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50¢

Who Wants School Choice?

By Steve Baldwin



In This Issue

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Sign Up to Run In Next Election

California's next election primary is coming on Tuesday, June 7. Before there can be an election, however, candidates must throw their hats in the ring and announce their intention to run for the different elected offices. To facilitate that, Madera County is announcing filing dates for various County offices. They are:

Supervisor, District 1; Assessor; Auditor-Controller; County Clerk-Recorder; District Attorney; Sheriff-Coroner; Superintendent of Schools and Tax Collector-Treasurer. The Judicial offices are: Judge of the Superior Court, Office 1, 2 and 3.



If you'd like to run for District 1 Supervisor, at present held by Brett Frazier, and you don't want to pay a filing fee, you have to sign up between Jan. 4 and Feb. 9. All of the other offices consist of filing deadlines from Jan. 31 through March 16. For full filing information, visit www.votemadera.com and click on the "Interested in Running for Office" link or call the Elections Division at 559-675-7720, or toll free at 1-800-435-0509. Interested candidates must then obtain and file the required documentation to run for office from the County Clerk-Recorder, located at 200 W 4th Street in Madera, Monday through Friday during regular business hours.

Registration for Kindergarten Now

Spread the word: Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration is beginning for the 2022-2023 School Year.

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



Please see **TK&K** on P. 16

Why Running for School Boards May be a Waste of Time for Conservative Parents and What They *Should* be Doing

By Steve Baldwin

More and more parents are waking up to the abject failure of the American public school system and become desperate to take action to protect their children. The threats to their well-being include vaccination mandates, Critical Race Theory, a failure to teach students basic writing and math skills, obscene and unsafe sex education curriculum, allowing "trans" boys to use girl's bathrooms and the list keeps growing. Some are calling this the "Mama Bear Revolution." Bravo Mama Bears.

It is understandable that parents around the country are storming school board meetings and demanding change. Many have announced they will run for school boards and dozens of local and national education reform groups are urging them to do so.

Since it appears that the current threat is coming from elected school boards, the natural reaction is to take the battle to the leftists who have wormed their way onto those boards, but we must stop and think about this: The left has dominated the vast majority of school boards for decades now and a lot has changed since then. We need to ask ourselves if this is the right strategy. Based on my 40 years of working in the vineyards of the conservative movement and focusing heavily on education issues and school board races, I must tell you that I believe this fight is not worth it. It will exhaust us and accomplish nothing and there are better strategies to protect our children and give them a good education.

I have spent years fighting the left on education issues. As a member of the California State Assembly, I chaired the Education Committee and witnessed first-hand how our public schools have been transformed by the left. They no longer exist to create productive citizens; they now exist to create "social justice warriors" committed to transforming America into a socialist society. The entire education bureaucracy, from the teacher's union to the administrators, are committed to excluding parents from decision making as *they* know what is best for "the children" and they do not care what parents think. Winning a few school board seats will not change that one iota. I have been down this road and I know how it ends.

The Myth of Locally Controlled Schools

First off, we all need to understand that our public schools have not been "locally controlled" for decades. It does not do us any good if a parent spends time, money and energy on winning a school board seat then finds they will not have any major lasting impact.

Many conservative leaders do not seem to understand this, but school districts must follow thousands of state and federal mandates. Almost all policies regarding teacher credentialing, testing, textbook selection, academic standards, bilingual educa-

tion, special education and even the construction of school facilities have been centralized over the last 30 years to state and federal education departments. Basically, unelected state and federal bureaucrats are the ones who decide education policy in America today, not school boards, and certainly not parents.

The decisions school board members make today are inconsequential and are generally choices among options created by state or federal laws. While conservatives slept over the last three decades, we lost control of our local schools to liberal state and federal school bureaucrats. And it wasn't just the left responsible for this; it involved a coalition of many groups including the teacher unions, the Democrats, the school board associations, the liberal Republican establishment and the business establishment.

Yes, the United States Chamber of Commerce and other national business groups played a key role in pushing hundreds of bills over the last 30 years that dramatically centralized education policy in the hands of the Department of Education in Washing-

Who Wants School Choice?

By Steve Baldwin



ton D.C. This bureaucracy was created in 1979 as a result of a campaign promise made by Jimmy Carter to the teacher unions, who, in turn, threw their support behind him. Since that time, the Department of Education has massively grown in size and power at the expense of local school boards and parents.

Remember "Goals 2000"? That was one of many massive federal programs that centralized education policy in Washington, D.C. and it was enthusiastically supported not just by the left but by establishment Republicans, including both Bush Presidents, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. They actually claimed centralizing education policy into the hands of liberal bureaucrats in Washington would improve our education system. Of course, it did just the opposite because it destroyed local accountability.

Today, America's students are now out-performed even by students in Third World countries. We have a failing education system which is why employers today hire thousands of foreign workers. American students can't read or write at a world-class level anymore and anyone who tells you otherwise is lying to you.

Nonetheless, in the 1990s I thought I could improve our ed-

Please see **CHOICE** on P. 3

CHOICE cont. from P. 2

ucation system by helping to organize a slate of over 50 school board candidates in my county. This slate resulted in over 25 conservatives winning office, and in three school districts, conservatives even took majority control.

Today, 30 years later, I cannot say this made any difference at all. These conservative school board members encountered state and federal mandates everywhere they turned. Not only that, many of them spent most of their time fighting recall efforts and lawsuits launched by the teacher unions, which have the funds to harass conservative school board members full time. Not to mention there were almost daily attacks upon them by the media.

Indeed, all of them spent most of their time on the school boards defending themselves and nearly all of them retired within a few years or were removed by a teacher union puppet in subsequent elections. As far as I know, this was the largest sweep of conservatives to school boards perhaps in the last 60 years, but you would never know that by observing these same school districts today. Like the vast majority of school districts in America, they continue to follow the left-wing agenda without fail.

A classic example was the Vista School District in northern San Diego County. Conservatives won three of its five seats and one of the policies they championed was to allow teachers to introduce evidence critical of evolution. At no point did they try to ban the teaching of evolution; all they supported was freedom of inquiry on this issue. The left and its media allies went ballistic and for the next two years, that's all they would talk about. Board members were recalled, lawsuits filed and in the end, the conservatives accomplished little. Within a few years, Vista was back to it union-approved, anti-parent policies and today they're no different than any other school district dedicated to indoctrinating the children to be good little socialists.

The Myth of Public Schools being an American Institution

We call them public schools, but we really should call them what they are: Government schools. Government schools were not part of America's founding nor were they ever mentioned by our founder fathers. In fact, public school systems were not widespread until the late 1800s. Before then, all schools were privately operated and most of them were connected to a church. As education researcher Sam Blumenthal has written, this patchwork system of education produced a higher literacy rate than we have today.

There are also strong moral arguments against public schools as well. The Bible in-

structs parents to be responsible for raising their children and instilling in them virtuous values (as found in Proverbs 23:13-14; Luke 2:48-52; Galatians 4:3-3; Ephesians 6:1-4; and Colossians 3:20-24). The public schools claim to not teach religious values, but they do – they teach the values of humanism and atheism, both religious doctrines. By turning our children over to the public schools we have allowed liberal activists to supplant the values most parents teach at home.

Then What Do Parents Do?

It is time parents used their influence and networks to create strong private schools and home school networks. Such networks already exist but they need to be strengthened and invigorated. It is shameful that there are thousands of churches in our country which have unused facilities Monday through Friday. If the Christian community were serious about raising the next generation to be productive, law-abiding, virtuous people, then every Christian church should consider creating a school using their facilities, and if they think they're too small to pull this off, then they should approach other like-minded churches and go in together on such a project.

If the existing private schools are inadequate, then parents need to start their own school. As I mentioned, it would be wise to approach churches to undertake this project because the facility construction cost is not an issue. Moreover, most churches have a body of educated people who can serve as teachers. I won't get into all the specific details here, but the first thing to do is to form a board of knowledgeable parents who explore all the options regarding facilities, teachers, tuition, textbooks etc. I will say there are tons of resources online to help those who start private schools.

If hundreds of parents residing in a school district were to pull their children out of public schools and enroll in existing private schools – or create new ones – this could lead to a strong and vibrant network of private schools that could band together and cooperate on other things like forming sports leagues, debate competitions, etc.

The idea is to create a network of private schools that rival the public schools both in terms of academics and extracurricular activities. Moreover, on average, private school students outperform public school students on every measurement.

