

# The Ranchos Independent



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50¢

## What can TEXAS teach CALIFORNIA

Texas



California

... to end HOMELESSNESS?  
By Marisa Kendall

*In This Issue*

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Sending someone from the street into permanent housing is the ultimate goal for LaVoy Darden and legions of other outreach workers like him all over America. But it seems to happen more often in Houston, where the homeless population shrank by more than half over the past decade. Compare that to California's major cities, where the population surged by double-digits, and in some cases triple-digits.

It's not just Houston. Texas as a whole last year recorded a 28 percent drop in homelessness since 2012, while California's homeless population grew by 43 percent over the same period. In Texas, 81 people are homeless for every 100,000 residents. In California, the rate is more than five times worse.

And that's despite the fact that Texas spends far fewer state dollars on homelessness. Last year, not counting federal money, Texas put \$19.7 million into its three main homelessness programs – equal to about \$806 per unhoused person. California, on the other hand, poured \$1.85 billion into its three main programs – or \$10,786 for every unhoused person.

How do residents view homelessness in each state? The difference is stark: Homelessness is the No. 1 issue on California voters' minds, according to a recent Quinnipiac University poll. In a 2020 poll of Texas residents, it didn't even crack the top 10.

Why is Texas doing so much better on homelessness? Right-leaning observers are quick to blame the discrepancy on California's too-progressive policies. Liberals may distrust the statistics coming out of Texas, but the reality is more nuanced – as California leaders are realizing, while their cities and nonprofits send delegation after delegation to Texas.

With homelessness causing major tension in many California cities, and local and state efforts to get people off the streets continuing to fall short, Golden State leaders are desperate for new solutions. So desperate, that they're going to a state whose deep-red policies California Democrats are better known for scorning than emulating.

San Jose's homelessness response team visited Houston earlier this year. City and county representatives from the Los Angeles area went last fall. They came away jealous of some of the advantages Houston has over California cities – such as the lower housing costs that make it easier for the Texas metropolis to find or build homes for people.

But the Californians also were impressed by the way the city coordinates



with the county and other local organizations, prioritizes funding for permanent housing instead of temporary shelters and finds places for people before clearing encampments.

“What those folks are doing – really focusing on housing folks – is working,” said Alex Visotzky, senior California policy fellow for the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

In April, two city council members from the East Bay city of Richmond headed to Austin to tour a 51-acre tiny home community that provides permanent housing for 350-and-counting homeless residents. Elected officials from Sacramento trekked to San Antonio to see a 1,600-person shelter that offers everything from dental care to counseling – serving nearly the city's entire homeless population in one place.

Many experts agree California can learn something from these homeless solutions. But unless the Golden State fixes its housing affordability crisis decades in the making, copying the Lone Star State will get us only so far, said Eric Tars, legal director of the National Homelessness Law Center.

“Elected officials in California are desperate for quick-fix solutions,” he said. “They want a silver bullet to be able to solve homelessness for them. And so, when they see results like what's happening in Houston ... they say, ‘that's great, we want that.’”

Texas may seem like an unlikely place for California to find inspiration on anything – especially social services. After all, the Republican-led state is completely out of sync with California's lib-

eral majorities on everything from guns to abortion to LGBTQ rights – feeding an ongoing public feud between Gov. Gavin Newsom and his Texas counterpart, Gov. Greg Abbott.

Adding to the animosity, the California Legislature and some Golden State cities don't even allow publicly funded travel to Texas. Some Californians who have made the trip have had to seek exemptions by arguing the travel is in their jurisdiction's best interest.

“When best practices are happening somewhere, don't worry about what state they're in,” said state Sen. Dave Cortese, a Silicon Valley Democrat. “I have no problem looking them right in the eye and saying, ‘I don't like where you're going in terms of reproductive rights. I don't like where you're going in terms of your stubbornness on mass shootings and gun safety. But I do like what you're doing on the housing front, and I'd like to replicate some of that.’”

Attitudes on homelessness also differ widely between the two states. Earlier this year, 70 percent of Californians said homelessness is a “big problem” in their part of the state, according to a Public Policy Institute of California poll. That's up from 63 percent in 2019. By contrast, just 3 percent of Texans polled in 2020 said homelessness was the most important issue facing their state, according to the nonprofit Texas Lyceum.

The three Texas cities getting the most attention from California – Houston, Austin and San Antonio – are blue islands in a red state. Houston, a bustling metropolis of 2.3 million people, is Texas' largest city. Austin, the state's capital and a

mecca for artists, students and foodies, is famously quirky – and urges everyone to “keep Austin weird.” San Antonio lures tourists with the historic Alamo mission and picturesque, restaurant-lined river walk.

Cortese, who recently called for an audit of California's homelessness spending, tried to bring a version of the Austin tiny home village to Santa Clara County while serving as a county supervisor several years ago, but the idea never got off the ground.

He and others in California argue what the Golden State is doing so far isn't working, even though Newsom poured nearly \$21 billion into housing and homelessness since he took office and vowed the issue is a top priority.

“I don't want to see any more people die in the streets and call that compassion,” Newsom said last year.

His administration is well aware of the buzz around the Texas programs. Hafsa Kaka, the governor's new senior adviser on homelessness, said Newsom's policies compare well against the Texas sites.

Houston, Austin and San Antonio employ the same “housing first” approach that California has used for years, she said.

“While Austin built 350 small homes, we are putting 1,200 across the state, including 500 in Los Angeles,” she said in an emailed statement sent on behalf of Newsom's office. “California continues to make unprecedented investments into housing and homelessness which includes shelter and wrap-around supportive services, cleaning up encampments, and creating more housing. The state has invested more to increase housing supply than ever before in our history while holding local governments accountable.”

But the difference in outcomes in Texas versus California is unmistakable. The Houston area's homeless population dropped 57 percent between 2012 and last year, dipping to 3,124, according to the federally mandated point-in-time count. A New York Times article published last year highlighted the “remarkable progress,” catapulting the city that was already known in wonky homeless policy circles into the national limelight – and catching California's attention.

Los Angeles County's homeless population increased 106 percent over the same period. Sacramento County's jumped a whopping 230 percent.

Experts agree the point-in-time counts supplying those numbers — which

Please see **HOMELESS** on P. 3



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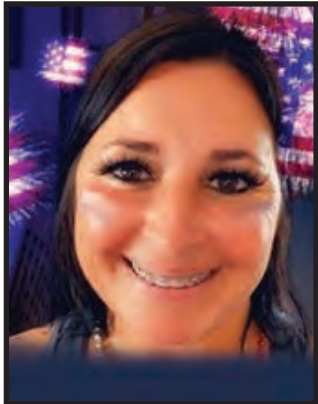
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*The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, always the second Wednesday of the month. Join us on August 9 at 6 p.m. at 37167 Ave. 12, Suite 5C. Come give your input on the future of the Ranchos.*

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**When's the next Chamber Mixer?**

*Thursday, July 20 @ 6 p.m.*

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**HOMELESS** cont. from P. 2

generally rely on volunteers and outreach workers tallying every homeless person they see over one night — miss portions of the unhoused community. But the counts can be a useful tool to measure the change in a city's homeless population.

One reason more people find housing in Texas: costs. The median rent for a one-bedroom home in the state was \$1,233 in early June, according to Zillow. In California, it was \$2,200 — making it harder for people to get and stay housed here.

Land and construction costs are cheaper in Texas, too, and the Lone Star State has fewer regulations that restrict construction. The city of Houston, for example, has no zoning — coupled with a strong mayor who can push projects through — making it easier to build and harder to block housing.

Last year, Texas permitted more than twice as many new homes as California, even though California has about 9 million more residents.

That means even when a California city is doing everything right, it's still not going to be as successful as its Texas counterpart in reducing homelessness, said Jennifer Loving, CEO of nonprofit Destination: Home in Santa Clara County, who visited Houston in March.

"We do all the same stuff," she said. "And the major difference is how much housing they have, how quickly it's getting built."

But despite its lower housing costs and dramatic drop in homelessness, Houston hasn't managed to get everyone off the street. When people get housed, it's not only because rent is cheaper. Texas cities are doing other things differently than California, and Houston is a good example.

Texas' largest city pours its homeless funding — including COVID emergency dollars — into long-term housing instead of shelters that offer a temporary fix. Most of that housing is in privately-owned apartments, where vouchers help formerly homeless people pay the rent.

California, on the other hand, divides its resources between temporary and permanent homeless solutions. The state funneled COVID funds into short-term hotels that as of last year had given 50,000 people — almost 30 percent of the state's unhoused population — brief respites from the street. Newsom's administration later used COVID and general funds to turn nearly 13,000 hotel rooms, apartments and other units into longer-term homeless housing.

