

The Ranchos Independent



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Volume 19 Issue 2 2023

The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County

50¢

Trifecta of Talent



all three Ranchos youth cheer divisions go to Las Vegas and come home National Champions

In This Issue

Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Recipes • Page 8
Classifieds • Page 20 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23

Angry Residents Shoot Down Supe's Fat Pay Raise

By DJ Becker

After angry comments and protests by residents, the new 2023 Madera County Board of Supervisors voted without discussion 5 to 0 to repeal a roughly \$30,000 pending raise the 2022 board of supervisors had voted themselves in late December. A smattering of applause and comments of relief were heard from residents present in the auditorium.

One speaker at the podium got nods of agreement from the audience as he read the definition of corruption into the record as, "Public officials enriching themselves at the expense of others."

A referendum petition was being circulated to demand the repeal of the Board of Supervisors raise ordinance and had gathered roughly 3,000 signatures at the time of the specially called meeting and vote on Feb. 14. Residents holding signs to recall supervisors also were present in the government center at the time the vote was cast. The raises were scheduled to go into effect on or about Feb. 18.

In late December, five days before Christmas, the 2022 board of supervisors placed a specially drafted ordinance on the agenda to increase their salaries to a higher percentage, or 55 percent of the salaries paid to superior court judges. This would have effectively given themselves a \$30,000 or more annual salary raise depending on how long they had been with the County. The ordinance was passed by a three-to-two vote with David Rogers, Tom Wheeler and Brett Frazier voting in favor of the increases. Tom Wheeler, who retired in December was reportedly the author of the ordinance, with Brett Frazier reportedly the co-author of the ordinance. Frazier had

stepped down as Madera Ranchos' District 1 supervisor in December after being elected as the Madera County Assessor, starting in January 2023. Although Frazier would not have been able to participate in the pay raise for Supervisors, an already passed pay raise for the County Assessor was already on the books netting him over \$160,000 annually in his new position.

Madera County supervisors typically work part-time, have full-time staff and are currently paid approximately \$97,000 or more per year in salary, depending on their longevity with the County plus other benefits. Under the new ordinance, the new starting salary range for a supervisor would have been \$127,000, with the District Attorney and Sheriff of Madera County being paid up to \$231,000, after their annual salary increases of approximately \$45,000, according to residents' calculations. Raises for the DA and Sheriff are already in effect.

Residents claim that placing the item on the calendar in late December was no coincidence and yet another example of what they called "backroom deals" and the raise was intended to be quietly slipped in and buried in regular business at a time when most residents were distracted with the Christmas holiday or out-of-town. Of the three 2022 supervisors who voted for the new ordinance, Tom Wheeler and Brett Frazier were no longer on the board. Residents pointed out that they would not be subject to public outcry or scrutiny as a result. The two supervisors that voted no in December for the increases are up for reelection in 2024, causing some residents to question the Supervisors' motives.

Please see **RAISE** on P. 4



Residents line up to speak in protest at the recent meeting of the Madera County Board of Supervisors, demanding the repeal of \$30,000 in raises for supervisors. Photo by DJ Becker

Triecta of Talent

Three groups of Ranchos Youth Football cheerleaders, representing the Pee Wee, Junior and Senior categories, travelled to Las Vegas to the Orleans Hotel Resort & Spa on Jan. 20-21 to participate in the JAMZ Cheer & Dance National Championship. All three groups came away with First Place Awards.

On Nov. 6, 2022 the girls competed in the Tri County League Championships in Visalia and won first place finishes for the Seniors and Pee Wees and a third place finish for the Juniors. The girls then competed in December in Alameda where the Seniors and Juniors took first place and the Pee Wees came in second. It was success in these regional events that garnered the invitation to the national event in Las Vegas. The girls competed – and won – in the Seniors Division 12 POM National Champions, Juniors Division 11 POM National Champions and Pee Wees Division 10 POM National Champions. POM refers to stylistic dance routines instead of straight cheerleading routines.

Each of the three squads has volunteer coaches and also high school coaches, and the program has a coordinator, an assistant coordinator and a technical advisor who volunteers hundreds of hours from tryouts beginning in April through Nationals. The Ranchos sent its first squad over to the Nationals seven years ago and placed second. In subsequent years, Ranchos teams have placed every year and won one National title in 2020, but this is the first time they have received National Titles for all three squads. The pictures on the cover of the Ranchos Independent show the girls coming onstage for their group photo, to receive a medal and to receive a National jacket.

JAMZ Cheer & Dance is based in California and provides cheerleading championships, summer camps and coaches clinics created specifically for youth cheerleading athletes. Each summer JAMZ educates over 25,000 youth cheerleaders and coaches in addition to hosting annual National Championships in Las Vegas drawing more than 60,000 attendees, including youth cheerleaders. JAMZ staff are industry professionals with proven skills in stunt, tumbling and dance.



Millerton Lake Advice: Don't Drink the Water

Are you planning on going up to Millerton Lake any time soon? Be very careful before you reach for that glass of water.

Fresno County's Department of Public Works and Planning has put in place an extended "boil water notice" for homes near the lake. Originally planned to terminate on Feb. 9, the notice has now been extended through at least Feb. 23.

The source of the problem is "new" water that has come into the lake. The new water is increasing Millerton's cloudiness, or "turbidity." According to the U.S. Geologic Survey, turbidity is "the measure of relative clarity of a liquid." Basically, how much light can get through the water? The less light, the worse the water. And what can be causing the turbidity can range from clay to silt to very tiny inorganic and organic matter, and even algae.



Right now the level of cloudiness found in Millerton Lake is way above state guidelines. The degree of turbidity has increased to the point that the Surface Water Treatment Plant, CSA 34, can't keep up. In addition to drinking water, this water condition can also impact the general water condition at the lake.

Although it seems obvious, there are guidelines for boiling tap water. Tap water should be boiled for one minute in any clean pot or kettle. After boiling you should let the water cool by leaving it on the counter or in the refrigerator in covered containers. After it's been boiled and cooled you can store it in the refrigerator or at room temperature. You mainly need to boil questionable water for drinking, preparing food, brushing teeth, making baby formula and making ice, among others. Remember that the purpose of boiling water is to kill the "bugs" you can't see that may be in the water.

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Call the Chamber for more information. 645-4001

All of Southeast Madera County needs a **MAYOR!**

WHY NOT YOU?



Whether you're from Riverstone, Tesoro Viejo or the Ranchos, anyone can run. In the proud tradition of American politics, your votes are **FOR SALE!**

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WIN-WIN-WIN! "Election" ends June 26, 2023.

ALL MONEY MUST BE TURNED IN BY 5 p.m. JUNE 26, 2023!

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, always the second Wednesday of the month. Join us on March 8 at 6:30 p.m. at 37167 Ave. 12, Suite 5C. Come give your input on the future of Southeast Madera County. Call us at 645-4001.

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RAISE cont. from P. 2

Other residents questioned what the impact of the many raises was on the general fund, whether the County had a budget deficit and how much it was, and if current Chief Administrative Officer Jay Varney, formerly sheriff, had the education and qualifications to run an operation with a budget as challenged and as large as Madera. Emails and calls in February requesting clarification, confirmation or comment from CAO Varney and the Board of Supervisors have not been returned.

County employees and mid-level management bargaining groups are reportedly frustrated and demanding an independent audit of the County's finances, due to changing financial information and the County's ongoing claims of no funds available for employee raises.

Supervisors have also been criticized

for spending over \$60,000 on rooms, spa suites, food and guest speakers from the Bay Area at their annual three-day management conference at The Pines Resort and Spa in Bass Lake in May of 2022, and over \$1 million on the huge, granite Madera County Monument sign perched high above northbound Highway 41.

City of Madera resident and developer Mike Pistoresi asked, "Why are [the board of Supervisors] trying to hide it from the public by putting the raise on the Consent Calendar? And what makes them think they are entitled to such a large salary, being in one of the poorer counties of California? Also, what did they do with the \$30 million in [Federal] Covid relief funds they got?" Pistoresi said.

Dan Metz, a member of the Sierra Citizens for Sensible Government group said,

Please see RAISE on P. 10

Spread the word – TK and Kindergarten registration for the 2023-2024 School Year!

GVUSD Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten Registration

Please bring your future kindergartener with you to your registration appointment as assessments will be given during the registration process.

In order to register your child, you will need the following:

1. Your child must be 5 by Sept. 1, 2023 for Kindergarten. If your child will turn 5 between Sept. 2, 2023 and April 2, 2024 your child will qualify for Transitional Kindergarten. You will need to bring in his/her birth certificate to verify either.

2. Your child's immunization record showing that your child is up-to-date on all of his or her shots.

- A. TB Test (A GVUSD Requirement)
- B. Polio (4)
- C. Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (5)
- D. Measles, Mumps, Rubella (2)
- E. Hepatitis B (3)
- F. Varicella (Chicken Pox) (2)

3. Proof of residency within the Golden Valley Unified School District boundaries.

A. This can be a current utility bill, tax records, rental agreement, etc.

4. A completed registration packet.
Webster Elementary 645-3540

Feb. 24, 2023 by appointment only - Kinder and TK Registration packets can be picked up Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the Webster Office beginning Feb. 1. When you pick up your packet, you will schedule an appointment to return your packet for registration on Feb. 24. In addition, if you

have concerns about your immunization records and would like to verify that your child has all of the necessary shots before your appointment, please feel free to bring the immunization card to the office when you pick up your packet.

Sierra View Elementary 645-3560

Feb. 17 – 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. by appointment only. Please call the school office at 645-3560 to schedule an appointment. Registration packets can be picked up Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the Sierra View office beginning Feb. 1. Please return all registration forms completed to the office by Feb. 9. Kindergarten Roundup will be by appointment only between 8:10 -11:15 a.m. and TK Roundup will be between 1-2:15 p.m. on Feb. 1. In addition, if you would like to verify that your child's immunizations are up-to-date, please feel free to bring the immunization card to the office when you pick up your packet.

