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STOLEN FUTURES

College opportunities for many graduating high school kids in California have been stolen from them

By Katy Grimes

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Area Students Win at Decathlon

In a battle of wits, Madera South High School triumphed over its rivals, making its students the champions of the 39th Annual Madera County Academic Decathlon. This was the first virtual competition. With a score of 28,727.6, Madera South will advance to the California Academic Decathlon and compete against the best teams in the state March 19-21.

Of the seven schools that competed on Feb. 6 in this 10-event competition, the Ranchos' Liberty High came in third, besting Chawanakee Academy Charter, Chowchilla Union High School, Madera High School, Matilda Torres High School and Yosemite High School.

"We are proud of all of our student decathletes for participating virtually this year," said Dr. Cecilia Massetti, Madera County Superintendent of Schools. "Their dedication and determination to succeed is inspiring."



Decathlon teams are comprised of up to 25 members competing in three levels of competition: Honor, Scholastic and Varsity students. Competition levels are based on the students' grade point average.

A total of 124 medals were handed out at the awards ceremony, with Liberty High being awarded 23 medals: six gold, seven silver and 10 bronze. Chawanakee Academy Charter received a total of four medals: one gold, one silver and two bronze. The top scoring senior from each school also received a \$100 scholarship, and at Liberty that award went to Aaliyah Razvi.

The Madera County Academic Decathlon is funded by donations from local businesses and community members and the Madera County Schools Foundation also supports the event.

Medal Winners

Liberty High and Chawanakee Acad-

Please see **AWARDS** on P. 4

In month 11 of California Governor Gavin Newsom's lockdown of the state, the real damage is beginning to show.

Millions of Californians filed for unemployment benefits during Newsom's government-ordered business shutdowns and now we know that millions of those claims went unpaid, and instead \$31 billion looks to have been paid out fraudulently.

Hundreds of thousands of small businesses have permanently closed for good because of Newsom's random, non-scientific government-ordered business shutdowns. Public schools have been closed since last spring. The SAT exam was cancelled. High schoolers have lost college opportunities, academic scholarships and sports scholarships.

While other states have allowed players to return to the field, California football players remain benched. Any hopes of a 2021 season are dashed. Lancaster's Paraclete High football player Isaiah Navarro posted a Tweet this week expressing his frustration at the loss of his immediate future: "Zero offers, zero looks, zero commitments, zero time on campus, zero homecoming, zero prom, zero traditional graduation. What a wasted final year of school. Worked hard and dedicated for absolutely ZERO. Big shout out to @Gavin-Newsom! You got what you wanted."

Navarro speaks for thousands of high school kids.

"Navarro was interviewed live on Fox News [Friday, Feb. 5]. He's been asked to be a guest on Newsmax, the John and Ken Show on KFI AM 640 radio and is scheduled to appear on CBS next week with Paraclete football coach Dean Herrington," the Los Angeles Daily News reported.

The California Globe has talked with many parents of high schoolers who are frustrated and acutely worried about their kids' futures. They know their students have fallen a year or more behind other high schoolers in the country, who live in states that re-opened and resumed school, clubs, social activities and sports.

A coach we spoke with said he lost several of his top football players whose families relocated to states open for business and schools; but those were the lucky kids, the coach conceded. He acknowledged that for many high school athletes, college scholarships are the way out of poverty and tough neighborhoods. For many athletes, it's the way into college if they aren't particularly academically strong.

The bottom line is that college opportunities for most graduating high school kids in California has been stolen from them.



Isiah Navarro's Tweet struck a chord with thousands as it went viral, as it showed the damage done to two years of high school classes that will never be undone. Will they have an asterisk by their names if they are allowed into colleges without taking the SAT exam? What about the thousands of California school kids who have fallen into deep depression from the lack of social interaction, clubs and sports, now replaced by eight hours of a computer screen?

Is this going to be a lost generation? And what about all of the "underserved" kids the public education system claims to care about so much? School is often a lifeline for them. Are they destined to become gangbangers now, when they had a chance to escape the life?

The governor's COVID lockdown has really hurt families with school-aged kids the most: Parents who work but have had to stay home and monitor their kids' distance-learning and deal with the repercussions of non-activity and depression.

Gov. Newsom's approval ratings have tanked for a good reason, and one which is not lost on 18-year-old Isiah Navarro.

When Gov. Newsom lifted the regional COVID restrictions two weeks ago, he announced allowable activities include outdoor dining with modifications, hair salons opened with modifications and competitive youth sports with modifications.

However, Assemblyman James Gallagher (R-Yuba City) reminded us what those youth sports are in the purple tier: Badminton and lawn bowling. Under Gov. Newsom's tiered system, football is still two tiers away.

With the governor's announcement came another new measurement, even after acknowledging a drop in hospitalizations by 20 percent, moving the goal posts once again (the fifth or sixth new measurement). Newsom said he would now be measuring improvements in the state's capacity projections in another 3-4 weeks, on February 21.

Even an 18-year-old can see through the governor's balderdash.

As California Globe contributor Samuel Coleman recently reported, Gov. Newsom might be willing to

re-open California's public schools, just as soon as the teachers union tells him to. "Because Newsom's priorities are getting re-elected, and not protecting California's children or getting them back in the classroom."

Meanwhile, California's Democrat governor is facing a recall election which has already gathered 1.5 million signatures of angry voters, parents and small business owners.

Katy Grimes is the editor of the California Globe at www.CaliforniaGlobe.com. Originally published Feb. 6, 2021, it is used with permission.

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The Bookshelf

Ranchos Library Hitting Stride

By Jerrica Edmundson

It has been a hectic few months at the library, but we have finally hit our stride and gotten a bit more normal. Last month we officially started our backpack literacy program for 4- and 5-year-olds that we are doing with sponsorship from First Five of Madera County. We have three spots still open of the 15 available and are excited to see the smiling faces of those participating with the program. Each week we focus on a different book and have a coinciding craft to go along with it. If you would like more information or are interested in enrolling your child, please reach out to the library or fill out the form located online at backpack.maderalibrary.org.

The Madera County Library system was honored with a grant that has allowed us to purchase and furnish a bookmobile and we need help from the local communities to see with what it should be stocked. There is a survey for that available through our Facebook page and posted in various locations in the area. You can take the survey at www.survey-monkey.com/r/mclbookmobile.

We are open for public access inside the library every Wednesday from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. We do still have curbside pickup of library materials available from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Tuesday through Saturday each week. We are still not accepting donations and any donations left outside the building will be thrown away. As soon as we are able to accept donations again, an announcement will be made through all available outlets.

Now that the business is out of the way, let's get to the fun part!

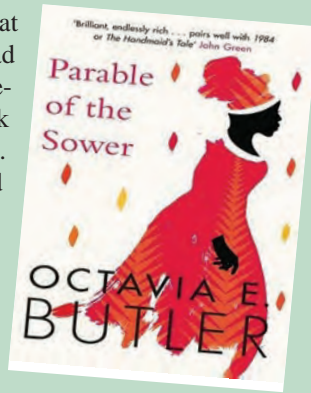
Jerrica's Shelf: *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia E. Butler

This is a book that I have meant to read for ages, but for some reason never got around to. Now that I have read it, I can't believe it took me so long. Considered a classic piece of fiction by many, *Parable of the Sower* follows a main character named Lauren Olamina through her life.

The book is set starting in 2024, in a world that I find to be frighteningly close to what we could easily become. Jobs are scarce, resources are skyrocketing in price, crime rates are constantly climbing and there is a new drug decimating the population.

Lauren lives in a fairly secure housing area with her father, the local preacher, and her step-mother and brothers. As the book develops, we get glimpses into what is happening in the world and see what the reactions of this community grow to be.

Overall, this book is a cautionary tale expressing the dangers of where we are headed if we don't look out for our fellow men and women. Don't read this book if you're looking for a comfortably happy book, but I recommend it wholeheartedly if you want to see a different point of view.