And in Texas' largest city, government agencies have a reputation for working together. Houston collaborates with Harris County and local nonprofits on a shared

plan.

In Los Angeles County, by contrast, four different local government groups apply separately for limited homelessness funding from the state.

"I think that what we haven't done is come together with a single plan," said Cheri Todoroff, executive director of Los Angeles County's Homeless Initiative, who went to Houston in September. "And that's really what we were looking to learn from Houston."

LA County is working on creating a collaborative leadership commission, mirroring Houston's, which would include elected officials, businesses, nonprofits and other leaders.

Other parts of Texas' approach to homelessness are more punitive than practices favored by California cities and state officials.

The red state passed a law banning encampments throughout Texas in 2021, obligating cities to clear camps and empowering law enforcement to cite and fine campers. California Republicans proposed two similar bills this year, but got no traction.

Individual cities in Texas also have their own local camping bans. In Austin, for example, police sometimes force homeless residents to move out of encampments, even if they have nowhere else to go, and cite them if they don't comply.

Texas Gov. Abbott cultivates a hard-line stance against homelessness — leading a charge to clear encampments on state property, publicly attacking Austin's Democratic leaders for being too soft on homelessness and pushing for the state's camping ban. "No one has a right to urinate and defecate wherever they want," he tweeted before the camping ban passed.

Seeming to take a page out of Texas' book, California cities also are growing increasingly punitive. For instance, San Diego recently approved a controversial encampment ban, and other cities have taken similar steps. But a major difference: Due to 2018 federal court ruling *Martin v. Boise*, California cities cannot clear camps or unilaterally ban encampments unless they have shelter beds to offer. Texas, in a different federal district, is not subject to that ruling.

Other aspects of Houston's approach also might not translate well in California. Because Houston prioritizes long-term housing — the city and its county partners have moved more than 28,000 people into permanent housing since 2012 — it neglects the type of short-term shelters that quickly get someone off the street.

Houston's lack of shelter beds and long

Please see **HOMELESS** on P. 17



By Sarah Morgan

Greetings from Golden Oak 4-H!  
July 11 through July 15 was the annual Madera County 4-H Summer Camp at Camp Keola on the banks of Huntington Lake. 4-H members from across the county joined together to participate in activities like archery, fishing, arts and crafts, outdoor cooking, cake decorating and science.



Wyatt and Sarah Morgan enjoying the scenery on the camp hike.

Members also got to play in the lake and do things like kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding and squirt gun wars. There was a campfire every night where we would perform skits, dress up, sing camp songs, read from the "squealer box," and even had s'mores one night. We would form teams for team games and usually got soaked.

In the evening we did things like cabin wars, a scavenger hunt, casino night and my personal favorite, the dance.

Golden Oak 4-H had two members in attendance, Wyatt Morgan and Sarah Morgan.

This is the second year of camp for both of them. According to Wyatt, his favorite part of camp was, "lake activities and pranking each other, that's what I liked the most." Anyone looking for friendship, fun, action, laughs, all outdoors, come check out 4-H summer camp.

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## Guest Editorial

### Oil Bad! ... Then What?

By Ronald Stein

In answer to the provocative question posed in an article of *Issues and Insights*, "Are We Finally Heading Toward ESG Sanity?," Sweden and Shell Oil have recently initiated actions they deem beneficial for the health and well-being of the world's eight billion residents.

The few wealthy countries transitioning to occasional electricity generation from breezes and sunshine has proven to be ultra-expensive for Germany, Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand, all of the EU, and the USA. Those few wealthy countries represent about one billion of the world's population.

That leaves over seven billion people living in nations that could not care less about emissions, including all nations with high birth rates and all nations that have a large percentage of people without reliable electricity.

The ruling class in wealthy countries is not cognizant that the planet

populated from 1 to 8 billion over the last 200 years. During that time, we learned through human ingenuity that crude oil is virtually useless unless it's manufactured (refineries) into oil derivatives that are the basis of more than 6,000 products in our daily lives that did not exist before the 1900s, and the fuels to move the heavy-

*Recognizing that ridding the world of oil, without a replacement in mind, would be immoral and evil, as extreme shortages of the products now manufactured from fossil fuels will result in billions of fatalities from diseases, malnutrition and weather-related deaths, and could be the greatest threat to the world's eight billion population.*

weight and long-range needs of more than 50,000 aircraft moving people and products, and more than 50,000 merchant ships for global trade flows, and the military and space programs.

Of the three fossil fuels:

1. Coal is used for coal-fired power plants and in furnaces to make steel.

2. Natural Gas is used for natural gas power plants and for making fertilizers to help feed the world.

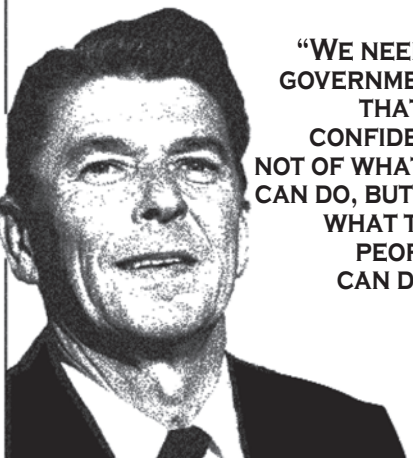
3. Crude oil is a fossil fuel that is useless until it can be manufactured at refineries into usable oil derivatives that make most of the products in the world and the fuels for the various transportation infrastructures, militaries and space programs.

Recognizing that ridding the world of oil, without a replacement in mind, would be immoral and evil, as extreme shortages of the products now manufactured from fossil fuels will result in billions of fatalities from diseases, malnutrition and weather-related deaths, and could be the greatest threat to the world's eight billion population.

Recently, Sweden stirred the global climate conversation by overturning its green electricity targets and shifting its focus back to nuclear power. Finance Minister Elisabeth Svantesson cited the need for a more "stable electrical supply system," pointing out the inherent instability in wind and solar electricity generating sources.

Like Sweden, Shell is doubling down, away from wind turbines and

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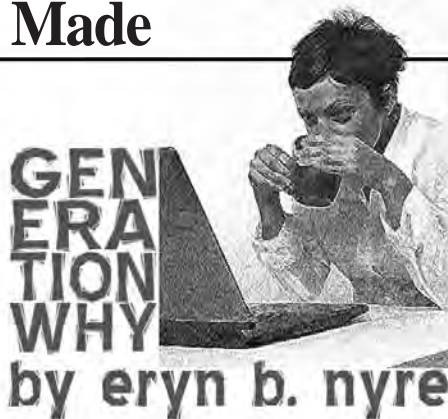
**"WE NEED A GOVERNMENT THAT IS CONFIDENT NOT OF WHAT IT CAN DO, BUT OF WHAT THE PEOPLE CAN DO."**

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

Please see EDITORIAL on P. 9



# Some "Karens" are Made



I've talked a lot over the years about the declining customer service problem that has been plaguing this country. It doesn't appear to be getting any better. I fully believe that a combination of bad training (or complete lack thereof), apathy with regard to work ethic, and actual "Karens" have led to a complete disregard of the customer experience.

I admit that the latter has had a huge impact on the problem. These poor examples of humanity are out there trying to turn throwing public hissy fits into an Olympic sport. They yell and scream at poor team members and associates who have no say in prices or policies. They demand to speak to the manager for the most inane things. They make the already difficult world of customer relations nearly impossible. All of this leads to employees becoming leery to even listen to any complaint, regardless of whether or not the complainant is reasonable and polite. The thing is, not all "Karens" are born. Some are made. We all watch the videos online, but we don't always know what drove them to that level of crazy. Are they mean, or have they been trying to get their issues resolved for so long that they finally lost their tempers, and possibly their minds?

I recently had an experience that pushed me frighteningly close to my breaking point, but I did manage to keep my cool. I figured I'd just let it all out here.

A couple of weeks ago I met a few friends for lunch near my office. We chose a restaurant we often go to because it is quick and delicious. We were seated immediately and a cursory glance told us there was a high staff to customer ratio, so we expected to be served quickly. We were wrong.

We sat there for about five minutes chatting before we realized that no one was approaching us. We actually hadn't been acknowledged by any of the employees who walked by our table. This wasn't a common occurrence at this restaurant, so we didn't immediately say anything, but after several more minutes passed with

no change, we flagged someone down.

This gentleman had just delivered some food to a nearby table, so I asked him if he would be able to find our server because no one had come by. I expected him to say he would, but instead what he asked was whether we were supposed to be sitting there. I told him we were seated by the hostess and he nodded and walked away. Spoiler alert, he was never seen nor heard from again.