Stone Creek Elementary 645-3530

March 3 - 8 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. by appointment only - Registration packets can be picked up Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the Stone Creek office beginning Feb. 1. When you return your packet, you will schedule an appointment for registration. In addition, if you have concerns about your immunization records and would like to verify that your child has all of the necessary shots before your appointment, please feel free to bring the immunization card to the office when you pick up your packet.

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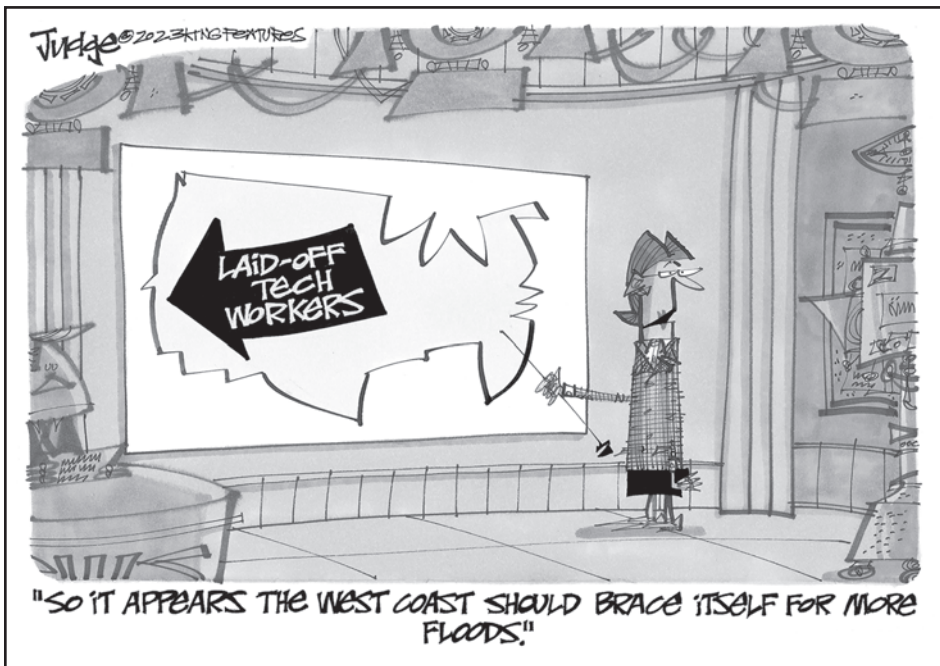
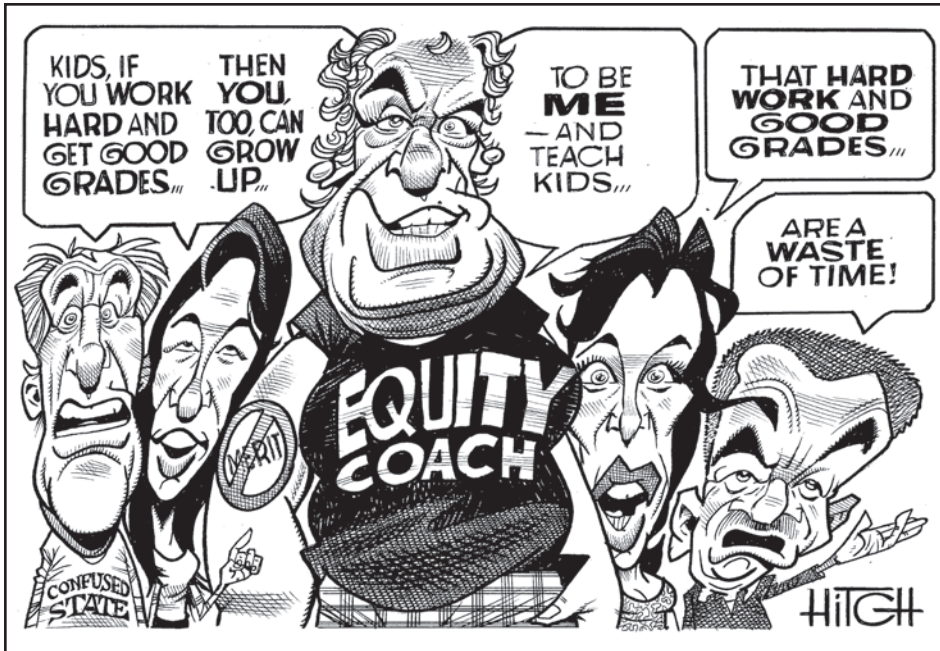
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Guest Editorial

Vote By Mail? Nope ...

By J. Christian Adams

The California Secretary of State just issued data that show the 2022 election was a mess.

Why? Because of vote by mail. Indeed, this was California's first election that relied on the United States Postal Service to get the mission accomplished. In September of 2021, Sacramento passed new legislation that said everyone registered to vote — dead or alive — is automatically sent a ballot in the mail, every election. That might sound good, but the new data proves that mass vote by mail should have remained a pandemic experiment.

An analysis by the Public Interest Legal Foundation shows over 226,000 mail ballots were rejected by election officials. That's a quarter million citizens who thought their ballot would count, but it didn't. The number one reason for rejection was the ballot arrived too late. That's what happens when you put the post office in charge. The United States Postal Service has a 94 percent success rate for timely delivery of political mail. Put another way, they aspire for only six percent failure; six percent of voters disenfranchised.

Other reasons the data show rejection include the voter forgot to sign the ballot. This is a simple

error that is easily caught and fixed in person at a polling place. Automatic vote by mail elections also needs near-perfect voter rolls, otherwise deceased registrants are mailed ballots and people registered more than once are mailed multiple ballots.

This massive failure of California's automatic vote by mail election process shouldn't be a surprise. It failed everywhere it was tried in 2020. According to federal data, in 2020 over 560,000 mail ballots were rejected. Over half a million citizens did not get to have their voice heard because of vote by mail.

Unfortunately, many states — like California — have now passed laws institutionalizing these pandemic mail voting policies. Along with California, seven other states have enacted the automatic mailing of ballots to every registered voter. These states have essentially put the U.S. Post Office in charge of their elections. The post office excels at one thing — delivering me my neighbor's mail. We shouldn't be trusting them with electing our leaders.

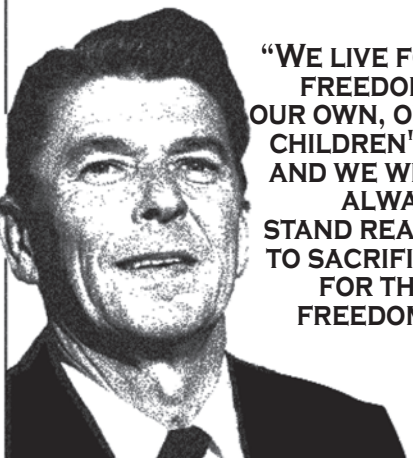
States need to add safeguards to their vote by mail systems. Lawmakers should change their laws to require mail ballots to be accompanied with a driver's license, voter registration number or social security number. Signature matching is an inefficient and inconsistent system.

Finally, states must not allow vote by mail to cause a delay in election results. Some states allow the counting of mail ballots that arrive up to 14 days after Election Day. It's supposed to be Election Day, not Election Week. All 50 states should require all ballots to arrive by Election Day.

Top election officials and lawmakers need to step up and enact these common-sense reforms before the 2024 elections.

J. Christian Adams is the President of the Public Interest Legal Foundation, a former Justice Department attorney and current commissioner on the United States Commission for Civil Rights. This article originally appeared on The Daily Caller's website at www.dailycaller.com.

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RONALD REAGAN
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Making a REAL Choice

Way back in April of 2020, when we were all about six weeks into the “two weeks to stop the spread” lockdown, I was really starting to miss going to church. I watched my pastor’s weekly sermons online, which was lovely, but it wasn’t the same. To try and fill the void, I started watching a lot of shows and documentaries about Christianity and stumbled across something I think many, if not most, Christians have at least heard of at this point. It is a show called “The Chosen,” and it changed my life.

I know that some people dislike the series because they believe people will substitute watching it for reading the Bible, but that’s not my story. For me, it actually drove me to the Bible. I started not just reading it, but studying it, truly feasting on God’s Word. Judging by the comments and videos posted on the show’s website by fans all over the world, I wasn’t the only

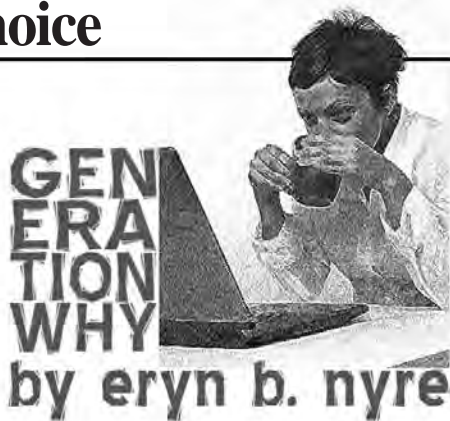
one. Many people have said that they opened their Bible for the first time in a long time because of “The Chosen.” Others

It is a show called “The Chosen,” and it changed my life.

said it inspired them to seek God more fervently through prayer. All of that is wonderful, and according to the creator it is the reason he developed the series to begin with. Some, however, have a problem with people trying to glean spiritual nourishment from a television show and not through scripture and prayer. I understand what they mean, however I personally think watching something that gets you thinking of Jesus is certainly better than not thinking of Him at all.

This series brings the gospels to life. Sure, there’s an obvious fictional element, but the teachings and parables are lifted right from the good book. The point is to bring you into the disciples’ world and experience it how they may have seen it. The story of imperfect people following God’s perfect lamb. It is a tangible way for us to connect to those who were actually there through that which we all have in common ... humanity.

It is meant to inspire you to de-



velop your relationship with Jesus through prayer and scripture, not to take the place of it. It is full of examples like a man who holds on to his faith, and even heals others despite the fact that he, himself, remains unhealed. A man and woman who continue to serve after suffering a traumatic loss from which they were not spared. You see people who struggle with guilt about their past, heartbreak and pain, confusion and tension and yet they turn to Christ. They cling to Him. Like we do today.