AWARDS cont. from P. 2

emy students who received medals were:

Art

Honor: Silver: Winston Samuelson, Chawanakee

Economics

Honor: Gold: Nicholas Fongemie, Liberty

Varsity: Bronze: Samuel Rauschenberg, Liberty

Essay

Scholastic: Gold: Ryan Avila, Liberty
Silver: John Reynoso-Mendoza, Liberty

Varsity

Bronze: Charles Grijalva, Liberty

Interview

Honor: Silver: Aaliyah Razvi, Liberty

Scholastic: Gold: John Reynoso-Mendoza, Liberty

Bronze: Emma Piedra, Liberty

Varsity: Bronze: Carlos Briceno, Liberty

Language & Literature

Honor: Gold: Winston Samuelson, Chawanakee

Mathematics

Honor: Silver: Aaliyah Razvi, Liberty

Scholastic: Silver: John Reynoso-Mendoza, Liberty

Varsity: Gold: Cameron Schoolcraft,

Please see **AWARDS** on P. 14

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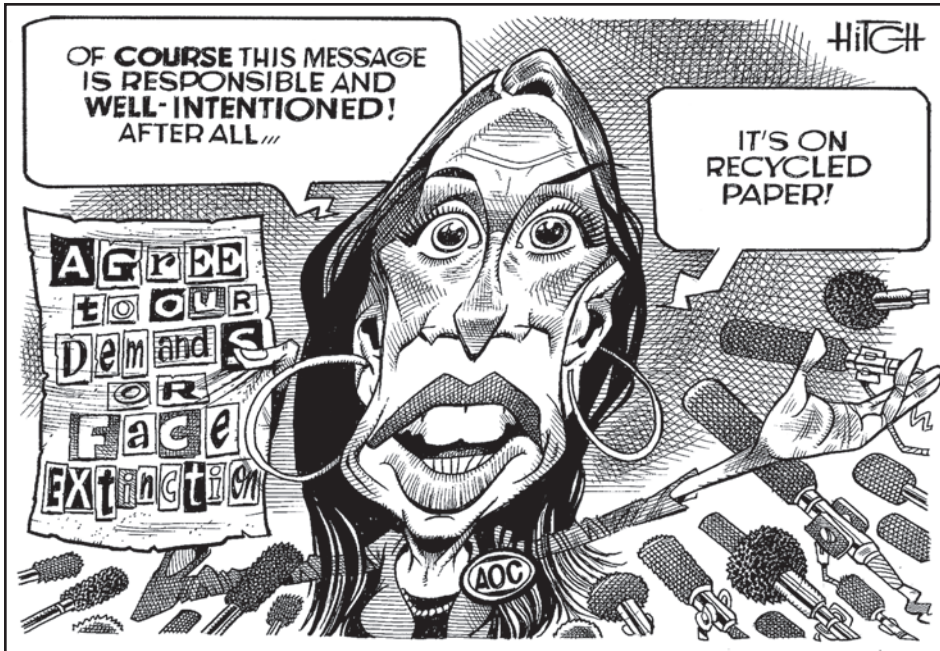
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Guest Editorial

Speech Free for Me, Not Thee

By Rich Lowry

Long a stalwart defender of the First Amendment, the American media is now having second thoughts.

For decades, it was a commonplace sentiment among journalists that freedom of the press was one of the glories of our system. It helped to make the government accountable and to air diverse points of view -- even unpopular ones -- to be tested in the marketplace of ideas.

Media organizations were at the forefront of the fight to vindicate First Amendment rights, with The New York Times involved in two landmark Supreme Court decisions (New York Times Co. v. Sullivan and the Pentagon Papers case) and tended to rise as one against any perceived threat to their prerogatives and freedoms.

This advocacy has been sincere, although, if nothing else, journalists should be First Amendment purists out of a sense of self-interest. In a 2018 essay in The Atlantic representing the bygone conventional wisdom, titled "Why a Free Press Matters," the longtime newscaster Dan Rather noted, "As a working journalist, I know I have a stake in this concept."

One would think so.

Yet, now journalists have lurched from finding a threat to freedom to

the press in every criticism of reporters and news outlets by former President Donald Trump to themselves calling for unwelcome media organizations to be shut down.

They've become the thing they profess to hate -- closed-minded censors who want to stifle free expression, First Amendment be damned.

Perversely, the TV program and email newsletter of the top media analyst at CNN, Brian Stelter, has been a clearinghouse for such advocacy, whether it is demands to get right-wingers removed from social media or -- more astonishingly -- to keep conservative cable networks off the airwaves.

Stelter's colleague, media reporter Oliver Darcy, tweeted about his effort to get cable companies to answer why they carry pro-Trump channels like Newsmax and One America News Network. "Do they have any second thoughts about distributing these channels given their election denialism content?" he asked on Twitter. "They won't say."

In the same vein, Washington Post columnist Max Boot drew a direct line between how we deal with foreign terror groups and how we should treat right-wing media organizations. "We need," he wrote, "to shut down the influencers who radicalize people and set them on the path toward violence and sedition."

Boot noted, approvingly, that the U.K. doesn't have the equivalent of Fox News because regulators won't allow it. The U.K. also doesn't have a First Amendment, a small detail that might be worth considering if the point is to protect our freedoms rather than destroy them in a fit of ideological vengeance.

A writer at the progressive publication Mother Jones argued for an advertiser boycott instead of regulatory action in a post called, charmingly, "It's Time to Crush Fox News."

A boycott wouldn't violate the First Amendment like a direct crack-down on Fox and others. Still, it would be private action undertaken in the service of a profoundly illiberal goal, running counter to the country's culture of free speech.

All of this would be bad enough

Please see **EDITORIAL** on P. 8

The Ranchos Independent

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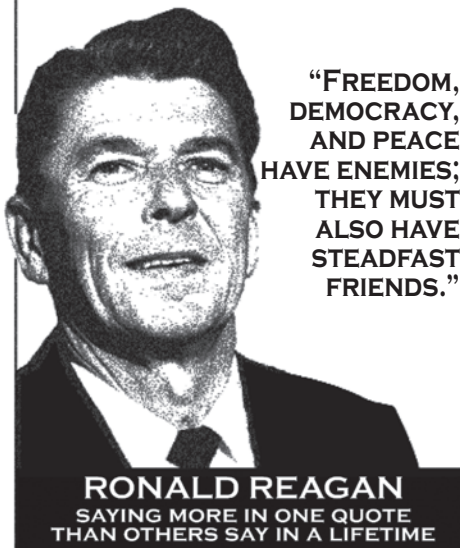
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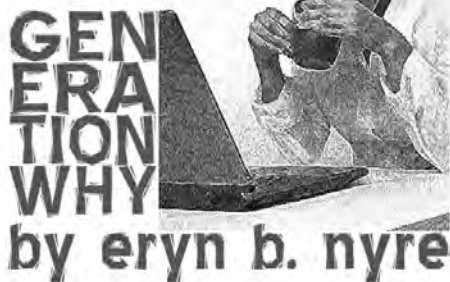
Not that long ago, when I was working more than 50 hours per week and commuting more than an hour one way, I remember expressing the desire to have more free time to read like I did when I was a kid. With work, commuting, adult responsibilities and social obligations (what are those, again?) reading was a luxury. Now, amid what appears to be the never-ending lockdown, I have more than enough time to read *all* the books. (Be careful what you silently, half-heartedly wish for while grumpily battling traffic on a long commute to a job you mostly just tolerate.)

While the year of the quarantine has given me ample reading opportunities, I have also turned to that which most of us eventually fall victim: The television. I haven't really been a dedicated television watcher ever since I shut off my cable about eight years ago, but as I am trying to fill the time I used to spend outside my house doing things that are evidently not essential, I have to do what I have to do. So, TV it is.

After going through half of Doris Day's catalogue and most of what Alfred Hitchcock has to offer, and having no real desire to start anything new, I went on a streaming deep dive. I found a trove of old 90s sitcoms that were free with Amazon Prime. It was like a gift from the quarantine overlords. I found a couple of shows that fizzled after two or three seasons and a couple that lasted quite a while even though you don't hear many people talking about them like they still do about "Friends" and "Seinfeld."

Not that there's anything wrong with those shows.

It's been a fun trip back into the past, but it got me to thinking that they wouldn't be able to make those shows now with cancel culture as pervasive as it is. This has been especially true since 2016 when part of the country melted into delicate little snowflakes and screamed and cried for attention whenever they didn't feel safe. Which, incidentally, is anytime someone isn't stroking their fractured egos and telling them they



are super smart. These old sitcoms wouldn't make it past the third episode -- that is if they even managed to make it out of the pitch meeting and into production. They showcase outdated stereotypes like the gay waiter, the spoiled brat and the angry teenager. Not that these stereotypes no longer exist, we just aren't allowed to make fun of them anymore. Down with the patriarchy!

I can just imagine how the angry posts would read if these shows made it on the air today:

The spoiled brat is so misunderstood. She just knows what she wants and isn't afraid to demand it. A man wouldn't be called a spoiled brat if he made similar demands even if it was without actually working or earning anything.

That teenager is not angry! She is just fighting against the patriarchy and the boomer generation that melted the ice caps and filled the sea with plastic. It is because of those out of touch boomers that we have to go into crippling debt for a degree in philosophy. And don't suggest we pursue a different degree, or even a trade skill, that might not only benefit us financially but also contribute to society in a more concrete and tangible way, because that's consumerism and we won't have it. The degree in philosophy, with a minor in intermediate basket weaving, gives us the tools to theorize about how much better the world would be if the boomers would just get off their retired butts and get back to work so they can keep paying taxes to give everyone free stuff.