Still no acknowledgment from anyone wearing a uniform, I stepped up to the bartender and asked if she could take our order because we couldn't seem to find our server. She told me she would try but she was making drinks for the entire restaurant and didn't think she had the time. We finally gave up and left.

I stopped at the host stand, where there were three employees hovering around, and asked if I could speak to the supervisor on duty. I was calm, I was smiling, and I was definitely not giving off any "angry Karen" vibes. A young lady left and came back and said the supervisor told her to say that he wasn't available and to just call the customer service line if I had a complaint. Oh ... I definitely had a complaint now.

Later that day, hoping to miss the rest of that supervisor's shift, I called and left a message for the restaurant manager to call me back. It took nearly a week, and sadly a call to corporate, to get a return call from her. I relayed the story and explained that had the first person I talked to found our server rather than accusing us of seating ourselves and then never coming back, I wouldn't have

Please see **GEN WHY** on P. 7

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GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

complained at all. If the bartender had sent over a server or taken our order instead of blowing us off, I wouldn't have wanted to talk to the supervisor. If the supervisor hadn't blown us off and said he was too busy to even talk to me, I wouldn't have called her. And finally, if she had called me back sooner, I wouldn't have felt the need to call corporate.

I wasn't expecting her to kiss my feet or give me a \$100 gift card. I didn't want anyone fired and I didn't need any empty promises of customer service training and discussions of performance. I just wanted a sincere apology and acknowledgment that my friends and I weren't treated well. I know it seems silly to some, but when I was a restaurant manager I would have

wanted to know if I had a breakdown like that at my store. I would also want my customers to know that they, and their experience in my restaurant, mattered. Staying calm and polite made no difference. Her dismissive tone clearly told me that I was just an annoying complainer that she had no interest in engaging further. All she said was, "Sounds like they were busy, sorry you were unhappy with the service. Do you want a free appetizer or something?"

In the end it was a waste of my time because she was flippant and unconcerned. I'll pick somewhere else to eat next time. They won't notice, of course, because I'm just one person and I don't have an impressive social media following.

Isn't that just a sad statement about where we are as a society?



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### Closed for Inventory

Taking inventory isn't much fun. In fact, the process can put shepherds right to sleep. Businesses find it essential to track what they have, but what about our homes?

Most of us don't think about a home inventory until it's requested, which normally means something stressful has happened — a fire, flood, theft, divorce, etc. During those events, it's not as easy to think clearly and concisely.

As with most projects we'd rather not do, it helps to consider it in terms of

cost versus benefit. The cost doesn't need to be much more than the time it takes to create it. If you choose to use an inventory app, you might have a financial investment as well.

Benefits include accelerating the claim process after an incident, maximizing your claim payment because you won't be relying on your memory, ensuring that your insurance coverage is adequate and general peace of mind.

*If your scale tips on the benefits side, here's how to start.* Go to your homeowner's insurance website or contact your agent to see what resources they offer. Bob Vila offers a list of inventory apps to check out at [www.bobvila.com/articles/home-inventory-apps/](http://www.bobvila.com/articles/home-inventory-apps/). If you're more of a DIY project person, here are the general things you need to know.

*For high ticket items* your inventory should include the following: a description of the item (make, model, serial number, and appraisal, as applicable), estimated value, purchase place/date, and receipt. Unless you're already a meticulous record keeper, you may not have or know all of that. At least you'll have the item listed and can choose to record these things for new, incoming purchases.

*Using a spreadsheet or yellow pad* create and label your inventory by room (living room, kitchen, bedroom, garage, etc.) or category (furniture, artwork, jewelry, electronics, collectibles, etc.). Make columns for Item Name, Location, Description and Price. Include high ticket information columns, as needed. Use one sheet for each room or category.

*Photograph the items* and store them in a digital folder la-

*A home inventory is kind of like insurance — you hope you never need it, but if you do, you're glad you have it!*

beled with the room or category name. If using paper, print the photos and store with the paper inventory list in a sheet protector. You may choose to photograph an entire drawer or shelf rather than individual items and, for instance, list the total number of pants, shirts and shoes. List expensive items separately.

*Scan and name coordinating receipts* and save in the digital folder or keep hard copies in the sheet protector with the inventory list. A photocopy of the receipt will be less likely to fade over time.

*One other method is to videotape* the contents of your home while describing the items and zooming in on details such as serial numbers and accompanying receipts.

*Include in your inventory the contents of outside sheds,* attics, basements, off-site storage units and safe-deposit boxes.

Please see **ORGANIZE** on P. 17

## Don't Scrimp on Shrimp

(July 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.



lined baking sheet in a single layer. Cover and refrigerate until ready to cook. This can be done several hours ahead of time.

Pour enough oil into large non-stick pan to reach depth of ½ inch, heat over high heat until hot. To test if oil is hot enough, use tongs to hold one shrimp by the tail and submerge it in oil; if it sizzles and crackles it is ready. Working in batches so as not to crowd the pan, add shrimp to hot oil and fry, turning once, until golden brown. It should take about 40-60 seconds per side; if shrimp is browning too quickly turn heat down a bit. Use a slotted spoon to transfer shrimp to plate lined with paper towels to drain. Arrange shrimp on platter and serve with favorite dipping sauce.

### **Skinny Coconut Shrimp**

1 Pound (about 24) Large Shrimp Peeled and Deveined  
½ C + 1 T Shredded Sweetened Coconut

½ C + 1 T Panko Crumbs  
2 T All-Purpose Flour (you may only need 1 T)

1 Large Egg

Pinch of salt

Nonstick spray

Preheat oven to 425. Spray a non-stick baking sheet with cooking spray

Combine coconut flakes, panko crumbs and salt in a bowl. Place the flour on a small dish. Whisk egg in another bowl. Lightly season the shrimp with salt. Dip the shrimp in the flour, shaking off the excess, then into the egg, then into the coconut mixture.

Lay shrimp on cookie sheet in a single layer, then spray top of shrimp with more cooking spray. Bake in the middle of the rack for 10 minutes. Turn shrimp over and cook another 6-7 minutes or until cooked through. Remove from oven and serve with favorite dipping sauce.

### **Sweet and Sour Dipping Sauce**

This recipe makes about one cup

1 tsp. Cornstarch

1/3 C White Vinegar

2 tsp. Vegetable oil  
2/3 C Unsweetened Pineapple Juice  
2 T Ketchup  
3 T Brown sugar  
Salt to taste

In a small sauce pan over medium low heat, whisk (using a metal whisk) together vinegar and cornstarch. Add remaining ingredients whisking constantly until mixture is heated through. If you want a thicker sauce than this, dissolve a quarter tsp. cornstarch in 1/8 to ¼ C cold water. When dissolved, stir mixture into sauce and continue to heat and whisk until sauce thickens.

When Carolyn was younger and didn't have a boyfriend (Hi Josh!), she would stay overnight with me on the week-ends. I found out she loved vegetable tempura. There was a little Japanese take-

out restaurant not far from me and for a treat we would go over there and get our dinner. Thinking if you were going to serve the Coconut Shrimp, how about doing some tempura too? I found a number of recipes and will tell you about the simplest of them all.

### **Tempura Batter**

1 ¼ C All-Purpose Flour  
12 oz. Club Soda (1 can)  
Vegetable oil for frying

In a bowl large enough to dip the vegetables, mix together the flour and soda until just mixed, ok for a few lumps. Pour oil into heavy pot or skillet about 2 inches deep. Heat on medium high heat until 375 degrees on thermometer. Dip vegetables in batter, shaking off excess. Working in batches, fry vegetables until golden, about 3

Please see **RECIPES** on P. 9

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EDITORIAL cont. from P. 5

solar panels, and into fossil fuels. Shell said it would expand its booming liquified natural gas business while focusing other investments on “low carbon” technologies, including biofuels, hydrogen, electric vehicle charging and carbon capture and storage.

At the recent Indy 500 race, Shell was proud to power INDYCARs with 100 percent renewable fuel. With the debut of the new fuel developed by Shell, the NTT INDYCAR SERIES became the first United States-based motorsports series to power racing with 100 percent renewable race fuel that enables at least 60 percent greenhouse gas emissions reduction compared to fossil-based gasoline. Working together with INDYCAR engine suppliers Chevrolet and Honda, the Shell 100 percent Renewable Race Fuel will meet the demands of a race weekend without any changes in performance.

Despite the urgency propelled by the World Economic Forum, the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Paris Climate Agreement, the World Bank and the Biden administration, both Sweden’s Parliament and Shell are demonstrating that

stability and efficiency must come before ideology.