Why do I bring all this up now? Well, if I thought that watching the show in my living room was an intense and emotional experience, it was nothing compared to seeing it on the big screen of a movie theater.

If you are a fan then you already know there are three seasons so far with more to come. The last two episodes of season three were so highly anticipated that they actually released them in theaters. I almost didn’t go. I almost talked myself out of it. Why? It’s probably silly but I’ll tell you anyway: I cry during every episode. Every. Single. Episode. It’s ridiculous. My mother would be proud. That woman cried at everything. Sappy movies, sad songs, long distance phone company commercials. She was a wonderful, loving, over-emotional cry baby and I’d give absolutely anything to see her blubber over something ridiculous just one more time, but I digress. I’m more like my dad in this respect. I’m not a crier, not at movies or TV shows anyway, and I would

Please see GEN WHY on P. 7

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GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

not be comfortable crying in a public theater. I almost had myself convinced that I didn't need to see these episodes on a big screen, but somewhere in the back of my mind I just knew that I would regret it if I missed this opportunity. So I sucked it up, bought myself a ticket, grabbed a box of tissues and settled myself in for what turned out to be an experience I will not soon forget.

When the woman was healed by touching Christ's garment it filled my heart with hope. When the 5,000 were fed from five loaves of bread and two fish, I felt strong in the power of Christ. When the final moments of the season drew to a close, I knew what it meant to lose faith but find it again. And most importantly, I wasn't alone. I cried through most of it. I blubbered audibly while my eye

faucets burst open and soaked my cheeks. I thought I was going to be humiliated, but instead I walked out of the theater wearing my red, swollen eyes as badges of honor.

If you already watch the series, and the final episodes are still playing in a theater near you, do it. Buy the tickets. Watch it on the big screen. I promise it will be worth it.

If you don't already watch "The Chosen" then you are missing out. It's completely free online and I am certain it will touch your soul. If you've already given your life to Christ, I believe this will only strengthen your faith. If you haven't, or if you're lost, it could help you find your way. This show beautifully connects Christians in the first century with Christians today in a way that shows us that even though many things have changed, Christ hasn't. God remains faithful and we need only have faith in Him.

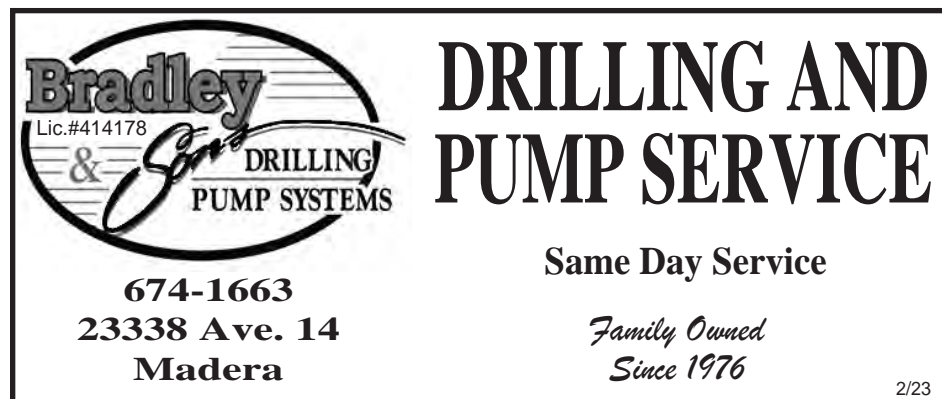


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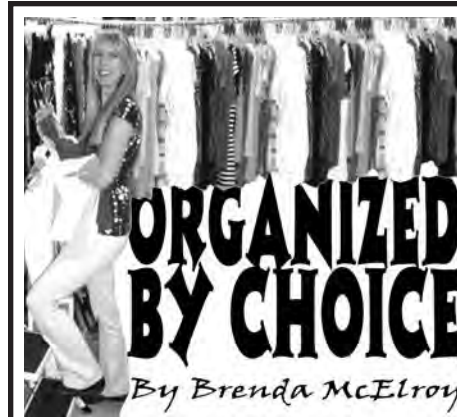
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Hide Your Clutter

"When multiple stimuli appear simultaneously in the visual field, they are not processed independently, but rather interact in a mutually suppressive way, suggesting that they compete for neural representation in visual cortex." -- Diane M. Beck, Department of Psychology and the Center for the Study of Brain, Mind, and Behavior, Princeton University, www.pubmed.gov

In layman's terms this means clutter effects more than our environment. It affects our brains and well-being. I don't need university studies to tell me that; my clients do.

"When I look at my clutter, I feel overwhelmed."

"It's hard to relax when I see all the piles I need to deal with."

"I tell my friends I can't go out because I need to stay home and organize. Then I end up sitting on the couch avoiding the task."

"I'm so distracted. I bounce around from one thing to another and never finish anything. It's so frustrating."

When you walk into your house, what do you see? If it's piles, every pile represents a task — papers to process, laundry to fold, books to read, toys to put away, projects to complete, sport gear to relocate. Being reminded of so many tasks at once can be overwhelming.

Everyone has a different level of comfort when it comes to visual clutter. Even if you're more tolerant than most, you've probably experienced the stress of piles melding, making it difficult to find what you need.

Release the idea that your piles are motivating you to take

care of business. They may be reminding you, but in a way that adds to your stress as they combine to "compete for neural representation."

How does "hiding the clutter" help? I don't mean stash it all away and forget about it. Remove it from your common areas in a systematic way so you can deal with the tasks within the clutter.

Containerize your clutter by project in *clearly labeled* boxes, bags, or bins. These will be *temporary* holding places for your piles. For paper clutter, keep current bills, forms, etc. in a container separate from old mail and papers to be dealt with later. Label one Current Papers and one Old Papers. Place the Current Papers container where you normally pay bills and email me for my Piles to Files tip sheet (info@organizedbychoice.com).

Designate an area in a spare room or closet for the Old Papers container along with the other labeled containers of special projects, household sort/relocate, etc. Remember, this is a temporary holding place. It's okay if it adds to the clutter of a closed room or closet temporarily.

This provides immediate clutter relief for your common areas and, since you're keeping your clutter containers together in their temporary holding place, you'll be able to locate anything that was removed. But you're not finished.

Prioritize the containers on a sheet of paper, computer document or phone note. Schedule time to deal with each container on your calendar and add a reminder to your phone. Your calendar and reminders will be the trigger to retrieve each project in order, one at a time.

Your clutter-free common areas will allow you to enjoy your space when you're not working on a project and will help you be more productive and focused when you are.

Contact *Organized by Choice* at P.O. Box 26152, Fresno, CA 93729, call 559-871-3314 or email info@organizedbychoice.com. You can visit www.organizedbychoice.com when you go online.

An Apple A Day

(February 2013)

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.



by Jean Briner

Crisp.

Apple Crisp

Preheat oven to 375

Filling:

6 cups peeled and chopped tart apples
(this will take about 2 ½ pounds)

Juice of ½ lemon

3 T granulated sugar

Topping:

½ C Flour

¼ C granulated sugar

¼ C packed brown sugar

½ tsp cinnamon

½ tsp nutmeg

1/8 tsp salt

6 T butter, cut into pieces

1/3 C old fashioned oatmeal

1/3 C chopped nuts (optional)

Butter or spray an 8 inch square baking dish.

Put all the topping ingredients in bowl and mix with two forks (or your hands) until mixture resembles coarse meal. Set aside while preparing the filling.

Place prepared apples, lemon juice and sugar in large bowl and toss until apples are coated. Pour evenly into pre-

pared baking dish. Spread the topping evenly over apples. Bake 30-40 minutes until top is golden brown and apples are done. Let sit about 30 minutes before serving.

Adam's Apple Pie

Pie Crust:

2 C flour

1 ½ tsp salt

2/3 C shortening

½ C ice water

Mix together flour, salt and shortening with pastry cutter until like meal. Add water and mix into a ball. This will be a little moist, but when you put it onto floured board

and flour before rolling, it should be perfect. Cut in half, and roll each piece to a circle just larger than the 9" pie plate.

Filling:

3 to 3 ½ pounds peeled and sliced tart cooking apples

2 T flour

2 tsp cinnamon

1 C Sugar

4-5 pats butter

Mix together apples, flour, cinnamon and sugar in large bowl. Pour into pie plate on top of bottom crust. Add butter randomly on top of apples. Put top layer on and crimp edges to seal. Cut air vents in top (before putting on top of apples, you could be fancy and cut apple shapes in top crust)

Bake in preheated 350 oven for 1 hour.

Ollia Ridge gave me this recipe – sounds wonderful and you don't

even have to peel and slice apples.

Vonda's Apple Cake

Preheat oven to 350

Mix the following ingredients together:

2 C flour

2 C sugar

1 can apple pie filling

½ C oil

1 tsp salt

2 tsp cinnamon

2 tsp baking soda

2 eggs

1 ½ C raisins

1 ½ C chopped walnuts

Pour into 9x13 pan and bake for about 45 minutes.

There is a website that gives "Nine Reasons Why an Apple a Day Really Does Keep the Doctor Away." Among the reasons are: Apples contain Vitamin C; they help

Please see **RECIPES** on P. 9

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LHS Boys Soccer Wins Division



The Liberty High School Boy's Soccer team made school history by becoming the first boys Hawk soccer team to win their division.

Liberty High is part of the Northwest Sequoia League as part of the CIF, or California Interscholastic Federation, Central Section. The CIF is the organization that regulates high school athletics.

The Northwest Sequoia League is divided into two divisions, North and West,

with Liberty High representing the North. They share the division with Yosemite, -Sierra, Chowchilla and Minarets High Schools.