I'm not saying these shows are cutting edge or anything, but there are some funny little nuggets hid-

Please see **GENWHY** on P. 7

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GENWHY cont. from P. 6

den in each episode. It reminds me of all the things we *aren't* supposed to find funny these days. It must be a really dark time for comedians. An entire industry built on critical observations, sarcasm and vulgar wit down the drain because no one is allowed to be the butt of the joke anymore. Oops, except white men, Christians and conservatives. That's a pretty small pool, though. How many comedians can go wading in such shallow waters and still manage to keep a career?

I'm glad these shows were already made so I can sit back and enjoy the nuance of an obviously gay man introducing his parents to a fake girlfriend (how dare they not just accept him and offer to pay for his gender reassignment surgery if he wants it!). A show where the angry girl swears she will never fall into the patriarchal trap of love and

marriage meets a guy and suddenly finds some happiness and joy wrapped up in a little romance (how dare they insinuate she needs a man to be happy!). A show where the cultural dynamics between a husband, wife and all the in-laws clash to such a degree that a turkey gets thrown out the window (how dare they not all immediately accept and celebrate their differences – unless any of them are Republican, then they go out the window with the turkey!).

Sure, many of the story lines are cliché. The thing is, sometimes cliché is funny because it's absurd and sometimes it's funny because it's relatable. Ah, but there's the rub. We aren't *allowed* to find anything relatable that isn't 100 percent social-justice-warrior approved, and we most certainly can't laugh at it. I wonder how long it will take for laughter to be considered a micro-aggression?



More Time ≠ More Productivity

"I thought once I retired, I would get everything done."

"I figured after the kids moved out, I'd be much more productive."

Have you ever had more discretionary time and found it *more* challenging to get stuff done? I have. Pre-COVID, business was booming. Understandably, many people are still cautious about inviting someone to work inside their homes, so this means I have more time in mine.

A year ago, I had a small window of time for household chores. Now with a freer schedule, it's easy for me to put them off. **Erin Elizabeth Wells says, "Productivity is doing the right things at the right time in the most effective and efficient way possible."** That might sound unattainable or outright boring, so let's break it down.

Do the right things. There are some universal "right things" like paying bills and doing laundry. We may not experience joy in the process of these essentials, but the result is peace of mind and ease of living. Make a short list of the undesirable tasks you tend to put off.

Other "right things" are those you choose to do — your personal priorities. Identify your top three. These could include anything from working on a relationship or hobby, volunteering or getting a degree. During the pandemic, three of mine have been catching up on continuing education classes, writing a children's book on organizing and sorting through my keepsakes. Yes, I have keepsakes.

Working on your priority list has a double benefit. They're things you really care about and, since you've determined them to be a priority, you can let go of the guilt from not doing other things that didn't make the cut.

At the right time. For early birds that means working on your projects

first thing in the morning. For you night owls, the afternoons or evenings might be more productive. For all, it means scheduling time. Assign essential and priority tasks to a specific day and time on the calendar.

From the start of the shutdown, I maintained my schedule and began "working" at the same time I did when I was meeting with clients. If you're retired, I'm not suggesting you schedule yourself a 40-hour week, but depending on what you want or need to accomplish, two to three days per week might be necessary.

The most effective and efficient way. You may prefer to complete the unpleasant or difficult tasks first and then reward yourself with the enjoyable ones. Others may alternate between the two, so that boredom or becoming drained of energy doesn't stop progress. Figure out what keeps you moving forward and do that. Some listen to music or podcasts to enhance productivity. One of Scott and my "right things" is a 7-minute workout in the evenings before watching TV. (We're starting small.) We find listening to comedy on the Dry Bar app makes it more enjoyable. For jobs like writing, I need quiet. Ensure that your environment supports the effectiveness of your task.

To promote efficiency, simplify your tasks. Keep supplies convenient and work smarter, not harder. Store some cleaning supplies in each bathroom. Prepare a week's worth of veggies at once so you don't have to wash and cut them every day. If your project is paper sorting, have a bag for recycle, a shredder or shred box and folders on hand. Reduce distractions by clearing off your workspace so you can focus on one project at a time. Have a notepad handy or use Notes or Reminders on your smart phone to record other tasks that come to mind while working. That way you won't stop to do things you're afraid you'll forget.

As always, start small. Choose one essential task and one item from your priority list. Schedule the "right time" on your calendar and look for ways to make that time effective and efficient.

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Substitute This!

(February 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.



haven't had cake flour in your pantry for years. Then you read on that it takes buttermilk! The last time you had buttermilk in the refrigerator was when Aunt Matilda was here for a visit. Now what to do? Don't panic, there are ways to get around these "problems" without going to the store.

This month's article is a little different than usual. I am going to give you some substitutes for ingredients and measurements used in food preparation.

Have you ever been to a friend's house and had a piece of cake that was absolutely yummy and asked for the recipe? A week later you get the recipe out because you want to make this fabulous cake for your family only to discover it takes "cake flour" instead of all-purpose flour. You

Ingredient	Amount	Substitutes
Arrowroot Starch	1 tsp.	1 T Flour or ½ tsp. cornstarch
Baking Powder	1 tsp.	¼ tsp. baking soda plus 5/8 tsp. cream of tartar or 1/3 tsp. baking soda plus ½ tsp. cream of tartar
Bread Crumbs, dry	1/3 C	1 slice of bread
Bread Crumbs, soft	3/4 C	1 slice of bread
Catsup	1 C	1 C tomato sauce, ½ C sugar, 2 T Vinegar
Chives	2 tsp.	2 tsp. finely chopped green onion tops
Chocolate-semisweet	1-2/3 oz.	1 oz. unsweetened chocolate plus 4 tsp. sugar
Chocolate-unsweetened	1 oz.	3 T cocoa plus 1 T butter or margarine
Cream, half & half	1 C	7/8 C whole milk plus ½ T butter or margarine
Cream, whipped		Chill a 13 oz. can of evaporated milk for 12 hours. Pour into a chilled bowl. Add one tsp. lemon juice. Beat until stiff.
Cream of tartar	½ tsp.	1½ tsp. lemon juice or vinegar.
Flour, cake	1 C sifted	1 C minus 2 T sifted all purpose flour
Flour, Self rising	1C	1 C minus 2 tsp. all-purpose flour, plus 1½ tsp. baking powder and ½ tsp. salt
Garlic	1 clove	1/8 tsp. garlic powder or ¼ tsp. instant minced garlic

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

EDITORIAL cont. from P. 5

if it weren't people who write and comment on TV for a living advocating it. But journalists have been moving in this direction for a while now, as Armin Rosen catalogues in a disturbing report for Tablet magazine.

The author, Steve Coll, who is no less than the dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, said last December, "Those of us in journalism have to come to terms with the fact that free speech, a principle that we hold sacred, is being weaponized against the

principles of journalism." The former managing editor of Time magazine, Richard Stengel, has written: "All speech is not equal. And where truth cannot drive out lies, we must add new guardrails."

And so its erstwhile champions are ready to retreat from strict adherence to the First Amendment to a new rule of "free speech for me, but not for thee."

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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RECIPES cont. from P. 8

Ingredient	Amount	Substitutes
Herbs, dried	1 tsp.	1 T fresh, finely cut
Milk, buttermilk	1 C	1 C plain yogurt or 1C minus 1 T sweet milk plus 1 T vinegar or lemon juice. Let stand 5 to 10 minutes.
Onion, chopped	1/2 C	A 4 oz. onion, about 2" diameter
	1 C	An 8 oz onion, about 3" diameter
	2 C	A 1 lb. onion, about 4" diameter
Parsley	1 tsp.	3 tsp. fresh parsley, chopped
Shortening, melted	1 C	1 C cooking oil. Should not be substituted unless recipe calls for melted shortening

Shortening	1 C	1 C minus 2 T lard or if being used in baking, 1 1/8 C butter or margarine, decrease salt in recipe by 1/2 tsp.
------------	-----	---

Measurement Equivalents	1 tsp.	equals	1/3 T
	3 tsp.	"	1 T
	2 T	"	1/8 C
	2 T + 2 tsp.	"	1/6 C
	4 T	"	1/4 C
	5 T + 1 tsp.	"	1/3 C
	6 T	"	3/8 C
	8 T	"	1/2 C
	10 T + 2 tsp.	"	2/3 C
	12 T	"	3/4 C
16 T	"	1 C	



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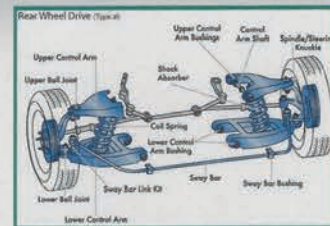
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Kiwanis Korner

Ranchos Kiwanis Budget Targets Helping Children

By Nancy Wayne

Rancho Kiwanis has met for 36 years with the focus of the Club being supporting the children of the world and our community.