Then there's the home school option. Most people don't know this but there are almost 4 million homeschoolers in the USA today. Our government can't stop this movement, nor can they compel a student to attend a public school. Home

Please see **CHOICE** on P. 12

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The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, always the second Wednesday of the month. Join us on February 9 at 6:30 p.m. at 37167 Ave. 12, Suite 5C. Come give your input on the future of the Ranchos.

New Member

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

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Letters

Dear Editor:

Just reading the latest version of our Ranchos newspaper. You're right, I love reading it every month and your recent article, "And They Said It Wouldn't Last." Thanks for hanging in there and keeping all of us in the Ranchos informed. I look forward to this paper every month. Thanks always for the great information and may you have a great New Year.
Debbie Ferguson Szucs
Madera Ranchos

lic Health Public Health Officer. I asked for his email because he is on the top of the organizational chart with Director Sara Bosse and his photo is prominently placed on the mailer along with this quote from him: "The risk of the vaccine is almost zero and it's much safer to get the vaccine than it is to get COVID. If you don't get vaccinated, the odds are that you're going to get COVID sooner or later because it's very infectious." As you will see in my email that I intended to send, Dr. Paul is telling a half-truth because he could have – and should have – also said, "If you get vaccinated, the odds are that you're going to get COVID sooner or later because it's very infectious." See the difference? He must know that the vaccine is woefully ineffective at preventing transmission and yet he only shared that which would lead the public into vaccinating their children as young as five.

I was told by the courteous employee that I spoke to that they cannot give out Dr. Paul's email address.

This is a public servant!

A person in this position should be available and accountable to the public, and yet there is no way for a tax-paying citizen to communicate with this public official on

Please see **LETTERS** on P. 12

Dear Editor:

On Jan. 20, I received a glossy mailer from Madera County Public Health. You probably received it too. It is titled: "Doctors in Madera County recommend the COVID-19 Vaccine for ages 5 and Up." I went online to the Madera County Public Health to try and send an email response. There is a COVID-19 community feedback form where comments and questions can be submitted in 500 characters or less so I called the department (559-675-7893) to ask if there was an email address where I could send my comments. There isn't. So, I asked if I could get the email address of Dr. Paul, Madera County Department of Pub-



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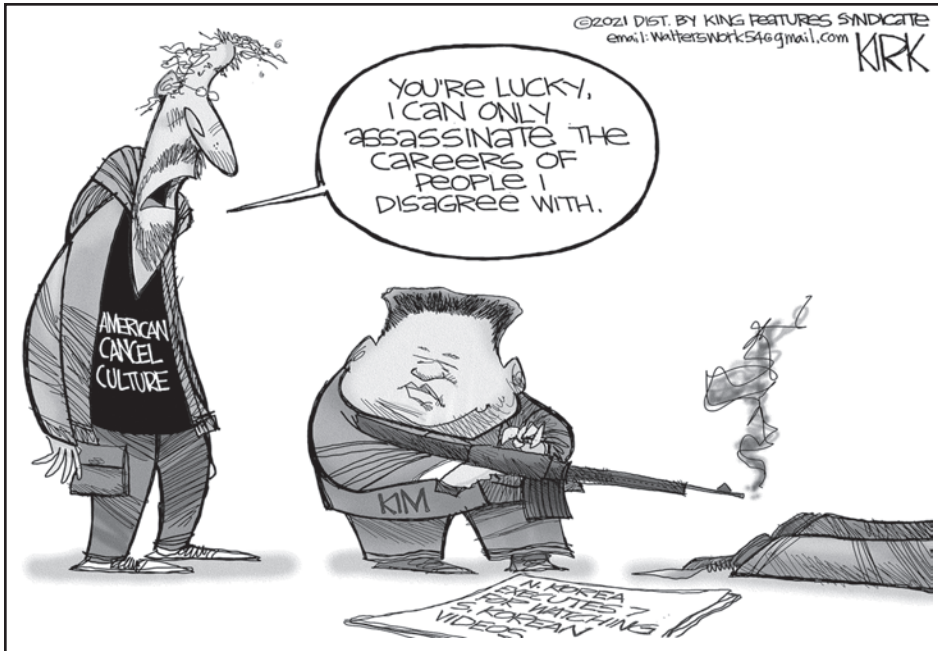
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Guest Editorial

Get Ready for Next Election

By Joseph Ragonese

The 2020 election was full of voter/election fraud, and some very unusual voting machine irregularities. This is not a conspiracy but documented in reports big and small.

However, that truth has been buried so deeply behind a facade of boilerplate commentary, like the sham January 6 investigation. And while there is no way to right the past, many Americans are forgetting that there is an election coming this November. An election that could put a sudden stop to the transformation of America taking place. Democrats haven't forgotten their success and they are bolstered by that success in 2020. It is, most likely, that Democrats are setting up another massive steal of the 2022 mid-term election. To protect Democrats, the media keeps everything dealing with voter fraud carefully hidden.

Actual facts about ongoing voter fraud investigations in several states are being ignored, if not censored. For example, the Arizona voter fraud investigation in Maricopa County – as broadly reported – the audit established "... there were no substantial differences between the hand count of the ballots provided and the official canvass results for the County." The "main street media" ran with that, completely ignoring the numerous

findings of problems with the election and, most significantly, evidence indicating tens of thousands of ballots were illegally cast or counted. Those ballots were enough to swing the vote for Biden. Those votes that changed the results were directly related to the mail-in ballots sent out, many of which were fraudulent. There were many other problems with the findings in Arizona, but none were explored by the biased legacy media. There are other, lesser investigations of the massive voter fraud of 2020, mostly dealing with mail-in ballots and faulty voting machines.

Investigations are ongoing in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin. However, most people do not know about them because of the coordinated efforts of the main street media, the Democrat Party, and social media to hide and suppress any information about the massive fraud of 2020 from seeing the light of day.

And there is a reason for that.

It is to provide enough cover to the Democrats to try to hang onto power this November. And they need to hang onto the House of Representatives badly. If they lose the house, the Bidens – father and son – should finally come under scrutiny. Joe and Hunter will face charges if the House changes hands, unless Republicans, once again, allow them to avoid the gaze of justice as they have been doing with Hillary Clinton for decades.

There's coalition to save Joe Biden and the Democrats in November 2022. Watch as a coalition of left-wing tech, social media, Democrats, socialists, globalists, communists and our very own mainstream media, band together to save the Biden administration from the truth being learned, just as they came together to steal the 2020 election from President Trump.

There is a strong belief among the middle-class, conservatives, independents and libertarians, that come November the power will shift in both the House and Senate, but that is a false hope if Democrats have their way. And Democrats are working feverishly to assure that they maintain both houses of Congress. Their vehicle for this will be the very same mail-in ballots from 2020.

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RONALD REAGAN
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Please see **EDITORIAL** on P. 9

Real Fans Wanted

I believe that every person needs some real fans throughout his or her life. I don't mean cheerleaders – people who stand on the sidelines when you're on the field and shout for joy when you score a goal. Those people are great, but they aren't the real fans. The real fans are there in the locker room with you after a loss helping you understand what to do differently next time. They are on the practice field with you helping you improve your skills. They are the parents, coaches, teachers, mentors, managers and friends that involve themselves in your journey and not only celebrate your success but also talk you through the failures. Whether they are lifelong fans or they leave you after a season, while they are with you, they are fully invested in you. I think some people go through life without this kind of support and it reminds me of how blessed I am to have had some truly great fans in my life.

First, let me tell you about my Ol' G-Pa Jim. It's possible that he is my biggest fan. He gets the Ranchos Independent and reads my articles faithfully. Now, some grandparents would merely skim the essay then occasionally pick up the phone and rave about how much they love reading their grandkids' work. G-Pa takes it a step further. After his dedicated perustration of my monthly article, he sends me a letter with his review of the piece. Sure, he tells me what he liked about it, which is nice to hear, but what makes it so special is that he is specific. He'll point out something that made him laugh, something that made him think, things he didn't think "kids" my age really thought about but he's glad I brought it up. It shows me that he was actually taking it all in. He doesn't stop there, though. He tells me what he thinks might have made it better and shares ideas for future topics. He also has a love of vocabulary, so he sends me words he doesn't think I've ever heard of, and I try to work a few in here and there to see if I can stump him. I look forward to that letter each month because it's not just empty flattery. He is invested in me, and he demonstrates that through real interest. It's not just the articles, either. He's supported me and encouraged me through both my bachelor's and master's degrees. Education has been important to him ever since he worked his own way through

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WHY**
by **eryn b. nyre**



college when he was a cop. He actually wants me to succeed in life, and it feels good to know I have someone like that in my corner.