By winning their division, Liberty was eligible to play in the CIF Central Division Championship against Hanford West on Feb. 14. Unfortunately, Hanford West got the better of the Hawks by a final score of 3-1. A sad end to a great season.

RECIPES cont. from P. 8

prevent heart disease; they are low in calories; they help lower bad cholesterol and increase good cholesterol; and they help prevent tooth decay. So keep eating those apples. You have lots of choices: yellow, green and all shades of red and all the way from tart to sweet.

(The following has been updated for the current upcoming Crab Feed. Editor)

Before I close this article, I want to put on a different hat. I want to talk to the residents of the Ranchos (this includes the Bonadelle, and Rolling Hills areas) about the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. As you have no doubt heard by now, the annual Crab Feed is coming up on March 3. It is the one big annual

fundraiser for the chamber. You can purchase a ticket or a book of tickets from any member of the chamber and for \$75 you get huge amounts of salad, pasta and crab. PLUS, you get to see old friends and meet new ones. Oh, there's one other thing: YOU GET TO HELP THE CHAMBER! Trust me, it is money well spent.

While I'm on the subject of the Chamber, I want to let you know that the Chamber could use your help. With the Crab Feed coming up this Friday, March 3, there is a list of "chores" that need volunteers to fill. Just call the Chamber at 645-4001 and ask how you can help. In addition to the chores, the Chamber also needs items for the two auctions.

This article first appeared in the February 2010 issue of the Ranchos Independent.

The Bookshelf

Painting Miniatures at the Library?

By Jerrica Edmundson

This has been an interesting month, with preparations starting already for our Summer Reading program. We plan on doing a more hybrid version, with in-person performers some weeks and take-home crafts others. We will still be using our on-line tracker for reading and activities and are bringing back the Library Loot store which was a huge hit last year. I look forward to seeing just how this year goes and hope it is an even bigger success than last year.

The Friends of the Ranchos Library book sale will be returning March 7-11 during business hours and all the books have been fully refreshed thanks to a massive donation from a local family. Be sure to come and see if there is anything new that strikes your fancy. The book sale takes place the entire week and all proceeds directly benefit the Friends of the Ranchos Library who are to thank for funding most of the activities we have here at the library.

I just finished painting the donated Warhammer army, so we are ready to roll on our "free paint and learn day" on April 4, during spring break. We will be hosting an all-day event where teens from 12-18 are welcome to come in and paint their own miniature figurine to take home, learn to play *Warhammer: Age of Sigmar*, or even just come hang out and play board games. A fun day and I look forward to seeing everyone come through. If there is enough interest in the game, we can even start up a league to have some friendly competition going on. The event is posted up on our library calendar through our website and will soon be advertised in the branch as well as on our Facebook page — but feel free to ask our branch staff if you have any questions and we will be happy to assist.

Now that the business is out of the way, on to the fun part.

Jerrica's Bookshelf: *Rabbit Hutch* by



Tess Gunty

I'm sure you all are a bit over my obsession with science fiction and fantasy, so this time I tried to branch out of my niche and go for

something a bit more in the realm of literary fiction. *Rabbit Hutch* follows the residents of the La Lapiniere Affordable Housing Complex, or as the residents colloquially call it, The Rabbit Hutch. Set during a week at the peak of summer in Vacca Vale, Ind. this book takes us through the daily lives of the residents in each apartment: A few teens who have just aged out of the foster care system and decided to room together; a new mother and her husband; a lonely woman who works at an online obituary company; and an aged couple who are simply stuck in their ways after decades of marriage. The main character is Blandine though, one of the four teens living together to survive, and we learn her entire story and see how this week in particular takes her life for an entire new turn — even though she's suffered enough change to last a lifetime on her own.

This was an interesting novel, but one that took a few days for me to digest after completion as there was a lot more happening than what was simply put forth, forcing me to dwell on certain aspects of the story. After ruminating for a bit though, I can say I would recommend this book to anyone looking for an introspective on their own status in the world. It was refreshing and led me to look inward and appreciate my own station in life a bit more — which is never a bad thing.

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Senior Report

Mexican Food for St. Patrick's Day at Senior Center -- Why Not?

By Melanie Williams

What a GREAT start for the New Year.

We have many new and returning members who have joined us in January at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. New activities are being added to the Senior Center calendar each month.

A tentative date for a trip to the Golden Chain Theater in Oakhurst has been set for April 16. It is opening day for the presentation of the Hunchback of Notre Dame. If you think you would like to attend the presentation with our senior group, reserve your seats by calling the Senior Center at 559-645-4864. Joliene Mason will be reserving a block of tickets for everyone going



Ranchos/Hills Senior Center has invited El Rinconcito to bring their lunch truck for a novel twist on a traditional St. Patrick's Day meal, March 18 at 11:30 a.m. at the Center.

from the Ranchos/Hill Senior Center.

We have our Annual Home and Garden Festival scheduled for April 1. The event is being planned with the help of our Scout Garden volunteers. Local Master Gardeners will be invited to give advice about creating a colorful Spring Garden in your own yard. Vendors are being contacted through email and letters are being sent out soon. If you are interested in participating as a vendor or volunteer contact the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center at 559-645-4864 or email rhseniors@att.net.

February's Monthly Sale was a success. It was great to see everyone out at

Please see SENIORS on P. 11

RAISE cont. from P. 4

"The raise they voted to give themselves just before Christmas is horrendous and exceeds all sensibility. The raise by itself is greater than the [average] per capita income of most County residents. It was also done without any supporting justification ... and nothing has been made available to the public," Metz said. He further said, "I would like to see the ordinance repealed and a complete salary study done in public ... Transparency ... like they always talk about."

Other residents went further and suggested reminding the elected officials they were public servants and holding the Supervisors responsible for their actions and saying it was time to begin gathering signatures to recall Supervisors and other public officials' accepting the excessive raises.

Residents can email comments for Supervisors to COTB@MaderaCounty.com or a leave message by phone at 675-7700.

Wamhoff Responds to Supe Pay Raise

Newly elected District 1 Supervisor Jordan Wamhoff agreed with residents and voted to repeal the approximately \$30,000 in raises for himself and other supervisors on the 2023 Madera County Board of Supervisors.

"I didn't become a County Supervisor to pad my pockets," Wamhoff said. "I did it because I care about where I live and want to make it a better place. These raises were voted and approved under the previous board prior to me taking office, and when it came up to rescind the raises it was an easy 'yes' vote for me."

Spring Color is Here!



- Spring color has made its way into the nursery. Loads of gallons, perennials and color 6-packs are gracing our tables.
- Frost-loving vegetables are still available. Get a jump start on your spring garden and plant today!
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SENIORS cont. from P. 10

the Senior Center and Treasure House on a chilly Saturday morning. Thank you to all of our Ranchos/Hills Seniors volunteers for helping at the Monthly Sale. If you are interested in joining in the fun, contact the Senior Center at 559-645-4864. We would be glad to introduce you to Jo Chase and her team in the Treasure House, Juanita Williams and her team in the Senior Center and Carol Wood in the Boutique. These ladies give their talents and time in coordinating sales every first Saturday of each month. We will have our next Monthly Sale on March 4 from 8 a.m. to noon.

During the General Meeting on March 14, we will have a presentation by California Phones. Lydia Santilan will be discussing many options about senior specialty services and many other assistance devices for landline and cell phones offered by this state-funded program. There is no cost, obligation, age or income requirement. The presentation is open for everyone in the community to attend. Everyone interested in learning more about phone assist devices provided by California Phones, come join us at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center

on March 14 at 1:30 p.m.

We are excited to have a local Ranchos restaurant providing the meal for our St Patrick's Day March Birthday and Anniversary Luncheon. The El Rinconcito Mexican Restaurant will have their taco truck parked in our back lot, cooking a delicious hot plate of Mexican food. Tables and chairs will be available for seating on the patio, weather permitting, or inside the Senior Center for the luncheon. Orders have to be placed and paid for in advance by Thursday, March 16. Meet at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center on March 18 at 11:30 a.m. to enjoy your hot Mexican food box lunch and celebrate St. Patrick's Day along with the March birthdays and anniversaries.

With the passing of the winter months, the springtime change is almost upon us. We set our clocks ahead one hour on March 12. It just seemed that the Christmas season has barely passed and now we are looking forward to spring wildflowers and the bright colors of new life.

Thought for March: "It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold, when it is summer in the light and winter in the shade." Quote by Charles Dickens



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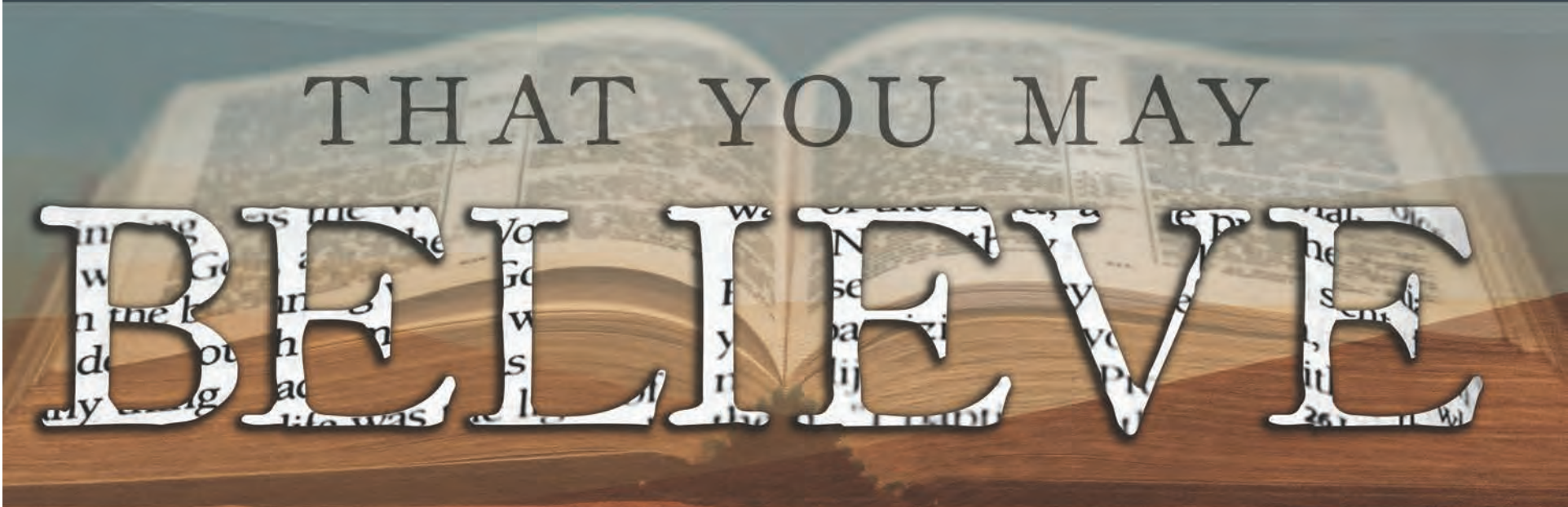
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SEMUCU *speaks*

By Igal Treibatch

Rain, Rain Where'd You Go?