On Feb. 4, the Rancho Kiwanis Board met at 5:30 p.m. and a regular meeting was held at 6:30 p.m. The Board was presented with the 2021 budget which was then discussed and passed with the decision to leave the budget lines the same as last year.

Here are some areas where the community benefits from the fundraising events of the Rancho Kiwanis, whose ultimate goal is to raise money for the children of the Ranchos area:

Elementary Schools: Sierra View and Webster awards.

Ranchos Middle School: Two Hope for America awards.

Liberty High School: Key Club, Academic Scholarships, 4-H/FFA, Mock Trials, National Leadership Conference, Robotics and Sober Grad.

Ed Ops, Ranchos Library, Valley

Teen Ranch, Boy/Girl Clubs of America.

Supporting children outside the Ranchos area: The Miracle Mile of Quarters, Torch of Excellence, Special Education, Special Olympics Bowling event, Station 19.

The Board is always open for more ideas of how to create a positive and encouraging environment for children in the Ranchos surrounding area. Call the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce at 559-645-4001 and leave any ideas you may have.

At the regular meeting with nine people attending, Harlan Hart was the guest speaker. He is a Ranchos resident and works in Fresno at Trelleborg Sealing Solutions as the technical manager. Hart said the international company is a world leader in polymer sealing solutions, they type of seals we use every day at home, in our community and even in space. His presentation was followed by a question and answer period.

The Ranchos Kiwanis is always

looking for quest speakers. If you'd like to share, call the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce at 559-645-4001 and leave a message. President Richard Wayne will return your call.

The Ranchos Kiwanis is still meeting, observing Covid restrictions, on the first and third Thursday of the month. Call the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce at 559-645-4001 for more information and directions to the location of the meeting.



Ave. 9/Hwy. 41 Plans Follow-Up

In continuing to provide information first reported in the Ranchos Independent in the January 2021 issue regarding projected improvements to Avenue 9 and Highway 41, the Fresno Council of Governments, in partnership with the Madera County Transportation Commission, held an online open house to further investigate the subject and involve more community members.

The online open house was held on Wednesday, Feb. 17 and was hosted in English and Spanish and the event was recorded and is available on the Ave. 9/SR 41 Info Center at www.ibiviz.com/41_9InfoCenter/.

"The SR 41/Ave 9 corridors will begin to take on an increasingly important role in the movement of both people and goods as the population continues to grow in both counties," said MCTC Project Manager, Dylan Stone. "This Study will help us to make sure we are making the right improvements to support our economy and community in a 'sustainable' way."

Questions should be directed to Fresno COG Project Manager Braden Duran at bduran@fresnocog.org.



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2/21

Senior Report

Seniors Keep Center Active

By Margaret Tynan

We are happy to announce the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Officers and Board Members for 2021. Ethel Hansen, President; Joliene Mason, Vice President; Connie Prince, Chief Treasurer; Diane Maxfield, Assistant Treasurer; Ellen Williams, Recording Secretary; Margaret Tynan, Correspondence Secretary. Rosemary Janis, Shirly Tickel, Bob Campbell and Nancy Palazzo are all Board members. Carol Wood is Acting Past-President and Helen Lowell is the Parliamentarian. These officials' service is much appreciated.

We also appreciate all the members who volunteer at the Center. One of the faithful is Violet Smith, who has helped in the Center's Treasure House since she became a member 12 years ago. In our recent phone interview, Violet shared that she celebrated her 95th birthday a few months ago. Just think, she was born when Calvin Coolidge was president and the Grand Ole Opry broadcast its first radio show. Still very active, Violet has always liked sorting the many donated articles, discovering new treasures, working with fellow volunteers and meeting new people.

Raised on her family's farm in Oklahoma, she is no stranger to hard work. She helped with the peanut harvest, picked black-eyed peas and chopped cotton. When she and her husband moved to California's Central Valley, she worked on a conveyor belt line packing cantaloupes and carrots. Prior to moving to the Madera Ranchos to be close to one of her six children, Violet had an Avon business for 47 years, which she really enjoyed.

Violet is anxious for the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Center to reopen. She says she misses all the people and the friendly atmosphere. She especially misses the Center's Exercise Program. In the past 12 years, she has only missed a few sessions. She continues her daily exercise routine at home, using 2 lb. weights to help keep her active and in shape. She looks forward to once again participating in the Senior Nutrition Program and all the special events at the Center when it is able to reopen. Hopefully that will happen once enough people are vaccinated and the COVID-19 virus is under control. Violet says she misses everyone, and we miss her as well. Her participation in the various Center functions is very much appreciated.

With spring in the air, now is a great time to add beauty to your yards and gardens. You can find lovely plants at the Center's monthly outdoor sale. The Treasure House will be open and offers many interesting useful items for all ages. We hope to see you on Saturday, March 6 from 8 a.m. to noon. Please wear a mask and maintain physical distancing while shopping.

Donations are always welcomed and appreciated. Make your check out to Ranchos/Hills Seniors and mail it to 37330 Berkshire Dr., Madera, CA 93636. Please note: At this time, we are only able to accept donations of physical items by appointment. Call 559-645-4864 to make arrangements.

Hopefully [the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center will open] once enough people are vaccinated and the COVID-19 virus is under control.



The sprightly 95-year-old Violet Smith has been regularly volunteering at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center's monthly Treasure House sale ever since she became a member, 12 years ago.

Thought for March: "Where flowers bloom, so does hope." – Lady Bird Johnson

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Deadline to sign up is March 1 • “Election” ends June 1 • Contact the Chamber office for full details at 645-4001

“Why should I join the Chamber of Commerce?”

- 1. Because the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce carries the reputation of being a leader of business integrity in the Ranchos and my affiliation lends my business credibility.**
- 2. Because the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is a close-knit organization in which members support each other’s businesses.**
- 3. Because the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce unifies the public spirit of the Ranchos and directs it into useful and constructive channels that are not limited to business.**

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is always looking for good people who are interested in helping to make the Ranchos a better place to live, work and play.

Next MEETING is Wednesday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. • Call 645-4001 for more information

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2/21



In Memoriam

Ohan Ohan • October 1950 ~ January 2021

He loved to see the customers at Madlin's Alterations shop, and he also loved to crack jokes with the local Ranchos people at one of his yard sales.

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Now you dance and make jokes with the angels forever.

Always gracious and welcoming, everyone was made to feel like family in our home. A hard worker who is loved and admired by many people, you are a great example of how to be a good man. We all love you very much. The Ohan family legacy will continue to live on through your grandchildren.

We will look for comfort in your past smiles, laughing and good memories. There are no words for the difficult days ahead. You always swaddled our sweet mama with your peace, protection and love. Thank you for that.

This won't be my last standing ovation for you, Mr. Ohan. I love you, Baba. Cheers!



In Memoriam

Rick Allen Stock

May 11, 1951 ~ February 8, 2021

Rick Allen Stock was called home, with his family by his side, Feb. 8, 2021 at the age of 69.

Rick was born in Arcata, Calif. to Rod and Audrey Stock. He lived most of his life in Fresno. Rick graduated from McLane High School, class of 69. He met the love of his life Donna (his Dolly) in kindergarten at Fresno's Viking Elementary. They were childhood sweethearts who married Jan. 31, 1970. They had been married 51 years at the time of his passing. Rick was a loving husband and father of their two children, daughter Tammy Morrison and son Steven Stock. They have five beautiful grandchildren: Amanda Morrison, Jonathan Stock, Sydnie Boles, Jake Morrison and KaiLee Stock.

Rick worked in plumbing, heating and air conditioning most of his adult life. He owned and operated Stock's PHC Services in Fresno. He taught at San Joaquin Valley College. During retirement Rick worked for the California State Board of Contractors. Rick and Donna were members of the LDS church and the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

Rick enjoyed spending time with his family, going on roller coasters, the beach, superhero movies and genealogy. Rick took care of his mother after she had a stroke, allowing her to recuperate in her own home. He accompanied her to church and the Senior Center in the Ranchos.

Rick is survived by his mother Audrey, wife Donna, daughter Tammy and her husband Kelly, son Steven and his wife Ginnie, granddaughters Amanda, Sydnie and KaiLee, grandson Jake, brother Bob, sister Sue and their families, brother in law Mike, sister in law Deana and their families.

Rick was preceded in death by Stanley Steinhauer, Rodric Stock, George and Wanda Vianello, Shelbi and Jonathan Stock.

Rick had a heart of gold and will be missed by all who knew him.

