

The Ranchos Independent



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35¢



Mary Ann Rykema-Williams sits among the rubble that was her house and feels that she owes her life to Teddy, the family dog, who first discovered the fire and wouldn't stop barking until everyone was awake and out of the house.

Teddy to the Rescue!

Local dog saves family of three from certain death

By Randy Bailey

As election night wound down on Tuesday, June 6, most of the Ranchos was lost in a mix of preparing for bed, catching some late election returns on the evening news or nodding off in front of the TV. But in the 12000 block of North Road 37, a life and death drama was beginning to play itself out right around 9:20 p.m.

Mary Ann Rykema-Williams, 65, was tired and had just put her pajamas on as she prepared for bed. Husband Jack Williams, 69, had fallen asleep in front of the TV and Dan, their border, was asleep in his room. It was a scene that had played out exactly like this countless times before.

In the backyard, a large Golden Retriever named Teddy was a little spooked. Teddy had two interesting

idiosyncrasies: One, he never went in the house. Even on cold nights, the family would have to force him to come in out of the cold to warm up. He was an outside dog and had no muse for the inside of a house. His second idiosyncrasy was he didn't like fireworks. Every Fourth of July for all 9 of his years, Teddy dreaded the incessant popping and hissing and would whine and look for a place to hide.

On Tuesday night, Mary Ann had thought she had heard fireworks earlier. "It was a faint popping, like kids a few blocks away were lighting some off," she remembered. But what she was actually hearing was an electrical short progressively getting worse somewhere in the area of the laundry room between the kitchen and the garage. "Earlier in the day the lights were flickering and I never

got around to changing the bulb." The fire investigators that talked to Mary Ann after the fire said that flickering lights is often a sign of a potential fire problem.

As Mary Ann prepared to lay down in bed, Teddy became excitable. "He tried to come through my bedroom window!" Mary Ann said. She tried to calm him down

Please see **FIRE** Page 11



The window Teddy was trying to get through.



The winner! Frank Bigelow takes the reigns for another four years in District 1 with 52 percent of the vote.

Bigelow, Measure "S" Glide to Victory in Ranchos

By Randy Bailey

The voters of Madera County have spoken and when all the counting was done Tuesday, June 6, incumbents won and measures passed handily.

Frank Bigelow, the incumbent Supervisor for District 1 beat opponents Hal Grant and Santos Medrano handily, garnering 52 percent of the vote and eliminating the possibility of a run-off election in November.

The surprise in District 1 was how poorly Medrano performed. Backed by some big guns and some strong unions, he only was able to get 585 total votes for 14 percent. Local boy Hal Grant finished with a respectable 1,460 votes for 34 percent of the total and a strong second place. The obvious question is where the votes would have gone if it had only been a two-horse race, however even if all of Medranos' votes went to Grant, the total would still only be 48 percent and Bigelow would still be Supervisor.

Measure "S", the \$70 million school bond measure for Golden Valley Unified passed by 57 percent to 43 percent. The key here was that it had to have 55 percent or more to pass, so it just made it, but made it none the less. What I find amazing is the

power of one vote. If you don't think your vote counts, look at Measure "S". There are over 13,000 people living in the Ranchos and a measure that will impact everyone's tax bill was decided by 1,193 people. Democracy!

From the Ranchos to Iraq: fighting terrorism one bomb at a time



Ranchos resident Sandy Ramey sent in this picture of her son, Nick, posing next to a weapons cache recovered on a raid by his unit in Iraq. Sandy didn't have any further information on the nature or outcome of the operation, but she did have a thought. "As you can see, Iraq is still a very dangerous place for the U.S. military." Amen.

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AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH...



Editorial

The Election's Over - Now What?

By Randy Bailey

Man am I glad that election is over. There were aspects of it that made me proud to be an American involved in the process that is the cornerstone of our type of Government; and yet there were other aspects that really left a sour taste in my mouth.

On the good side, our voter turnout was awesome. I've written here before about how the bigger counties effectively negate our votes by the sheer volume of voters they can mobilize for a candidate or an issue, but when they stay home (as in this election), then our votes gain in strength. More importantly, when we present a voting bloc like that, people in places quietly stand up and take notice. Candidates start

coming out to see us and special attention begins to trickle down. The smart candidates figure out pretty quickly that it makes more sense to woo a voting group that actually votes than to try and land that 800-pound marlin of a county that might, or might not, show up on election day.

With that increased attention comes our obligation; namely to keep our elected officials' feet to the fire.

Folks - they work for us!

They are not appointed by the hand of God Almighty. None of them pulled a sword out of a stone. None of them sprang from a lotus with the powers of the lord of the universe.

They work for us!

As such, if there are questions that you feel (check that - questions that you KNOW) are not being answered, don't let up on them. Make them accountable. Without exception, every time someone tells you, "... that just can't be done," what they're REALLY telling you is that they haven't tried all that hard. They're telling you it sounds a little too hard and they'd rather not put the effort in. When Bill Clinton was elected in 1992 he campaigned on a middle-class tax cut. At his first State of the Union address, he said that in the previous 30 days he had tried harder than he had ever tried in his life to get us a middle-class tax cut, but there was just no way to do it. What did we do? Rather than say, "Well, how about you get in there and try for thirty ONE days? How about 45 days? How about you don't stop trying until you deliver on your promise?" instead, we rolled over and got the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 that raised our taxes.

It all ultimately rests on our shoulders. With this last little election we showed that we can be a force.

What are you going to do with it?

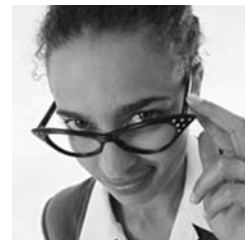
THE OBSERVATION DECK
REPUBLICANS BELIEVE EVERY DAY IS THE FOURTH OF JULY, BUT DEMOCRATS BELIEVE EVERY DAY IS APRIL 15.
RONALD REAGAN

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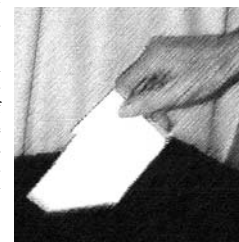
Random Notes

What is going on out here? In the last few weeks there have been three different sets of cast iron patio furniture stolen from different homes in the Ranchos. Broad daylight kind of stuff. HEAVY furniture being picked up, loaded up and taken away and no one has a clue who's doing it. Local realtor Eileen Tiso had a three-piece brown filagree wrought iron table and chairs stolen from right out in front of her office window at The Real Estate Network at 36946 Ave. 12 Ste. B. She's plenty angry and has decided to up the ante on this sub-humanoid behavior by offering a \$300 reward for the identification of the thief (or thieves) that obviously don't have ANY respect for the property of other people. She doesn't even care if she gets her property back, she just wants to put an end to it by this criminal by banking on the fact that there's probably no honor among thieves. If you have any info, Eileen's got \$300 waiting for you at 706-0301.