Water rivers in the skies! Atmospheric Rivers! An odd notion. Hard to conceptualize all that weight traveling miles per hour over our heads, but it really is just water vapor that moves with wind currents until it hits cold temperatures which turns it into water at which time the weight pulls it down as rain.

Now what? Slow, low volume rain will not travel much and soak into the soil, but when an atmospheric river comes along with a high volume of water vapor and encounters cold air as you have along the Sierras it is a different story. High water volume in a short period of time will not have the opportunity to soak into the ground although some will. The water gathers in creeks and flood plains, picks up speed and moves right past parched soil. Fortunately, some of the rain will fill lakes and reservoirs but more than 80 percent of the rainwater we experienced ended

up in the ocean -- wasted.

Do you have a savings account "for a rainy day"? Funny, but we "need" a rainy day for a "savings account."

We need to create water savings accounts behind dams and underground. We can collect some of the water that flows into the ocean and hold it for a time of need. WE NEED MORE DAMS. Why is California allowing water to go to waste while we know we MUST HAVE IT? The State of Israel was mostly a desert lacking water and solved its problem by desalinating sea water. Today, it has excess water to sell. Why is California not working on such ideas more seriously as well as building more dams rapidly instead of planning to destroy dams which are already built? Yes, it is true, there are dams slated for destruction as I write this article. Did you know that an ordinary dam may take as many as 20 to 25 years to build from conception? Yes, there are environmental reasons some profess; to protect fish and there are some old and deteriorating structures may be another reasons. Who is going to protect us? The people?

In the year 1900, there were less than 1 million people in California;

today we're approaching 40 million. What is going to happen by the year 2100 while we have the same amount of water? By 2100 California may have a population of about 68 million with the same amount of water as today ... maybe ... if we don't continue to have droughts.

Food for thought? No, we need water for thought! We must have more solutions and fast. This is only one of many ways the state can help. "CREATING/MANUFACTURING" water besides just conservation. Conservation is a good start, but it does not matter how much the state can conserve, we need more water to meet today's and our future needs.

As part of SEMCU's work, at a cost of more than \$500,000, we drilled 146 Dry-Wells (Recharge Wells) throughout Southeast Madera County in order to capture as much of the atmospheric river as we could. We need more of these types of projects as we move forward. Putting together a program that will work for all is not easy and not everyone can agree on how to tackle it and who pays for it. We must reach solutions sooner rather than later in order

for our families to progress and survive.

These are my thoughts, and I take responsibility for my actions in life, farming and helping our community.

SEMUCU is a Nonprofit Corporation dedicated to help our community thrive. We hold meetings once a month on the third Monday of every month at 6 p.m. for one hour. We will be discussing our community's needs and evolution on matters such as water, school, safety, roads, events and whatever is needed to improve our lives as a community. Everyone is invited to participate, offer opinions and suggest projects that will help serve our community's needs. Our next meeting will be held on Monday, March 20. Please join us at 6 p.m. To call, dial 312-757-3221. When prompted dial the access code 715657949#.

To reach SEMCU for more information or suggestions, call 559-363-9095 or reach the organization at www.semcu.org or by email at info@semcu.org.

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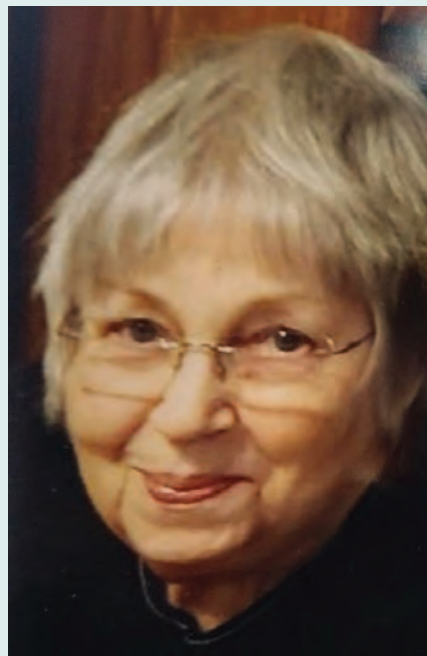
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*In Memoriam***Frances (Frankie) Romana Blake****July 14, 1937 -- December 16, 2022**

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Frances (Frankie) Romana Blake, 85, of the Madera Ranchos. Frankie was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Frankie passed away, in her home on Dec. 16, 2022, from natural causes while surrounded by family and loved ones.



Frankie Blake was born on July 14, 1937, to Erma Chapman Lachle and Frank Bivins Lachle in Sherman, Texas. Frankie attended Centenary College of Louisiana after graduating from St. Vincent Academy High School in Shreveport, La. in 1956. Shortly after graduating college, Frances met Anderson (Andy) Blake and they went on to wed in 1962 at Barksdale Air Force Base (formerly Bossier Air Base), Louisiana. Frankie and Andy lived in multiple locations, including overseas, while Andy served 20 years in the Air Force before retiring from the military in 1980. Frankie and Andy then lived in Watsonville, Calif. where they managed Healthway Natural Foods on East Lake Ave. Frankie was very active with St. Patrick's Catholic Church, where she taught catechism and youth group. She was also recognized for her exceptional talent and undertook an extensive restoration project on the church's stations of the cross that were severely damaged from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Andy and Frankie then briefly lived in The Colony, Texas for seven years before moving to the Madera Ranchos in 2003.

Frankie loved reading, painting, music and spending time with family outside during warm sum-

mer evenings while Andy barbecued. Throughout her life, Frankie enjoyed sharing her love of arts and crafts with others and volunteering her time with her grandchildren's school programs, where she taught the children how to paint. Frankie is preceded by her parents, her brother, Samuel Lachle, her sister Anne Porter and her husband Andy Blake. She is survived by her sister, Patricia Principi, her four children, James Blake, Patricia Akiyama, John Blake, and Brenda Blake; his nine grandchildren, Jerry, Anthony, Samuel, Daniel, Amanda, David, Isiah, Katherine, and Julieanne (Max); and her great-grandson Milo.

Funeral services and reception will be held at Holy Spirit Church, in Fresno on March 9 at 2 p.m. for the rosary and 2:30 p.m. for funeral services and reception afterward. The service will be live-streamed for those who are unable to attend at holyspiritfresno.org. Burial services will be held on March 10 at 2:30 p.m. at San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery.

*In Memoriam***Craig Garbarino****February 3, 1957 -- February 2, 2023**

Craig Garbarino, 65, passed away in his sleep at home on Feb. 2, 2023. He would have turned 66 the very next day. Craig was preceded in death by his parents, Beverly Loman Dean and Frank Garbarino.

Craig was a loving patriarch to "Team Garbarino" with his wife of 28 years, Wendy. He left behind his boys and their wives: Travis and Kaitlyn; and Anthony and Nicole. He was enjoying a new chapter in his life as grandfather to Travis and Kaitlyn's 2-year-old daughter, Quinn.

Before taking on the role of "stay-at-home dad" in 1997, Craig wore many different hats in the working world. He spent 12 years in the local beer business, many of which were setting up and managing draft systems in popular restaurants and bars in the Fresno/Clovis area. After that, he shared ownership of a local bar (The Rheinstein) with dear friend Chuck Eha, created and operated a cigar magazine with dear friend Randy Bailey, and owned and operated a Little Debbie distributorship.

Craig spent his youth between Novato, Calif. and Fresno/Sanger. Upon graduating from San Marin High School in Novato, he returned to the Central Valley and served as caretaker to his grandparents Claude and Wilma Loman until their passing.

Craig's empathy, quick wit, spot-on impressions and physical strength were only surpassed by his love and devotion to his "tribe." He relished the time he was able to spend with his family and friends, especially his "sweet pea" and "bag of sugar," Quinn.

Please join the family in a Celebration of Craig's Life on Feb. 23, 2023 at The Wallin Funeral Home, 1524 9th Street in Sanger. Visitation will be at 9 a.m. and Chapel Service will be at 10 a.m. There will be a short Graveside Service at the Sanger Cemetery, 568 S. Rainbow Route, Sanger at 12:30 p.m. Following that, there will also be a reception held at New Covenant Community Church at 1744 E. Nees Ave. in Fresno.

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Kiwanis Korner

Madera Ranchos Kiwanis Welcome Next Generation from Liberty High

By Sally Rowden

We had the pleasure of having our Liberty High School – Kiwanis Key Club president and vice president visit us at our last meeting in January. President Lydia Martinez and Vice President Abriceno-Ferrer are two amazing students who both presented information on the Kiwanis Key Club happenings at Liberty High School. Kiwanis Key Club is a pathway for high school student-members to have opportunities to provide community service, build character and develop leadership. There are 40 student-members in the Liberty High School Kiwanis Key Club. Thank you Lydia and Oscar for honoring your club with your exceptional leadership.

