the Ranchos' own Website.  
 Get fully downloadable back issues of the Ranchos Independent (beginning with April 2006). Learn how you can add your Ranchos-area business to this site!

**www.theranchos.com**  
**www.theranchos.com**  
**www.theranchos.com**  
**www.theranchos.com**  
**www.theranchos.com**



**RECIPE** cont. from P. 8

- ¼ tsp. ground ginger
- 1/8 tsp. ground cloves
- 1 – 15 oz. canned solid pack pumpkin

In a large bowl beat together the pudding mix and milk until slightly thickened. Add the pumpkin, cinnamon, ginger and cloves, and mix until well combined.

Gently fold in the whipped topping in three additions, Pour ½ cup of the mousse into each of the 8 serving dishes. Chill for at least 30 minutes before serving. Each serving is 97 calories, 16.2 g. carbs, and 6.1 g. sugars.

Knowing how much I like any dessert made with lemon, this one is for lemon bars.

**Old Fashioned Lemon Bars**

- Crust:**
- 1/3 C Splenda granulated Sweetener
  - ½ C whole wheat flour
  - ½ C white all-purpose flour
  - ¼ tsp. baking powder
  - 4 T margarine, hard or cold butter
  - 2 T buttermilk
  - ¼ tsp. salt

- Topping:**
- 2 tsp. powdered sugar, optional
  - 2 large eggs
  - 1 egg white
  - 3 T white all-purpose flour
  - ½ C Splenda sugar blend for baking, or ½ C EACH Splenda granular and granulated sugar

*... if you stop eating anything with sugar long enough you will get so used to it that after a while you will get to the point that sugar will taste so sweet to you that it is yucky, believe me!*

- 2/3 C fresh lemon juice
- 1/3 C low fat buttermilk
- 1 T fresh grated lemon peel

**DIRECTIONS:**

**CRUST:** Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with non-stick baking spray. In a medium bowl, mix together flours, Splenda, salt and baking powder. Cut in margarine (or butter) until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle buttermilk over mix and blend. Press onto the bottom of the prepared pan. Chill for 15 minutes

and then bake for 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned.

**TOPPING:** While crust is baking, prepare topping. In a large bowl, beat eggs and egg white with 3 T flour and ½ C of Splenda or Splenda/sugar blend. Beat in 1/3 C buttermilk, lemon juice and zest. Pour into hot crust. Turn oven down to 350 and bake bars an additional 18-20 minutes or until top is set. Cool completely. Just prior to serving, dust with powdered sugar if desired. Cut into 16 bars. 107 calories, 15 g. carbs and 3.8 g. sugar for each bar.

There you have it – three recipes that should let you have dessert and not destroy your sugar count. I sincerely hope you are able to keep your glucose under control because we all know what can happen to you if it gets out of control.



**BUY 4 TIRES**  
**RECEIVE FREE ALIGNMENT**  
\$49 VALUE

**Tires**  
We carry a great range for all vehicles and all applications, new and used

**Wheel Alignments**  
Computerized wheel alignment. 30-day warranty

**FREE Tire Maintenance**  
We offer FREE tire rotations and balance every 7,000 miles

**Wheel & Tire Packages**  
We give your car the right look without compromising safety

**Lift & Lowering Kits**  
Whether you're looking to run bigger tires or get an aggressive look, we have the right product for you

MADERA 559.831.2837 CHOWCHILLA 559.201.9133 FRESNO 559.478.5539

[www.hotiresnwheels.com](http://www.hotiresnwheels.com)  
**(559) 831-2937**  
421 Noble St. Madera, 93637




**90 DAYS SAME AS CASH**

**OPEN 7 DAYS**  
M-SAT 8-7 • SUN 9-5

**PON TUS LLANTAS HOY CON TRES MESES PARA PAGAR**



**We do suspension and brake service.**  
**Hacemos trabajo de suspension y frenos.**



[www.hotiresnwheels.com](http://www.hotiresnwheels.com)  
**(559) 831-2937**

*Kiwanis Korner*

# Celebrating the Ranchos Holidays in Ranchos Kiwanis Style

By Sally Rowden

*“Kiwanis International is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world one child, one community at a time.”*

The festive, wintery month of December is here and the Kiwanis Club of the Madera Ranchos continues its successful community events.

The club welcomed the new Superintendent of Golden Valley Unified School District, Kevin Hatch, as an Honorary Member of the Ranchos Kiwanis and thanked Superintendent Hatch for his supportive involvement.

The Kiwanis Poinsettia Sale, led by Ollia Ridge, was a well-received fundraiser. Each plant was individually wrapped for attractive and easy gift giving and the Ranchos Kiwanis are looking forward to this annual event again next year.

The Ranchos Kiwanis is one of 11 Kiwanis Clubs throughout Fresno and Madera that make

up Kiwanis Division 5. Valley Children’s Hospital presented an Honorary Award to Division 5 for its volunteer work in the Run 4 The Miracle event held in September at Historic Cobb Ranch. This event raised \$14,352.64 for the Pediatric Trauma-Injury Prevention Program and it was the collaboration between the clubs that was the tool for this success.

The Ranchos Kiwanis Christmas/Holiday House Decorating Contest provided three creative winners. Take some time to travel through the Ranchos enjoying these spotlighted homes and you’ll not only see the contestant winners’ creativity but many other Ranchos residents’ creativity as well.

The Ranchos Kiwanis would like to thank the Liberty High School Choir under the direction of Janet Tenpas for coming out to Fernwood Gardens on the evening of Dec. 10. The choir sang Christmas carols as Kiwanis members handed out house decorating judging sheets, cupcakes and candy canes. Many noticed “holly-jolly” voices singing vibrantly with the choir sing-

alongs.

Our shared Christmas gathering for Ranchos Kiwanis members was held at the home of Leslie and Bob Carella with local caterer Don Foster providing an excellent dinner. In addition, there was also a gift-giving exchange game that had everyone laughing. The Kiwanis would like to thank Leslie and Bob for hosting the holiday fun.

This wraps up 2021 and the year for Ranchos Kiwanis events, but without delay its first community event for 2022 is on the way. Look for more information in the January issue of the Ranchos Independent.

From all of the members of the Kiwanis Club of the Madera Ranchos, we wish you the happiest of holidays and leave you with a quote from William H. McRaven’s book, *The Hero Code*: “I will be kind and compassionate to at least one person every single day and expect nothing in return.”

[www.RanchosKiwanis.com](http://www.RanchosKiwanis.com)

## In Memoriam



**Douglas W. Hagen**  
Feb. 13, 1950 - Dec. 12, 2021

It is with a heavy heart we announce that Doug Hagen, founder, and former owner of B-K Lighting + Tekka Illumination, passed away early Sunday, Dec. 12, 2021.