Speaking of degrees, I will never forget my academic advisor during my graduate program. Perhaps she was just good at her job, but I never felt like I was merely one of her students and she was doing nothing more than performing her required duties. She helped tailor my graduate project to the position I was in at that time so that I was able to convince my boss to allow me to do some of the work on company time. She also helped me expand the project enough so that it would advance me toward the career to which I was aiming. All she really had to do was help me pick the right classes, let me choose a topic and run with it, and ensure that I was following departmental guidelines to graduate. Whether it was because she saw something in me personally or that she chooses to invest in all of her students, she set me up to succeed beyond attaining my degree. Although ultimately she was one of those fans that was only there for a short while, she made a significant impact on me and my career and I will always be grateful to her for that.

Some of you are probably a bit surprised that I haven't mentioned my mother yet. She was a great fan, I'm sure she still is, but she's not who I'm going to talk about. No, for my final mention I'm going to have to go with my dad. There's no one like my dad. Sure, he has supported me and cheered me on my whole life, but he's molded me as well. He's always said that his job as a father is to make me a good person, not just treat me like a princess and give me everything I ask for. He taught me, he helped shape me, and occasionally he had to knock a little sense into me. Ok, sometimes he had to knock twice. He wanted me to be

Please see **GEN WHY** on P. 12

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Remember What?

One of my most embarrassing moments centers around forgetting something. Years ago, I contacted Clovis Adult School about offering a class on organizing. They were interested and I scheduled an appointment to present my syllabus. I still have no idea how it happened, but I totally missed the appointment. It wasn't until the next day that I realized it.

I was so embarrassed! I figured they'd prefer having someone a little more reliable teach a class on organizing, but I called and the woman in charge graciously rescheduled. She even said she'd like to take my class.

Embarrassment is just one of many consequences linked to forgetting things. Things like less productivity and more stress and

frustration are also on the list. Whether you're having trouble remembering appointments, to-dos, what you need from the store, when to pay your bills or the name of the book a friend told you about, there's an app for that. The Reminders app on the iPhone is truly my most-used and most favorite.

Say good-bye to piles of scribbled notes. No more forgetting what you wanted to add to your grocery list before you can find it. No more getting to the store and realizing you forgot your list at home. No more frantically pulling out your trash cans in your jammies as the garbage truck approaches. No more thinking of something you need to do when you get home, but not remembering it once you're there. The Reminders app has features to help with each one of these — and more.

As an organizer, anything that reduces clutter, has easy access and increases efficiency ranks high on my list. David Allen, in his book *Getting Things Done*, says, "If it's on your mind, your mind isn't clear." He suggests that anything waiting to be done needs to be captured in a trusted system outside your mind. For me,

I was so embarrassed ... Embarrassment is just one of many consequences linked to forgetting things.

the Reminders app is one of those trusted systems.

The app comes standard on the iPhone and other Apple products, but if it was deleted somehow, you can go to the app store and reinstall it. You can find comprehensive instructions on how to use it online at support.apple.com/en-us/HT205890. There are also instructive videos available on YouTube. Just search "how to use the Reminders app on an iPhone." Here are some of my favorite features.

SPEAK REMINDERS: No need to search for pen and paper, or even type. Just tell Siri what you need to remember. Initiate Siri by voice or

pushing the side button on your phone and say, "Remind me to call Diane." Boom — it shows up in your app.

DATE/TIME: If the reminder is time sensitive, add a date, time and repeat instructions if needed. Say, "Remind me to pull out the trash cans every Sunday at 9 p.m."

You can also add reminders, dates, times and repeat instructions manually, but using the voice option substantially increases the ease of use.

LOCATION: I use this one ALL THE TIME. While working or running around town, I think of something I need to do when I get home. A simple, "Remind me to send a thank you note to Megan when I get home," is all that's needed to have a reminder pop up on my phone as I pull into the garage. You can also request reminders when you arrive at other places that are in your

contacts. "Remind me to look for Haley's lost jacket when I arrive at Webster School."

If you need a reminder as you leave a location, you can do that too. When caring for a friend's pet while they're gone, you can say, "Remind me to feed Fluffy every day when leaving work." Make sure you've listed the places you want to use, like "work" and "home" in your phone as such.

CREATE SHOPPING LISTS: I have four shopping lists in my Reminders app — Office Max, Costco, Grocery and Target. As I think of things, or run out of things, I just say "Add yogurt to my Grocery List." The shopping lists, like the other reminder lists, have dots to check off items as you make your purchase or complete your reminder.

You can link your lists to other iPhone users. So, my husband can add to my Costco list from work or stop at the store and pick up the items I've added to the grocery list.

OTHER LISTS: I have a Christmas list that holds gift and activity ideas. A Books to Read or Movies to Watch list can hold suggestions you collect from friends and family. A House Project list with scheduled tasks can keep you from forgetting to change the AC filter or smoke alarm batteries.

The possibilities are endless and yet all easily accessible in the one thing you have with you the most. The only feature they haven't perfected is how to get it to do the stuff for you.

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Some SUPER Recipes

(January 2012)

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



by Jean Briner

I was looking on the computer to see who was going to be the half time entertainment this year and it's Madonna! So that I won't offend any of her fans, I won't tell you how much I don't care for her. Half time will probably be a good time for me to go clean the bathrooms. Enough said!

Although it is not an official holiday, it is certainly celebrated like one. It is a good day to bring out the munchies. And please, don't just open a bag of chips and say "this is it." Depending on how many are in your group, you could have them each bring a tray of their favorite snack food. A couple of simple suggestions is to open a package of cream cheese (let soften before serving) and pour your favorite salsa over it, and serve with tortilla chips. Or if you're not a salsa fan, but like seafood, use a jar of shrimp or crab cocktail over the softened cream cheese and serve with pita chips. Or how about a tray of peeled and sliced cucumbers, zucchini, baby carrots, broccoli, cauliflower and olives with a bowl of ranch dressing.

One of my favorite dips is the old standby onion soup mix and sour cream. Just stir a package of Lipton onion soup mix into a pint carton of sour cream. Be sure to let it sit for a couple of hours in the refrigerator before serving so you won't be biting down on dry onions.

Another good one for a crowd is the 7-Layer dip. I use a large cookie sheet, but use whatever size is good for your party. The layers I use (from bottom to top in this order) are:

- Refried Beans
- Sour Cream
- Guacamole
- Chopped Green Chiles (drained)
- Shredded Lettuce
- Diced Tomatoes
- Chopped (or sliced) Olives
- Green Onions – chopped
- Shredded Cheese

I didn't put any amounts down because it will depend on the size of the platter you will be using. Additionally, I brown a pound of hamburger, drain it well on paper towels and then stir it into the beans before beginning to layer the other ingredients. The cheese can be of your choice: Cheddar, Monterey Jack, or if you want to make it a bit zestier, use pepper jack, or a combination of these. Serve with tortilla chips.

Depending on how much work you want to go to before your party, you could do chicken wings. I'm not a fan of the hot wings, but I do like the BBQ or this recipe for Brandied Chicken Wings.

Brandied Chicken Wings

3 lbs. Chicken Wings with tips removed.

Sauce:

- ¼ C Brown Sugar (packed)
- ¼ C Cooking Sherry
- ¾ C Soy Sauce
- 2 t Ground Ginger
- 1 or 2 Cloves of Garlic – chopped

Combine sauce ingredients. Place chicken in baking dish and pour sauce over chicken and let marinate in the refrigerator overnight. When ready to bake, place wings on greased cookie sheet and place in 450 oven for 10 minutes and turn wings over and cook for another 10 minutes. Reduce oven to 350 and cook wings for another 15 minutes or until wings are done.

Spinach Dip & Bread Bowl

1 Pkg. (10 oz.) Frozen Chopped Spinach.

Cooked, cooled and squeezed dry

Please see **RECIPES** on P. 9

Here we are into the year 2012 – can you believe it? It seems like only last week I was changing all the calendars from 2010 to 2011. Time does march on doesn't it? Hope you had a good beginning to 2012. Hope your new year will be very prosperous.

Well, it's Super Bowl fever time again. Will it be the 49ers or the Giants? The Patriots or the Ravens? At this point we don't know who it will be but definitely it will not be Denver, starring the Broncos' Tim Tebow, who was eliminated in a loss to the New England Patriots. My niece Brooke and nephew Brandon and his girlfriend Barbara flew from southern California a few weekends ago to see the Broncos play in Denver and I think Brooke went just to see Tebow play, rather than the whole team. I can tell you one sad girl who's not looking forward to the Super Bowl.