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AWARDS cont. from P. 4

Liberty

- Silver: Charles Grijalva, Liberty
- Silver: Austin Medlock, Liberty
- Bronze: Noah Clark, Liberty
- Bronze: Samuel Rauschenberg, Liberty
- Bronze: Lily Vang, Liberty

Music

- Honor:** Bronze: Winston Samuelson, Chawanakee

Science

- Scholastic:** Gold: John Reynoso-Mendoza, Liberty

Social Science

- Scholastic:** Silver: John Reynoso-Mendoza, Liberty

- Varsity:** Bronze: Carlos Briceno, Liberty

Speech

- Honor:** Bronze: Aaliyah Razvi, Liberty
- Bronze: Winston Samuelson, Chawanakee

- Scholastic:** Gold: John Reynoso-Mendoza, Liberty

- Bronze: Skyler Poodry, Liberty

A link to the virtual awards ceremony video is available at youtu.be/FoVu6qfNCNQ.

SEM CU speaks

Ranchos Update

By Jeff McGrath

SEM CU has received the final payment from the state of California for the washing machine/dishwasher program. Final count shows that as a community, we replaced 100 dishwashers and 134 washing machines. In addition to all the water that was saved, we also reduced electrical use, saving you -- the homeowner -- additional money. Job well done. Thank you.

We attended Brett Frazier's monthly coffee meeting via Zoom and most of the discussion was on Covid-19 and the MD-10A water district.

On the issue of Covid-19 vaccines, the Madera County Health Department emphasized that getting the vaccine was very important. Madera County has been

aggressively obtaining vaccines and have scheduled dates to dispense them. Go to www.maderacounty.com/government/public-health/corona to get more information or call 311.

For a MD-10A update, it seems like six years ago that Liberty High School, Ranchos Middle School and Valley Teen Ranch identified a water contamination issue. The plan was to incorporate those mentioned areas into MD-10A and the County went to the State and obtained a grant to do just that. As time progressed, more issues came to the attention of the County, such as the for a storage tank, contamination of the Kensington well, leaky and failing main lines, problems with the Fender well, a treatment plant, new well next to the library and more. As these issues were identified, the County went back to the State for additional funding. What started out as a more than \$5 million project has grown to well over \$11 million. The grant

has been approved and I believe the project will go out to incremental bids starting in March. "You can only eat an elephant one bite at a time." Hang in there, MD-10A.

Spring has not sprung yet but there has been a flurry of activity in the Ranchos. Ground has been broken for the new AG building on Liberty High's campus. If you have not visited Riverstone, you should. The new elementary school being built is progressing well. The sports complex is also very impressive. There was a State Route 41 and Avenue 9 Transportation Study held via Zoom on Jan. 27. In last month's issue of The Ranchos Independent, Randy Bailey wrote an article detailing the plan. There are nine goals of the project which are: Congestion; Air Quality; Traffic Management; Walking and Hiking; Access; Connectivity; Safety; Local Economy; and Health and Well.

What started out as a more than \$5 million project has grown to well over \$11 million. The grant has been approved and I believe the project will go out to incremental bids starting in March.

SEM CU attended the meeting to understand which direction the State and County wants to go. Avenue 12 is currently the main thoroughfare between 99 and 41. There has been talk about widening 12 through the Ranchos, building a by-pass south of 12 or moving the traffic to Avenue 9. This portion of the meeting dealt with Avenue 9 only. The Highway 41 corridor meeting was held at a later time and not part of this discussion. Locals were given a chance to express their concerns, desires and expectations.

I felt that the group endorsed the plan to make Avenue 9 an expressway linking Highway 41 to Highway 99. For more information, and to see the concerns, go to www.fresnocog.org/fresno-madera-state-route-41-and-avenue-9-sustainable-corridors-study.

SEM CU continues to meet the third Monday of the month observing social distancing. The public is encouraged and invited to join. To find out how, call SEM CU at 559-363-9095 or reach the organization at www.semcu.org.

SEM CU is "By the Community, For the Community"

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Checking Check Balls

Hello 93636,

As you all know, my company works for the company building the local section of the High Speed Rail. Their fleet of nearly 200 vehicles consist primarily of newer Chevrolet Silverados. Many of their vehicles reach 100,000 miles in less than three years. As a result, we see the development of pattern failures before most other repair facilities. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of our discoveries with the Ranchos Independent readers and offer some preventive maintenance advice. If you drive a Chevrolet or GMC pickup or SUV, you may find this article helpful.

When the fleet manager approached me, his two greatest complaints were premature engine and transmission failures and early replacements. It wasn't long before his concerns were in my bays. His engine pattern failures were primarily valve train issues and the 6L80E transmission issues were primarily valve body issues. With our training and technology, we are equipped to diagnosis and repair these problems without replacing the engines or transmissions.

Valve Train Pattern Failures

Since 2007, General Motors has employed Active Fuel Management Systems (AFM) technology with their pickup trucks and SUVs. AFM vehicles include the Chevrolet Avalanche, Impala, Silverado, Suburban, Tahoe, Trailblazer and GMC Sierra Limited. Active Fuel Management is the trademarked name for General Mo-

tors' automobile variable engine displacement technology. V6 and V8 engines can deactivate half of their cylinders during light-load conditions to increase fuel mileage. A 5.3L V8 becomes a 2.65L V4. AFM engines are the Vortec 5.3L, Vortec MAX 6.0L, 3.9 L and small block 5.3L engines. Increases in computing speed have paved the way for much faster communications and engine control management strategies. Governed by the laws of physics and motion, the engine's mechanical components are much slower than the electronics' ability to control. In order to facilitate the more complex and faster engine management strategies, advancements in engine mechanical design needed to be developed, thus the implementation of low-viscosity engine oils. Don't be surprised—0-16 weight engine oil is just around the corner.

Today's engine oils are not just lubricants, they are also the hydraulic fluid for the engine's mechanical hydraulic systems. Oil viscosity is the single most critical physical property for today's engine oils. Lower viscosity oils (thin) increase velocity and flow rates. Higher viscosity oils (thick) resist flow.

When AFM technology deactivates a cylinder, the Powertrain Control Module activates solenoids that direct engine oil into the intake and exhaust valve lifters. The oil unlatches the lifters' internal locking mechanism, effectively allowing the lifter to collapse instead of opening the valves. When the cylinder is reactivated, oil flow is terminated allowing the latching mechanism to lock again.

Let's imagine we are traveling down the 99 freeway at 2,520 engine r.p.m. At 2,520 r.p.m. the intake and exhaust valves open and close 21

times per second or every 48 milliseconds (ms = 48/1,000 of a second). How fast does the engine oil need to accelerate and decelerate to successfully unlock and lock the latching mechanism in less the 48 ms? If the oil viscosity is too high or the oil is dirty (thick), oil flow and velocity can be reduced enough to disrupt the timing of the latching mechanism and cause locking pin failure. The wrong or dirty oil can also cause premature camshaft lobe and rocker arm damage. These are all common AFM failures.

Here is a Technical Service Bulletin I found from Melling's Engine Parts: "We have noticed increased issues surrounding the replacement of deactivation lifters in GM LS engines with AFM. Most lifters returned for analysis are found to be good. We have found most lifter faults are caused by oil pressure or oil control issues".



The #1 nylon check ball erodes from .250" to .180" and gets stuck in the plate passage, affecting clutch fluid supply when in drive.

For this purpose, GM developed Dexos 2 motor oil for late model GM vehicles. Oils meeting GM Dexos 2 specifications are required for GM vehicles manufactured from 2011 and newer but are also compatible with older models. We use only Dexos 2-approved motor oil for GM vehicles in my shop. Using the correct engine oil and timely oil changes are ABSOLUTEY ESSENTIAL for the proper operation and maintenance of the AFM Systems.

6L80E/6 Speed Automatic Transmission Pattern Failures

The first transmission failure we saw was a 2017 Chevy Silverado with 83,000 miles. The complaint was "No Forward Gears-Reverse Only." As fate would have it, a 2018 GMC Canyon from a different fleet account also with less than 90,000 miles arrived with the exact

same complaint.

When I studied the transmission application charts, I discovered the #1 valve body check ball was the only common denominator. When the transmission is operating in drive—1st - 6th gear ranges—fluid pressure seats the #1 check ball against the 35 reverse feed. If the check ball doesn't seal the reverse feed, there is "No Forward Gears-Reverse Only." I replaced the Silverado's valve body and the transmission's function was restored. When I disassembled the valve body the #1 check ball was missing. How could it suddenly disappear? When I disassembled the Canyon's valve body, I found the #1 nylon check ball wedged in the separator plate. It was obviously much smaller than the other seven valve body check balls (See picture).