Fundraiser Success

Our Valentine’s Day Limo Fundraiser was a success. The grand prize winner was Elia Hernandez of Fresno. The drawing was held at the Pizza Factory on Feb. 3. Elia enjoyed a four-hour limo ride with her loved ones on Feb. 11. Second prize of a Valentine’s Basket valued at over \$100 went to Ali Strickland of Clovis, with third prize going to Larry Loucks of Fresno. He received a \$50 gift certificate from the Pizza Factory. Thank you Pizza Factory for housing us and always supporting us.

We had an exciting visit from the Kiwanis Club of Fresno at our Feb. 9 meeting. Seven members came to say hello and enjoy our evening meeting of events. A goal for all Kiwanis Clubs is to do inter-club meetings. This means clubs make visits across towns sharing time at each other’s club meetings. Thank you, Fresno Kiwanis. We owe you a visit.

Our next upcoming project is supporting the 19th Annual Golden Valley

Chamber of Commerce Crab Feed on Friday, March 3 at 6 p.m. at the Dante Club in Fresno. We are their smiling servers for the evening. Plan to come out supporting not only the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce but the Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos, too. Your generous server-tips will help us grow our scholarship fund.

Scholarships Renamed

Which leads right into our next topic: For the past 20 years we’ve been sponsoring the Liberty High School Scholarship Awards. Our dedicated member, John

Minney, was our tireless chairperson, but John needed to make a move to be with family back east. So, in honoring John for his steadfast dedication, the scholarship awards are being renamed The John Minney – Liberty High School Scholarship Awards. Many of our local businesses and individuals have very generously supported this scholarship fundraiser. In the next few weeks, letters will be going out to ask for your support or continued support. All monies go directly to the students. Know that your support will bring

answers to student’s hopes and dreams. For further information contact rowden-sally2@gmail.com.

I want to close with an invitation: Come and meet us. We gather at the Second Son Brewery on the second and fourth Thursdays of every month at 6:30 p.m. We are a group of folks who desire to support children, our communities and have fun doing so. And, if it’s your birthday, we’ll sing you our award-winning version of “Happy Birthday.”

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Reliable Sources

By Betty Van Valkenburg

The process of writing this column usually involves a lot of research to find and verify facts and then convince myself that my conclusions have merit. That process can lead to a long and circuitous journey, starting with trusted websites or a general online search plus books, magazines, newspapers – and way too many cups of coffee. Sometimes the online trip leads to unintended and questionable web pages, but that's a subject for another day. And, on occasion, the virtual journey has taken me to unexpected places and to reading things which may be interesting but have absolutely nothing to do with the subject at hand.

This time, instead of researching and expounding here on our serious national problems, the reader is invited to dig into suggested resources for the facts on issues of interest. These resources can be found online – just watch out for the detours – and in print form. There seems no end to our national problems that need researching and solving, including rampant inflation, crime, homelessness, the border and fentanyl crises, Biden's incompetence vs big-bad balloons, the lunacy of banning gas stoves to "save the planet," the failing education system, or the general leadership debacle in general. These resources can be helpful when researching solutions.

1. Check out the Hillsdale College website for a wealth of information. Hillsdale is a private conservative Christian liberal arts college in Michigan. Its online courses include these and many more diverse subjects: Constitution 101; The American Left: From Liberalism to Despotism; The Second World War; The Great American Story: Land of Hope; C. S. Lewis on Christianity; and Supply Side Economics – to name a few.

Hillsdale College *Imprimis* is "the free monthly speech digest dedicated to educating citizens and promoting civil and religious liberty by covering cultural, economic, political, and educational issues." The content of *Imprimis* is drawn from

speeches delivered at Hillsdale College events. First published in 1972, it is one of the most widely circulated opinion publications in the nation with over six million subscribers. You can read it online or subscribe to receive it by mail, email, or both.

2. The Tuttle Twins children's book sets were recommended in an earlier column but are worth a second look. They teach the principles of freedom and free-market economics so well and interestingly that young and old folks enjoy reading and learning. Glenn Beck says, "In a world gone woke, every conservative family needs to own *The Tuttle Twins* kids' books." This old grandma writer has given the book sets to several youngsters, and the mother of one young boy said that he loved them and had read them several times.

Readers might find slight disagreement with a point here or there, but overall the books espouse time-honored American values and conservative principles with a slight libertarian slant.

3. The New American Magazine features well-researched and dependable coverage of government and current events. The latest issue introduces the book *Stealing Your Vote -- How Election Fraud Is Rampant, and How to Stop It before It Kills America*, which appears to be the definitive story of the last election process.

The magazine's Freedom Index rates members of Congress based on their adherence to constitutional principles of limited government, fiscal responsibility, national sovereignty and a traditional foreign policy of avoiding foreign entanglements. For instance, newly elected Speaker Kevin McCarthy's score for the 117th Congress is 80 percent, up from a dismal 61 percent. Perhaps the speakership he fought so hard for has emboldened him to move to the right, where one who identifies as Republican should be. We can hope. And by the way, Congressman Tom McClintock rated 100 percent!

4. Tea Party Patriots website. This site not only provides useful information, but also encourages effective action. They state: "Tea Party Patriots Action's mission is to equip Americans with the resources and training they need to be engaged citizens and effective activists. Our vision is for a nation where individual liberty is cherished and maximized, where the Constitution is revered and upheld, and where Americans are free to pursue their American Dream." They endorse reducing taxes and spending, and call for a debt-free future.

These are just four good resources of reliable information out of many. Please check them out.



By Sarah Morgan

Favorite foods day was held on Saturday, Jan. 21. Favorite foods day is a day where kids all over the county come to make some of their favorite foods hoping that it could be the judges' too. Some of the different foods there were mints, potato



salad, pasta salad, sugar cookies, s'mores brownies and all sorts of cakes.

There wasn't only a bunch of yummy food, but there was also kitchen showmanship and a game room because the kids needed something to do while they were getting judged. The kitchen showmanship is like livestock showmanship, but with kitchen supplies.

First there was a test to see if you knew what each of the kitchen tools were; next you answered questions to see if you knew certain things about the kitchen safety and finally you did a measuring test to see if you knew how to use your cups and spoons

correctly.

At the end of all the judging there were awards for the best favorite foods, the top three kids got either bronze, silver or gold as an award for working hard to make something so yummy. There were also some special awards for people who used agricultural foods in or on top of their dishes.

Everyone did an amazing job at the contest, but it would not have been possible without the help of Anne Deniz and Katie Mellott, for the use of the LEAF building,

the community members that served as judges and Dana Poore and the Sierra Shadows leaders for hosting the event. These people made it so that this contest could really happen and we thank all of you for helping us.

The favorite foods day contest was a big success. Everyone had so much fun and we really hope for a favorite foods day next year. The Sierra Shadows 4-H members who competed were Cassidy Reis, Paisley Bower, Brooke Davis, Elizabeth Morgan, Lucy Lee, Micah Lee, Wyatt Morgan, Mikayla Carr, Sarah Morgan, Elaina Reis, and Landon Davis.

- A Calvin and Hobbes comic from 1992 referred to the start of the universe as the "Horrendous Space Kablooie" because they thought "The Big Bang" was too boring.
- When a man noticed that his food supply was mysteriously diminishing he set up a webcam, only to discover that a woman had been living in one of his closets -- for a year!
- During Spain's colonial period, the builders of Filipino churches used millions of egg whites in the mortar to make the structures more durable. This also accounts for why Filipino desserts often use lots of eggs: Many of the recipes were developed to use up all those leftover yolks.
- In 2013, Belgium created five limited edition stamps that smelled and tasted like chocolate.
- According to the American Kennel Club, dogs will fake a sneeze for play and communication purposes.
- Iceland has the largest population of green-eyed people in the world.


Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

Thought for the Day: "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." -- Maya Angelou

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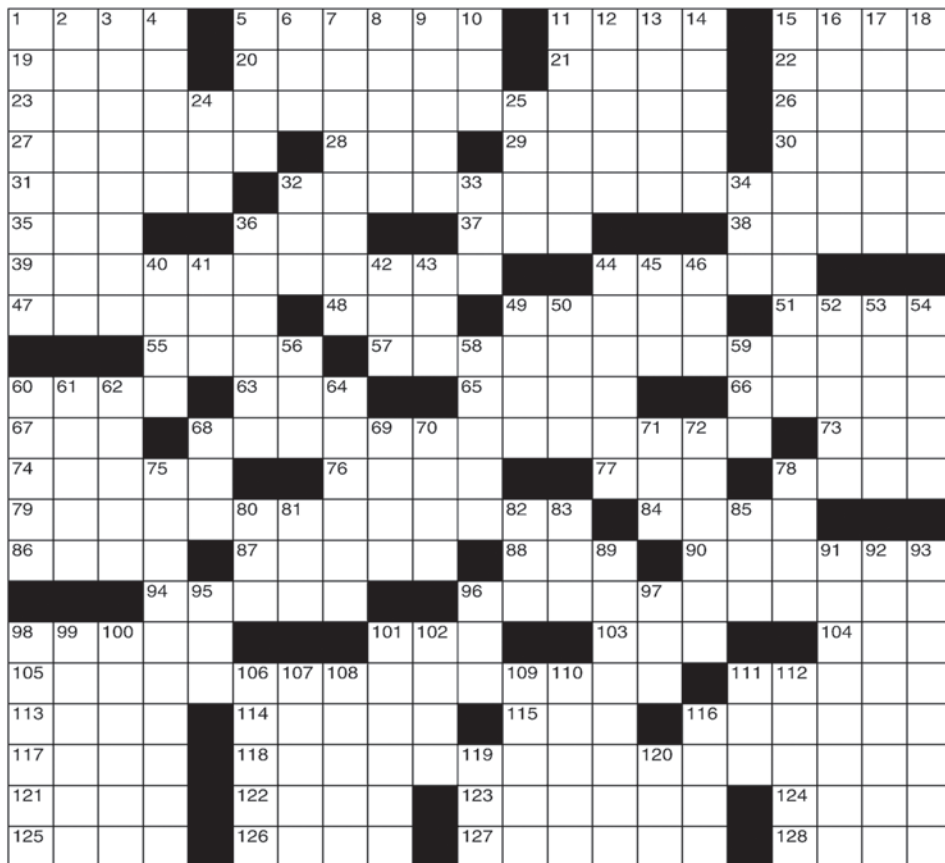
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11 M A T E R N A L