Our companies have lost not only a powerhouse in the industry, but also an invested mentor and dear friend. Doug built up B-K Lighting for more than 30 years and became known as a leader and expert in the lighting world before retiring in 2014. His knowledge and passion for lighting will be greatly missed and leaves a void that cannot be filled.

Doug was a caring and loving man who leaves behind his wife, Kathleen, his three children, Yvette Alexander, Kimberly Minard and Nathan Sloan, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

For those of us that knew Doug and knew him well, may you always remember the sweetest of memories. It is hard to express how much he meant to so many people and in so many ways. He sought to make the lighting industry and the world around him a better place and we vow to continue honoring Doug by doing the same.

*Celebration of Life*

*11 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

*Fort Washington  
Country Club*

*10272 N. Millbrook,  
Fresno*

*Saturday, January 22*



The Ranchos Kiwanis Club Christmas/Holiday House Decorating Contest First Place went to Mark, Devon, Cash and Heath Corrente on the corner of Road 36 and Marciel.



12271 Topper Road is where you’ll find the home of Julie and Jeff Clark, Third Place winners of the Ranchos Kiwanis Christmas/Holiday House Decorating Contest.



While Kiwanis members handed out judging sheets and goodies in front of Fernwood Gardens, the LHS Choir caroled with music teacher Janet Tenpas (right).

Joel and Bailey Nelson, at 11756 Haven Road, were the Second Place winners of the Kiwanis Club Christmas/Holiday House Decorating Contest but unfortunately the picture of their winning home became unavailable. All of the winning homes were chosen by votes cast by Ranchos residents.



*Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays from the Madera Ranchos Kiwanis Club*

## Senior Report

# Ranchos Seniors Looking Forward To New Year, Experiences

By Melanie Williams

The Seniors celebrated the holidays with style at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center this year.

Several people attended the holiday card crafting hosted by Eva McAtee where she demonstrated how to emboss paper and add sparkle to some very Merry Christmas cards. According to Eva, you don't have to be a master crafter to create a seasonal crafted card with a handmade flair. She shared all the crafting materials and equipment along with her expertise in crafting paper into beautiful artwork. Join us for the next crafting day on Jan. 27 at 9:30 a.m. A Valentine fabric card will be featured, available to make and take home that very day. Call the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center to sign up at 645-4864. The Senior Center is located at 37330 Berkshire Dr. in the Madera Ranchos.

Crafting events are being planned for the last Thursday of

every month. If anyone inspired by a talent or craft you would like to share, please contact the senior center. Everyone is welcome to participate in a great time of crafting, coffee and conversation.

The Good Company Player's "Holly Jolly Holidays" was a highlight of the Christmas season. It was the first outing planned since the reopening of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. The group collectively seemed amused by the lively, humorous satire of the Twelve Days of Christmas at Fresno's Second Space theater. It's an annual event, so next December get your tickets early.

The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center members waited with great anticipation for the Christmas Dinner Event of 2021. Tables were decorated by members who wanted to create the most festive Christmas seasonal décor for our annual Christmas Dinner. The bragging rights and some amount of fame is associated with the best decorated table. Birthdays and anniversaries

were celebrated and new board members were introduced and installed at the event.

A festive "ringing in" of the New Year with everyone was planned for Dec. 31. Participants were asked to bring a dish for a festive potluck and stories to share about the past year.

As the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center begins to plan events for the new year, this is the time to renew your annual membership. We encourage our returning members to please renew by Feb. 1, 2022. New members are welcome at any time.

We always encourage anyone wanting to find out more about our activities and events to stop by and chat with us. Please call ahead to 645-4864 for the hours the senior center is open during the holiday season. We wouldn't want anyone to miss out on an opportunity to gather together for conversation and fun activities.

Add Saturday Jan. 15 at 11:30 a.m. at the Pizza Factory to your calendar. It is the first monthly celebration of membership birthdays and anniversaries for January 2022. Put on some warm coats and sweaters and come out to celebrate with us.

We have a Game Night planned for Thursday Jan. 20 at 5:30 p.m. Come and join us for a hand of Poker, a game of Hand and Foot, or any other games you



Helen Lowell (left) and Ana Colorado get crafty at the recently held Ranchos/Hills Senior Center crafting event. The event was so well received the Center is planning another one on Jan. 27. Contact the Center for more information.



Crafts instructor Eva McAtee (center) shows Kim Bradley (left) and Margaret Tynan the finer points of crafting at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center crafting event held in December.

**We want to thank all of our valued customers for your support and patronage this past year. We appreciate you all.**



**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!**

### HOLIDAY HOURS

**Closed Dec 24 - Dec 27**

**Normal hours resume Dec 28 from 8 am - 4 pm**

**END OF YEAR SALE Dec 28 - Dec 31**

**EVERYTHING discounted 15% at register**



**Fernwood Gardens • 645-7677**  
12090 Fernwood Dr., Madera • [www.FernwoodGardens.net](http://www.FernwoodGardens.net)

12/21

like to play. Game Night is our first Potluck of the new year, so make sure to bring your own tableware and a dish to share.

A big thank you to the Kiwanis Club and Gus for donating a beautifully decorated Christmas tree to the senior center as part of their "Trees for Charity" program. It is a fantastic addition to the festive decorations for all our seniors to enjoy.

The Ranchos/Hills Seniors members wish the community a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year filled with joy and wonderful new adventures in 2022.

Thought for January 2022: "If you're always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be." – Maya Angelou

## GOLDEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

The Annual Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce Community Christmas Tree Lighting happened on Friday, Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. at the Maywood Center and was well-attended. In addition to lighting a Christmas tree for the Ranchos Community, there was also an appearance by the Big Man himself, Santa Claus, as Christmas snacks were handed out amidst the Christmas music. The crowd was reminded – and thanked – for the real reason behind the event: Gathering sorely needed items for our veterans who will be spending Christmas at the VA Hospital in Fresno.

Any event is only as good as the people behind the scenes, and this year the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce wants to thank some helpers who particularly shined, beginning with Verlaine Elinburg, Alma Griffen and Ollia Ridge who did an outstanding job decorating the tree. A very special thanks

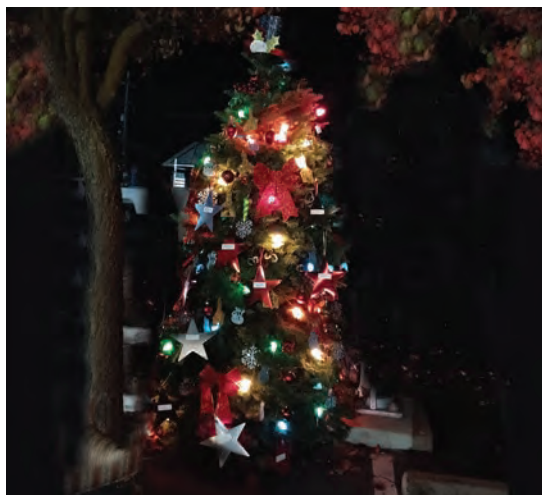
goes to Mike Fursman who “helped” Santa meet all the eagerly awaiting children – and a few adults. A group that was very instrumental in providing cookies, cocoa and a lot of help was the Sierra Shadows 4-H group. What a great group of kids. And of course, thanks to Mark Kellner for driving the beautifully decorated fire engine that delivered Saint Nick safe and sound.