While walking her dogs on May 23, Ranchos resident Marlene Frank found a pair of prescription glasses near the fire station on Avenue 11. Marlene says they appear to be men's glasses and are also bifocals. The only identifying mark on them was a case that says they came from Kaiser Permanente. She's real eager to get them back to their rightful owner so if you've been walking around squinting lately because you lost your glasses in that area, give her a call at 438-7107. Being someone who wears glasses, I don't know how they could have gone THIS long without them.

A quick congratulations to those who won during the recent election, but more importantly, a big "thank you" to the voters of Madera County. In an election where statewide only 28 percent of the voters turned out, Madera County had over 45 percent show up and cast votes. The squeaky wheels do get the grease. Keep squeaking!



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Center
6/06

Letters

Dear Editor,

It is with warm hearts we, of the Karz for Kidz committee, say "Thank You." Without people like all of you in our community, we could not have had such a successful event.

The Third annual Karz for Kidz Car Show was a great success! We had 194 beautiful automobiles on the hospital grounds.

Karz for Kidz was fortunate to have had the backing of Chukchansi Gold Resort

and Casino, Madera Auto Center, Western Johns and Patrick's Music for our sound system. Also, a BIG thank you to Randy Bailey and the Ranchos Independent for all his help and support, along with the many other businesses and individuals with their sponsorships. Our raffle and silent auction were successes; thanks to all for your generous donations of raffle prizes. We thank all of you and the kids thank you also.

We will delivered a check in the amount of \$13,455.91 to Children's Hospital of

Central California, which, without all involved, would not be possible. Please keep us in mind for next year, as our show will be bigger and better. The date of the fourth annual Karz for Kidz show is May 19, 2007 and we are looking forward to working with all of you again.

A great man once said, "There is never a man so tall as one who stoops to help a child," you have done just that.

I thank you, as do the kids in Children's Hospital of Central California.

Sincerely,

Bob Munier
Coordinator, Karz for Kidz

Dear Editor:

Ten years ago, Avenue 12 looked like laundry day on the farm, with possibly hundreds of signs tacked up on fences and utility poles. The poles at the corners of Rd. 36 and Ave. 12, and Highway 41 and Ave 12, were loaded with dozens of posters, many of them nailed on top of old ones. The ground in the vacant lot at 36

and 12 was littered with old signs that had finally weathered off the pole. This was a disgraceful trashing of our community, and constituted a severe risk to any linesman who might have to climb a pole the old fashioned way, because of the forest of nails driven into the poles.

A Madera County sign ordinance specifically forbids posting materials on utility poles, among other things, except for political material at election time, which requires a special permit.

Two members of the then Madera Patrol set out one day and took them all down. Subsequently, for the next 10 years one Patrol member removed signs every week, along with removing graffiti. Citizens may remember that our Ranchos neighborhood streets looked pretty clean all that time. This volunteer was occasionally cursed and physically threatened, but never was sued! About a year and a half ago he stopped removing signs, because of burn-out and increasing age. Now you will notice trash collecting on our poles again. On June 11, there were 73 signs on our poles between Rd. 35 and Highway 41 along Avenue 12 and nearby cross streets!

Now the plot moves from the general to the specific. Recently a respected and nor-

Please see LETTERS Page 8

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**at the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce
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Thank You

Frank
BIGELOW



Summer Reading, Summer Fun

By Ellen Mester

Now that summer is officially here and you've had a little break from schoolwork (this is for the kids and their parents who help them with schoolwork), it's time to start reading books for fun! And reward! June 22 from 1-7 p.m., the Ranchos Library will host a mini-carnival with music, food, crafts, games, contests (bark/meow competition) and storytime. It's the kick-off of our Summer Children's Reading Program, called Paws, Claws, Scales and Tales. Kids and teens can sign up for the summer reading program and receive a reading log book plus a book bag filled with goodies and enter the Dragon Drawing. Each week a lucky reader's name will be drawn from the Dragon Drawing. The winner will receive a prize package. There will be an opportunity to enter the Best Pet Photo Contest or the Best Decorated Pet Dish Contest also. Every week after the kick-off, we will be welcoming some of the best children's entertainment in the San Joaquin Valley, so don't be caught cat-napping and miss all the fun! Bring your tail to the Ranchos Library. Take a bite out of boredom and chew on a good book.

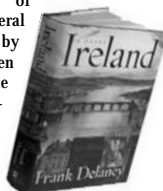
For those of you between the ages of 6 and 14 who enjoy reading and discussing books about American history, come to the Ranchos Library on June 27 at 10 a.m. and become a Ranchos Roundtable Reader. Readers will choose novels from a selection of age-appropriate fiction and non-fiction from the time frame of 1740 to 1850, then every two weeks we'll share what we've learned and sample some of the food, art and poetry from that era. Our discussion will be led by parent volunteers Julie Hale and Steve Bibler.

If you are a collector of rare, valuable books, you need to check out a Website that helps libraries sell books that they are unable to put in their collections. The web address is www.librarybooksales.org. Our Friends of the Ranchos Library has listed over 30 rare and special books and plan to list even more. You can browse books either by library (we're listed as Madera Ranchos Branch Library, top of the M list) or by author. You can also search for a specific book by typing in the title. It's a great way for libraries to list books for sale nationwide. Of course, we have way too many books for sale to list on the Website, so we rely on our regular sales from the Friends Book Sale room at the library as well as our Mini and Grand Book Sales that we have each year. With the increase in growth of the Golden Valley School District it is getting more difficult to schedule the Grand Book Sale behind the district offices. We are looking for a new shaded, secure and well-traveled location that could host our Grand Book Sale for a 2-3 week period twice a year. If anyone in the community knows of such a location, please contact us at the library.

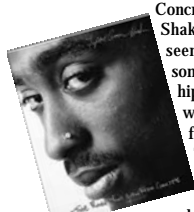
Book Recommendations

Adult Fiction Book: Ireland written by Frank Delaney. This is a wonderful book that tells the history of Ireland through the stories of a visiting storyteller. Set in the 1950s in the home of a small town lawyer, John O'Mara's son, Ronan, is mesmerized

by a storyteller that is invited into their home for a few days to share stories of Ireland. Several neighbors drop by each night to listen and enjoy the pleasure of hearing a good story — everyone except Ronan's mother. She sends the storyteller packing when no one is around to stop her. This leaves Ronan broken-hearted and determined to find the storyteller. Several years go by and Ronan has written and memorized all four stories he heard from the storyteller. Without his mother knowing, he covertly follows the trail of the storyteller yet always missing him but able to hear the last story left in his wake and then commits it to his memory. He too will one day become a storyteller. And each story tells a tiny spot of Ireland's fascinating history. If you have any storytellers in your family as I do, you will appreciate this ancient oral tradition of sharing family history.



Young Adult Non-fiction: The Rose That Grew From Concrete by Tupac Shakur. It may seem hard for some to imagine a hip-hop rap star writing beautiful poetry. But Tupac did! He wrote honestly and with such depth about love, ambition, sad times, faithfulness and kindness. And sadly too, is his last poem in which he predicts his own death. This book is a favorite with teens because of Tupac's fame. Once they read the poetry though, it touches their hearts. It definitely touched mine.