Today, there is an extremely dangerous precedent being set by bank boardroom decisions that can set energy policies with their Environmental, Social and Governance scorecard system before investing in energy infrastructure. Those boardroom decisions are allowing the investment community to collude to reshape economies and lifestyles so that they are in line with the social and political cause preferences of banks and other financial institutions. Unstable and inefficient technologies, particularly wind and solar power, have been endorsed and implemented with the noble goal of achieving, using exotic minerals and metals, one hundred percent renewable electricity from intermittent breezes and sunshine.

The sourcing of raw materials is an important consideration for renewable alternative electricity companies. Due to the limited worldwide supply of critical components used in many re-

newable goods and processes, such as rare earth minerals and those used in electrical components, mineral resources disclosures around this topic can create transparency in supply chain management by covering the management of risks associated with the use of critical materials, and more specifically, the environmental risks associated with their supply chain. Furthermore, human rights considerations around the production of sourced materials can be identified for disclosure. Such factors can cover materials sourced from workforces where forced labor or unsafe or harsh working conditions are employed.

The 2022 Pulitzer Prize-nominated book *Clean Energy Exploitations*, provides transparency to the environmental degradation and humanity atrocities occurring in developing countries mining for those exotic minerals and metals to support the “green” movement. Subsidies to purchase EVs are financial incentives encouraging further exploitation of yellow, brown and black

skin residents in developing countries.

An easy observation in our society is that everything that needs electricity, starting with the basic light bulb, is made with oil derivatives manufactured from crude oil, including all electronics, all medical supplies and all communications. Ridding the world of oil, without a replacement in mind, is immoral and evil, as extreme shortages will result in billions of fatalities from diseases, malnutrition and weather-related deaths.

In economic terms, the wealthier countries’ climate hysteria is imposing severe negative externalities on developing countries. Ethically, the West’s climate obsession is immorally condemning present generations of impoverished peoples and nations to continued perjury and early deaths in the years ahead. Make no mistake, and this ruse exists to enrich people in developed countries further while they simultaneously exploit those in developing countries.

Congratulations to Sweden and Shell for doing what’s best for the health and well-being of the world’s eight billion residents.

*This article originally appeared at cfact.org.*

*Ethically, the West’s climate obsession is immorally condemning present generations of impoverished peoples ...*

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RECIPES cont. from P. 8

minutes. Don’t put too many in oil at one time as this will cause oil to cool. Using a slotted spoon, remove tempura to platter lined with paper towels to drain and sprinkle with salt.

You can use just about any vegetable that comes from the garden or farmers market. Broccoli or cauliflower florets, eggplant, all summer squash, carrots, potatoes, green beans, yams, onion slices or even green onions.

After I did this on vegetable tempura, I thought how about fruit tempura? We have fruit fondue and we grill fruit as well as vegetables, so why not fruit tempura?

The fruits suggested are all the pitted fruit: pears, apples, bananas and pineapple. Avoid the soft fruit such as melons and strawberries. However I did read one recipe that used strawberries but it said the berry was squishy on the inside. All the recipes suggested dipping the sliced fruit in flour, shaking off the excess before dipping in the batter. Fry until golden then remove to paper towel-lined platter and sprinkle with powdered sugar.



Senior Report

# “Summer Nights” Ice Cream Social at Ranchos/Hills Senior Center

By Melanie Williams

The summer months are quickly passing by. We are celebrating the cooler days of nice weather amidst our normal days of hot summertime temperatures in the Ranchos by offering the community an Ice Cream Social.

The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center is hosting a Community Open House event, “Summer Nights’ Ice Cream Social,” on Tuesday, Aug. 22 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Anyone 50 years and older is invited. Join us for some delicious ice cream and see all the wonderful activities we have going on at the Senior Center each month.

Our new members are also encouraged to attend the Ice Cream Social and get to know some of our more “seasoned” members at the Senior Center. We are located at 37330 Berkshire Drive in Madera Ranchos. If you have any questions about the event, call us at 559-645-4864.

The Monthly Sale at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center on Aug. 5 is from 8 a.m. to noon. Our Treasure House, Boutique and Scout Garden will be open for the Monthly Sale.

In August, we give our steadfast bakers a break from baking in the summertime heat, so this is a NO BAKE SALE on August 5. Donations are welcome to help keep our bakers and baked goods coming back for your “favs” in September.

Mary Thompson and her gardening team are working hard to repot and maintain plants to look their best, so walk over and check out the Scout Garden on Aug. 5 at the Monthly Sale. The Scout Garden also takes plants with roots and cuttings from your garden, if they are protected from drying out from the summer heat. You are encouraged to call the Senior Center before donating plants, so we can contact our volunteer gardeners to replant as needed. Thank you for all the wonderful donations we receive from the community to support our outreach to local seniors.

Interested in card games? Every Thursday we have a group who meets to play their favorite card games. They are always looking for interested players to join. Meet at the Senior Center any Thursday at 12:15 p.m. for a great time playing cards and meeting people.

In case you missed the new info last month, all the Madera

Ranchos community seniors have been invited to additional activities presented by Melanie Glass at the Art Groove Gallery in River Park. Bingo is in full swing at the Art Groove Gallery on the second Wednesday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m. If you like playing Bingo, come and join our senior group on Aug. 9.

Local jewelry artisans are hosting a jewelry making class on every fourth Wednesday each month from 4 to 6 p.m. All the jewelry making supplies are provided. If you are interested in the jewelry making class on Aug. 23 at the Art Groove Gallery, please sign up at the Senior Center by calling us at 559-645-4864.

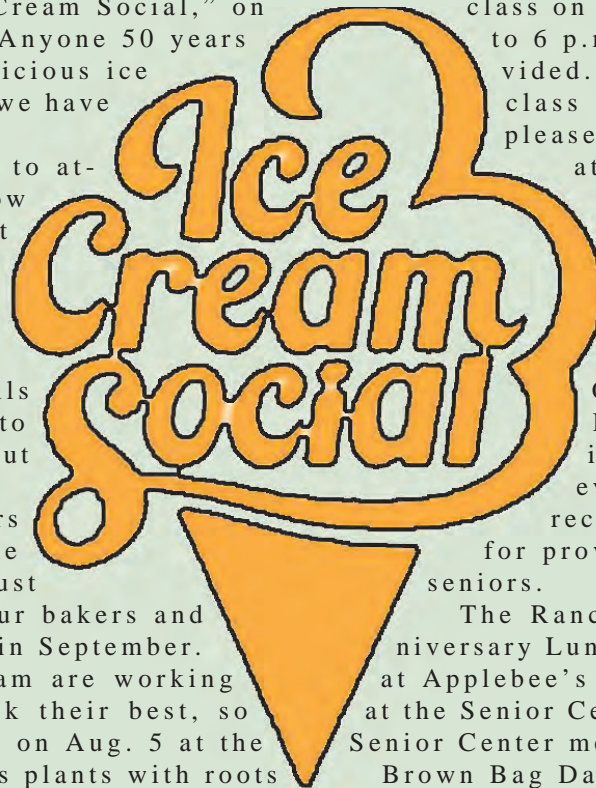
We are still on the Art Groove Gallery schedule every first Wednesday of each month for the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center Paint Party. The next Senior paint class is on Aug. 2 from 2 to 4 p.m. We help to facilitate the planning process at the Art Groove Gallery if you sign up through the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. ALL SENIORS in the community are invited to these free events. A big thank you to Melanie Glass, director of the Art Groove Gallery at River Park for providing these wonderful activities for local seniors.

The Ranchos/Hills Senior Center Birthday and Anniversary Luncheon is on Saturday, Aug. 19 at 11:30 a.m. at Applebee’s at 8430 N. Friant Road in Fresno. Sign up at the Senior Center if you would like to celebrate with the Senior Center members.

Brown Bag Day is Wednesday, Aug. 23 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sign up with the Madera Food Bank to participate in the Brown Bag Senior Program for August through December. All seniors can participate in the Madera Food Bank Brown Bag Program. You can call the Senior Center for application forms and mail them to the Madera Food Bank.

Make sure to check your August Newsletter for upcoming events at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. If you don’t receive our monthly newsletter through email, you can drop by the Senior Center and pick up a copy at the front desk.

Best wishes to all students attending Back to School activities at the Golden Valley Unified Schools. We hope you have a great school year.