Of course, the BIGGEST THANK YOU goes out to all of you in the Ranchos who so selflessly donated items for our veterans this holiday season. Veterans gave so that we can enjoy the freedom to gather together at Christmas time with loved ones, and we thank them for that. Your giving tells them in a small way, “Thank you.”

The Annual Christmas Tree Lighting is a yearly event, and the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce looks forward to seeing you next December.



*Who needs reindeer when you can arrive in a fire engine? Santa made his entrance in flashy style complete with lights and siren.*



*Of course, the OTHER guest of honor was the Community Christmas Tree donated to the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce by B&D Christmas Trees.*



*Finally getting to the seat of power. If you want something for Christmas, go to the head man and plead your case. That's what this young lady did.*



*It wasn't only the kids who wanted a little face-time with Santa. Some of the more “mature” crowd got in line as well, ostensibly to “hedge their bets.”*



*Prior to the arrival of the guests, holiday snacks were laid out and arranged with the help of the Sierra Shadows 4-H Club.*



*With his work done here, Santa says his goodbyes before loading up his firetruck for that long drive back to the North Pole.*

*All photos courtesy of Bill Whyman*

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM YOUR FRIENDS  
AT THE GOLDEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

# FLIP SIDE *join us* SUNDAYS 9 & 10:30 AM

LIVE ONLINE AT 10:30 AM | [WWW.FLIPSIDE.CHURCH](http://WWW.FLIPSIDE.CHURCH)

## COMING SOON...

*Christmas Eve Services*  
AT 3:00 & 5:00 PM

IN THE MAYWOOD CENTER | 37193 AVE 12 #3H MADERA, CA 93636 | (559) 481-6875 | [INFO@ACTS176.COM](mailto:INFO@ACTS176.COM)

### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS FROM BIRTH-6TH GRADE  
JR HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL 2ND SERVICE

### YOUTH MIDWEEK SCHEDULE

JR HIGH | MONDAYS | 7 - 8:30 PM  
HIGH SCHOOL | WEDNESDAYS | 7 - 9 PM

# FLIP SIDE RIVERSTONE SERVICES AT 10:30 AM

GRAND OPENING JANUARY 9TH 2022

LOCATED AT STONE CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

12/21

# California Drought is Manageable Lack of Preparation is Not

So here we are again, California. We're coming through another dry year and watching the sky, hopeful that Mother Nature will give us a reprieve.

We've all had a bad year, but everyone needs to buckle up because some of the biggest consumer impacts are just now showing up. Farmers, many of whom received none of their promised water allotment this year, were forced to grow less of the healthy, safe, diverse food supply our families rely on. Just trying to make it through the year, most farmers had to either fallow land, focus only on the highest value crops or a combination of both. Price increases and decreased availability of some foods are hitting the markets now, just as we're all making shopping lists for all our favorite holiday foods. What will next year bring? There are already rumblings that farms will start the year with a zero percent allocation of promised water.

### *It Doesn't Have to Be Like This*

It doesn't have to be this bad. California has weathered multi-year droughts as far back as data has been recorded and still been able to deliver water to farms, people and the environment.

What is preventing California from meeting water needs now? Of course, we're in a drought, but there is much we could be doing to help mitigate the worst of the drought impacts on people, farms and the environment.

Our government has been slow to adjust to climate change.

Climate scientists have been telling us for some time that our changed weather pattern is here to stay. We are seeing more precipitation in the form of rain instead of snow in the Sierras, drier dry years and wetter wet years. In order to adjust to these boom-or-bust water years, we must be able to store it when we get it. If Sites Reservoir had been built, we'd have nearly one million acre-feet of water available to help reduce the impacts of this year's drought.

But there is much more we can and should do apart from multi-year projects like Sites. Restoring flood plains and building recharge ponds is critical. It not only captures surface water, but holds it,

allowing us to recharge groundwater aquifers, and also helps prevent flooding and rockslides.

We are simply not ready to adequately capture water from big storms such as in 2019 when 18 trillion gallons of rain fell in California just in the month of February, or the atmospheric river that soaked the state in October of this year. Making these adjustments could dramatically enhance our ability to meet California's water needs. We just need the political will to make it happen.

State and Federal agencies want to revert to old, outdated operating rules for 2022. Over the past decade, science has taught us that keeping our ecosystem and fish populations healthy requires us to take a holistic approach to water management. Rather than only considering the amount of water in our rivers and streams, we've learned that we must also improve habitat, increase food supply and control

predators. And in 2019, we finally abandoned decision making based on arbitrary calendar dates and began using real-time monitoring because fish don't check the date on their iPhones, they respond to real-time

changes in the ecosystem that governs their lifecycle. And to be clear, we discarded the outdated ways of doing things because they weren't working. Fish continued to decline throughout the decade that the ineffective rules were in place.

We already know that abandoning the holistic approach to managing our environment won't help fish. Reverting to an outdated system also removes important operational flexibility and delivers even less water to farmers. Proposals from officials at the Bureau of Reclamation and the State of California put food production third or fourth in line for getting water. And what's even worse, is that farmers wouldn't know what water they will have to work with until after planting decisions must be made. All this new plan would do is guarantee decades more conflict and litigation.

**Voluntary Agreements are Key**  
Voluntary Agreements are currently

Please see **DROUGHT** on P. 16

*If the state and federal governments don't change their way of doing things now, California farmers simply will not be able to provide the diverse food supply to which we are accustomed.*

*What's Happening*  
**93636**

*Your Neighbors & Real Estate Experts*

Thinking of buying or selling a home?  
Don't know where to start?  
Call or contact us.