There are a couple of statistics that are related to the Super Bowl that I find interesting, however I can't verify them being valid. Did you know it's reported that more toilets are flushed during the half time of the Super Bowl and that sewers have a hard time keeping up? And supposedly there are more pizzas sold on Super Bowl Sunday than any other day of the year.

Sticker Shock

Have you seen the price of a ticket to the Super Bowl? I looked on the Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis website where the game will be played. The stadium was built with 63,000 seats, but it will be increased to over 70,000 for the game. Tonight (about three weeks before the game) there are 2,356 tickets left and they cost \$2,214 each.

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RECIPES cont. from P. 8

1 16 oz. Container Sour Cream
 1 C Mayonnaise
 2 or 3 Stalks of Celery, chopped
 1 Pkg. Knorr Vegetable Recipe Mix

3 Green Onions chopped (optional)

Combine all ingredients and chill about 2 hours. Hollow out a loaf of French bread and use as a container for the dip. Tear up the bread you pulled out of the loaf into

bite-size pieces and use as dippers. When the dip is almost gone, tear up the loaf and you have bread with dip on it ready to eat.

Kickoff will be 3:30 our time so you have enough time to get up and go to church and be home in time to get your party started and enjoy the game – especially if your team is winning. Hope you have a good time.

The Super Bowl in 2022 will be on Sunday, Feb. 13 at 3:30 p.m. on ABC Channel 30.

EDITORIAL cont. from P. 5

If you wondered why we are still under vaccine and mask mandates, remaining locked down, it is because Democrats need a reason to have mail-in ballots. Those mail-in ballots are their magic pill to victory. Unless they perfected their algorithms for the software in their Dominion voting machines, they will not be able to alter so many congressional races, especially for the House. But the mail-in ballots are a convenient way to stuff the ballot boxes across the nation.

To accommodate this fraud in 2022, Democrats are already setting up the reason for the “need” for mail-in ballots once again. Of course, that is the same one from 2020, and that is the great covid pandemic that just won’t die. Even if Covid does die – as predicted and becomes a non-story by March of 2022 – unless Republicans stand up and demand in-person voting (with limited exceptions), voter ID and a thorough vetting of any and all voting machines with both republican and democrat experts monitoring, expect history to repeat itself.

This new omicron variant is not going to last long enough, but just in the nick of time a new variant has appeared in France. Called the IHU variant that was announced by the World Health Organization that said while only a dozen have been infected in France so far, it has nonetheless been on their radar for a while. This new variant has 46 different mutations and that will be enough to spread fear without anyone being able to print any conflicting facts about it, allowing those mail-in ballots to be printed. If this variant doesn’t get Democrats over the finish line in November, another will surely take its place.

In any case, Democrats will stop at nothing to maintain their power. Even if it kills all of us with their lies and *www.TheRanchos.com*

misinformation. And those lies and misinformation are the reason that no one can publish anything that counters Fauci, Biden, the CDC, or the Democrat talking points on any media without being punished. Even scientists in those fields who have counter studies.

Marjorie Taylor Greene, the Republican congresswoman from Georgia, learned that lesson by posting to her Twitter account information directly from the federal government that counters Fauci and the CDC. For posting the truth she was permanently banned from the radical leftist platform. Conservative news sites have been punished by being banned by big tech, and most ominously by Google, who controls all advertising dollars on the internet. Without that income, many sites go bankrupt. The effect is that full censorship is in effect.

Those items are the events of January 6, Covid-19, climate change, Democrat voter fraud, mail-in ballots, and socialism/communism. This is why there is only one side of the story allowed in any media. And it all boils down to mail-in ballots. Without them, Democrats lose power. With them, they remain in power and they don’t care how many graves they have to walk on to maintain it.

Prepare yourself for the big steal of 2022 in November – unless Republicans in Congress grow some integrity and stop it by getting in front of the microphones that litter the Capitol and change the narrative from fear of Covid to election integrity. They can do it, and they can do it now. Before it is too late.

But they won’t.

Joseph Ragonese is a veteran of the United States Air Force, a retired police officer, has a degree in Criminal Justice, is a businessman, journalist, editor, publisher and fiction author. This article appears courtesy of www.com-diginews.com.

Senior Report**A Whole New Year of Senior Activities**

By *Melanie Williams*

“Come one, come all,” as the ringmaster said, “Let’s get this show on the road.”

Yes, we have events planned for you at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center with many exciting activities already in motion for 2022.

The Mississippi River Cruise is back on the July calendar. It is scheduled for July 25 through Aug. 2. The river paddleboat cruise aboard the American Countess leaves from St. Louis and travels to St. Paul and it is a great upper Mississippi River tour that highlights the grand adventures of Mark Twain. There are many complementary shore excursions included at every port with a

professional tour guide. Many of our members have already signed up so your chance is closing

soon. The deadline is March 4. If you are interested in going on the Mississippi River Cruise, call the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center at 645-4864 and talk to Jolene.

The new membership is growing, and renewal of our seasoned members are due by Feb. 1. Come and be part of all the activities planned for February.

The Treasure House is open on the first Saturday of each month from 8 a.m. to noon. If you want to get in on the great deals, come help Jo Chase on either the first Wednesday, Friday or Saturday mornings at the Treasure House. The renovations of the Treasure House have spruced it up and make it easier to find the possible “gems” you might want. Everyone is welcome. Call the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center at 645-4864 to get information about volunteering at the Treasure House.

A guest speaker is scheduled for the General Meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 8. Donna Blair will speak on issues that seniors face with their dentistry needs. Her motto is “*Dentistry ... not just about the TEETH!*” Dr. Blair is a graduate of the UOP Dugoni School of Dentistry. She is retired from her practice, but stands on the premise that once a dentist, always a dentist.

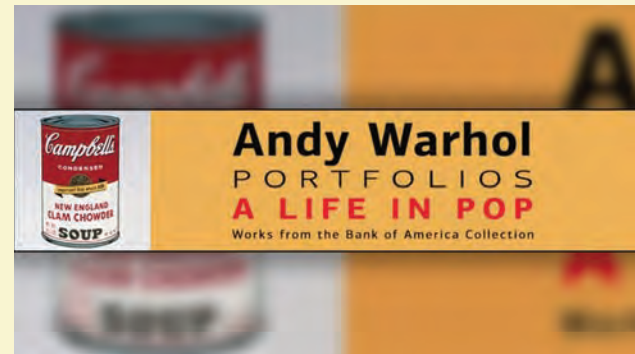
Our annual Valentine’s Day Potluck is back this year. We are having a 50/50 Raffle with proceeds going to the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. Gather with us on Feb. 10 at 5:30 p.m. for delicious entrees and desserts cooked by our own members. Come bring a dish and tableware to celebrate the day with friends.

The February birthday and anniversary celebrations are at Tahoe Joe’s at Cedar and Herndon Ave. in

Fresno on Saturday, Feb. 19 at 11:30 a.m.

If you missed Kim’s crafting of the Valentine’s fabric card in January, we have another Coffee, Craft and Conversation activity planned on Feb. 24 at 9:30 a.m. It’s a favorite activity with our members, called “Sit n’ Stitch.” Whether you are an expert crafter or just a pure novice beginner, come and share your knowledge of a favorite crafting activity, like quilting, crocheting or needlepoint. Anyone can attend and participate by bringing their own crafting materials. We love it when our members and the community come together to share their skills and knowledge about their favorite craft. It might be an opportunity to have talents discovered that could be

Please see **SENIORS** on P. 10



Kiwanis Korner

Celebrate Valentine's Day in Style

By Sally Rowden

You've probably seen this Kiwanis flyer around our community advertising our first fundraiser for 2022. Purchasing a raffle ticket is a chance to win a sweet ride for you and 13 of your friends and family to celebrate Valentine's Day.

As you travel through the intersection at Avenue 12 and Road 36, take a peek at the northeast corner at our new Kiwanis Club banner. Thank you, Trigo Enterprises, LLC for donating the funds.

The cover story in our January/February Kiwanis Magazine by Megan Fulwiler suggested that rather than making a New Year's resolution, "let go of holding on." She says 80 percent fail in resolutions so why not instead learn to let go of things that "no longer serve you." Read more at kiwanismagazine.org/past-issues/. Scroll down to January/February 2022 – *Let go of holding on. Practical steps to release what no longer serves you.*

www.RanchosKiwanis.com



SENIORS cont. from P. 9

displayed at the craft fair or other events at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The Fresno Art Museum is on the calendar for Feb. 27. The exhibit is featuring *Andy Warhol: A Life in Pop/Works from the Bank of America Collection*. It highlights the Pop Art movement during the latter half of the 20th Century.