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## The Bookshelf

# Exciting Summer Events at Library

By Jerrica Edmundson

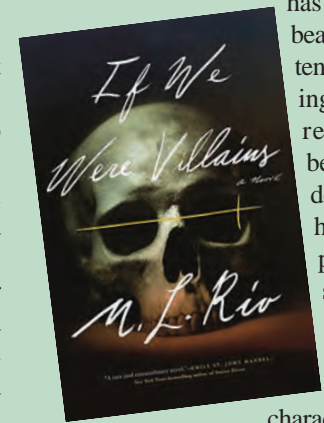
Summer reading is coming to a close, but we still have two exciting events left to participate in, with many more chances to shop at our LibraryLoot store for fun prizes. This coming Thursday, June 20 we will have a fun visit from Reptile Ron at 11 a.m., bringing a mix of reptiles and furry friends for us to meet. The final event will be in partnership with our local Pizza Factory, where we will host a pizza party and have ocean-themed crafts available for everyone starting at noon. For the pizza party, registration is required through our website so that we can have a final headcount and can properly prepare. This year has been an overwhelming success, and it has been so much fun seeing everyone for our in-person events. We are so glad to be able to host these events again in person and look forward to keeping it up. We are eternally grateful to the Friends of the Ranchos Library and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services for making this possible.

Thanks to First Five of Madera, we have had an amazing update to our children's area, making it more accessible and adding in fun new aspects for kids to play with. While we don't have storytime right now, there are still so many things to see in the library, and all in a wonderfully climate-controlled environment. Every change made to the branch works more toward increasing accessibility and I truly feel that we are getting better each time an adjustment is made.

Our branch is open Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you have any programs you would like to see at the library, let us know. We are always open to suggestions and if we can make it happen, we will.

**Jerrica's Bookshelf:** *If We Were Villains* – M. L. Rio

This is an interesting change of pace for me, as a suspense/literary fiction novel. Rio



has created a beautifully written novel focusing on the relationships between students at a highly competitive classical conservatory, where the main

characters are part of the Shakespearean performance program. Oliver is one of only seven in his year, and these actors have worked together through their four-year program, finally making it into their final year and facing the new challenges it brings. All seems like a normal story until the perspective shifts and we realize that the story is being told from Oliver's point of view as he recounts the tale for a detective interviewing him after his release from a 10-year prison sentence for murder.

*If We Were Villains* is almost poetic in its composition, with the author drawing from Shakespeare's own works to bring a haunting story to light. I was so drawn into the storyline it made me happy to deviate from my usual reading fare.

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# SEMUCU speaks

By Verlaine Elinburg

## The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce represents our community

It is a known fact that every community thrives more often when its businesses are supported by the community and the businesses support its community. It is a two-way street. We as a community have the need to take care of our own front and back yards, including the health of our neighborhood. We, the Ranchos Community and Southeast Madera as a whole, are losing the battle of that integration. The Southeast Madera community is closing in on 5,000 homes and is on the precipice of a major expansion. To meet the challenge, we must look at how the expansion will affect the quality of lifestyle locally.

It seems the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is battling for its existence. A good example is the fact that our Flatlander's Parade, which has been

a standing pillar of our community's identification, was cancelled this year due to inadequate participation and community indifference. This year, our children and folks did not have the opportunity to sit at curbside, celebrate and enjoy the May parade, nor participate in the art and food festival booths that have been operated by the Friends of the Library support group that have been going on for many years as part of our community. I suggest we all try to rehabilitate the Chamber of Commerce and support it as a community pillar with pride.

As another way to make the Chamber more visible, as in past years, an Honorary Mayor's Race is being held in support of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce and local non-profit organizations. Sommer Skov, Rigo Rivas and Verlaine Elinburg are running. The voting is a donation-based race with all funds going 25 percent to the Chamber and 75 percent to the candidate's selected charity organization. The winner will be the one that is able to have the most dollars donated on their behalf.

SEMUCU is also securing a working space at the Golden Valley Chamber Office at 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C to be more available to the community while at the same time helping the Chamber

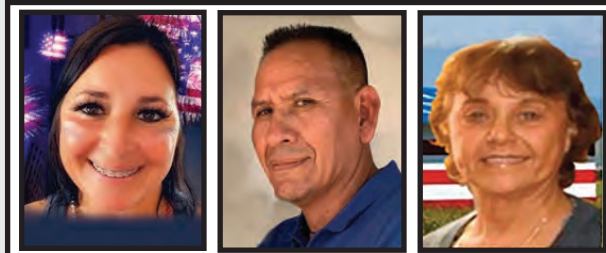
function. So now, instead of just being a SEMUCU telephone in "LaLa land," we will have a designated person and place to go to for information or suggestions.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many aspects of our lives, including the ability to connect with each other and participate in our community activities. The Ranchos Library, for example, is a community center of which we and our children can and should take advantage. Besides books, there are computers for adults and children as well as a space for meetings, but no communication system for Zoom type of meetings. Our library is a community center with the ability to connect us all. To improve

this condition, SEMUCU is in the process of donating and arranging with the County and the Ranchos Library to install equipment such as a television screen, a microphone, a speaker and a WIFI connection needed for teleconferences that may be used by everyone in our community.

Due to Covid, SEMUCU's monthly meetings have been carried on solely through teleconferencing. We hope that as we set up the new communication system in the library, we will be able to re-establish more human contact for people who are interested in participating. If you

Please see SEMUCU on P. 15



**Summer Skov**  
representing  
Lucky Dog  
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**Rigo Rivas**  
representing  
Golden Valley  
Chamber of Commerce

**Verlaine Elinburg**  
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*In Memoriam*

**Richard "Rick" Denis Hodgson**

**May 23, 1954 -- June 25, 2023**



Richard "Rick" Denis Hodgson, 69, of Madera, passed away on June 25, 2023 at Hinds Hospice in Fresno.

Rick was born on May 23, 1954 in Lindsay to Laurance and Betty Hodgson. He lived and attended school in Porterville and graduated from Monache High School. He went on to further his education at Fresno State. He met Michele in 1982 and they were married on October 19, 1985.

Rick worked as a Master Control Operator in the television industry from 1985 until his retirement in 2019. He worked for KMPH and Valley Public Television in Fresno. He was passionate about his music but was especially an avid Grateful Dead fan. He loved camping with the family, being outdoors and frequent trips to Bass Lake and Morro Bay.

Rick is survived by his wife of 37 years, Michele; daughter Amanda Reed, her husband, Austin and granddaughters Mackenzie and Maddison; son Ryan Hodgson and future daughter-in-law, Aurora Escott; brother Mike Hodgson and his wife, Cindy.

SEMCU cont. from P. 14

would like to help, or donate funds, they can be made to SEMCU, earmarked "Ranchos Library." We are hoping to go live as soon as all technical work is in place with the help of the County Library and becomes available for all to use.

In the SEMCU meeting you will get to hear from speakers, make suggestions, ask questions, share your feedback and find out how you can get involved in upcoming projects. Our meeting usually lasts about one hour and takes place on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. To participate in the board's conference meeting VIA telephone or VIDEO, call 312-757-3121 and you will get prompted to input the access code 715657949#

If you are a resident, landowner or a

business owner in Southeast Madera County, you share common interest with SEMCU. There are opportunities to become a board member which will allow you to be a part of the decision-making process of a collaborative group of working individuals in SEMCU's community. It will be your opportunity to voice your concerns and have an input on how issues facing our community are handled.

SEMCU convenes for only one hour on the third Monday of every month starting at 6 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, Aug. 21. To reach SEMCU for more information or suggestions, call 559-363-9095, reach us at [www.semcu.org](http://www.semcu.org) or by email at [info@semcu.org](mailto:info@semcu.org).

*SEMCU is "By the Community,  
For the Community"*

- All the paint on the Eiffel Tower weighs the same as 10 elephants.
- The actual grave of Mumtaz Mahal, for whom the elaborate crypt known as the Taj Mahal was built, is the only undecorated part of the famous structure, due to a Muslim law dictating that graves cannot be adorned, as this is seen as an act of vanity.
- One ingredient in Ranch salad dressing is titanium dioxide, which is used to make it look whiter. It's also the same ingredient that's used in sunscreen and paint for coloring.
- George Washington celebrated July Fourth by giving his soldiers a double ration of rum.
- The Bagheera kiplingi spider, discovered in the 1800s, is the only species of spider that has been classified as vegetarian.
- William Moulton Marston, who created the superheroine Wonder Woman, also designed the first lie detector.
- The full name of the famous Chuck E. Cheese mouse is Charles Entertainment Cheese.
- After the release of the 1996 film "Scream," which involved an anonymous killer calling and murdering his victims, caller ID usage tripled in the United States.
- The longest-ever cricket test match, between England and South Africa, lasted more than 12 days and finally came to a conclusion because the English team would have missed their boat home.
- There's very little evidence the TSA has ever stopped a terrorist or found a real bomb. When tested, they failed to find fake weapons and bombs 95% of the time.
- The island of Madagascar got its name when Marco Polo misspelled it.
- During the Second World War, German tank drivers would drive their vehicles over camel droppings, thinking it would bring good luck.