With some research, I discovered steel check balls have been replaced with nylon check balls to reduce wear to the aluminum valve bodies and separator plates. My problem is the nylon check balls exacerbate the very problem they were intended to solve. I went "Old School" and installed steel check balls.

It's my conclusion the friction materials worn from the clutch discs mixed with transmission fluid acts like sandpaper flowing across the #1 nylon check ball. Eventually the nylon is worn down to the point where it is unable to seal the 35 reverse feed. As a proactive measure, we now recommend 6L50E-6L80E transmission fluid exchanges every 45,000 miles instead of the manufacturer's recommended 90,000 mile interval. The fluid exchanges are much more cost effective then replacing the nylon check balls.

OK guys and gals, that's all for this one. Hope this helps. As always, I'm looking for interesting and informative automotive topics to write about. If you have any suggestions, recommendations, requests, general and/or specific question about a vehicle, please email me at complete_car_care@hotmail.com or text 559-907-7661.

God Bless America and God Bless 93636.

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1978 Starfire Cabin Cruiser - 22-foot w/trailer, GREAT CONDITION - 351 Ford, 9.8 HP Honda trolling motor, 2 new batteries, new tires, all work done by Cronin Marine in Madera Ranchos, current license and a cover. **BEST OFFER.** Call 304-2019 or 252-0291.

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.

For sale -- Large bird cage with stand. Color/white. \$160 or best offer. Call 559-312-0891 for more details and size. Please leave message.

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Grapes to Beat Skin Cancer?

A new study has found table grapes increased resistance to sunburn and reduced markers of UV damage.

According to a recent human study published in the Journal of the Academy of Dermatology, consuming grapes appear to protect against ultraviolet (UV) skin damage. Study subjects showed increased resistance to sunburn and a reduction in markers of UV damage at the cellular level.

Natural components found in grapes known as polyphenols are thought to be responsible for these beneficial effects. The study, conducted at the University of Alabama, Birmingham and led by principal investigator Craig Elmets, M.D., investigated the impact of consuming 2.25 cups of grapes per day for 14 days against photo-damage from UV light. Subjects' skin response to UV light was measured before and after consuming grapes for two weeks and grape consumption was determined to be protective; more UV exposure was required to cause sunburn following grape consumption, as high as 74.8 percent.

Analysis of skin biopsies showed that the grape diet was associated with decreased DNA damage, fewer deaths of skin cells and a reduction in inflammatory markers that if left unchecked, together can impair skin function and can potentially lead to skin cancer. It is estimated that 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70 and most skin cancer cases – 90 percent of non-melanoma skin cancers and 86 percent of melanomas – are associated with exposure to UV radiation from the sun. Additionally, an estimated 90 percent of skin aging is caused by the sun.

"We saw a significant photoprotective effect with grape consumption and we were able to identify molecular pathways by which that benefit occurs – through repair of DNA damage and downregulation of proinflammatory pathways," said Dr. Elmets. "Grapes may act as an edible sunscreen, offering an additional layer of protection in addition to topical sunscreen products."

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by Linda Thistle

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

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

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

	÷		+		13
+		+		×	
	-		×		15
÷		×		+	
	×		+		13
8		25		21	

1 2 3 3 4 5 6 7 9

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We Will Survive

By Betty Van Valkenburg

NOTE: As this newspaper was being prepared for print, President Donald Trump was acquitted in his second impeachment trial, just as he was in the first. And, as you will see was predicted in this article, it changes nothing. CNN looked hard to find one thing to crow about: The 57 to 43 vote. They stated, "... the number of Republican senators who voted against Trump ended up higher than even Trump's legal team had anticipated, marking a stark departure from the first impeachment trial last year when only one Republican ... found Trump guilty."

Sorry, CNN. That doesn't change the facts. He was found not guilty and so can't be removed from an office he no longer holds. -- The Author

As of this writing, Feb. 12, 2021, the impeachment trial of private citizen Donald J. Trump is in full swing with the outcome predicted but unknown. The impeachment itself is sad proof that our country is perilously divided – torn apart by hatred, violence and political strife.

Where will we go from here?

If Trump should be acquitted -- as expected -- life will go on. If he should be convicted, life will go on. With all the American spirit and resolve that we can muster, we will survive the Democrat administration's disastrous policies guaranteed to limit freedom, prosperity and the

country's independence and safety. We will live to revive our once and always great nation from whatever catastrophes the new administration inflicts on it.

Joe Biden will retain the presidency through the miracle of cue cards, ear buds, teleprompters and assorted sycophantic spokespersons – until the time his handlers decide enough senility is enough and he is told to step aside. Kamala Harris will not only survive but ascend to the presidency.

Nancy Pelosi will continue to live in luxury, enjoying her \$15 ice cream and wearing her stylish color-coordinated masks and pushing through onerous thousand-page bills. Hunter Biden will continue to make millions of dollars from China and book deals, obviously due to his extraordinary skills as America's former Second Son and now First Son.

Senators, cabinet members, representatives, bureaucrats, governors, mayors, speech writers, tech billionaires and pontificators will survive as before. Never-Trumpers will find others to undermine. Constitutional conservatives, few though they are, will persevere to carry on the fight for liberty as best they can, and as long as "fight" is still permitted.

And Donald Trump will survive nicely, whatever he decides to do with his life and with or without tweeting. He will carry with him the thanks of conservatives for his many successes and, yes, for fighting to make America as great as possible. He deserves thanks for keeping the country safe, cutting taxes and regulations, improving the economic status of all segments of society, brokering peace treaties for Israel, fast-tracking vaccines, gaining energy independence and lowering gas prices, getting us out of bad United Nations agreements, building the border wall to protect the country from drugs, gangs, criminals and human trafficking – and much more.

To the amazing dismay of Democrats, President Trump did put America first in all his policy decisions and made it as great as possible. And now, incredibly, they are undoing all his successes as rapidly as possible. Still, we will each find a way to live our lives, some better than others.

What is not certain, sadly, is whether the crippled and bleeding United States of America will itself survive as the world's bastion of freedom and prosperity or have its light of hope extinguished. Will "We the People," all 340 million of us who call America home, retain the rights endowed by our Creator? Will we continue to live under the Constitution where the government requires our consent, or will we succumb to the dictatorial rule of socialism or communism promised by the current administration and its cronies? Will the United States again become entangled in international alliances superseding our own national sovereignty? Today the prospects seem bleak, which has absolutely nothing to do with whether non-president Trump is impeached or not and everything to do with the Democrats in power.

Perhaps we should consider how the country became so politically fractured and then figure out how to heal the wounds and stop them from occurring again. Those will be discussions for another time, but meanwhile we should give them serious thought. This writer's opinion is that we must respect the Constitution, stop election fraud, counter socialist propaganda, improve government-school education, rein in big tech and social media power and censorship, and stop the draconian virus lockdown policies that are killing our children and our economy. And ultimately elect true conservatives to office who will live up to their pledges to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States America against all enemies, foreign and domestic.



• Save and thoroughly clean foam egg cartons for kids' paint palettes.

The wells keep colors contained, and the flat space on the lid side is great for resting brushes. They are easy to rinse off and just as easy to recycle if you are done with them.

• When topping a pie with meringue, make sure that it touches all the edges of the pie crust. Otherwise it will shrink.

• Wrinkled ribbons? You can use your curling iron or flat iron to give the satin a quick freshening up.

• "You can use a little bit of cooking oil to remove the last bits of sticker adhesive from a glass picture frame. Remove as much of the paper sticker as possible, then dab the spot with oil on a paper towel. Rub off. When all the adhesive is removed, use glass cleaner." -- R.H. in South Carolina

• Got stale bread? If it's not too stale, you can try to bring it back in the oven. Set on a low heat alongside -- but not in -- a pan with water. If it's too far gone, you can always cut it up into cubes and make it croutons, or toast and grind into breadcrumbs. No waste!

• Rose DeWitt Bukater's fabulously expensive pendant, "The Heart of the Ocean," featured in James Cameron's "Titanic," was not completely fictitious -- it is believed that a rather large sapphire went down with the ship that fateful night.