Juvenile Picture Book: The Tortoise and the Hare Race Again by Dan Bernstein and illustrated by Andrew Glass. Imagine a rematch between the tortoise and the hare from the old Aesop fable only with modern language filled with hilarious puns. The famous hare that came in second to a tortoise was constantly razed by his peers — such as Hare E. Plodder, Jack Rabbit, Pete R. Rabbit and General Rabbit E. Lee. Meanwhile, the tortoise was tired of all the attention he received from winning the Great Race. He really wanted a normal life, working at the shell station putting on the turtle wax. Inevitably a rematch is set and the hare, determined to keep himself from napping, ties alarm clocks to his body so he won't sleep through the end of the race. The race is comical with an unusual surprise ending. It's fun to read aloud and show the beautiful illustrations to any age.



Check out these books and more at the library and remember your library card ... don't leave home without it!

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The Stock Report

School Year Ends as Another Begins

By ud ey toc

Hi neighbors,
 One of the best parts about being on the Golden Valley School Board is being a part of graduations. At all levels it is great to see the smiles of the students as they realize that they have completed an important step in their lives. I watched the 6 graders both proud and a little scared to be leaving the elementary environment and going on to middle school. They looked so young and little to me. At the 8th grade promotion I saw the excitement and again that wonder on their faces, "Am I ready for High School?" Then there was the most exciting graduation of all, the Liberty Senior High graduation. These students have earned the pride of making it through four tough years.

Yes, high school is tough at Liberty. My hat is off to all of those great students who made it. As I shake his or her hand and congratulate each student, I see the hope of the future walk before me. So I congratulate each and every Golden Valley student as they either go on to the next grade or college or into the work force. May you never stop learning and caring for the world you live in. God Bless each one of you. Thank you for letting me be a small part of your life.

Victory belongs to all of the community members who voted "yes" for the local Measure "S" Bond. Yes, I am jumping up and down as I thank you for your "yes" vote. Now I will see Liberty High finished and I'll see a comprehensive middle school in Golden Valley for

the students. Our two elementary schools will be repaired and upgraded also. I want to thank the Measure "S" Bond committee for all of their hard work and the quick pickup of all of the Measure "S" signs the day after the vote. A big thank you goes to our fearless leader, Chairman Ron Osborn. Golden Valley is growing fast and in the right direction. Thank you for continuing the dream!



Regular school is over and summer school is well on the way. All students who failed a class and need to make up a grade are already working. Summer school is a 4-day week with Friday off. It started on June 6 and will end July 13. The other summer program Golden Valley offers is called the Summer Elementary Enrichment Activities program. There are 80 elementary students enrolled in the enrichment program. Four Liberty High student volunteers and four teachers will be working with the students. This 4-hour a-day, fee-based, 6-week program offers music, art, drama and PE classes. This program includes three field trips and a tee shirt. It started June 6 and will end July 13.

As one regular school year ends, your district office and school board are gearing up for the 2006-2007 school year. Some teachers are leaving Golden Valley and others are already being hired to take their place. The budget for last year finishes up on June 30. The school year budget for the 2006-2007 is already being put together. There are always assumptions in any budget that depend on both the state and

Please see STOCK Page 11

MEASURE "S" PASSES!



Golden Valley Unified School District

Dear Golden Valley Residents,
 The Committee for Yes on "S" wants to thank you for your support. Without you, the future of our school district and our children would be dim. By passing Measure "S" you have once again shown that you truly do have a "dream" for our future, a vision for our community, and a love for our children.

Thank you, you make us proud to be part of this community.

*Ron Osborn & Mike Kelly
 Co-Chairs Yes on "S" Committee*

Independence High School Valley Teen Ranch

THE DREAM CONTINUES

Children's Hospital Big Winner as Karz for Kidz Puts Pedal to Metal



Bob Munier and Bonnie Letesentacec on the left and Karz for Kidz representative on the right holding a check from the Children's Hospital Foundation.

By Randy Bailey

The Third annual Karz for Kidz Car Show was held May 20, 2006 on the grounds of Children's Hospital, Central California and raised over \$13,000 for the children at the hospital.

"What a great success!" said organizer Bob Munier. "We will deliver a check in the amount of \$13,455.91 to Children's Hospital of Central California, which, without all involved, would not be possible."

The event drew over 190 automobiles from all vintages as large crowds of car enthusiasts gathered and milled about throughout the day. The event was possible through the combined help of

Chukchansi Gold Resort and Casino, Madera Auto Center, Western Johns, Patrick's Music and the Ranchos Independent, along with other businesses and individual sponsorships.

Primary fundraisers for the event were a raffle and silent auction where donated items raised big bucks for the hospital.

Now in its third year, the 4th Annual Karz for Kids Car Show is already in the works for next year. "Keep us in mind for next year," said Munier, who promises a bigger and better show in 2007. "The date of the fourth annual Karz for Kidz show is May 19, 2007."

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6/06

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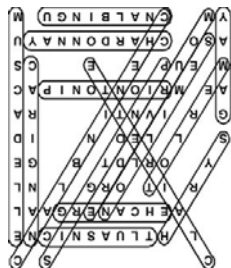
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6/06

Puzzle Answers

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



FRENCH GRAPE VARIETIES

A	S	H	P	A	R	E	N	T	M	E	E	T	S	I	C	S				
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e asto s es

A Great Exchange

By Ken oo sey

Most of us are much too young to remember, but there was a time when someone would stand at an appointed place and yell out "HEAR YE, HEAR YE, HEAR YE," then, in a loud voice, begin to speak out whatever the news was that the people needed to hear. This particular person was called the "town crier." Everyone knew that when they heard the town crier crying out, they needed to lend an ear to whatever he had to say because it was sure to be pertinent to their very lives. It could even be a matter of life and death.

As in days gone by, some heed the words of the one crying the news and some don't - and some simply (for whatever reason) still have not yet heard the words of the crier. As much as the crier would yell out, and with everything that was within him, some just couldn't hear, or wouldn't hear his voice and the words he spoke.

There was such a time when this "town crier" cried out as loud as he possibly could that there was a "Great Exchange" taking place. The crier cried out, "The King has proclaimed a promise to anyone who will hear. The King will exchange all your debts for a declaration of pardon with his insignia on it that would be a sign to anyone who would try to collect, that all had been forgiven and that they would have to go through the King to try and collect."

As you could imagine, this created quite a stir in the community. Some didn't hesitate for a moment and went as fast as they could to the King to receive this wonderful gift, while others couldn't believe it could be true. So, while some exchanged all they owed for a free pardon from the King, some continued paying the debts they owed. Those who were redeemed by the King went and told their friends about this Great Exchange and that it was true, the King really would take what you owed and cancel them all with his insignia. As much as they tried to convince the friends they loved to make the same exchange they had made, their friends neglected to take the King at his word because it just seemed to be unbelievable. "I mean after all," they reasoned, "no one had ever made such a promise before - and it doesn't even make sense that a King would do something like that for someone like me. Why would he do this incredible thing for me? I have never even met this King."

As ordered by the King, the town crier continued crying out every day with this same message: some heard the words of the King and acted on them, while others ignored his generous offer. Some were saved from their burden of their debts, while other lived their lives with their burdens forever weighing them down.