By Lucie Winborne

Thought for the Day: *"In the long run, the sharpest weapon of all is a kind and gentle spirit."* -- Anne Frank

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*Kiwanis Korner*

# Kiwanis Looking Ahead to the Fall

By Sally Rowden

Mid-July and that summer sun is shining with all its strength, though our meetings have us talking and planning for those upcoming fall months.

Be on the lookout in August and September for our BBQ Raffle Basket to be on display at different sites on Avenue 12. Members accompanying the basket will be selling raffle tickets at six for \$5. Our designer, Ollia Ridge, creates baskets that have an endless bottom of surprises. I know firsthand as I won last year's Easter Basket Raffle. The winning ticket will be pulled the beginning of September. All fundraising monies go toward our many school projects we support throughout the school year.

Our Christmas Tea is in the planning stages, so put a "Save the Date" on your calendar of Nov. 18 to attend. I can share that the event will be held locally, provide a tasty luncheon, numerous door prizes and raffle prizes. Only 60 spaces will be available so watch for further details in our future articles in the Ranchos Independent.

As I've shared often, the Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos fundraises for the children of our communities. Our communities center on the Golden Valley Unified School District, comprised of Liberty High School, Ranchos Middle School, Riverstone Elementary, Sierra View Elementary and Webster Elementary. We are currently planning school projects for the 2023-2024 academic year, though we would sincerely like to hear from you, the community, with ideas on what you see as vital and important for our children. Possibly you have ideas focusing on our youngest children in our community, newborn through five years of age. We welcome all suggestions and input. What would you like to see in our communities that benefit all our children? Send any and all ideas to rowden-

sally2@gmail.com or visit us at one of our meetings at Second Son Brew at 37167 Ave. 12 #4C at 6:30 p.m. every second and fourth Thursday of the month. It would be fantastic to hear from you or have you give us a visit.

I'm going to take this opportunity of the slow, lazy months of summer to share my insight on becoming a Kiwanian. I worked close to 30 years in education in Fresno. I lived primarily in the Madera Ranchos during that time, being focused on my career for the children of Fresno County. Upon retirement, I promised myself that I would get involved in my local community. A longtime friend in the Ranchos encouraged me to join the Kiwanis Club of Madera Ranchos. I knew little of the club and I knew little of Kiwanis, but I decided to join. At my installation as a member, I was told I had 15 minutes to share myself. Then, from that point on, being a Kiwanian wasn't about me ... it was about the children. I was extremely impressed with this tradition. I've learned of the worldwide projects, events and happenings that Kiwanians do for children. I've seen firsthand what our local Kiwanis provide and what other Kiwanians have provided from the 11 clubs in District 5 serving the counties of Fresno and Madera. Kiwanis Division 5 is a part of the California-Nevada-Hawaii (Cal-Nev-Haw) District of Kiwanis International. I'm sincerely enjoying being a Kiwanian for our Madera Ranchos that houses the Golden Valley Unified School District and touches the children and families of Bonadelle, Madera Ranchos and Riverstone.

Continue to enjoy the rest of your summer months and remember ... *"Some of the best memories are made in flip flops."* – Kellie Elmore

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

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## Madera County Waste Study

Madera County is conducting a solid waste management study to help identify solid waste management options that support and align with community values while complying with state regulations.

The study's aim is to identify ways to improve the solid waste system in a manner that is consistent with community goals and in compliance with state regulations. These studies can include an analysis of current waste management practices, identification of alternative methods and an assessment of the economic, social and environmental impacts of different waste management options.

To achieve the intended goals of the study, Madera County is using a consultant, Raftelis. According to their website, Raftelis helps local governments and utilities by providing management consulting to help local governments and utilities. They claim to have helped more than 600 organizations in the last year alone in areas of management consulting regarding finance, assessment, communications, technology, executive recruitment and strategic plan-

ning. Their expertise is purported to have helped local governments across the nation in conducting planning studies, specifically in the area of solid waste management programs.

Madera County's solid waste program is required by code to provide incorporated, and unincorporated areas in the County, like the Madera Ranchos, solid waste handling services. But the question is raised about how well is the system working and can it be improved? And all while remaining in compliance with state regulations.

Madera County's solid waste management study that began in early 2023 will proceed through late summer in an attempt to gather comprehensive input from the community, identify what works among our neighboring counties and come away with solid waste program recommendations to meet the service needs of Madera County communities while complying with state regulations.

The results and recommendations of the study will be made public at its conclusion.



## ORGANIZE cont. from P. 7

**When complete, confirm with your agent that your policy is adequate** to cover the replacement value rather than cash value of your belongings. Also, inquire about sub-limits as some policies have coverage limits, i.e., theft coverage for jewelry and watches. In this case you may need to do an add-on to ensure you'll receive their full value.

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## HOMELESS cont. from P. 3

wait times for housing allowed homeless encampments to proliferate, frustrating local residents – as they have in California. So, the city in 2018 began a push to “decommission” homeless camps. Now, former homeless camps dot the landscape – grassy strips by the side of the road or patches of dirt under overpasses that used to hold dozens of tents, but now are empty and circled by chain-link fences.

How homeless camps are removed is one of the most contentious issues of the homelessness debate in California. Though the Boise ruling prevents cities in the Golden State from clearing camps without offering the occupants shelter, activists say many people aren't given options that work for them. Some people may not be willing to give up a beloved pet in exchange for a bed in an animal-free shelter, for example, while others may have mental health conditions that make it hard to sleep in a crowded room. As a result, they instead scatter throughout the streets, losing contact with their caseworkers.

In Houston, when it's time to clear a camp, outreach workers spend a month or more getting to know the occupants and figuring out what they need. Anyone they can't immediately house generally is offered a spot in the city's 100-bed navigation center, which opened in January.

The navigation center is a big step up from traditional shelters where dozens of people sleep together, occupants have to leave early each morning, and residents often see no discernable path to long-term housing. At the navigation center, people sleep four to a room, can bring pets, and during the day can relax in a comfy living room with TVs, a pool table and snacks. Entire encampments move into the center at once, allowing people to maintain close friendships forged on the streets.

“They make you realize you're somebody again,” said 51-year-old Terry Hardison, who has been homeless off and on since 1999. He was living under a bridge before coming to the navigation center. On a recent Saturday afternoon, he sat on the couch in the center's common room, watching “G.I. Joe” on the T.V. with friends.

But with only 100 beds, the navigation center can't come close to accommodating everyone. People Darden meets on the street constantly ask how they can get in. He has to tell them the hard truth: Most often, they can't.

For those lucky enough to get a spot, there's one big way the navigation center differs from a regular shelter: It gets people into permanent housing.

Of the 57 occupants who moved through the navigation center since it

opened, as of early May, 91 percent went into permanent housing – and it generally takes just 30 days. Navigation center clients are bumped up to the top of Houston's housing waitlist.

California also has navigation centers, but they haven't been nearly as successful because there's often no direct path from there into long-term housing. San Francisco's largest center, for example, reported just 8 percent of the people who left its program ended up in permanent housing last year.

*This article originally appeared on [calmatters.org](http://calmatters.org) and was edited for length from the original.*

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by Linda Thistle

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• They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but in today's digital age, storing and displaying our treasure trove of images can take some craft work. For a lovely, cheap display, find frames of varying designs in secondhand stores. Remove the glass and lay them out on newspaper. Spray-paint them all the same color and, when dry, frame and hang your favorites in a very cohesive grouping! • "When on vacation, it's really easy to take hundreds of pictures, but when you upload them to the computer, it's hard to find the gems in the mass of files. Spend some time each day reviewing the pictures on your camera, and delete the redundant ones and pics that are obviously not keepers." -- E.L. in Illinois • "When my sisters and I get together (there are five of us), we each bring a flash drive with about 50 good, recent family pictures. One sister is a technical whiz, and she put all the pictures together and loads them back on the flash drives, labeled with the date. And then we all watch a picture slideshow together and share our stories." -- G.B. in Georgia • Save your favorite family photos to a disk and give a copy to a trusted friend. That way, if anything should happen to your computer/home/etc., you'll still have those pictures. • "My mother-in-law has a digital photo frame, and about every six months we send her a new flash drive to plug into the back of it. She does not have a computer, so she enjoys the picture show and can go back to the old pictures as well whenever she wants just by plugging a different drive into the frame. What a great way to share photos with a different generation." -- A.T. in Missouri •



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.