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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) St. Valentine's Day magic rules the entire week for romantic Rams and Ewes. Music, which is the food of love, is also strong. The weekend offers news both unexpected and anticipated.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your aspects favor the arts -- which the Divine Bovine loves, loves, loves. Also, for those looking for romantic love, Cupid is available for requests. After all, his mother, Venus, rules your sign.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Loving commitments continue to grow stronger. Ditto budding relationships. A recent move to help start-up a new career-linked direction soon could begin to show signs of progress.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Single Moon Children might be eager to take that proverbial chance on love. But your more serious side will feel better if you take things slowly and give your moonstruck self more time.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) It's a love fest for Leos and Leonas this week. Paired Cats might expect to be purr-fectly in sync. And with matchmaking friends, single Simbas searching for romance shouldn't have too far to look.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) More understanding on both sides can work miracles in restoring ailing relationships to health. Make the first move, and you'll be closer to your much-wanted reunion.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Accept the fact that you are worthy of being loved, and you'll find proof in what is revealed to you over the course of the week. Also accept a compliment offered with great sincerity.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Planning to take a new direction in life is exciting. And so is a new awareness of someone's special affection. Expect a slow and mostly steady development of the situation.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Although you might still feel you weren't treated quite right in a recent matter, all that will work out in time. Meanwhile, enjoy the week's special qualities and potentials.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Deciding not to give up on a troubling romantic situation helps start the healing process. Expect to find some valuable insight into yourself as things move along.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) The week is filled with positive potentials, but it's up to you to make the right choices. The advice of someone who truly cares for you and your well-being can be priceless.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) It's a good time to make yourself available to possibilities of the romantic kind. Already paired? Good. In that case, be sure to reassure that special person of your feelings.

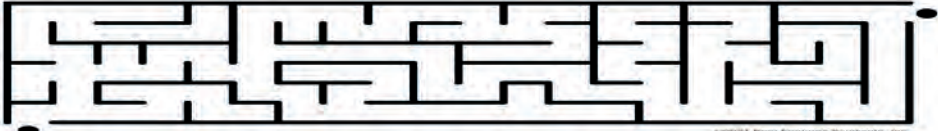
Born this Week

Your generosity gladdens the hearts of others, and you bask in their joy.

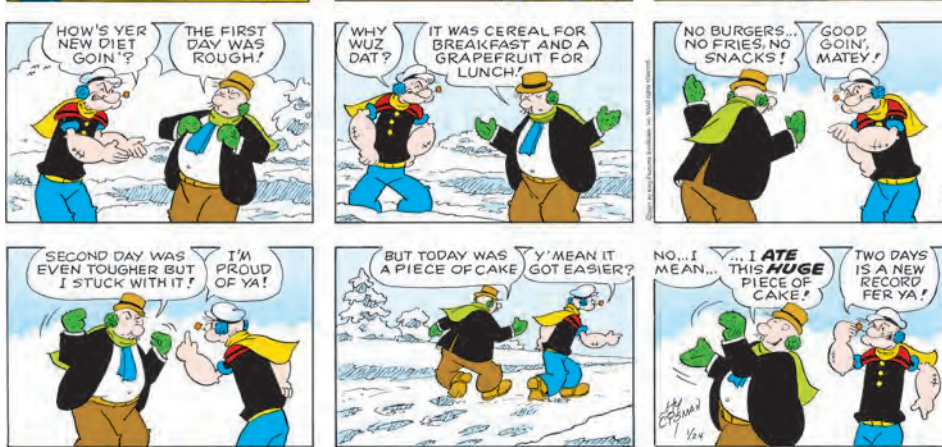
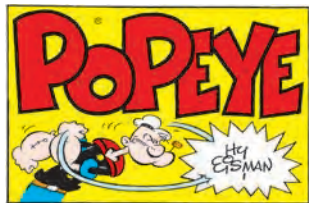
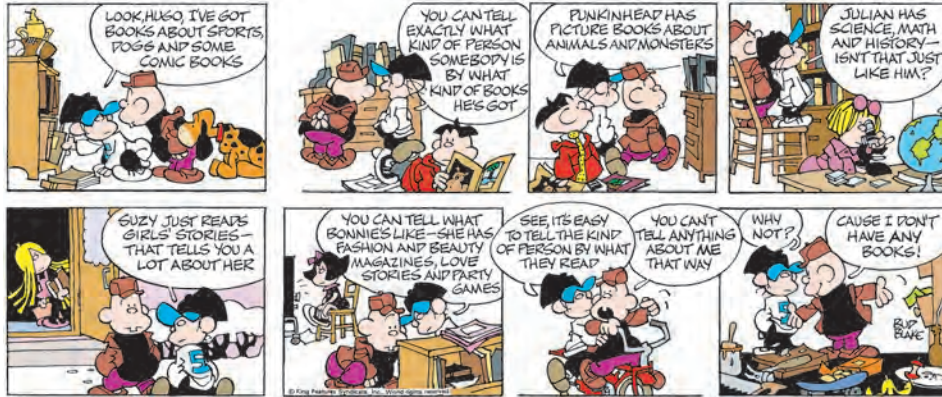
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FUN PAGES

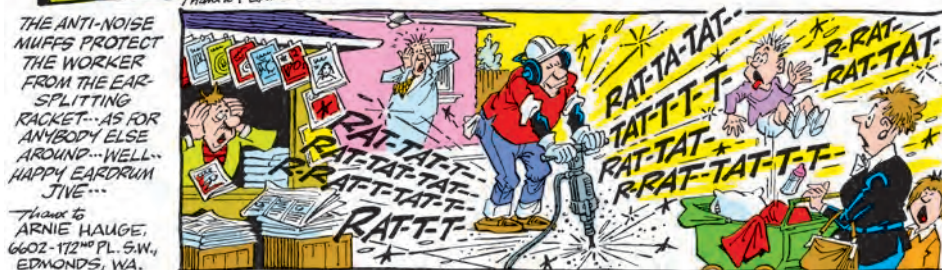
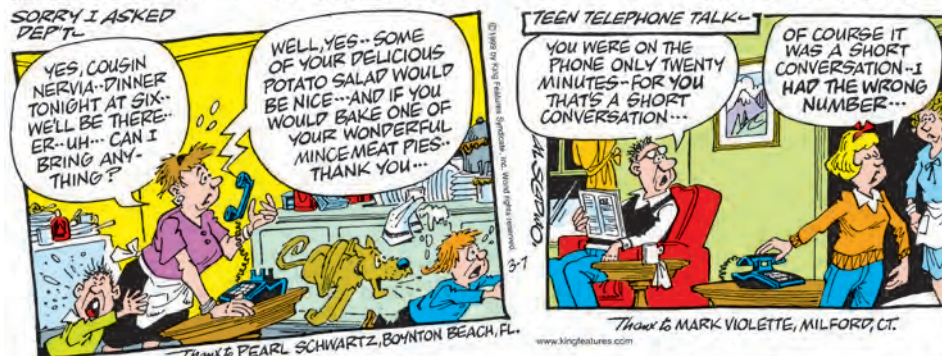
Kids' Maze



TIGER



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



CONNECT THE DOTS and find out what the end of everything is.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

SIGNS OF WINTER!

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



Answers: The letter "G," of course, is at the end of EVERY-

Illustrated by David Coulson

DON'T SLIP UP ON THIS ONE! Try solving this AlphaMath puzzle over a nice cup of hot cocoa. You must replace the letters in the sign with the digits 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, so that you have a correct addition problem. The same letters get the same digits.

Our answer: I=6, C=3, G=3, A=3, E=8, B=9, R=9, N=4, K=0, S=1, A=2, L=7 (638 + 9640 = 10278)



Hidden in the diagram above are 17 words associated with winter. They can be found by reading up or down, or side to side. You'll even find them diagonally going up or down. Letters can be used more than once. Listed below are the words that you're looking for.

- Blizzard
- Christmas
- Drift
- Fireplace
- Flurries
- Holidays
- Lights
- Mistletoe
- Presents
- Salt
- Shovels
- Sledding
- Sleet
- Snowball
- Toboggan
- Toys
- Trees

IT'S MAGIC! Use the numbers 6 through 15 to fill in this Magic Number Square. The numbers in each horizontal row, vertical column and even the four corner squares must total 55. We've filled in six of the squares. The rest is up to you. Use trial and error - and a good eraser!

Answers: First row: 13, 16, 20, 6. Second row: 19, 7, 12, 17. Third row: 8, 22, 14, 11. Fourth row: 15, 10, 9, 21.

16	20		
19			17
	22		
			21

[55]

Wishing Well

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

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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TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

- SCIENCE: What kind of charge does a neutron carry?
- THEATER: Which 20th-century play features a character named Blanche DuBois?
- HISTORY: Which ancient Greek author is considered "the Father of Comedy"?
- LITERATURE: What were the first names of the Bronte authors and sisters?
- FOOD & DRINK: What kind of nut also is known as a filbert or cobnut?
- AD SLOGANS: Which brand of men's aftershave used the advertising slogan, "Be careful how you use it"?
- MOVIES: What was the title of the movie in which Kirk Douglas played the artist Van Gogh?
- GAMES: Which video game character was the first to be featured as a giant balloon in Macy's Thanksgiving Parade?
- MUSIC: Which Billy Joel song featured a couple named Brenda and Eddie, the king and queen of the prom?
- GEOGRAPHY: What was the former name of the African country of Zimbabwe?