Ansel Adams: 120 Years is also featured at the Fresno Art Mu-

seum. These iconic photographs from their permanent collection marks the 100th anniversary of Ansel Adams' first publication in the Sierra Club Bulletin. Sign up and get the details for our first outing of the New Year at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center, 37330 Berkshire Dr. Call 645-4864 for more information.

Thought for January: "Often you will end up loving the new things you try, and even if you don't love it, you've given yourself a new experience." *Alli Simpson*

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CHILDREN'S PROGRAM FROM BIRTH - 6TH GRADE

CHOICE cont. from P. 3

school graduates are among the most sought after students by top colleges because they are light years ahead of public school kids on just about every academic measurement.

Homeschooling comes in many different forms. In some cases, multiple families go in together on this, hiring tutors to cover areas they are not knowledgeable about, and rotating homes where the kids meet. Many homeschool families subscribe to programs online that feature top educators who teach online. There are homeschool networks in almost every city and state that will help a parent figure out how to do this. Some homeschool networks have places during the day where they meet other homeschoolers so the kids get plenty of interaction with other kids. Indeed, there are even private school athletic leagues that allow homeschoolers to band together and enter their league.

Moreover, one of the greatest benefits of homeschooling is that it only requires a few hours a day. When you subtract all the non-academic activities at a public school, there is only about 2-3 hours of real academic learning that takes place. Without all the interference and noise, homeschools can covered the same ground in just a few hours and then the family can use the free time to go on educational field trips like to the local museum, tours of factories, etc.

Lastly, parents can fight for change by getting involved with efforts to pass statewide educational choice laws or initiatives. The cost of private schools and homeschooling may be prohibitive for some families and since our constitution never granted monopoly status to public schools, every state should have some form of educational choice in place, but most don't because the teacher unions typically block such programs.

Most conservative states have passed educational choice legislation but in lib-

eral states, the only option may be to place an initiative on the ballot by collecting signatures, assuming a state allows that type of process. However, this is a major effort which requires millions of dollars with little chance of success in a liberal state.

One form of educational choice is called the "voucher" system in which every parent in the state is essentially given a "voucher" representing a specific amount of public money that can be redeemed at any public or private school. But there is concern by some conservatives because when state money is directly involved, the state government could eventually use the voucher system to further regulate private schools who accepted such vouchers. If that occurs, then private schools could simply refuse this money, but it is a threat of which we all need to be aware.

Another system of educational choice is commonly referred to as "educational tax credits," whereby a family is allowed to write off on their taxes the cost of private school tuition or homeschooling costs. Since this is not a direct government subsidy like vouchers are, the likelihood of government using this process to further regulate private schools and homeschoolers is remote. It's no different that the tax write-off used by charities.

Bear in mind, the liberals have no problem creating hundreds of programs to benefit illegal aliens, transsexuals, unions, etc., but when it comes to helping working moms and dads educate their children, they will not lift a finger because liberals actually believe that all education should be controlled by the teacher's union in a public school setting. After all, liberals understand that they cannot transform America into a socialist society unless they have total control over the minds of the next generation of Americans.

"Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord, and do not touch the unclean thing." 2 Corinthians 6:17

GENWHY cont. from P. 6

happy, sure, but he also wanted me to understand that I am responsible for building my own life and my decisions would directly affect both my success and my happiness. He's always checking in with me about my dreams and goals and piping in with his two cents about both, whether I ask for it or not. Spoiler alert, I almost never ask for it but rarely am I not thankful for it. He loves to give me ideas and then follows up to see what I've done about them. A father's job is never done, and I'm happy he's taken up

the mantle with such gusto.

True fans can enrich your life. They are there to celebrate the highs and guide you through the lows. They raise you up, not by giving you empty adulation but by giving you constructive criticism and feedback designed to help you grow and improve. If you don't have any fans in your life you need to find some, and if you aren't someone's fan then you need to become one. We might find that this world becomes a better place if everyone finds at least one other person in whom to invest.

LETTERS cont. from P. 4

an issue that virtually every person in the County has been impacted by.

Here is the email I intended to send. Please review the data for yourself. Then, perhaps, you can send a message to the Public Health Department in 500 characters or less:

Hello Drs. Paul, Sosa, Naz and San- doval:

Today I received your message found on the Madera County Public Health mailer. I find your quoted comments improper and unfitting for medical professionals who aim to "do no harm," especially given the following data:

1. Prior COVID infection is more protective than vaccination: www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/prior-covid-infection-more-protective-than-vaccination-during-delta-surge-us-2022-01-19/

2. Coronavirus vaccines do not produce sterilizing immunity: thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/501677-what-is-sterilizing-immunity-and-do-we-need-it

3. COVID-19 vaccines do not prevent

transmission of the virus: www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/cdc-director-covid-vaccines-cant-prevent-transmission-anymore/ar-AASDndg

4. Risk of hospitalization and death for children 5-17 years old is virtually nil: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-age.html

5. Despite the recent narrative that vaccine side effects are the result of a placebo effect, and without wading into the politicized VAERS reporting system, vaccine side effects are real and serious. Even this moderate article states that ONLY 40 percent of suspected side effects had resolved or were resolving at the time of reporting: www.irishtimes.com/news/health/one-in-2-500-children-with-vaccine-reports-suspected-side-effect-1.4781873

Please consider retracting your recommendation before this data and more like it breaks the stranglehold on the sensational story that vaccines in the age of omicron are efficacious and safer than contracting omicron, especially for children ages 5-17.

Sincerely,
Ray M. Sanchez
Madera Ranchos

ANZERS puzzle grid with crossword clues and a word search.

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SEMCU speaks

Some questions are being asked by residents in our community.

What is SEMCU anyway?

When water issues began appearing in earnest and grants were offered by the state, it became evident that a non-profit could participate and apply for grants to help our community in Southeast Madera County. A group of residents got together and started SEMCU (Southeast Madera County United) as a 501(c)(3) (non-partisan) entity. Interested people joined the Board of Directors and monthly meetings began and continue today on the third Monday of every month. Usually taking under one hour per meeting, the discussion is on ongoing needs and ways to achieve help. Meetings can be about traffic, schools, water or potential grants that may be able for the community.

What is SEMCU working on at this time on behalf of our community? The idea is to help and deal with pressing needs of our community and neighbors. SEMCU recently finished dispersing the funds of two grants (approximately \$420,000) dealing with water and energy savings for our community. We're interested in finding grants for a park and we're in the process of applying for several grants that deal with the coming water meter requirement, emergency water pump replacements as well as several recharge and flood control projects.

The grants SEMCU is working on total as much as \$7.5 million. Our area would benefit greatly with all of these.

These grants include:

- Water Meter Grant -- \$3.5 million
- Drainage-Recharge Grant -- 1 million
- Sustainable Groundwater Management Implementation and Planning Grant -- \$1 million
- Small Community Drought Relief Program -- \$1 million
- Urban and Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Program -- \$1 million
- Grassland Conservation Reserve Program • Grant depends on the qualified acreage

SEMCU is always interested in adding to our Board and would appreciate any nomination of community members who are interested in helping with ideas and the direction that SEMCU should move forward. If you are not available, maybe you know of someone that may be interested and could help our community by spending one hour per month at our monthly meeting. Although the time required is minimal, the importance of caring for our community is invaluable.

As part of the practice of social distancing, our monthly board meetings take place on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. and will be held via telephone conferencing. The public is invited and encouraged to listen in and offer ideas of projects that can help improve our community. To join in at 6 p.m. dial 312-757-3221. When prompted, dial the access code 715657949 #.

To call SEMCU for more information, call 559-363-9095 or you can reach the organization by email at info@semcu.org. You can also visit the website at www.semcu.org.