	-		x		5			
x		-		÷				
	+		÷		1			
-		x		+				
	-		x		6			
3		8		7				
1	2	3	4	5	5	6	8	9

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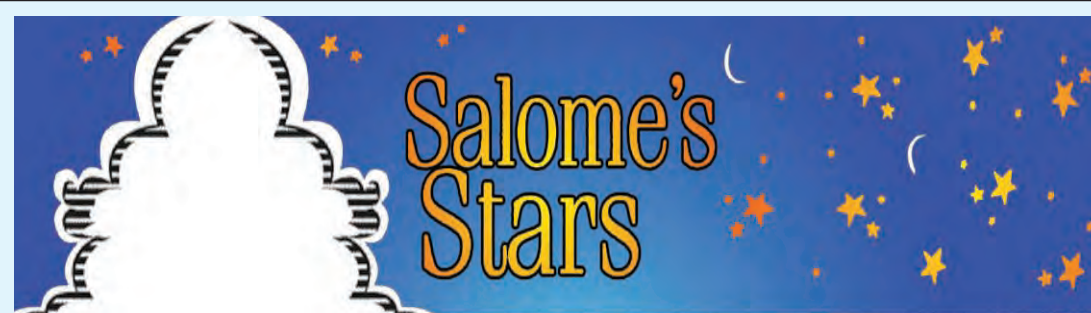
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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Keep a lid on your temper, despite attempts by someone trying to goad the Sheep into flaring up. Staying cool helps put your adversary into a deep freeze.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) All you Ferdinands and Fernandas need to take time to smell the flowers. You've worked hard. Now, stop and indulge yourself with the vacation you so richly deserve.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) There's good news for single Geminis who feel incomplete without someone special in their lives. A peek at Cupid's checklist reveals that a Scorpio or Virgo will soon be knocking on your door.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) Don't fret if things at work might be going too slowly for you. Everything's on track. Meanwhile, gather your family and friends for a lovely summer outing.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) You might feel you're being virtuous dedicating all this time to your project. But a little time off for summer fun with loved ones will help you relax and refill your energy reservoir.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) Your emotions might mislead you, but not your instincts. Do what you know to be right, even if you'd rather make other choices. Time will show that you chose well.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) This could be a good time to reevaluate some of the business decisions you've made during the past several months. A new advisor offers some much-needed counsel.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) A personal challenge involving someone close to you needs precisely the kind of courage and honesty you can bring to the situation. Go to it -- and good luck.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Continue to build your self-confidence by taking additional steps to assert your rights. Cheer up. The process gets easier with each clear-cut victory.

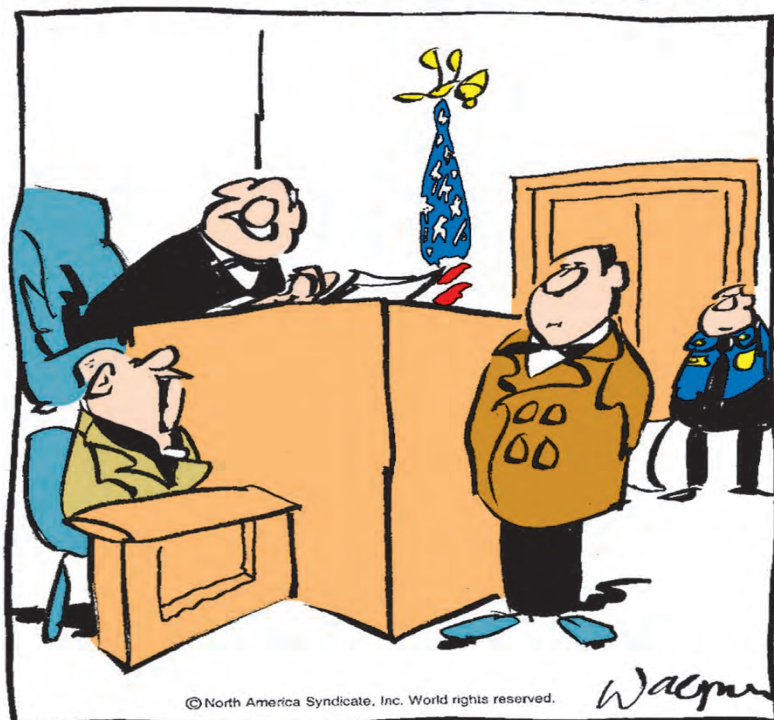
**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) Despite your keen Capricornean sense of what's right and what's not, you still need facts to back up suspicions about a co-worker. Bide your time. The truth will come out.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) A relationship you hope to save might seem too far gone to be rescued. But continue working with your partner to try to mend the misunderstanding.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) You need to keep your emotional side in check and let your logical self sort out the problem that threatens a longtime association. Expect some hidden truths to be revealed.

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**GRIN and BEAR IT** *Wagner*



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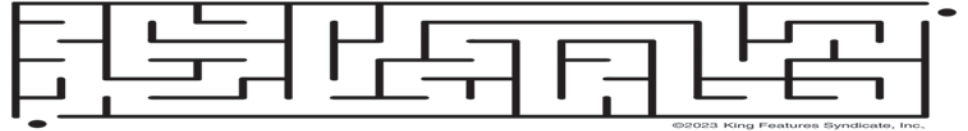
*You can be extravagant and frugal, almost at the same time. But whatever you do and whenever you do it, you do it with style and gusto.*

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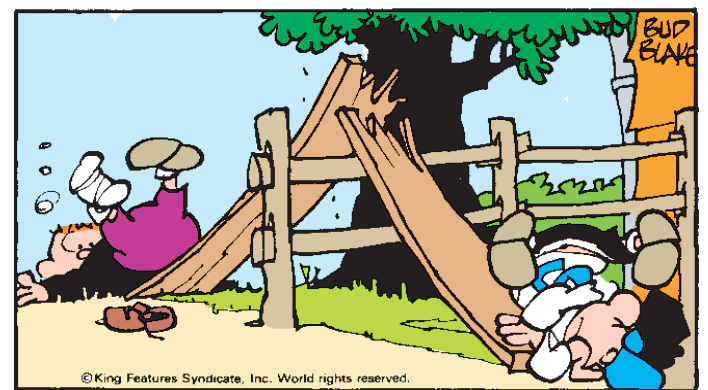
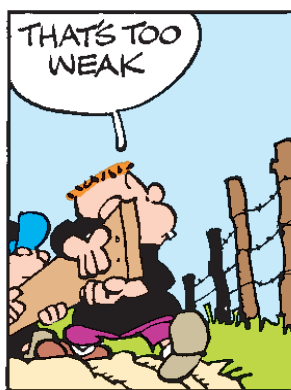
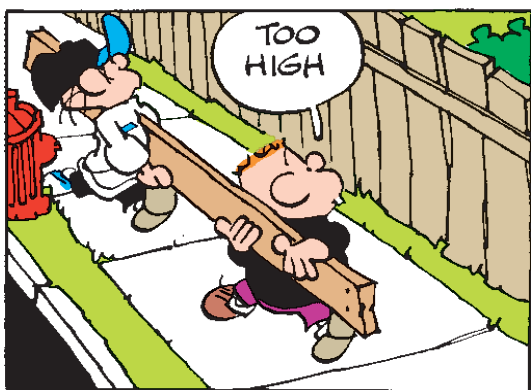
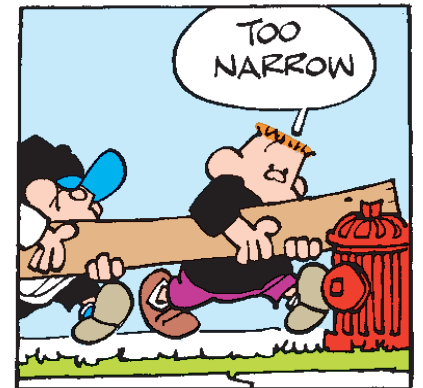
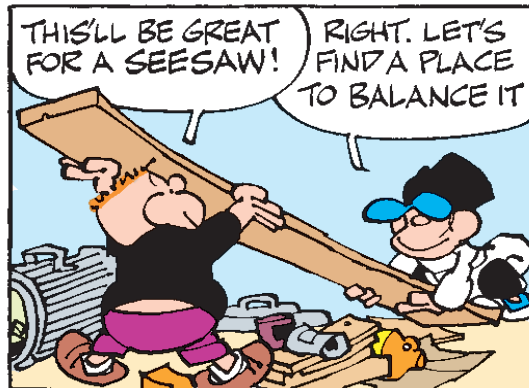
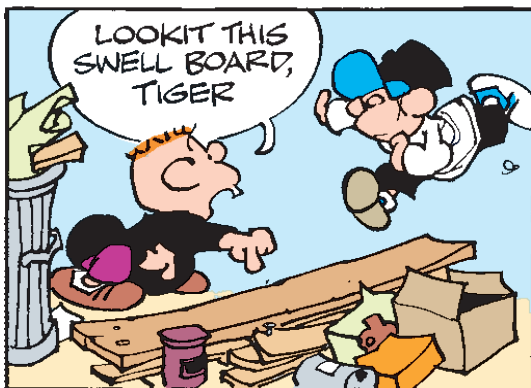
Kids' Maze