Answers

- A neutron has no charge.
- "A Streetcar Named Desire"
- Aristophanes
- Emily, Charlotte and Anne
- Hazelnut
- Hai Karate
- "Just for Life"
- Sonic the Hedgehog
- "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant"
- Rhodesia

MAGIC MAZE — DEGREE

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

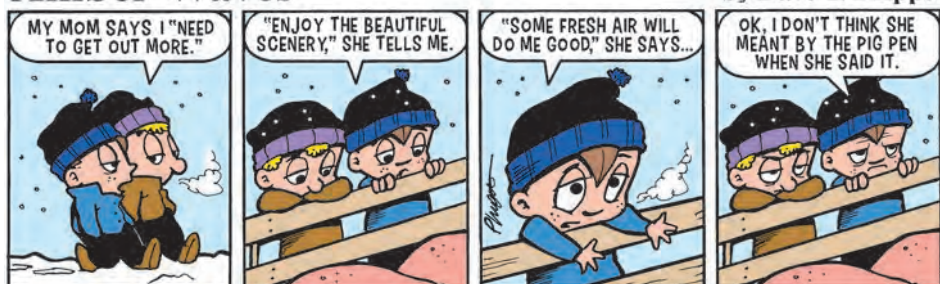
Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: HE WAS GIVEN THE — DEGREE

Academic	College	Honorary	Science
Advanced	First	Law	Second
Associate	Graduate	Master's	To some
Bachelor's	Highest	Nursing	

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



HOCUS-FOCUS

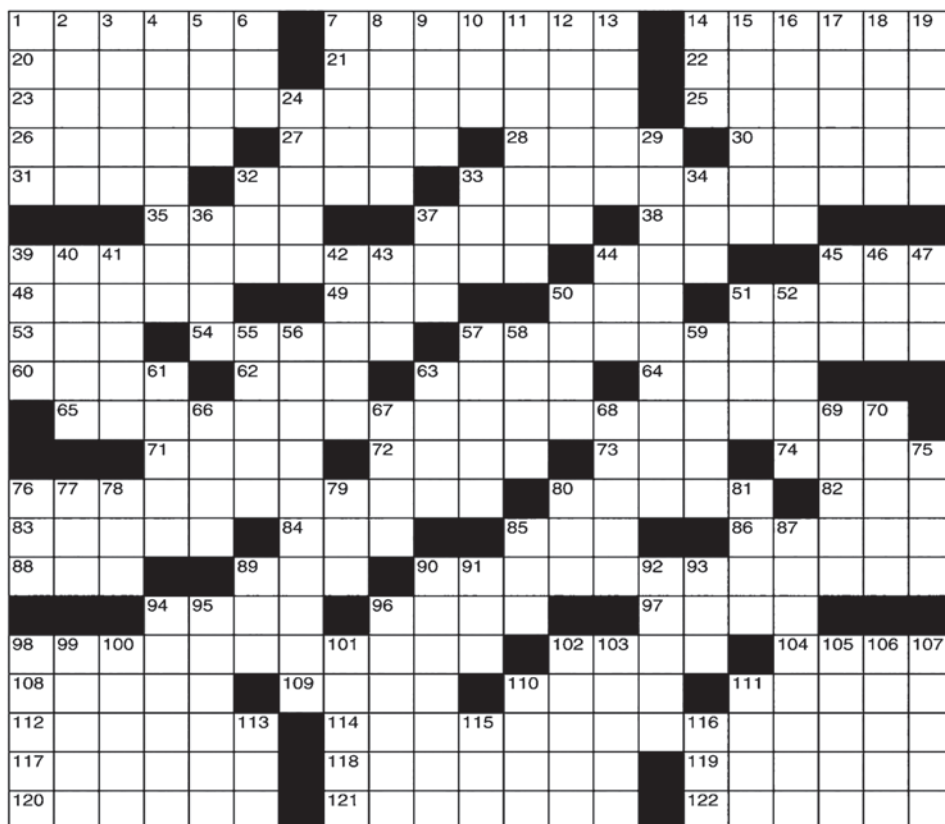
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. "Danger" sign is taller. 2. Jersey numbers are different. 3. Stars are black. 4. Fewer people in crowd. 5. Hockey stick is missing. 6. Arena wall is taller.

Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Ill will
 - 7 Accepted blame humbly
 - 14 Creatures
 - 20 Mafia code of silence
 - 21 Person of the hour
 - 22 Bill Clinton's #2
 - 23 Formalwear imparting a pleasantly optimistic feeling?
 - 25 Flier Earhart
 - 26 Tricky rascal
 - 27 Some pipe shapes
 - 28 Model of iPod
 - 30 Weasel's kin
 - 31 Room, in Spanish
 - 32 G-men, e.g.
 - 33 Appropriate underwear in a law court?
 - 35 Gemini, e.g.
 - 37 Unwanted plant growth
 - 38 "Oh, sure!"
 - 39 Neckwear making people unable to move?
 - 44 ICU tubes
 - 45 Burnt residue
 - 48 Yellow hue
- DOWN**
- 2 Boulders
 - 3 Sherpa land
 - 4 Deep fissure
 - 5 An Amerind
 - 6 Brit. mil. fliers
 - 7 Get — of (obtain)
 - 8 Implements
 - 9 Closing parts
 - 10 Homer Simpson cry
 - 11 Rusty color
 - 12 Avenged
 - 13 Singer — Marie
 - 14 Sheep's call
 - 15 "Rum Punch" novelist
 - 16 "Yeah, makes sense"
 - 17 Nick of film
 - 18 Heartache
 - 19 Scorches
 - 24 "Angie" star Davis
 - 29 "Tommy" actor
 - 32 E-I linkup
 - 33 Royal flush card
 - 34 They're shot from air rifles
 - 36 Modest reply to kudos
 - 37 Comical sort
 - 39 Scots' toppers
 - 40 Many Apples
- ACROSS**
- 49 With 1920s-'30s design style
 - 50 Royal flush card
 - 51 A Marx brother
 - 53 — Zedong
 - 54 Ukraine city
 - 57 Toadstool-shaped headwear?
 - 60 Kilt wearer
 - 62 Stew sphere
 - 63 Moral errors
 - 64 Actress Perlman
 - 65 Women's wear encircling a magazine?
 - 71 Tooth filler
 - 72 See
 - 49-Across
 - 73 Abbr. of fair hiring
 - 74 Go bonkers
 - 76 Beach where everyone dons athletic wear?
 - 80 Do a tally of
 - 82 Abbr. in personal ads
 - 83 Sir Andrew — Webber
 - 84 "— Day Will Come"
 - 85 Be in debt to
 - 86 Writer Joyce Carol —
- DOWN**
- 41 Paperless novel, e.g.
 - 42 Turkic language
 - 43 Bit of lifting lingerie
 - 44 I, to Freud
 - 45 Curved line
 - 46 Mani offerer
 - 47 Quick trip
 - 50 Helper: Abbr.
 - 51 Gardening implements
 - 52 Stock up on
 - 55 As is fitting
 - 56 Grabs the attention of suddenly
 - 57 Cut to bits
 - 58 Counteract
 - 59 Buckeye State sch.
 - 61 A bit drunk
 - 63 Plaintiff
 - 66 Regretted deeply
 - 67 Lysol target
 - 68 Jon who played Napoleon Dynamite
 - 69 Join together
 - 70 Studio prop
 - 75 Earring part
 - 76 "I'm Real" singer's nickname
 - 77 Pixie
 - 78 Deteriorate
 - 79 Kiss go-with, often
- DOWN**
- 80 Stupefy
 - 81 Seal schools
 - 85 Mel who wore #4
 - 87 Helpers in crime
 - 89 — Mahal
 - 90 Painter's studio
 - 91 Used a sofa
 - 92 Elected (to)
 - 93 Platform for Apple devices
 - 94 Biceps, e.g.
 - 95 French dish
 - 96 Thin
 - 98 Slightly off
 - 99 Regional
 - 100 Hush money
 - 101 Slide on a sled, say
 - 102 Polyphonic choral piece
 - 103 Opinion pieces
 - 105 Lysol target in recon
 - 106 It's gathered
 - 107 "Pippin" director Bob Mend, as socks
 - 110 Mend, as socks
 - 111 Mets' former stadium
 - 113 Ending for lion or seer
 - 115 — culpa
 - 116 "Zip it!"

SEM CU

south east madera county united

It is not hope, but “certainty” that things will get better for us all.

Wounds will heal as time passes. Remember the good times and bring them back. Share them with family and friends as often as you can and take solace in the fact that humanity is here to stay and thrive. It is not always easy, but this is the time to be kinder, more accepting, forgiving and more loving.

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

Our Annual Meeting is Monday, Mar. 15 at 6 p.m.

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

Please let us know if you have any questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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