HORIZONTAL

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14 A C C O R N G E E L I V E

15 A S S A Y P O L A R C A P L E T

16 T R I P L E T P L A N N E R S S U N L L

17 L I L I L I R A S O L D B Y N A M E

18 A M I E E V E R Y O D O W I N S L E T

19 S P E C N O N E Y E R E D I E

20 T Y R E A S S I T T E R S E R R A N S

Say you saw it in the Ranchos Independent

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 "Sch." for "school," e.g.</p> <p>5 "My stars!"</p> <p>11 Source of poi</p> <p>15 Baseballer Ty</p> <p>19 "Don't stop!"</p> <p>20 Foray</p> <p>21 State firmly</p> <p>22 Voiced</p> <p>23 Put on some wrist jewelry?</p> <p>26 Actress Foch</p> <p>27 Connect for use, to Brits</p> <p>28 With 86-Across, China's place</p> <p>29 Haunting</p> <p>30 Mike Brady's three kids, e.g.</p> <p>31 Greek fabulist</p> <p>32 Pair of poetic lines about the army?</p> <p>35 — Valley, San Francisco</p> <p>36 Disney frame</p> <p>37 FedEx rival</p> <p>38 Layers</p> <p>39 Healed a fictional prince of Denmark?</p> <p>44 Striped feline</p> <p>47 "And others," in footnotes</p> <p>48 Mineo of "Dino"</p> <p>49 Steer snarer</p> <p>51 Re</p> | <p>55 Home of Taj Mahal</p> <p>57 Extra wrestling garment in case the main one gets lost?</p> <p>60 Heifer's home</p> <p>63 "Hulk" director Lee</p> <p>65 Blind as —</p> <p>66 Earp of the O.K. Corral</p> <p>67 Sound of wonderment</p> <p>68 Bright red Kleenex?</p> <p>73 Foot part</p> <p>74 Cause, as havoc</p> <p>76 City in Kansas</p> <p>77 Time as end</p> <p>78 Bison group</p> <p>79 Secondhand apartment rental in Rome?</p> <p>84 — gin fizz</p> <p>86 See 28-Across</p> <p>87 Gamma follower</p> <p>88 Just so-so</p> <p>90 Warship fleet</p> <p>94 Test, as ore</p> <p>96 Coated pill produced in Antarctica?</p> <p>98 Oak nut</p> <p>101 Letter before dee</p> | <p>103 "— got it!"</p> <p>104 Partner of 67-Across</p> <p>105 Parents-to-be expecting three babies at once?</p> <p>111 "The — come out tomorrow" (start of an "Annie" song)</p> <p>113 "Mystic Pizza" actress</p> <p>114 Turkish coins</p> <p>115 Out-of-date</p> <p>116 How cats ask for Meow Mix, per a slogan</p> <p>117 Lady friend, in France</p> <p>118 Pleasing answer when actress Kate asks her agent "Who wants me next?"</p> <p>121 Job detail</p> <p>122 "Huh-uh!"</p> <p>123 Cyclops' odd feature</p> <p>124 Actress Falco</p> <p>125 Car roller, to Brits</p> <p>126 Secy., e.g.</p> <p>127 Less wordy</p> <p>128 Also- — (race losers)</p> <p>DOWN</p> <p>1 Tone of an environment</p> |
|---|---|--|
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| <p>2 Validated, as a claim</p> <p>3 Period of Model T's</p> <p>4 Right-hand book page</p> <p>5 Pickle choice</p> <p>6 Ending with ethyl</p> <p>7 Many indie movies</p> <p>8 Like queens</p> <p>9 New Zealand native</p> <p>10 Univ. URL ending</p> <p>11 Gunlike stunners</p> <p>12 Animator Tex</p> <p>13 Saintry article</p> <p>14 "— ed Euridice" (Gluck opera)</p> <p>15 Nefarious group plot</p> <p>16 Bobolink's kin</p> <p>17 Big headline</p> <p>18 Explosions</p> <p>24 "The Raven" poet's inits.</p> <p>25 Gather in</p> <p>32 "— culpa!"</p> <p>33 Boy pharaoh</p> <p>34 4x4, in brief</p> <p>36 Jacques of France</p> <p>40 Panache</p> <p>41 Use a shovel</p> <p>42 Vegas lead-in</p> <p>43 Wallach of "Firepower"</p> <p>44 African fly</p> | <p>45 Suffix with organ</p> <p>46 Mass of mayo, say</p> <p>49 Pride parade letters</p> <p>50 Jai —</p> <p>52 Glide on ice</p> <p>53 Teach privately</p> <p>54 Decided (to)</p> <p>56 Actress Ortiz</p> <p>58 Of birth</p> <p>59 Astonishment</p> <p>60 "Fame" vocalist</p> <p>61 Major artery</p> <p>62 Ostrichlike birds</p> <p>64 Horrific</p> <p>68 Glide on snow</p> <p>69 Uncouth guy</p> <p>70 Napoleon's exile isle</p> <p>71 "He-e-elp!"</p> <p>72 Loosen, as a shoe</p> <p>75 Decorative church screen</p> <p>78 Cannabis fiber</p> <p>80 Paid promos</p> <p>81 Tchr.'s org.</p> <p>82 Comic Philips</p> <p>83 Phone no.</p> <p>85 "... man — mouse?"</p> <p>89 Clairrol products</p> | <p>91 "M*A*S*H" co-star</p> <p>92 Request for a poker hand</p> <p>93 Olympics participants</p> <p>95 Jai since '75</p> <p>96 Writer's tool</p> <p>97 Trailer park campers, for short</p> <p>98 "Finally!"</p> <p>99 Like pie crusts with pressed-in ridges</p> <p>100 Greasier</p> <p>101 Dry red wine</p> <p>102 Simple</p> <p>106 Kagan of the court</p> <p>107 Some DVR systems</p> <p>108 Sets up, informally</p> <p>109 Herman's Hermits</p> <p>110 Senior frontman</p> <p>111 Wd. of similar meaning</p> <p>112 Auto racer Al</p> <p>116 Funeral platform</p> <p>119 Net automaton</p> <p>120 Letter before zee</p> |
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- Save smaller bits of leftover veggies in a large freezer-safe container or bag, in the freezer. When it's full, make vegetable soup.
- "Be sure you use bathroom fans correctly, turning on to remove steam, but turning off to keep from pumping out heat. This is equally important in the summer, when you pump out valuable cooled air. Many people don't think of fans this way, and they end up running for hours." -- R.D. in Mississippi



- Keep salt or baking soda by the stove for small quick cleanups. A good dose of salt will stop an egg from running all over the place. Dip a damp cloth in baking soda for a handy scrub. Although a handful of either might work in a pinch on a small flare-up on the stove, you should have a fire extinguisher close by for fires.
- "I used to comb through my last year's calendar for important yearly dates when transferring them to the new year's calendar. This year I have gotten smart. At the end of the month, before turning the page, I have highlighted the items I would want to put in next year's calendar. When I look back, I will not have to search through all the entries for the good stuff." -- U.L. in Ohio
- "I just spent a lot of time cleaning my mother's bathtub in a long-neglected bathroom. To keep it from mildewing, I used paste wax to protect the walls. You can use car wax for the same purpose, and many people know about this helpful tip. But I wanted to add a caution: walls only. Especially if you have an elderly resident (or a child), do not wax the inside of the tub, and make sure to have a non-slip mat in the tub at all times." -- A daughter in Oregon

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

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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.

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	+		÷		3			
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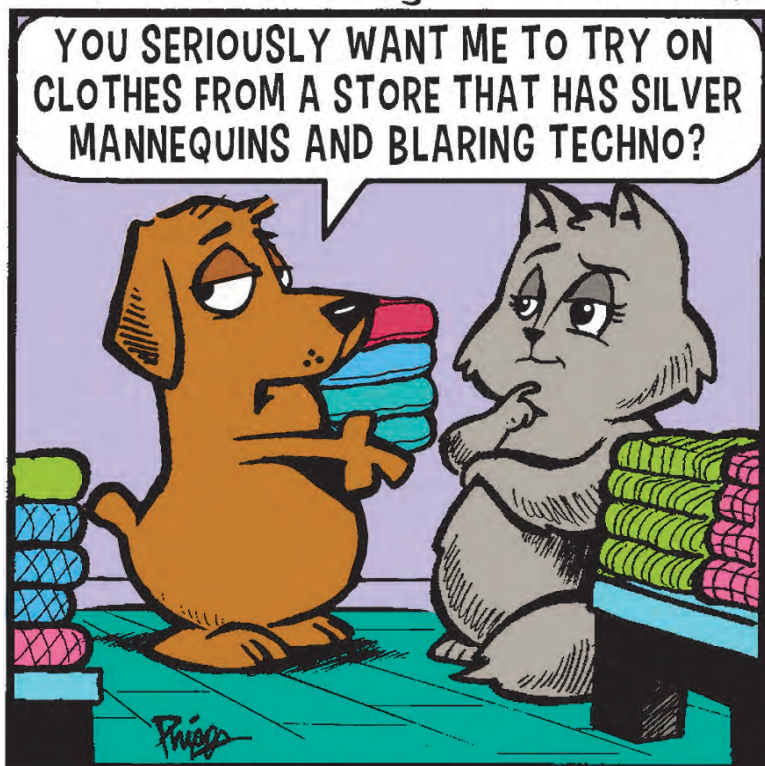
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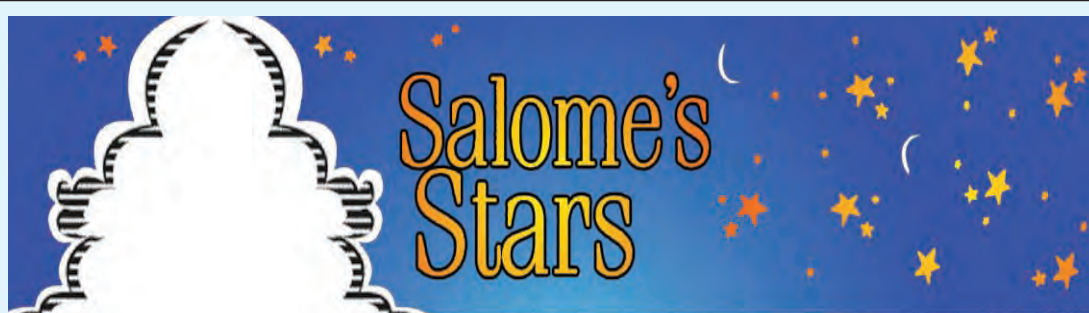


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“My client is a simple shoemaker. OK, so they’re cement shoes.”