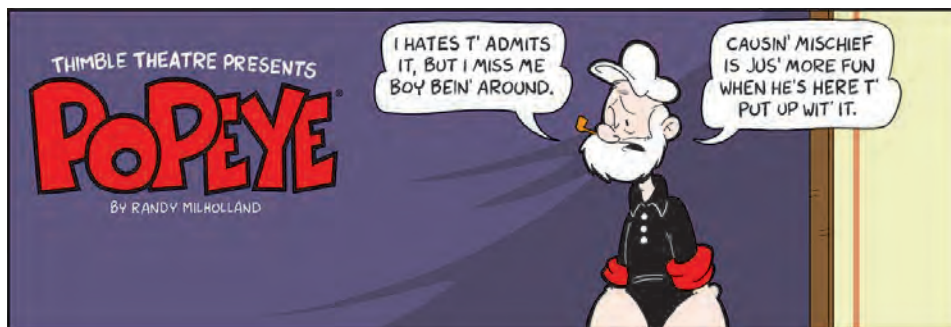
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## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION:** What is the name of Samantha's mother in the "Bewitched" comedy series?
- MOVIES:** What is the name of the shark-hunting boat in the film "Jaws"?
- SCIENCE:** What is the most lethal consumed plant in the world?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM:** What is a female goat called?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS:** Who served as vice president in Abraham Lincoln's first term as president?
- FOOD & DRINK:** What kind of alcohol is traditionally used in a drink called a sidecar?
- LITERATURE:** What city is the primary setting for Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"?
- ASTRONOMY:** Which planet in our solar system was the first to be explored by a space probe launched from Earth?
- MUSIC:** In what year did MTV launch?
- GEOGRAPHY:** Where is the famous St. Basil's Cathedral located?

- Endora.
- The Orca.
- Tobacco.
- A doe or nanny.
- Hannibal Hamlin.
- Brandy.
- Verona, Italy.
- Venus (Martiner 2).
- 1981.
- Moscow, Russia.

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Click on "Local News" at



# Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



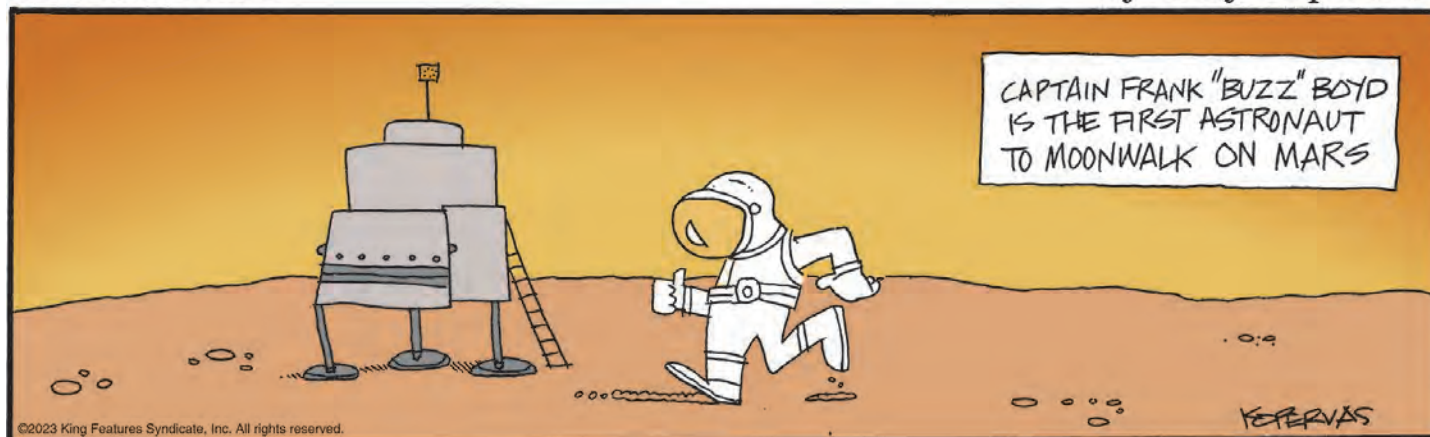
# Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



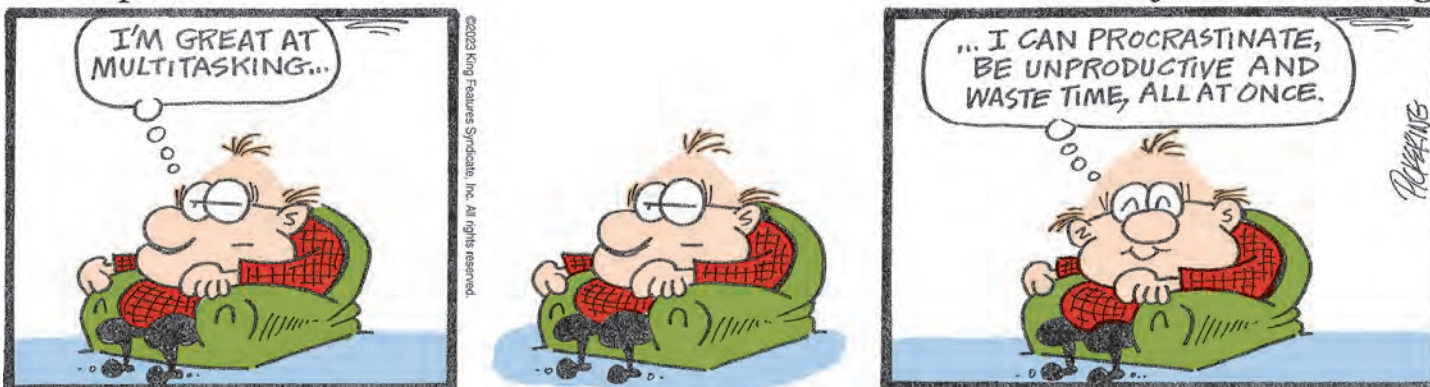
# Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



# The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



1. Which song includes the phrase, "I know" over 20 times? 2. Who wrote and released "Spirit in the Sky"? 3. Where did the Thompson Twins get their name? 4. Who sang "I'm Never Giving Up" in a Eurovision contest? 5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "I will love you longer than forever, Promise me that you will leave me never."

and songwriter.  
Charles E. King, a Hawaiian legislator for Thee"), was written in 1926 by song, "Ke Kali Nei Aua" ("Waiting There Elvis Presley and others. The original song was also covered by Brook Benton, Song," by Andy Williams, in 1958. The Kingdom. 5. "The Hawaiian Wedding in 1983. They represented the United three to seven members. 4. Sweet Dreams, group was never a duo, but ranged from but were not twins. The Thompson Twins Adventures of Tintin," who looked alike tectives in the comic strip "The evision to write the song. 3. From two de- was inspired by watching Westerns on tel- Greenbaum, in 1969. Greenbaum said he talked into leaving it alone. 2. Norman instead of all the "I know" phrases but was 1971. He'd intended to write another verse 1. "Ain't No Sunshine," by Bill Withers in © 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

## MAGIC MAZE ● POPEYE



Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: GIRLFRIEND — OYL

- Ahoy
- Muscles
- Sailor
- Tattoo
- Bluto
- One-eyed
- Sea Hag
- Toot toot
- Brutus
- Pappy
- Spinach
- Wimpy
- Hamburger
- Pipe
- Swee'Pea

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# FUN PAGES



# **SEM CU**

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**If you are experiencing domestic well or water quality problems, contact "Self-Help Enterprises." Qualified people may have a water tank installed or have bottled water delivered, or have work done on a new or existing well. Call Drought Support at 559-820-1685 or contact them at [droughtsupport@selfhelpenterprises.org](mailto:droughtsupport@selfhelpenterprises.org).**

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

**Our next meeting is Monday, August 21 at 6 p.m.**

**The teleconference number is 312-757-3121  
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**Please let us know if you have any questions.**

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