**NOVEMBER 2021**

Median Listing Price  
\$497K

Median Days on Market  
10

Median Sold Price  
\$508K

Median Price/SF Sold  
\$242

**WE GOT YOU!**





Mary Avigliano  
559-367-7264  
mary@ironkeyrealestate.com  
REALTOR® • DRE 02093132

Maurice Gonzales  
559.288.1904  
maurice@ironkeyrealestate.com  
REALTOR® • DRE 01390928

Data based on the Fresno County MLS

12/21

**Tired of your OLD, DAMAGED, OUT-OF-DATE window coverings?**

**New window coverings are just a phone call away!**

**FREE ESTIMATES | FABRIC DISCOUNTS | 49 YEARS EXPERIENCE**

**Draperies by Suzanne 559-660-5643**

Complete line of window coverings and accessories  
Ranchos resident

12/21

**DECEMBER AT THRIVE**

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**  
**FRIDAY DECEMBER 24 AT 6 P.M.**

**LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL**

**THRIVE CHURCH**  
**559-448-7174**  
**CONNECT@THRIVETOGETHER.CHURCH**

**JOIN US EVERY SUNDAY AT LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**FUN KIDS ACTIVITIES • INSPIRING WORSHIP MUSIC**  
**ENCOURAGING BIBLE MESSAGE**

**DECEMBER AT THRIVE**

12/21

*The Bookshelf*

# Ranchos Library Survives, Grows in Whirlwind Year

By Jerrica Edmundson

This has been a whirlwind of a year, but I am happy to see that we made it through in one piece. I want to take a moment to thank all of you wonderful people for being so understanding regarding the changes in policies we have had to implement thanks to the Covid regulations and note that we have come so far in the attempt to return to normalcy here in the library. While we still can't quite have the in-person programming, I have loved being able to arrange all the take home arts and crafts supplied by our local Friends of the Ranchos Library, as well as the success we saw with the Backpack Literacy Program.

**Award Winning**

The Madera County library system ended up winning an award for innovation from the California State Association of Counties for the Backpack Literacy Program. We could never have done it without your participation. We have continued the

program but have consolidated it down to being run solely through the main branch in Madera, so if you are interested, please give them a call at 559-675-7871.

We have been working hard to get the library here in the Ranchos to be as user-friendly as possible, and you'll notice new signage showing just where everything is in the branch. Our Friends of the Ranchos Library also purchased display frames for our meeting room, with the intent that we can use them to show temporary art installations in the future — so please let us know if you or a group you know of would like a place to display their art. Currently, we are showcasing the Life Magazines donated by Brett Frazier's grandmother, Marion Herburger, when we opened up this location last year. Feel free to come look them over and be sure to check out our Facebook page, where we will advertise any time someone has a special art showing here at the library.

**New Donation Setup**

Our donations setup has been working

well, and we appreciate your compliance with our "donations table" setup, as it allows us time to sort through the ample amounts of donated materials that we get on a nearly daily basis. We would like to remind everyone though, that donations should not be put into the drop box and should not be left outside of business hours, as they are not properly handled that way and we are unable to guarantee that they will be kept in good condition. Leaving them outside of business hours does often lead to them being damaged by the morning dew or inclement weather.

We are so utterly excited to see what the new year will bring and working toward getting all our amazing resources available to the community out here. Just this year we have added in mobile hotspot and Chromebook borrowing, meeting room usage that is not dependent on library business hours, and community-based art showing. What sorts of things would you like to see here at the library? Let us know.



1. Name the duo who released "Summer Nights." What soundtrack was it used in?
2. Who had a debut hit with "I Only Want to Be with You"?
3. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Goodbye, Papa, please pray for me, I was the black sheep of the family."

1. Olivia Newton-John and John Travolta, in the 1978 musical film "Grease."
2. Dusty Springfield, in 1963.
3. "Seasons in the Sun," by Terry Jacks, in 1974. It was offered to the Beach Boys, who declined it, and Jacks' version went on to top the charts worldwide.

© 2021 King Features Syndicate

**IT'S A GOOD DAY FOR QUALITY.**

**"When you put your name on something, you want it to be the best."**

That's the work ethic that Chris, our Senior Test Tech at YORK®, brings to work every day. American Quality impacts every level of design, engineering and manufacturing in every YORK® product. It's people of character and commitment who make that happen. You can see that in action in our latest video featuring a day in the life of Chris at [YORK.com/today](http://YORK.com/today). It's a good day for quality. And that's a good day for everyone who owns YORK® equipment.

Locally owned and operated  
37082 Avenue 12, Madera, CA 93636  
559-662-0336 | [www.huckabeeshvac.com](http://www.huckabeeshvac.com)

12/21

**NORTHwest PEDIATRIC Medical Group**

*Quality Pediatric Care Since 1995*

Marina Alper, MD | Vivian Hernandez, MD | John Kim, MD | Alisha Bajwa, DO

**WELCOME DR. ALISHA BAJWA**

**WE ARE ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS**

Pharmacy, laboratory & urgent care ON SITE

**Close to the Friant exit off of Freeway 41**  
7355 N. Palm Ave. #100  
Fresno, CA 93711  
**(559) 271-6302**

[northwestpediatricmedicalgroup.com](http://northwestpediatricmedicalgroup.com)

12/21

**PETS** cont. from P. 2

Winter walks can become downright dangerous if chemicals from ice-melting agents are licked off of bare paws. To help prevent cold weather dangers from affecting your pet's health, please heed the following advice from our experts:

**1. Repeatedly coming out of the cold** into the dry heat of your home can cause itchy, flaking skin. Keep your home humidified and towel dry your pet as soon as he comes inside, paying special attention to his feet and in-between the toes. Remove any snow balls from between his foot pads.

**2. Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter**, as a longer coat will provide more warmth. If your dog is long-haired, simply trim him to minimize the clinging ice balls, salt crystals and de-icing chemicals that can dry his skin, and don't neglect the hair between his toes. If your dog is short-haired, consider getting him a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck with coverage

from the base of the tail to the belly. For many dogs, this is regulation winter wear.

**3. Bring a towel on long walks** to clean off stinging, irritated paws. After each walk, wash and dry your pet's feet and stomach to remove ice, salt and chemicals—and check for cracks in paw pads or redness between the toes.

**4. Bathe your pets as little as possible** during cold spells. Washing too often can remove essential oils and increase the chance of developing dry, flaky skin. If your pooch must be bathed, ask your vet to recommend a moisturizing shampoo and/or rinse.

**5. Massaging petroleum jelly or other paw protectants** into paw pads before going outside can help protect from salt and chemical agents. Booties provide even more coverage and can also prevent sand and salt from getting lodged between bare toes and causing irritation. Use pet-friendly ice melts whenever possible.

**6. Like coolant, antifreeze is a**

**lethal poison** for dogs and cats. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle, and consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol.

**7. Pets burn extra energy by trying to stay warm** in wintertime. Feeding your pet a little bit more during the cold weather months can provide much-needed calories, and making sure she has plenty of water to drink will help keep her well-hydrated and her skin less dry.

**8. Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep**, off the floor and away from all drafts. A cozy dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow is perfect.

**9. Remember, if it's too cold for you**, it's probably too cold for your pet, so keep your animals inside. If left outdoors, pets can freeze, become disoriented, lost, stolen, injured or killed. In addition, don't leave pets alone in a car during cold weather, as cars can act as refrigerators that hold in the cold and cause animals to freeze to death.