For some the thought of getting something for nothing was too much to believe. "I can't believe it could be that easy," they would say. So they would turn down this redemption in exchange for a life filled with pain and heartache. The words kept repeating over and over again and

Please see PASTOR Page 21

LETTERS Continued from Page 3

mally well-balanced citizen of our community, hereafter known as Citizen 1, nailed 15 or 20 letter-sized paper ads on our poles, advertising "trees for sale." He has taken furious, and I would say extravagant, offense at another reasonable citizen, hereafter known as Citizen 2, for removing some of his paper signs. Indeed he threatens to sue Citizen 2 for a possible total of over \$4,000 if #2 does not pay him over \$800 for damage to "personal property" (several sheets of typing paper printed in black). He cites heavy losses for his business, and presumably, unbearable pain and suffering.

Personally, I think #1 has lost his marbles somewhere along the line.

Meanwhile, our main street is about to become as trashy as it was 10 years ago, with people tacking up signs and leaving them to slowly weather away.

People of the Ranchos, what do you think about this?

An additional comment on my part: It is a grave violation of managerial policy for governments, commercial enterprises, schools, or families, to post or try to maintain rules which they have either not the resources or the will to enforce. Such behavior undermines respect for the system that allows it. The county should either enforce this ordinance or take it off the books.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Mathes

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Kool Rides at 3rd Annual Karz for Kidz Car Show at Children's Hospital



A string of 55-57 Chevys with the Children's Hospital as a backdrop set the tone for the day at the Karz for Kidz show.



Not to be outdone, the early Ford hot rods lined up amid a chorus of "ooohs" and "aaahs."



Trucks were on hand as well to truly provide a little bit of something for everybody at the show.



So you like a car only if the word "muscle" precedes it? There were plenty of those on hand as well.



Sitting in the middle of a herd of Mustangs, families were everywhere at the Karz for Kidz show.



I'm still not sure if Sponge Bob was meant to be a hood ornament or if he just didn't get out of the way in time.



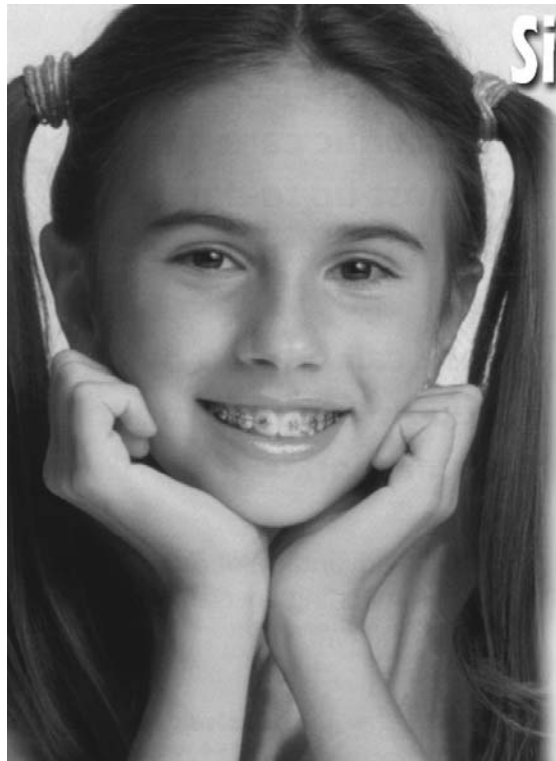
The cars were fun, but it was the attendees (here bidding at the silent auction) that helped raise the money for the kids.



For little ones not interested in cars, local mascots from Hometown Buffet (left) and Wienerschnitzel entertained.



Not all cool cars have to be 50 years old, as a group of Vipers proved to the crowd.



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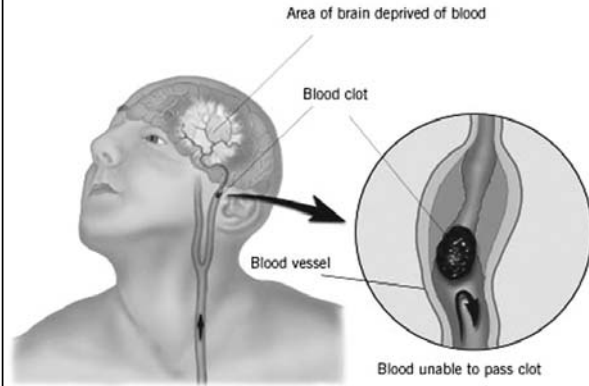
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Remember "STR" and Save a Life



The first three letters of "stroke" may identify a stroke victim

(Editor's Note: This was sent to me by Mary Tucker at Ranchos Auto Repair and she thought it was pretty important information. "This could be very helpful to someone," she said in her note to me. I agree.)

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke ... totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Thank God for the sense to remember the "3" steps, STR. Read and Learn!

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The

stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

- "S" - Ask the individual to SMILE.
- "T" - Ask the person to TALK; to speak a simple sentence coherently, i.e. "It is sunny out today."
- "R" - Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

Another potential sign of a stroke is this: Ask the person to stick out his or her tongue. If the tongue is "crooked" and goes to one side or the other, that may also be an indication of a stroke.

If he or she has trouble with ANY one of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

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federal government funds. After they come in the school budget is adjusted to reflect that.

The Liberty High Sober Grad night was a success with 96 of the graduating seniors attending with 31 of their guests. They all enjoyed a night of good food and fun. I worked the 9-midnight shift with two of my Ranchos Hills Seniors helping. We made sure that the pizza, cookies, soft drinks and water was always ready for the students. The parent chairman, Sandra Carter, and her committee had things well under control. Without the generous donations from the local merchants Sober Grad could not take place. The students walked into a Hawaiian-decorated building at 9:30 p.m. and left the building at 5 a.m. Natasha Bash won the car that was donated by Madera Auto Center. Now she has to get her license. Every Liberty senior went home with a very nice gift. Senior graduation night is one of the most dangerous nights of the year. Thank you parents for keeping so many of the Liberty High graduates safe at the Sober Grad Night.

It has been a full and very busy couple of weeks for me. At the same time as I was working on the Measure "S" bond committee I was also winding up the school year graduations and working the lunch program at the Ranchos Hills Senior Center. Twenty-three of our RH seniors were on a trip to Alaska for two weeks. When people ask me what I do with my time since I retired, I just laugh and say I keep busy. I am never bored.

The next school board meeting will be June 27 at Liberty library at 7 p.m. If you want to know what is going on and help the board make informed decisions please come to the board meeting. Everyone is welcome.

and sheepishly admitted that she was actually getting quite upset with all the ruckus he was making. Teddy was quite literally tearing up the screen and the window sill and Mary Ann had had just about enough. Frustrated she got up out of bed and went out into the living room to yell at Jack to yell at the dog and make Teddy stop. Jack was asleep in his favorite chair and Mary Ann began trying to wake him, with Teddy carrying on madly outside. She finally got Jack to wake up and was explaining what the dog was doing when just past Jack something from the kitchen caught the corner of her eye.