SEMCU is "By the Community, For the Community"

1/22



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| April 9 | Spring Festival 9am-1pm |
| April 17 | "Sonrise" Service 7am |
| May 8 | Mother's Day Celebration |
| June 6-10 | Vacation Bible School |
| June 19 | Father's Day Celebration |
| July 4 | Independence Day-Firework Celebration @ 8:30pm |
| July (11-15) | Fuge Youth Camp |
| September 18 | National "Back to Church" |
| 9/30-10/2 | Women's Retreat |
| October 29 | Fall Harvest Festival |
| November 11 | Veteran's Day-Honoring those who served |
| November 19 | Thanksgiving Dinner 5pm |
| December 11 | Christmas Party |
| December 24 | Candlelight Service 6:30pm |

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Wednesday • Life Apps 6:30pm
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Thursday • Women's Bible School 6:30pm
1st Saturday of the Month • Men's Breakfast 9am



Mandates, Lockdowns and Faux Footprints

The plan for this column was to offer carefully researched evidence showing that the draconian mask, vaccine and lockdown mandates do not “follow the science” but are tactics used by an overreaching government and its power-hungry politicians. Instead, I’ll share an experience from just this morning to make the points a little differently, hopefully with a little humor, and definitely with a lot of sarcasm.

Remember that in February, 2020, when asked his advice on wearing a mask while traveling, Anthony Fauci answered, “The typical mask you buy in the drug store is not really effective in keeping out virus, which is small enough to pass through material ... I do not recommend that you wear a mask ...” And in March, 2020, he said, “There’s no reason to be walking around with a mask.” Note that drugstore masks include the blue paper variety accepted everywhere as satisfying the mask mandate, even though they are “not really effective.”

Now to my experience this morning.

When entering a store at River Park, I didn’t realize that I was, gasp, maskless! I had forgotten the darn useless accessory, but with full transparency I’ll admit that I usually mask up only when forced to do so. I saw not a single person in the big store as I headed to my desired department, but I noticed Wear-a-Mask signs everywhere. There seemed to be more of them than the store’s own signs advertising the products they are in business to sell. Within 60 seconds, a dutifully masked gentlemen employee approached me, seemingly from out of nowhere, but not to help me, the customer. No, he held out – at arm’s length – a box of brand-spanking-new blue paper masks, and asked me – no, told me – to take one and wear it. “It’s company policy,” he emphasized. I told him that I would comply, but only under protest. He “understood”, but it was, after all, company policy. I reluctantly donned the stifling and useless contraption, telling myself that the employee was just “doing his job” and that the company was under pressure to comply with unnecessary mandates, but mandates nonetheless.

Then I encountered a gentleman shopper, the only other customer in the entire store, wearing a mask at half-staff below his nose. While waiting for a store clerk to help us, since Mr. Wear-a-Mask had abandoned us, we discussed our mutual less-than-

stellar opinion of the mandates. In the good old days, say way back in 2019 or so, we might have discussed the morning’s heavy fog or decried the store’s inflation-driven high prices and absence of clerks to help us. But not this morning in this year: 2022. Or is it still 2020 as Biden said a few days ago? Does he know something we don’t, or was his mask just wound too tightly around his brain?

As the gentleman and I talked – from more than six feet apart, by the way – and seeing no one else in sight, I removed the stifling blue mask. And then promptly forgot about it. Oh, the criminality of it all.

Later, having completed my shopping and approaching the check-out line, I observed the usual brightly painted footprints on the floor indicating the required six feet of separation. Achtung! I had no tape measure with which to verify that the faux prints were exactly six feet apart, but in an unexplained burst of complete subservience and patriotic fervor, I placed my feet right smack-dab on the painted outlines as they appeared before me. Right foot on right footprint, left foot on left, all the way to the end. And an unexplained feeling of exaltation enveloped me. At last, I felt as one with the acquiescent! I don’t know if I actually sang the Star-Spangled Banner aloud or just imagined it.

When I came to the last faux footprint and approached the register, the man behind the counter turned out to be none other than, you guessed it, Mr. Wear-a-Mask. Oops! I had neglected to replace that useless blue paper thing on my face; and he told me to put it on, while fearfully recoiling from me (really!) even though he himself was masked. This time I was not receptive to his demand, as his ridiculously overwrought attitude had just crushed my newfound regard for blind obedience. I told him that I would wear an N95 mask if he had one; but if not, I would rely on Dr. Fauci’s clear pronouncement that paper masks are useless and not recommended. And I added the thought that occurred to me while waiting in line: This business might incur liability for providing useless masks and requiring trusting customers to wear them, thus imparting a false sense of COVID safety. It was, I thought, a point that the company lawyer might like to consider. Mr. You-Know-Who was unimpressed.

I concluded my purchase and left the store. Purchase in hand. Shaking my head. Maskless. And unafraid.

Seriously ... I don’t take the viruses lightly, and I want everyone to be safe and healthy. My criticism is aimed at those ordering the absurd lockdowns and mandates based not on “the science” but on lies, guess work, political muscle-flexing, the latest

ideas rather than proof, and unconstitutional government dictates – all of which require Americans to give up liberty and self-termination to the government and to, sad to say, businesses and organizations willing to, or coerced to be, the government’s enforcement arm.

I urge you to research the misinformation peddled over the last two years by politicians, the president, Lord Fauci and the alphabet-soup agencies. You will find that Fauci has repeatedly contradicted himself and flat-out lied. Most despicably, he swore to Congress that the U. S. government had not funded China’s gain-of-

function research to make the virus more virulent. But as the New York Post put it, “The National Institutes of Health has [sic] stunningly admitted to funding gain-of-function research on bat coronaviruses at China’s Wuhan lab – despite Dr. Anthony Fauci repeatedly insisting to Congress that no such thing happened.”

Shame on the NIH. Shame on Fauci. Shame on politicians climbing all over themselves to lock down the American people, the economy, businesses and schools.

Shame on us if we have access to the truth but silently succumb to power hungry liars and their lies.

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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.

	+		×		22			
-		+		×				
	-		×		27			
×		×		+				
	×		-		22			
18		25		26				
1	2	4	4	5	6	7	8	9

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SUDOKU
 by Linda Thistle

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

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TK&K cont. from P. 2

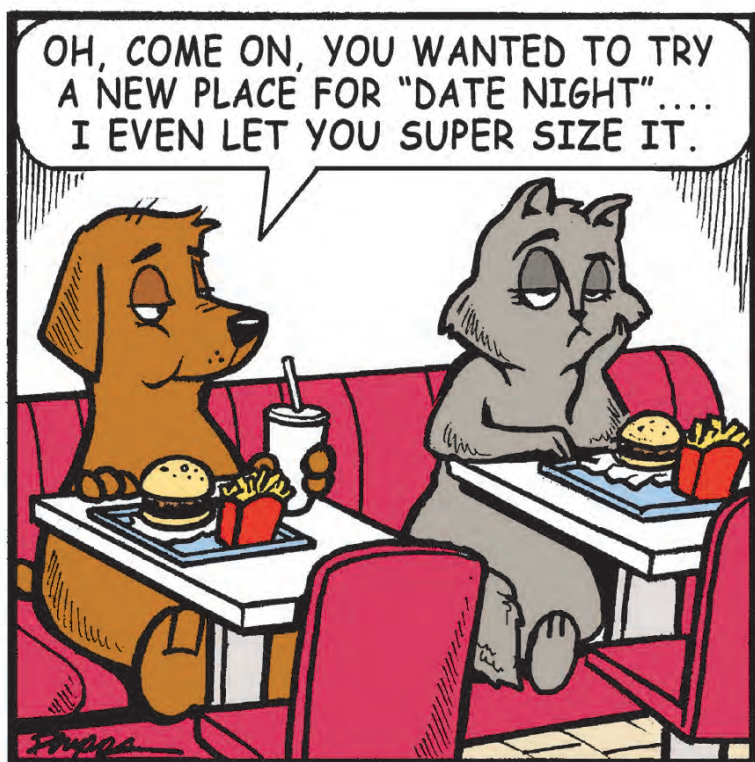
child must be 5 by Sept. 1, 2022 for Kindergarten. If your child will turn 5 between Sept. 2 and Feb. 2, 2023 your child will qualify for Transitional Kindergarten. You will need to bring in his/her birth certificate to verify age as well as an up-to-date immunization record. You'll also need proof of residency within the Golden Valley Unified School District boundaries and a completed registration packet. Webster assessments will be held Feb. 25; Sierra View assessments will be held Feb. 18; and Stone Creek assessments will be held March 3. Assessments are all by appointment only.