**GENWHY** cont. from P. 6

just say it wasn't triple digits, but still more than a woman my age should spend on a toy wand and leave it at that. I also faced a fear that week and climbed aboard a giant fan boat and zoomed around a swamp looking for alligators in their natural habitat. We found some. They weren't thrilled with our visit. It was the kind of trip that I will look back on fondly for the rest of my life.

As I contemplate the coming year and what I want for myself and my country, I am filled with hope. Hope that Americans will show the government with their votes that we demand our freedom and will take nothing less. Hope that more people will wake up and see that the left wants to keep people dependent on the government so those in office can hold onto their power. Hope that more people will come to realize that media is biased, dishonest and manipulates everyone who watches. Hope that businesses and organizations will reject the mandates and let people make the choice for themselves while remaining employed and providing for their families. I'm not saying the next year is going to be rainbows and cotton candy, but if this year has taught me anything, it's to hold on to hope. So, with that, I hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God bless you all, and God bless America.

**DROUGHT** cont. from P. 14

stalled and our biggest hope for common sense water regulation remains the Voluntary Agreements. These agreements would allow local stakeholders, through a collaborative process, to decide how to best use the available water in their area and base all decisions on the latest science. To make these agreements happen, already struggling farmers are willing to give up even more water because the result would be a holistic approach to protecting native species and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta and its tributaries, which would be good for all Californians.

Unfortunately, after years of negotiation and work throughout both the Brown and Newsom administrations, the state has chosen to walk away from talks with five water agencies operating projects on tributaries to the San Joaquin River. We appreciate how complicated the remaining issues are, including how to navigate water rights that precede the State's oversight versus state and federal control. However, we hope all sides can find a way to work this out. Without the Voluntary Agreements, we will continue to limp along under a top-down regulatory system that cuts the locals out of

key decisions and over the last decade has been making things steadily worse for fish, farms and people. Getting the Voluntary Agreements right is a critical step toward a more secure California water future and worth fighting for.

**The Bottom Line**

The bottom line is our state and federal governments have not done their jobs. Our infrastructure is old and decaying and outdated notions on how to protect endangered fish have clearly failed. Rather than embrace the future with new science, adaptive management, local decision-making, creating new water supplies and adapting to our new weather patterns, they remain locked into old and destructive ways of doing things. Their only solution is to demand more and more from water users, and we simply have no more to give.

If the state and federal governments don't change their way of doing things now, California farmers simply will not be able to provide the diverse food supply to which we are accustomed. Maintaining a healthy, safe, local food supply must be a priority for California and the nation

*This article appears courtesy of the California Farm Water Coalition at [farmwater.org](http://farmwater.org).*

**HERO** cont. from P. 2

Douglas' breath and arrested and booked him into the Fresno County jail on charges of DUI. His bail was \$277,000.

Police found Fuentes pinned into his vehicle and he was removed when fire crews arrived. He suffered massive head injuries, was sent to the hospital in critical condition and passed away a week later.

**The Ranchos Independent**

**Got Water?**

*Got a holding tank to fill? What about a swimming pool?  
Don't want to waste your precious well water or pay PG&E to pump it?*

**CALL US!**

**Bubba's Water Truck Service**  
call Gina at 559-289-3401 • [BubbasWTS@yahoo.com](mailto:BubbasWTS@yahoo.com)

12/21

LICENSE #932435

**TIM DE MERA**  
Owner/CEO  
Madera Ranchos Resident

**FREE ESTIMATES**

**ALL STAGE CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT INC.**

Room Additions & General Contracting • Commercial & Residential  
Discount Steel Buildings: Sales & Erecting  
Concrete Foundations & Flatwork

**TIMDEMERA@AOL.COM (559) 681-8947**

**WWW.ALLSTAGECONSTRUCTION.COM**

12/21





# 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 addi-

tions, barns and patios. Lic. #719500. **Call 559-970-4476.**

## Firewood

**Firewood for sale** - Seasoned Almond firewood. Round or split. **Call 259-7122 or 645-5523.**

## For Sale

**For sale -- Cemetery plots.** Two plots at St. Peter's "Sacred Heart" section. No opening or closing included. Side by side location. \$4,500 each plot. **Call 559-312-0891 and please 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.**

## Salesperson Wanted

**Salesperson Wanted** - The Ranchos Independent is looking for an independent contractor to sell ad-

vertising. Set your own hours, make as much as you want. **Call 559-645-0634.**

## 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 included. Remove hard water stain on home windows, shower doors and car windows. Cobweb removal too. Fully insured.

**Call Nick at 285-1723. Free estimates.**

**STOP THE PAIN!**  
**"We've got your back"**

*Specializing in AUTO ACCIDENTS*

D.O.T. Physicals • Drug Testing  
 Sports Physicals only \$35!

**HANEY CHIROPRACTIC**  
 & rehabilitation center

**36754 AVE. 12 • 660-5262**

**TO ADVERTISE CALL 645-0634**

**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.

	÷		+		11			
-		×		÷				
	+		×		20			
×		+		+				
	×		+		17			
16		17		9				
1	2	3	4	4	5	7	8	9

©2021 King Features Syndicates, Inc.

**SUDOKU**  
 by Linda Thistle

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

©2021 King Features Syndicates, Inc.

**Strange BUT TRUE**

By Lucie Winborne

- In 2008, PETA requested Ben & Jerry's use breastmilk instead of cow's milk to make ice cream. This was unanimously rejected by Ben & Jerry's and La Leche League International.
- Sixty-five percent of test subjects had the urge to yawn after reading about yawning.
- The kitchen dishwasher was invented by a politician's socialite wife who was fed up with servants breaking her expensive dishes.

© 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.



## As liberty hangs in the balance, what say we?

By Betty Van Valkenburg

Never, it seems, have Americans feared the loss of liberty more than at this very moment – and with good reason.

The Declaration of Independence states: "... that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The Constitution was established to "... secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Yet today we see an out-of-control government stamping out cherished rights through mere pronouncements of lockdowns, school closures, mask and vaccine man-

dates and more. Thomas Jefferson warned: "In questions of power then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from

mischievous by the chains of the constitution." But now in too many cases, mere pronouncements by "man" are accepted as law with absolutely no consideration of constitutional limitations or a vote by the people or their elected representatives. Congress regulates every segment of our lives and society and obliges us to pay taxes for our own "chains."

Ronald Reagan said: "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected and handed on for them to do the same." But now, schools in too many cases teach not the blessings of liberty but instead that Marxism, Socialism or some other tyrannical "ism" is desirable – a lie that even some elected officials openly embrace. Self-described Marxists were allowed to devastate American cities without consequence, and many cities now abet rampant crime by withholding punishment and curtailing police protection. How long can freedom coexist with sanctioned violence and lawlessness? Is

this the generation in which freedom becomes extinct?