ARIES (March 21 to April 19) A hectic period begins to wind down. Take time to draw some deep breaths and relax before getting into your next project. A long-absent family member could make contact as well.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You're eager to move forward with a new challenge that suddenly dropped into your lap. But you'd be wise to take this one step at a time, to allow new developments to come through.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You're almost ready to make a commitment. A lingering doubt or two, however, should be resolved before you move ahead. An associate could provide important answers to your questions.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Caution is still the watchword as you move closer toward a decision about a new situation. If you act too fast, you might miss some vital warning signs. Go slowly and stay alert.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Your new goal looks promising, and your golden touch does much to enhance its prospects for success. In your private life, Cupid does his best to make your new relationship special.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) That impatient side of yours is looking to goad you into moving before you're ready to take that big step. Stay calm and cool. Let things fall into place before you act.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) A legal matter you hoped would finally be settled could be a pesky problem for a while until all the parties agree to stop disagreeing with each other. Be patient.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Partnerships -- personal or professional -- which began before the new year take on new importance. They also reveal some previously hidden risks. So, be warned.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Your associates are firmly on your side, and that persistent problem causing you to delay some activities should soon be resolved to your satisfaction.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Favorable changes continue to dominate, and you should be responding positively as they emerge. Someone wants to become more involved in what you're doing.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) A friend wants to share a secret that could answer some questions you've wondered about for a long time. Meanwhile, travel aspects continue to be strong.

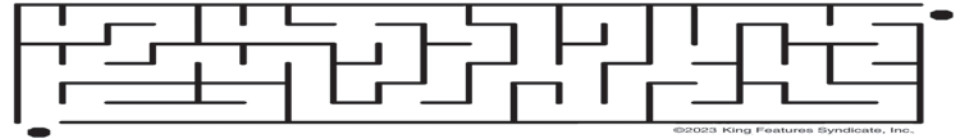
PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Stay on your new course despite so-called well-meaning efforts to discourage you. Rely on your deep sense of self-awareness to guide you to do what's right for you.

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FUN PAGES

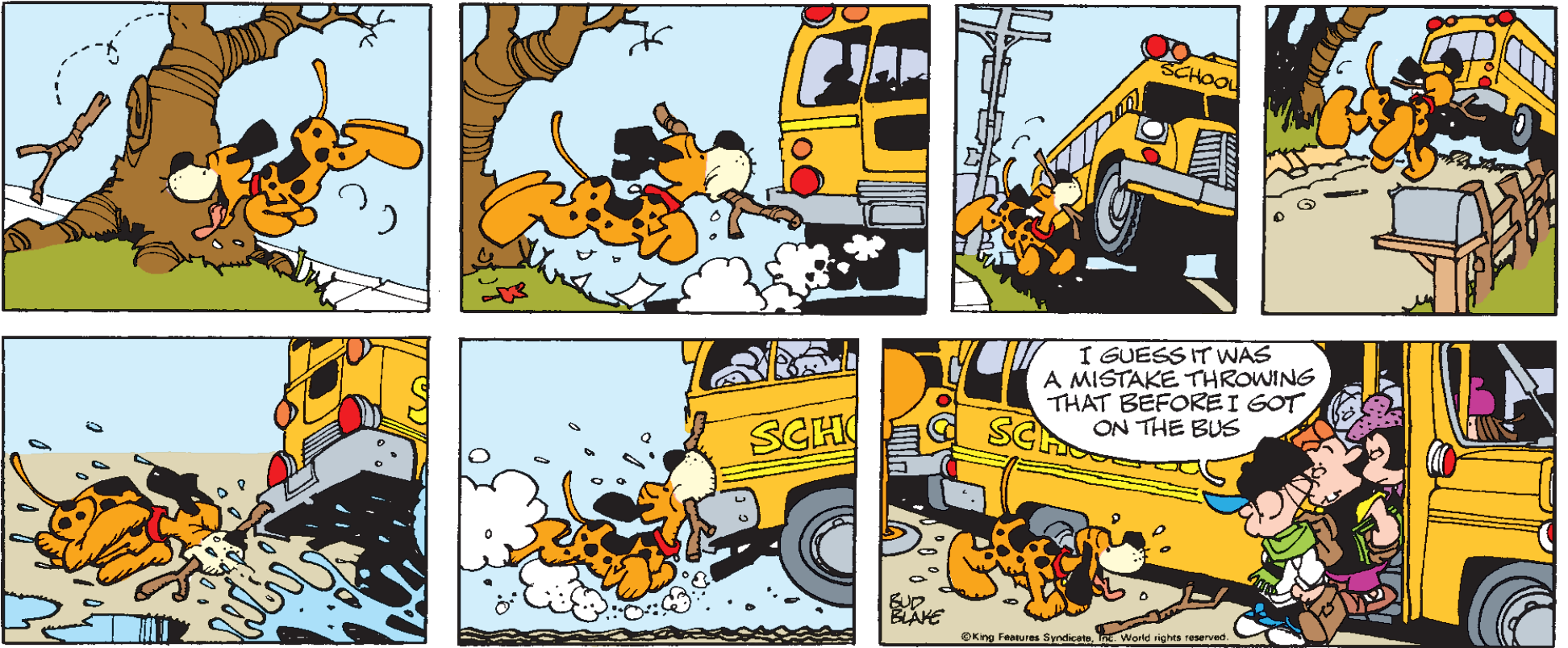
Kids' Maze



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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

- ART: Where is the Prado Museum located?
- GEOGRAPHY: What is the only country that the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn pass through?
- LANGUAGE: What does the Latin phrase "tempus fugit" mean?
- MATH: What is another name for the division sign?
- MUSIC: How long did it take singer Bob Dylan to write the big hit "Blowin' in the Wind"?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: How many times on average does a ruby-throated hummingbird flap its wings in one second?
- MOVIES: Which movie features the line, "Keep the change, ya filthy animal"?
- LITERATURE: Which novel features four children named Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy?
- TELEVISION: What is Joey's famous line in the sitcom "Friends"?
- ANATOMY: What is a common name for the pinna in human anatomy?

- Madrid, Spain.
- Brazil.
- Time flies.
- Obelus.
- 10 minutes, according to Dylan.
- About 50 times.
- "Home Alone."
- "The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe."
- "How you doin'?"
- Outer ear.

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Click on "Local News" at

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



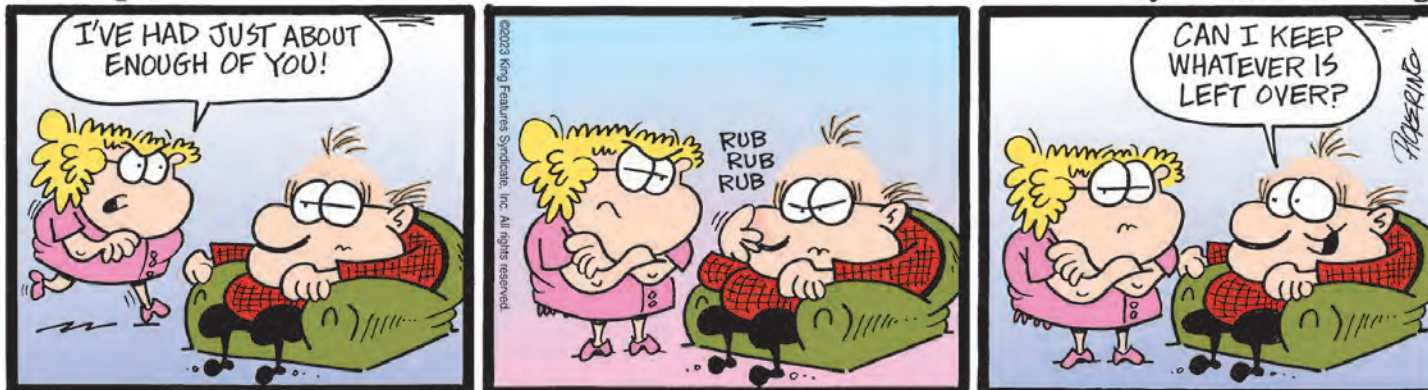
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Wishing Well®

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

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

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MAGIC MAZE • — LOVE

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: In Tennis : Server 2 Opponent 0

Affectionate	First	Parental	True
Brotherly	Labor of	Puppy	Unrequited
Enduring	Maternal	Romantic	Young
Fall in	Motherly	Selfless	

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FUN PAGES

SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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SEM CU

south east madera county united

“Are you worried about the future of our community? How will the County replace lost Tax Money as agriculture is phased out?”

Please join us for One Hour to provide questions, concerns and solutions to our community. Our next meeting is Monday, March 20 at 6 p.m.

Until further notice, the regular SEMCU meetings will take place via teleconference. Please let us know if you have any questions. The teleconference number is 312-757-3121 and the Access Code is 715-657-949.