It was fire.

"It didn't look too big so I went and got the cordless phone to call the fire department," she said. What she didn't realize was that the fire was already working its way through the attic, structurally weakening the supports for the heavy tile roof. "When I got the 911 operator on the phone the smoke detectors started to go off," Mary Ann continued. Upon hearing that the operator insisted she get everyone out of the house NOW! "I only had pajamas on and I wanted to go to the bathroom first," Mary Ann said, but the operator was insistent. Jack went and got Teddy who made a beeline for Mary Ann and never left her side the rest of the night. They awoke their border and moved outside.

"There was really nothing to see when we got outside," she said. Then all of a sudden Hell was unleashed.

From the weakening of the joists inside the attic, the heavy weight of the tile roof couldn't be supported anymore.

"It was like dominoes."

Starting at the garage at the north end of the house, the heavy tiles fell in succession, crushing everything underneath.

"And then the heat was so intense, I was over at the driveway and could still feel it," Mary Ann said.

It melted the front of her car that was parked next to the garage and just raged.

Firefighters arrived and had the fire out relatively quickly, but the nature of the bum was such that it tore through the house. "It happened so quickly," she said.

After the shock of having her house burn down hit her, Mary Ann began taking account of what was happening around her. "Neighbors that I didn't even know were offering me clothes to wear and offering their homes to us," she said in disbelief. The Red Cross was on the scene almost immediately

providing vouchers for a Fresno hotel for a few nights while other arrangements were made. "I literally lost everything. Credit cards, ID's, checking accounts." Worried about her medications that had been destroyed, a kindly pharmacist helped her replace everything she needed.

The experience was truly horrifying for Mary Ann, but in retrospect she counts her blessings that no one was killed and the items that were lost were just "things." "One of the most amazing things was that one wall in the hallway, where everything came crashing down, was where all of the family pictures were hanging. It was the one wall the fire didn't touch," she said in amazement.

This was the first time in her life she had ever been in a fire. "I'll tell you the truth, there are only two things I'm afraid of: electricity and fire," she said, realizing that her worst fear was what she had just been through. "But now I'm more than OK," she said as she stroked Teddy's golden fur over and over. "I'm more than OK."

The Rykema-Williams family would like to thank the Ranchos Community for all their help and prayers. We would also like to give a special thanks to the local firefighters, Madera Ranchos Secure Storage and everyone at the Ranchos Independent. The Ranchos' thoughtfulness will never be forgotten.

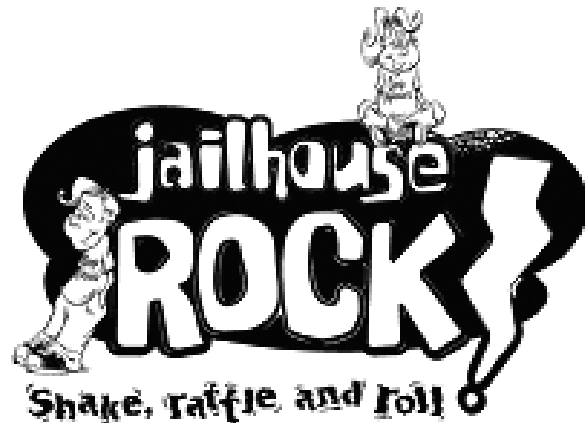
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Sheriff to OHV Riders: Obey Laws

Complaints phoned into the Sheriff's Department regarding excessive use of Off-Highway vehicles in areas where it is illegal has prompted Sheriff John Anderson to again remind Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) riders that driving in ANY residential zone of Madera County is against the law.

"Off-highway vehicle" includes: motorcycles, sand buggies, dune buggies, all-terrain vehicles, jeeps, mopeds, mini bikes, go-carts and any vehicle registered pursuant to Section 4000 of the California Vehicle Code.

No person shall operate an off-highway vehicle within any residential area except as follows:

1. An off-highway vehicle may be operated for the sole purpose of parking or storing that vehicle on a lot or removing the vehicle from the lot for operation outside the confines of the residential area.
2. An off-highway vehicle may be operated for a period no longer than 15 minutes between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. for the purpose of maintenance and repair of the vehicle.

Per Chapter 10.28 OPERATION OF OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES, reasons for prohibiting such use: off-highway vehicle riding results in the creation of dust and the generation of noise which disturbs the peace and quiet and threatens the welfare of the residents within the residential area. They further create traffic hazards to other vehicles, pedestrians and the operators themselves.



Those caught violating the law face citation, possible arrest and their vehicle could be impounded. For more information log onto the Madera County Sheriff's OHV Website at www.madera-county.com/sheriff/ohv/index.html.



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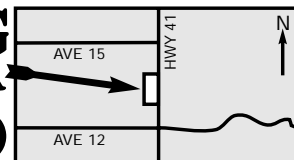
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Identity Theft: Massive Toll to You

By Master Dave Johnson

Welcome to the Second edition of "Safe & Sound." I hope you are all well and that you enjoyed the first edition back in March and that it brought you some helpful tips and stirred your thought processes or at least some lively debates. I would like to take a moment to encourage you once again to please give me your feedback, concerns, questions, and suggestions. This column will only get better the more I hear from you.

This month we are going to talk about Identity Theft but first I would like to review some important points. Prevention and Preparedness should be our focus. Prevention comes from education, action and consistency. Preparedness reduces paranoia and increases self-confidence. Effective preparedness comes from realistic training. "Defensive Awareness." To be calmly and constantly aware of your surroundings (ALL of your surroundings) and mentally prepared to react appropriately to whatever, without feeling nervous, apprehensive, afraid, or paranoid. In fact, done correctly, you should feel very comfortable, confident and secure. This mental and physical sense will in turn be very evident to the criminal element.

OK, answers to March's Educational Challenge.

#1. (Part A) Course of Action: Make sure your alarm has not been tripped or activated in any way; review your alternate escape routes should someone enter your home; let someone else know what's going on and what your plans are; don't stand too close or directly behind the door; speak with an authoritative voice; turn all outside lights on; have a phone in hand (preferably a cell phone); try to ascertain, by asking questions, why this person is at your door. **DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR. ANYTHING THEY MAY NEED, YOU CAN GET FOR THEM BY PHONE.** Ask her if she has a specific Towing or Insurance Company that you could contact for her.

(Part B) Let her know what they say, i.e., their estimated time of arrival. If something does not feel right, don't hesitate calling your local Law Enforcement Agency.

#2. (Part A) Course of Action: Scan the exit area, then the entire parking lot, then the immediate area near your vehicle. Without being paranoid, make sure you have a plan should something not feel or look right, i.e., returning to the store.

(Part B) Make sure to look closely at, below and into all vehicles parked directly near your vehicle. Be especially leery of vans or other large vehicles, especially vehicles with tinted windows. Place the merchandise inside the vehicle first. If you place the baby in first and they take control of your vehicle, you really have a problem. You can always get more groceries and a new car.

(Part C) Your keys should always be in your hand, held tight and ready to use as a weapon if need be.