George Washington said: "If the freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter." Now, acting as publicity agents for left-wing politics, powerful media promote outright lies while banning and silencing pro-constitution voices and views. TV, social and print media wantonly censor out pro-constitution viewpoints and even factual information itself. When brazen lying becomes the norm and propaganda triumphs over truth, then "dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter."

Patrick Henry, discussing strategy against the British in 1775, stated: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death." That admonition is included here not to suggest that our lives are in jeopardy when we speak out against authoritarianism, but is meant as encouragement

to fearlessly speak up for and assert our rights which were gained by those who did risk their lives for our freedom to speak.

Alexis de Tocqueville said

in the 1800s: "Democracy and socialism have nothing in common but one word: equality. But notice the difference: while democracy seeks equality in liberty, socialism seeks equality in restraint and servitude." Now, Democrat/Progressive office holders and pundits openly promote socialism's servitude and advocate for repressive laws and onerous regulations carrying multi-trillion-dollar price tags. They substitute the word "equity," by which they mean equal outcomes, for the word "equality," meaning equal treatment. Equal outcomes for free people with different abilities and goals can never be achieved, but that doesn't stop politicians from trying to achieve it through coercion.

Woodrow Wilson said: "The history of liberty is a history of limitations of governmental power, not the increase of it." But now, every level of American government seems to covet the total power of dictatorial socialist, Marxist or communist regimes, and their powers increase with every massively intrusive

# Real Estate



"Real estate is my life! I make your real estate dreams a reality."



MARIA FOTOPoulos  
REALTOR

559-250-6740 • [mfotorealtor@gmail.com](mailto:mfotorealtor@gmail.com)

Integrity, Dedication, Results

[www.homesmartpva.com/mfoto](http://www.homesmartpva.com/mfoto) • DRE #01454566

"Put my experience, knowledge, service and professionalism to work for you."

12/21

law and pandemic-related overreaching restriction.

Nancy Pelosi stated, when asked what was in the massive Obamacare bill which no one had read: "We have to pass the bill so that you can find out what is in it – away from the fog of the controversy." But the controversy she avoided is exactly what is needed: open discussion of the proposal and thoughtful consideration of constitutional limitations. Queen Nancy expected and got blind obedience and an uninformed vote which deprived American citizens of real constitutional representation. Now she and her Democrat cohorts are at it again with an even bigger freedom-killing multi-trillion-dollar pork-barrel bill, guaranteed to increase already exorbitant inflation and taxes.

Candidate Joe Biden said on March 2, 2020: "We hold these truths to be self-evident. All men and women are created, by the, you know, you know, the thing." Heaven help us! As president, he and/or his puppet masters have done everything possible to bring down our republic and limit our liberties. He has – or they have – encouraged the border invasion; sanctioned rioting and destruction; micromanaged citizens' lives and livelihoods through onerous laws and taxes; caused massive inflation through reckless spending; killed America's gas independence, resulting in steeper prices at the pump; and instituted destructive lockdowns and mask and vaccine mandates.

What say We, the People?

Our liberty, safety and way of life are at stake. Will we speak up? Will we work with like-minded groups or individuals to spread the message of liberty? Will we pressure politicians to adhere to the constitution and back away from the precipice of totalitarianism? Will we cast our votes for liberty or more of the same in 2022 and 2024?



- "My great-nephew and his family came to visit, and his toddler son is quite into opening doors. I had baby-proofed my home, but I did not think about his being able to turn a doorknob. His very smart mother pulled out a sock and slipped it over the doorknob, then secured it with a wide rubber band. Even I was unable to get a good grip on the doorknob after that!" -- V.R. in North Carolina

- Surprise guests? Here's how to quickly clean your living areas: First, clean the toilet, mirror and vanity in the guest bathroom and leave a fresh towel; grab a laundry basket and remove any clutter from the living room and kitchen; put away or clean dirty dishes and wipe down counters in the kitchen; finally, give carpets a quick vacuum. Then maybe light a great-smelling candle and greet your guests!

- "Fireplaces are wonderful for heat and ambiance, but the ashes! When cleaning up, I spritz the ashes with a rosemary water solution. This keeps them from dusting up and flying all over, and it smells great. My neighbor puts her damp loose-leaf tea in the fireplace for scent." -- C.W. in Iowa

- Empty spice containers can be used to hold different hardware in the shop or in your toolbox.

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

© 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

**Business Directory • Business Directory • Business Directory • Business Directory**

**CHANEY'S**  
  
 Lic. #899496  
**Bobcat Service**  
 • DRILLING • TRENCHING • DIRT WORK •  
 • efficient • reliable • cost-effective call Beau  
**559-301-1613**

**CLARK'S**  
  
 559-645-1578  
**General & Custom Auto Service & Repairs**  
 PERFORMANCE

**Unlimited Concrete**  
 Lic. #1042108  
  
 DRIVEWAYS • SIDEWALKS • COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL  
 call Jose Lopez  
**559-779-0401**

**Mike's Country Clippers Barber Shop**  
**HAIRCUTS \$14**  
 Seniors Thursdays ONLY \$12!  
**439-2004**  
**37184 AVE. 12 #104**  
 (behind Pizza Factory)

**NEW & USED CARS & TRUCKS**  
 All Makes & Models  
**J.H. Sanders Sales & Leasing**  
**822-4500**  
 41453 Ave. 14 1/2  
 Madera Ranchos  
[www.jhsanders.com](http://www.jhsanders.com)

**BEDROCK ENGINEERING**  
 A solid foundation for your next project  
 Land Surveying • Civil Engineering • Consulting  
**INVEST IN YOUR EXISTING PROPERTY!**  
 For a free consultation, visit our Madera Ranchos office!  
 10878 HWY 41 • 559-645-4849  
[www.bedrockeng.com](http://www.bedrockeng.com)

**Bradley & Sons**  
 Lic. 414176  
**DRILLING & PUMP SYSTEMS**  
**674-1663**  
*same day service*

**Huckabee's**  
 HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING  
 Lic. #837274  
**559-662-0336**  
**559-438-8260**  
 Sales and Service - Free Estimates  
 Duct Testing & Certification  
 Locally owned and operated!