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Click on "Local News" at

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



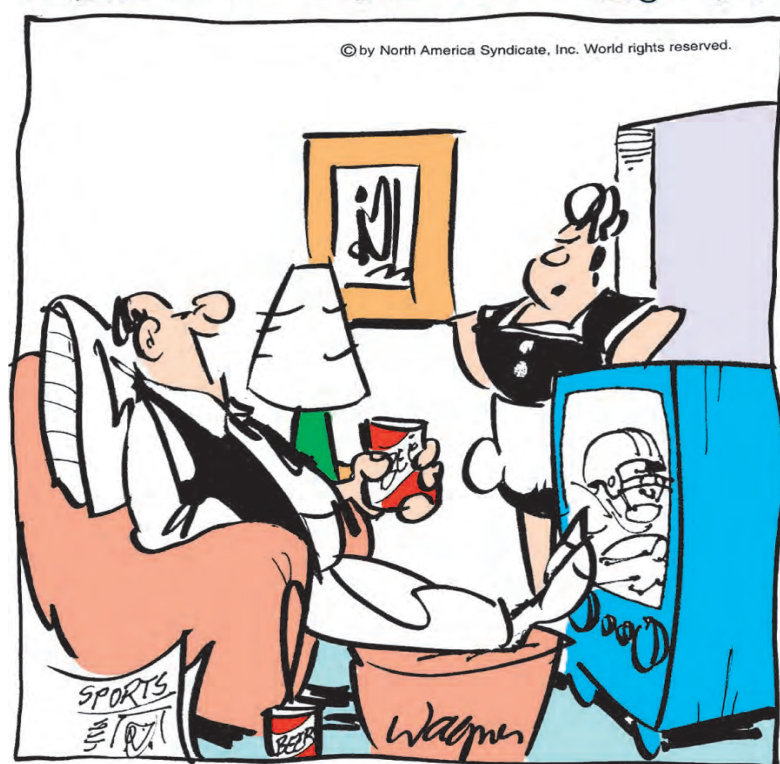
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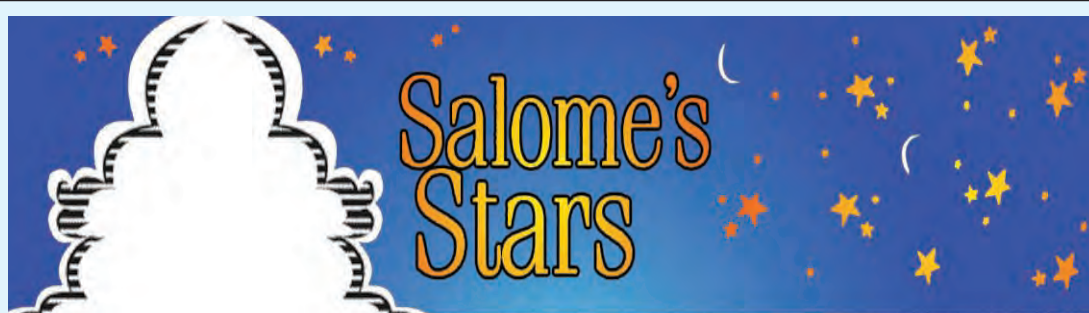
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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



“Hold my calls ’til after the Super Bowl.”

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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 makes contact.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You're eager to move forward with a new challenge that suddenly dropped in 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.

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 could 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 that has caused 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.

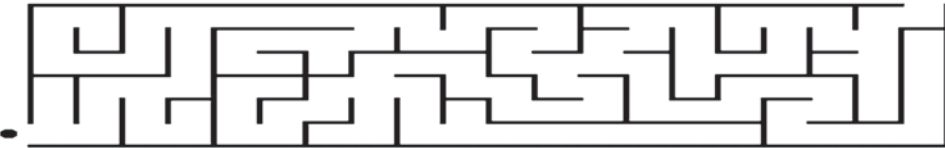
Born this Week

You have the capacity to meet challenges that others might find overwhelming, and turn them into successful ventures.

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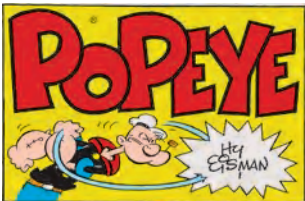
FUN PAGES

Kids' Maze



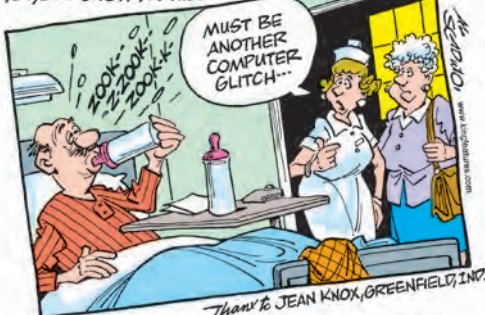
TIGER

by BUD BLAKE

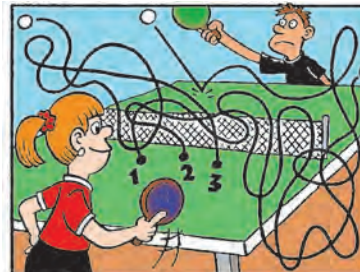
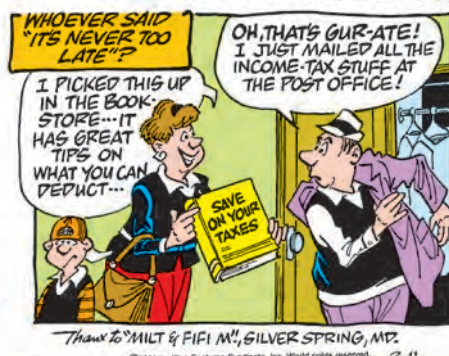


THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

SIGN OF THE TIMES--IT HASN'T HAPPENED YET, BUT GIVE IT A WHILE...



BY AL SCADUTO



ANSWER: No. 1 will put Freddy away.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



DON'T GET BOXED IN!
You have five minutes to get out of this challenge. In this type of problem you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move, you must change one letter in the previous word, so as to form a new word. In our example, we changed MIME to TALK in four moves. See if you can change the following words in four moves each.

1. LESS to MORE
2. OUST to REND
3. PEST to GONE
4. RUBE to GENT
5. SALT to LICK

CHANCE...CHA
FIG. 1

DOODLE PICS! The two pictures shown here are graphic presentations of familiar words, phrases or names. You have one minute to identify both.

FALL PRIDE
FIG. 2

ANSWERS: 1. Last chance; 2. "Pride goeth before a fall."

CHAIN REACTION! Take the seven letters printed below our diagram and place them in the circles so that eight four-letter words can be read, top to bottom, along the connecting lines. All the words will begin with the letter in the top circle.



ANSWERS: Top to bottom, left to right: Fall, pals, pans, pins, pipe, pipe, pipe.

Wishing Well

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

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 • "THE SOUND OF MUSIC"

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: PLAYED BY JULIE ANDREWS

- | | | | |
|----------|-------------|--------|---------|
| Austria | Friedrich | Kurt | Max |
| Baroness | Georg | Liesel | Musical |
| Brigitta | Gretl | Louisa | Rolf |
| Franz | Herr Zeller | Marta | |

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TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: Which Russian city used to be called Leningrad?
2. SCIENCE: What is the coldest city in the northern hemisphere?
3. LANGUAGE: What does the Latin phrase "persona non grata" mean?
4. U.S. STATES: Which state's flag is the only one currently that is two-sided?
5. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What was the first animal to appear on a U.S. coin?
6. FOOD & DRINK: How many herbs and spices are in the original recipe of Kentucky Fried Chicken?
7. MOVIES: How many movies did Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire make together?
8. LITERARY: In the Harry Potter book series, what are N.E.W.T.s?
9. TELEVISION: How many children were in "The Addams Family" sitcom?
10. HISTORY: In what year was the first email sent?