IDENTITY THEFT

OK, on with this month's topic: Identity Theft. By now I would suspect most people have heard of this term and what it implies, but I would bet most of you didn't know the following: Identity Theft is the fastest growing white collar

crime in America; has affected 27.3 million Americans over the last 5 years; and less than 5 percent of the identity thieves are caught. It accounts for \$48 billion in losses to businesses and financial institutions and \$5 billion to individuals.

MISCONCEPTIONS

Identity Theft is primarily credit card related - This has been proven by the FTC to be wrong. Only 42 percent of identity theft is credit card related. Now consider this: if your identity is stolen, it will take approximately 600 hours to regain your identity and cost approximately \$1,800, not including attorney's fees. Would you know the appropriate steps to take should this nightmare happen to you? Keep in mind that each of us has five identities: Financial, Medical, Social Security, DMV and Character/Criminal. Remember credit monitoring is great but it's just credit monitoring. If something happens, you're on your own when it comes to restoring your identity. Contact me to find out how you can protect yourself the right way for less than 50 cents per day.

Ask yourself the following questions: Do you hand your credit card to servers at restaurants? Do you sign your credit cards? Do you supply personal information over the internet? Do you keep your social security number in your wallet or purse? Do you leave mail at your home or business for the postal carrier to collect? Do you shred unwanted mail with personal information?

Remember, a professional thief can assume your identity in just a few hours, but it can take years for you to restore your credit standing. Don't wait until it happens. Please contact me. I would love to hear from you. E-mail me at info@masterjohnson.com. Your participation is vital and appreciated. Remember, since we are all in this together, let's make it a community project, have some fun, and increase our level of safety.

PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Spend some time with your children reviewing the following sites:
www.amw.com/kids
tcs.cybertipline.co
www.missingkids.com/adCouncil

SELF-DEFENSE TIPS

SEEK PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable, turn and look them in the eyes with confidence and tell them so. Protect your space. Always stand at a slanted angle with one foot back spaced at about shoulder width. Hands should be relaxed and held between waist and chest level. **KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT.**

Master Johnson is a world recognized security and self-defense expert specializing in executive protection, hand-to-hand, multiple opponents, and weapon disarms. He is listed in the "Who is Who" in Martial Arts and was named "Master Instructor of the Year" 1996 by the World Martial Arts Hall of Fame. He is the owner of Golden Valley Martial Arts, Tactical Training International, Dave Johnson Real Estate, and operates the World's only online self-defense and Black Belt training course at www.masterjohnson.com. He can be contacted at 559-917-5262.

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Couple's 4th Arrest Since Dec. '05



Over a thousand dollars worth of Meth was seized in their home in March and now a Madera couple is back behind bars facing felony drug possession after MADNET agents seize 1/8 of an ounce - an "8-ball" - of Meth. This arrest marks the couple's fourth drug related arrest since December 2005. Taken into custody was 26-year old Alberto Alvarez and 21-year old Jennifer Cota.

Agents served their warrant at the couple's home on Garfield Street in Madera, seizing Methamphetamine they found stashed in their infant's sock. The two-year old baby boy was turned over to his Grandmother.

The couple's troubles over the last six months read as follows:

1. On Dec. 22, 2005, agents arrested the pair for possession - finding 6½ grams of Methamphetamine and 121 grams of Marijuana - total street value for the drugs, approximately \$350. Both were booked on felony drug charges with bail set at \$10,000 each. Both posted bail and were scheduled to appear in Court Jan. 23.

2. On Feb. 16, 2006, agents arrested the pair again for possession - finding 48 grams of Methamphetamine and a small amount of Marijuana with a street value for the Meth at approximately \$500. Both were booked on felony drugs charges and committing a felony while on bail, with bail set at \$30,000 each. Both posted bail and scheduled to make a court appearance March 13.

3. On Feb. 28, 2006, agents arrested the couple for possession - finding 9½ grams of Methamphetamine with a street value of approximately \$200. Both have

Taken into custody was 21-year old Jennifer Cota (top) and 26-year old Alberto Alvarez.

been booked for felony drug possession and committing a felony for the second time while out on bail. This time bail has been set at \$35,000. At this hour, the pair remain behind bars.

Sheriff John Anderson again commented on the positive results that come from the close working relationship all Madera law enforcement agencies share in the county.

"MADNET's success is based on the cooperative efforts of every law enforcement agency in Madera County," Anderson said. Those agencies include, the Madera County Sheriff's Department, Madera County probation, Chowchilla and Madera Police Departments, Madera County District Attorney's Office, California Highway Patrol and the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (or BNE, which is part of the California Department of Justice.)

Both Alvarez and Cota now face felony drug charges in addition to committing a felony while out on bail.

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6/06

Cogdill Targets Identity Theft

Legislation by Assemblyman Cogdill (R-Modesto) to help combat financial fraud and identity theft was approved by the Senate Committee on Banking, Finance and Insurance late this afternoon. Assembly Bill 618 will add ATM photos and video of a suspect to the list of information that law enforcement officials can request when investigating an identity theft or fraud crime.

"California is unfortunately a haven for ID theft criminals," said Cogdill following the vote. "We currently rank third out of all states in the number of identity theft crimes. Modesto alone saw 2,310 cases of ID theft investigated last year. That's not something to be proud of and it's time we did something about it. I'm pleased that my colleagues on the Banking and Finance Committee are standing with me in fighting this insidious crime."

AB 618 will add surveillance photos and video taken at an ATM to the list of information that law enforcement can request of a bank during an investigation of an ID theft crime. Current law provides law enforcement officials with certain information, including access to the bank records of a customer's account covering the 30 days before and after the occurrence of a crime. AB 618 gives legal authority to banks, allowing them to provide law enforcement with the photos and video necessary to solve cases.

"Basically, we're tired of having to tell victims of this awful crime that we're sidelining their case because we don't have a photo of the suspect," stated

Sergeant Scott Blom of the Modesto Police Department, Investigation Division. "The photo is often the missing piece to the puzzle that would allow us to go after these criminals."

Sergeant Blom, who attended the hearing in support of Cogdill's measure, provided examples of ID theft cases that had gone unsolved because of the lack of ATM photo evidence.

According to a letter of support, Blom identified a case in May of 2005 that was suspended after the detective was unable to obtain the ATM surveillance photo of the transaction in question. Without a photo, the victim and law enforcement officers could not identify the suspect. In contrast, Sergeant Blom also outlined a case where surveillance photos were used to positively identify and arrest a habitual offender who was attempting to open a checking account with a stolen identity.

"It's estimated that ID theft crimes cost consumers over \$547 million in 2004 alone," commented Cogdill. "Californians deserve to have all options on the table when it comes to protecting their identity. AB 618 will give law enforcement the tools they need to combat the recent wave of ID theft crimes."

AB 618 will now move to the Senate Public Safety Committee for consideration.

For more information, or for bill text, please visit www.leginfo.ca.gov. Assemblyman Cogdill proudly represents part or all of the counties of Calaveras, Madera, Mariposa, Mono, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne.