**HIGH QUALITY GATE SYSTEMS**  
  
**559-454-8060**

**TOUCH-OF-GREEN LANDSCAPE**  
 CA LIC. #934774  
 commercial, residential and industrial landscaping  
 call **559-242-6352**  
[info@TouchOfGreenLandscape.us](mailto:info@TouchOfGreenLandscape.us)

Create a gift from the heart  
  
 Arts & Crafts Studio • Bisque • Wood Stems  
**Ranchos Crafters' Studio & Gifts**  
**559-824-6336**  
 37164 Ave. 12 #102 (behind Subway)

**"We don't cut corners, we CLEAN them."**  
 Carpet • Upholstery • Tile  
  
**559-676-0760**

**PERSONAL TOUCH**  
 Lic. # B0008113  
 Landscaping & Gardening Services  
 Yard cleanups & hauling • Weed control  
 Lawn & garden service • Maintenance  
 Weekly & monthly service (not a licensed contractor)  
 call Mag Anaya Jr.  
**559-974-1357**  
 Ranchos Resident

**BUBBA'S WATER TRUCK SERVICE**  
  
 We Fill Holding Tanks Swimming Pools  
 Potable Water Dust Control  
 Covering Mountain Areas & the Central Valley  
 Call Gina at 559-289-3401  
 email BubbasWTS@yahoo.com

**MARION POOL SERVICE & REPAIR**  
 • Weekly Service  
 • Equipment  
 • Supplies  
 • Residential  
 • Drains - Upstarts • Commercial  
 • Locally Owned  
**251-2514 351-1605 645-4799**  
 office cell after 5 p.m.

**SEM CU**  
**"For the community, by the community."**  
**559-363-9095**  
 3rd Monday of the month • 6 p.m.  
 37191 Ave. 12, Madera Ranchos

**VALLEY PROPANE**  
  
**"Service you can trust, prices you can afford."**  
**645-5324**  
 The ONLY locally owned propane company in the Ranchos

**H.O. TIRES**  
 • TIRES  
 • ALIGNMENTS  
 • WHEEL & TIRE PACKAGES  
 • LIFT & LOWERING KITS  
 • FREE TIRE MAINTENANCE  
**559-831-2937**

**Aleman's Painting**  
 SINCE 1980  
  
 Interior & Exterior  
 Specializing in Repaints  
 Rental, Residential & Commercial  
 Drywall, Stucco, Redashing & Acoustical Removal  
 Color Matching  
 BONDED & INSURED Lic. #589140  
**559-974-2268**

**FERNWOOD GARDENS**  
  
 12090 FERNWOOD DR.  
 MADERA RANCHOS  
**559-645-7677**

**FJIPSIDE join us**  
 SUNDAYS 9 & 10:30 AM  
**559-481-6875**  
**37193 Ave. 12 #3H**  
 Madera Ranchos  
 LIVE ONLINE AT 10:30 AM  
[WWW.FLIPSIDE.CHURCH](http://WWW.FLIPSIDE.CHURCH)  
[info@acts176.com](mailto:info@acts176.com)  
 SEE YOU SUNDAY!

**"We've got your back"**  
 D.O.T. Physicals • Drug Testing  
 Sports Physicals only \$35!  
  
**HANEY CHIROPRACTIC**  
 & rehabilitation center  
**660-5262**  
 36754 AVE. 12 • Madera Ranchos

**Get Involved!**  
  
**645-4001**  
 2nd Wed. of the month • 6:30 p.m.  
 37167 Ave. 12 #5C, Madera Ranchos

for MORE sales tomorrow, call  
**RANDY BAILEY**  
**Today!**  
 (559) 645-0634  
 The Ranchos Independent

## Just Like Cats &amp; Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



©2021 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Make your holiday preparations one step at a time in order to avoid being overwhelmed and leaving things undone. That confusing family situation continues to work itself out.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) Ease this year's holiday money pressures by letting your thrifty side guide you as you look for those perfect gifts that typically reflect your good taste and love of beauty.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) You'll have a good handle on potential holiday problems if you delegate tasks to family members, friends or co-workers -- most of whom will be more than happy to help out.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) Right now you are especially vulnerable to holiday scams that seek to take advantage of your generosity. Best advice: Check them out before you send out your checks.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) The upcoming holiday season gives the Big Cat much to purr about. Relationships grow stronger and new opportunities loom on the horizon, just waiting to be pounced upon.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) A changing situation brings conflicting advice about how to go forward with your holiday plans. Your best bet: Make the decision with which you feel most comfortable.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) Holiday plans get back on track after some confusion about the direction you expected to take. A potentially troublesome money matter needs your immediate attention.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Your holiday preparations are on track. But you need to confront a personal situation while you can still keep it from overwhelming everything else.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Tight financial matters ease a bit during this holiday season. But the sagacious Sagittarian is well-advised to keep a tight hold on the reins while shopping for gifts.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) Don't put off making decisions about this year's holiday celebrations, despite the negative comments you've been getting from several quarters. Do it NOW!

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) The holidays will bring new friends and new opportunities. Meanwhile, be careful to use your energy wisely as you go about making holiday preparations.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) There's good news coming from a most unlikely source. And it could turn out to be one of the best holiday gifts you have had in years. Remember to stay positive.

GRIN and BEAR IT <sup>by</sup> Wagner

© North America Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



"When we formed this carpool, I think we all assumed that one of us had a car."

www.TheRanchos.com

## Born this Week

*You are respected for your honesty and loyalty. You make friends slowly -- but with rare exceptions, they're in your life forever.*

© 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.