Answers

1. St. Petersburg
2. Oymyakon, Russia
3. An unwelcome person
4. Oregon (state seal on one side and a figure of a beaver on the other side)
5. An eagle
6. 11
7. 10
8. Critical examinations (Nastily Exhausting Wizarding Test).
9. Two: Wednesday and Pugsley
10. 1971

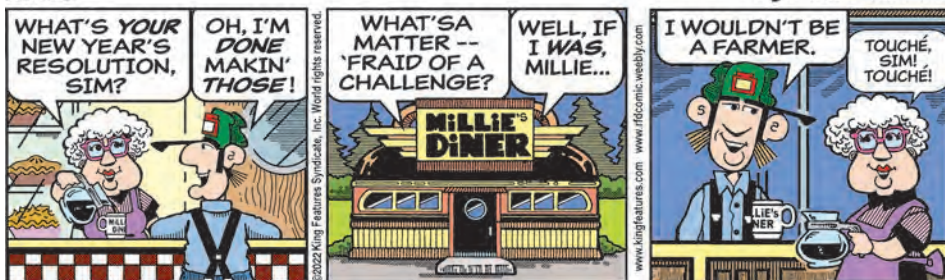
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



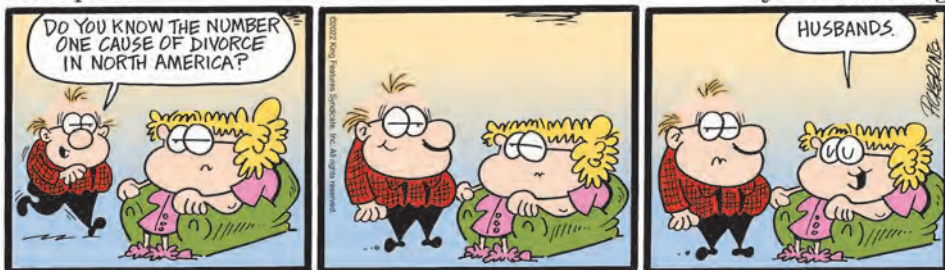
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



HOCUS-FOCUS

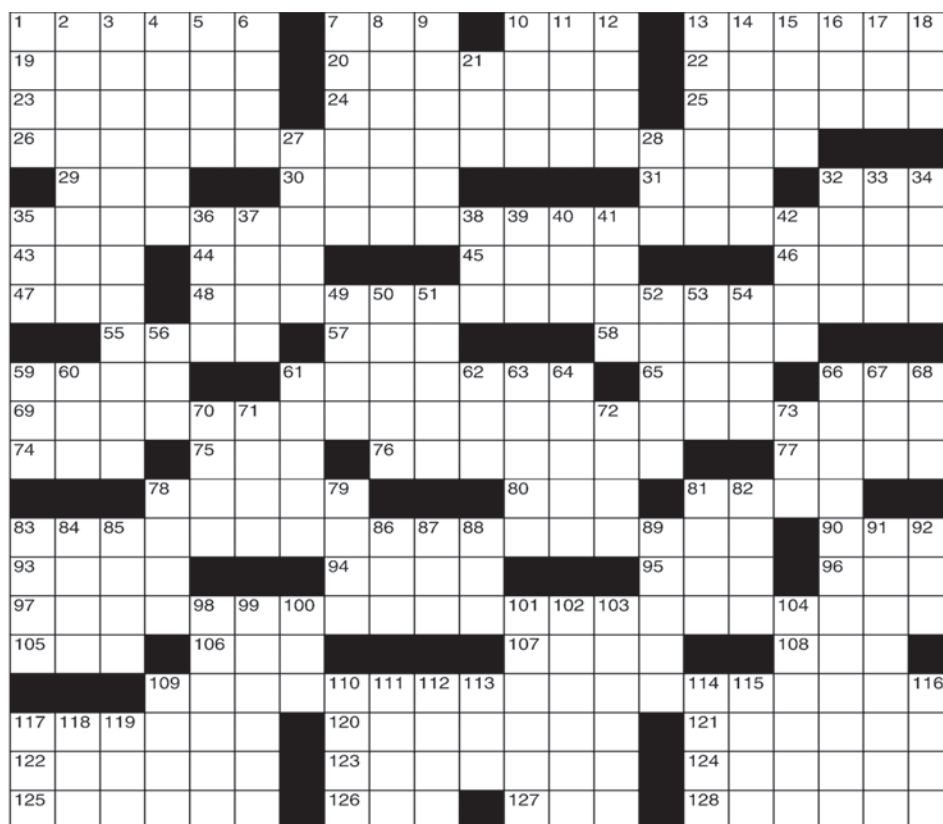
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Differences: 1. Cap is different. 2. Scarf is shorter. 3. Scarf is different. 4. Shovel is turned. 5. Doghouse is missing. 6. Sign is missing.

Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Exchanges for paper money
 - 7 Takes too much, briefly
 - 10 Gp. concerned with birdies
 - 13 Liquid detergent quantity
 - 19 Opere — (in the work already mentioned)
 - 20 International news agency
 - 22 Relaxed
 - 23 "First Blood" actor Richard
 - 24 Pilot Amelia
 - 25 Like magma
 - 26 Start of a riddle
 - 29 930-mile-long Russian river
 - 30 Politico Trent
 - 31 Raw rock
 - 32 Lakers' org.
 - 35 Riddle, part 2
 - 43 Styled like
 - 44 Heir, often
 - 45 Be a rambler
 - 46 "I smell —!"
 - 47 Defunct Russ. state
 - 48 Riddle, part 3
 - 55 Airline seat pull-down
 - 57 Dir. from N.M. to Ky.
 - 58 "Play it by ear," e.g.
 - 59 Orem's state
 - 61 Google program for targeted promotions
 - 65 Brother of DDE's follower
 - 66 Big tub
 - 69 Riddle, part 4
 - 74 Facial blinker
 - 75 Caviar base
 - 76 Manors
 - 77 Oklahoma city
 - 78 Livid
 - 80 Actor Stephen
 - 81 Basketball tournament org.
 - 83 Riddle, part 5
 - 90 Turner of song
 - 93 Add to the work force
 - 94 Vientiane is its capital
 - 95 No. on a map
 - 96 Liquor choice
 - 97 End of the riddle
 - 105 Prefix with 17-Down
 - 106 Byrnes who was "Kookie"
 - 107 Wayward GI
 - 108 Family mem.
 - 109 Riddle's answer
 - 117 Mitchell of NBC News
 - 120 Not yet encrypted
 - 121 Is entirely unacceptable
 - 122 Disclose
 - 123 List the particulars of
 - 124 Coop up
 - 125 Officers-to-be
 - 126 Tutu-wearing Muppet
 - 127 D.C. bigwig
 - 128 "— Fideles" (carol)
 - 13 SLR, say
 - 14 Makes amends
 - 15 Animal hide
 - 16 Jack Sprat's no-no
 - 17 Function
 - 18 Writer Deighton
 - 21 Jennifer Lopez's "J to — L-O!"
 - 27 Dull
 - 28 Homer Simpson's outburst
 - 32 Cruel Roman emperor
 - 33 Male lover
 - 34 Echidnas eat them
 - 35 Once existed
 - 36 Totally lost
 - 37 Squarish, as a vehicle
 - 38 Four minus one, in Italy
 - 39 Gmail rival
 - 40 Trailing plant
 - 41 — Strauss
 - 42 Wizard of Oz creator
 - 49 Work over
 - 50 Happen next
 - 51 Comes upon
 - 52 "Luther" star
 - 53 Repeated jazz phrase
 - 54 Smoker's puff
 - 56 Pi-sigma link
 - 59 Sport — (off-roader)
 - 60 Your, biblically
 - 61 "Billy, Don't Be —" (1974 hit song)
 - 62 Insect egg
 - 63 Beginning "J to — L-O!"
 - 64 Lauder of makeup
 - 66 Seasoned, oily salad dressings
 - 67 French buddy
 - 68 Turner of TV
 - 70 Big coffee dispensers
 - 71 Vincent van —
 - 72 Incline
 - 73 Coffee alternative
 - 78 Suited to —
 - 79 Christmas
 - 81 Court barriers
 - 82 Flight staffers plant
 - 84 Old LP player
 - 85 Crafts' partner
 - 86 Not stringent
 - 87 Lead-in to "And how!"
 - 88 Suffix with lobby
 - 89 High-pitched warble
 - 91 Nailed the performance
 - 92 Opposite of 63-Down
 - 98 Nuke, as leftovers
 - 99 Standards
 - 100 NFL six-pointers
 - 101 Legendary Manhattan restaurant
 - 102 Pluck, as brows
 - 103 "Stalag 17" star William
 - 104 With 109-Down, part of a Florida orchard
 - 109 See 104-Down
 - 110 Mini-exam
 - 111 A law — itself
 - 112 Slush Puppie alternative
 - 113 CD- —
 - 114 Female youth org.
 - 115 Incite
 - 116 Subjective loudness unit
 - 117 Circle bit
 - 118 Org. concerned with the three R's
 - 119 Burnable storage device

SEM CU

south east madera county united

ANNUAL MEETING
Monday Feb. 21 at 6 p.m.

When possible, SEMCU may be able to include approved advertisements of events for our community on THIS page. Contact SEMCU at 559-363-9095 or info@semcu.org

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

**Our next meeting is Monday, Feb. 21 at 6 p.m.
The teleconference number is 312-757-3121
and the Access Code is 715-657-949.
Please let us know if you have any questions.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:
559-363-9095 • www.semcu.org • info@semcu.org**