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3	\$250,000	10.25%	\$2,135.42	\$833.37	64%
4	\$250,000	12.25%	\$2,552.08	\$1,250.00	96%
11	\$250,000	12.25%	\$2,796.41	\$1,494.33	115%

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“We’re Watching You!” is Message; Copper Wire Thieves are the Target



A day that nabbed three arrests for stealing copper wire began with 28-year-old Michael Wilkinson of Sanger ...

Despite nearly a dozen arrests since January, Madera County's Agriculture Community continues to be victimized by copper wire thieves. Fed up, the Madera County Ag Crimes Unit – on its own volition – launched what they call “Directed Enforcement” – beefing up patrols throughout the county in an effort to hunt down copper wire thieves. The plan paid off in late May with the arrest of 28-year-old Michael Wilkinson of Sanger and his believed accomplice, 36-year-old Linda Sullivan of Fresno.

Detective Cliff Kirkes saturated areas he believed would probably be targeted, passing by one business at least twice and seeing nothing. But as the old adage goes, third time's the charm and when Kirkes passed by a third time he saw a vehicle parked on the property.

The pair claimed they parked there for a “rendezvous,” however, neither could explain the extensive number of cutting tools inside the car – including two bolt cutters and multiple receipts from various ferrous metal recyclers in Fresno.

Kirkes took both into custody without incident. Besides entering the tools into evidence, Kirkes also seized drug paraphernalia and Methamphetamine, booking Sullivan for possession of a hypodermic needle and burglary tools. With bail set at \$250, Department of Corrections cited her out. She is set to appear in Court June 26.



... continued with the arrest of his accomplice, 36-year-old Linda Sullivan of Fresno ...

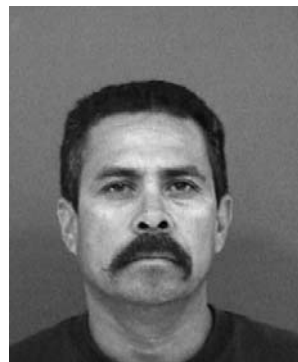
Wilkinson remains jailed for possession of a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia as well as burglary tools. His bail was set at \$5,000.

The price for copper wire has risen since Kirkes' last arrest in April when the cuttings would net \$2.10 a pound. Just two months later, the price of copper wire now goes for \$3.65 a pound.

“Our Ag Crimes Unit is one of the more aggressive detective units in the valley,” Sheriff John Anderson said. “Both Cliff Kirkes and Bud Smith continue to conjure up creative ways to catch criminals and since April, with the arrest of 42-year-old Roel Angel Soliz, they are without a doubt making good progress in getting the message out to would-be copper wire thieves: We’re watching you.”

Later on the same day, another man suspected of stealing copper wire – not once but twice, based on his own admission – was caught by Sheriff's Deputies.

Barely a week on the job, newly hired Deputy Bryan Hieger and his Field Training Officer Valerie Breedlove celebrated the arrest of 43-year old Ricardo Abundiz of Firebaugh.



... and ended with the arrest of 43-year old Ricardo Abundiz of Firebaugh. A wire theft “hat trick.”

According to Breedlove and Hieger, they received word that a suspicious looking vehicle was parked on a piece of property on Road 7 and Avenue 7 1/2 near Eastside Drive. When deputies arrived, Abundiz was still there. He not only admitted this trip was his second trip to that location, he spontaneously confessed to stealing wire from the property. Deputies seized copper wire from the bed of his truck and his tool-box.

Breedlove and Hieger took Abundiz into custody without incident, booking him into the Madera County Department of Corrections where he remains jailed facing possession of stolen property. His bail is set at \$5,000.

Senior Report

Senior Wins, Third Time for Ranchos

By Eleanore Burchell

Thanks to Joliene Mason of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center, located at 37330 Berkshire, who won the 14th Annual "Seniors Serving Seniors 2005 Volunteer Award" of the year for her service to others. This honor was bestowed on Joliene by the Fresno-Madera Area Agency on Aging, an organization that includes all senior centers in both counties. The 2004 distinction was given to Audrey Stock while again in 2003 Merle Anderson was chosen to be the honored recipient. We know we have a more-than-average, fantastic membership, and it is gratifying to know others recognize this fact also.

Joliene is a widow, a mother of three - two girls and a boy - and she has seven grandchildren. She is a retired Central Unified School District Pupil Transportation Specialist. She is a member of many organizations, but most important to her is Citizens On Patrol of Madera County and Ranchos Kiwanis.

Did you miss our article in the May issue of the Ranchos Independent? The Senior Report was submitted as usual, but I understand there was a computer problem and our article flew into outer space - poof gone! Thanks to all readers who asked, "What happened." It is surprising the number of people interested in this article.

We have just received many, many flats of flowering plants such as petunias and marigolds. Tomato plants are available. Come in and check out these and other varieties.

The bake sale is always held in the main building. The Treasure House has been setting up for this sale with many, many new items, including summer items such as shorts, etc. We don't want you to get out of the habit of coming in to see us so remember the produce and boutique sections are available Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays, 6 to 9 p.m., and Thursday evenings between 6 and 9 p.m.

More Facts and Fun

A nutritionally balanced lunch program Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. Suggested price for 60 years and older is \$1.75. Reservations are needed a day in advance, so remember to call Joann at 645-4864. There is still room in the well-attended exercise

class on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays, 10:15 - 11:30 a.m. Our faithful exercisers are looking for you to join them. You need not be a member to attend these classes. The attendance has been growing but there is always room for two more: you and your friend!

The Line Dancers are taking a summer vacation with no classes to be held in June, July and August. They will start meeting again on Thursdays at 1 p.m. in September. Watch for the start-up date in the August Senior Report.

The new cookbook is \$12 and is available in the office during the week and also at the monthly sale on July 1. **REMEMBER BINGO IS HELD EVERY TUESDAY EVENING** from 5:30 to 9 p.m.

Up and Coming Events

June 29, 6 p.m. Monthly potluck with Mid-Western foods theme, then Hand and Foot or Pinochle.

July 1, Monthly sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the garden section, produce, Treasure House, many boutique items and bake sale.

There will be a monthly Birthday and Anniversary luncheon held in July, but no date or place has been announced.

Weekly Events

Monday, Exercise Class, 10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

Monday through Friday Lunch Program, 11:30 a.m. (Reservations needed, call Joann 645-4864)

Tuesday, Pinochle, noon until ?
Tuesday, BINGO, 5:30 to 9 p.m. (Hot dogs, hamburgers, desserts and more available)

Wednesday, Exercise Class, 10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Card BINGO, noon to 1 p.m.

Thursday, Potluck then Hand & Foot or Pinochle, 6 to 9 p.m. (Please bring your own plate and silverware.)

Friday, Exercise Class, 10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

We have shared data regarding our Senior Center with you. We welcome you to come and be one of us as our organization offers and promotes social, educational and civic activities in order to provide a better quality of life for all senior citizens. You have received an invitation. Hope to see you soon?

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Final reports of the quality of drinking water for the 2005 year for the following schools in Golden Valley Unified School District are available for public viewing at each of the schools and District Office listed below. It is also available on the District Website at www.gvUSD.k12.ca.us.