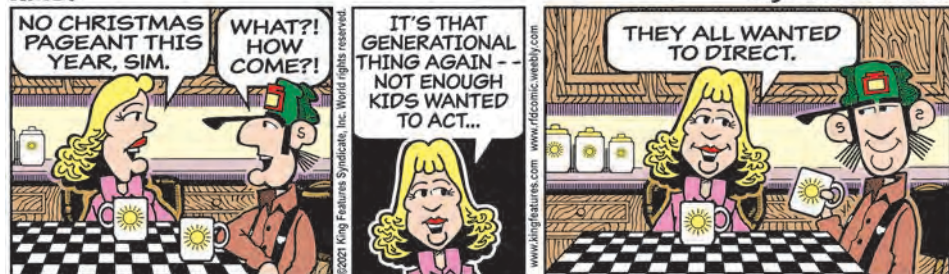
### Amber Waves

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

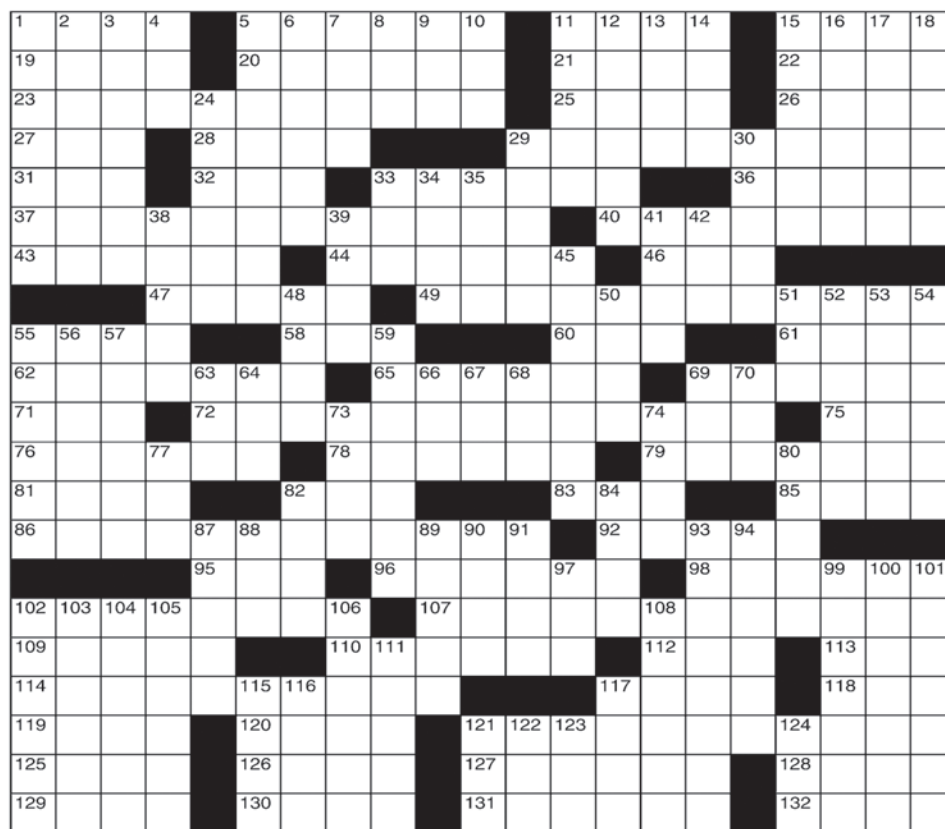
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

©2021 King Features Syndicate, Inc.



Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Table is moved. 2. Ball is missing. 3. Glasses are added. 4. Parts are different. 5. Hair is added. 6. Necklace is removed.

## Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Agree (with)
  - 5 Ability to cope well with difficulty
  - 11 Mini-devils
  - 15 Girl
  - 19 Forget to say
  - 20 Vocation
  - 21 Heist booty
  - 22 — Stanley Gardner
  - 23 She played Kira Nerys on "Deep Space Nine"
  - 25 Sicilian resort city
  - 26 Rain-starved
  - 27 Get riper
  - 28 Taken with
  - 29 Legendary nude horse rider
  - 31 Small bird
  - 32 Enhaloed Fr. woman
  - 33 Lightning source, as shortened in weather reports
  - 36 Like wicker baskets
  - 37 Rotating rocket ride at Disney theme parks
  - 40 Alternatives to dice
  - 43 Has the helm
  - 44 Exactly
  - 46 Lime drink
  - 47 "Oh, go on!"
  - 49 Kevin Bacon's "Footloose" role
  - 55 Spring-loaded stick
  - 58 R&B's Rawls
  - 60 Suffix with Gardner
  - 61 Elvis — Presley
  - 62 Twitched, as a muscle
  - 65 Pasta strip
  - 69 Raiment
  - 71 — and yang
  - 72 Depressing
  - 75 Santa —, California
  - 76 Overprotect
  - 78 Most ashen
  - 79 Discovered
  - 81 Old cracker brand
  - 82 Short time, for short
  - 83 Sheeran and O'Neill
  - 85 Regatta tools
  - 86 Grammy nominee for writing the Lee Ann Womack hit "I May Hate Myself in the Morning"
  - 92 Retort to "No you're not!"
  - 95 Moray, say
  - 96 Gin mill
  - 98 Be emphatic
  - 102 Moniker for Boston's locale
  - 107 Flying disc renamed "Frisbee" in 1957
  - 109 Zones
  - 110 FDR part
  - 112 "Indeedy"
  - 113 "Law & Order: —" (NBC series since '99)
  - 114 Silly grin
  - 117 Gravy Train competitor
  - 118 Insult, in rap
  - 119 Be very mad
  - 120 Baseball's Ty
  - 121 Their names begin eight answers in this puzzle
  - 125 Wields
  - 126 Major city in Norway
  - 127 Squirrel food
  - 128 Actress Hathaway
  - 129 Period before 6-Down
  - 130 Close-call cry
  - 131 Present in a different form
  - 132 Attention-getting cries
- DOWN**
- 1 Piano recital pieces
  - 2 Free-verse poet
  - 3 Kitchen nook
  - 4 Hellenic H
  - 5 Red apple
  - 6 It follows Holy Week
  - 7 Stooges, e.g.
  - 8 New Year in Vietnam
  - 9 Zodiac sign
  - 10 Mess up
  - 11 "Word has it ..."
  - 12 Munchies from Mars
  - 13 Pint-size junk
  - 14 Smeltery
  - 15 Entice
  - 16 Get there
  - 17 Split-off bit
  - 18 Alternatives to coupes
  - 24 Sun blockers
  - 29 Oscar winner Sophia
  - 30 Proprietor
  - 33 Uncle, in Spanish
  - 34 Sky shiner
  - 35 Head, in French
  - 38 Creditors' takebacks
  - 39 Square in the first column of a bingo card
  - 41 Speed
  - 42 Nuptial vow
  - 45 Try to equal
  - 48 "We're No Angels" actor — Ray
  - 50 Regatta group
  - 51 Gym pad
  - 52 Pop singer Grande
  - 53 Intersection
  - 54 Presses and stretches
  - 55 Hitchcock film of 1960
  - 56 Downer drug
  - 57 India's Indra
  - 59 Takes stuff out of a suitcase
  - 63 Nero's 1,550
  - 64 Up "til
  - 66 Popeye's Olive
  - 67 Lofty poem
  - 68 "ER" roles
  - 69 Exist
  - 70 Luggage-screening org.
  - 73 Oil gp.
  - 74 "Frozen" heroine
  - 77 Fawn nurse
  - 80 Hen's perch
  - 82 Road deicer
  - 87 U.S. flag sewer Ross
  - 88 Meadowland
  - 89 Sappy tree
  - 90 Earthen cooking pot
  - 91 Person, place or thing
  - 93 Motorist's distance marker
  - 94 Attach with a click
  - 97 Siouan tribe
  - 99 "All finished!"
  - 100 "Kids" actress Chloë
  - 101 Bridge supports
  - 102 Amount a sack will hold
  - 103 Stimulate
  - 104 Naval petty officers
  - 105 Most secure
  - 106 OK for eating
  - 108 Traffic cones
  - 111 Funny bone locale
  - 115 Garbage barge
  - 116 Dance violently
  - 117 Razor choice
  - 121 Uber order
  - 122 Fabulous flier
  - 123 Fabled flier
  - 124 "Zip-a-Dee-Doo- —"

# FUN PAGES

**Wishing You the Happiest of Holidays!**

**Mark Your Calendar!**

**SEM CU**

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**Monday, March 21**

**SEM CU REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday, January 17**

**6 p.m. • Virtual Meeting**

**call 312-757-3121 and enter code 715-657-949**

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

**SEM CU**  
**south east madera county united**