Golden Valley Unified School District Office 37479 AVE 12, Madera CA Liberty High School &	Ranchos Middle School 12220 RD 36, Madera CA Sierra View Elementary School 16436 Paula RD, Madera CA	Independence High School 16362 Paula RD, Madera CA Webster Elementary School 36477 Ruth Ave., Madera CA
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Garden Tips

What You've Been Waiting For: Main Growing Season is Here at Last

by Thea Fiskin

June marks the beginning of summer, the time that Mother Nature is at her peak in the garden. Flowers are in full bloom with fruit trees and veggies ripening. Don't forget Dad this month. Something as simple as helping with garden tasks, like mowing the lawn, can make him feel special. Or buy him a nifty garden tool.

WHAT TO PLANT

There are plenty of plants that can take the heat of our summer.

Color: ageratum, begonias, coleus, cosmos, gerbera daisy, impatiens, marigolds, petunias, salvias, spider flower (cleome), sunflowers, verbena, vinca and zinnia.

Vegetables: From seed plant beans, corn, cucumber, gourds, melons and squash. Eggplant, peppers and tomatoes should be planted using seedlings.

Harvest zucchini when young; it is not meant to hurt your back when you pick it up. Don't forget, June is the month to plant pumpkins to harvest for Halloween.

GARDEN CHORES

Plant, patch, or reseed: Warm season lawns like bermuda or St. Augustine. Now that the heat is here they will really take off and grow. Lawns need to be mowed regularly, at least once at week, every five days or so is better. On tall fescue lawns it's time to set the mower up a notch or two for the summer months. Keeping the grass a little longer conserves water and shades out weeds during the summer.

Regularly shear: Established woody herbs such as oregano, rosemary and thyme to keep producing fresh green growth for those summer recipes or use a bouquet of herbs in your home. Pinch several inches off chrysanthemums, New England aster, Autumn joy sedum and phlox to encourage branching and plenty of flowers in the fall.

Feed: Roses after each bloom cycle, remove spent flowers and water regularly. Apply a light amount of fertilizer to summer flower and vegetables to keep them producing.

Brown spot: On the bottom of your tomatoes? Blossom end rot is usually caused by either irregular watering or the lack of calcium in the soil. Be sure to water regularly and apply gypsum or even crushed eggs shells to improve soil.

Fruit drop: Some fruit trees may drop small fruit. This is normal so don't be alarmed; the tree is getting rid of excess fruit. Help nature along and thin fruit to at least 6-inch intervals. Yes, I know it hurts taking all those little guys off but you will be rewarded with large fruit rather than fruit the size of golf balls. To protect ripening fruit from birds, hang reflective tape, metal discs, or place nets over your fruit trees just before fruit ripens.

Weeding: Be sure to keep weeding your garden. Each weed plant can have thousands of seeds so pull them before they develop flowers or worse: seed heads.

CRITTER CONTROL

Watch for signs of spider mites: look for mottled leaves and fine webs; they always seem to appear with hot, dry weather. Plants along dusty roads are particularly susceptible. Hose off plants with plain water, or use insecticidal soap if necessary to prevent mite infestation.

Green caterpillars or "tomato worms" on tomatoes and corn are active now.

Spray with Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt). If your petunia buds fail to bloom and have little black specks on the buds, try Bt on them also. Prevent mosquitoes by remembering to clean birdbaths regularly, dump water left in pots and saucers, add fish to your pond or buy doughnuts of Bt to float on the water.

Dripping trees, or curled or deformed leaves, are signs of aphids. Controlling ants will help control aphids and scale in trees. Try using Tanglefoot around the trunks of trees and setting out ant baits. Visit our Website under UC Info for the Pest Note on Aphids.

Hunt for snails in the evening as they come out to feed. You can usually discover an army of the little slimmers coming out just at dusk.

WATERING

Be water wise! Water deeply and infrequently in the early morning to ensure minimum disease problems and maximum irrigation efficiency. Give water time to soak in between watering cycles. Use a timer if you have a habit of forgetting that the hose is on. If you develop dry patches in your lawn check the sprinklers and try pushing a screwdriver into the spot. If the ground is too hard for the screwdriver to go in, then you need to aerate the area to provide better water penetration.

Deep water all trees, ornamentals, fruits and nuts; this is especially important for any new plants.

BE SMART

Before you leave on the family vacation, mow, trim, weed and water; a well kept yard won't tip off anyone you are gone. Move pots into a shaded area where they will be automatically watered by the sprinklers. Harvest your veggie garden to keep it productive. Give produce to neighbors or a local food bank. Check the battery on your automatic sprinklers and replace if necessary. Water houseplants thoroughly then place out of direct light so they retain moisture.

Thea Fiskin is a UC Master Gardener with Tulare/Kings County. Master Gardeners are members of communities who are trained by UC Cooperative Extension experts in different aspects of plant science and then volunteer to extend that information to their community. The mission of the Master Gardener program is to provide research-based information for gardening practices and technologies of home horticulture, integrated pest management and environmental resource conservation.

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New Madera Co. Deputies Sworn



Kathy Ridley, (left), Bryan Hieger and Matt Brown are all sworn in as the newest members of the Madera County law enforcement team.

While the Madera County Sheriff's Department continues to recruit more patrol deputies - they are currently short 10 positions - Sheriff John Anderson is honored to announce the hiring of two new deputies.

Undersheriff Frank Benard swore in Deputy Bryan Hieger - a former reserve with the Madera County Sheriff's Department - who returns to Madera after serving nearly 10 years as a Police officer in the Monterey area.

Also sworn in today, fellow Madera resident Deputy Matt Brown, who also

has a career in law enforcement that included serving for the Chowchilla Police Department.

Along with deputizing Hieger and Brown, Undersheriff Benard also swore in Kathy Ridley who will serve as Clerk for the Madera County Narcotic Enforcement Team - also known as MADNET.

With these two new deputies the Department is still down 10 positions, currently operating with only 61 sworn personnel - that includes the Sheriff's Administration of the Sheriff, Undersheriff and three Lieutenants.

Radanovich Issues Statement on Death of al-Zarqawi

Congressman George Radanovich (R-Mariposa) issued the following statement upon receiving news of the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

"Today justice has been served, and a major milestone in the Global War on Terror has been achieved. The brave men and women of the United States Armed Service, along with the intelligence communities in Iraq and Jordan, have brought an end to al-Qaeda's second most dangerous terrorist. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi has masterminded the torture, rapes and brutal killings of thousands innocent people. The United States will contin-

ue to stand up to terrorists, who have declared war against human rights and democracy. We thank and appreciate the heroic troops who fight everyday to preserve our freedoms.

"This milestone on the War on Terror coincides with the announcement by Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki of his Minister of Defense and Interior cabinet selections. I congratulate Prime Minister Maliki of his commitment to furthering the development of Iraq's democracy. While we still have a long road ahead, the events of today are very encouraging news for the future of Iraq."



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Pastor's Kindness not Enough, Charges Now of Burglarizing Church

Madera-area church gave a room for the night, \$20 gas money, and then was burglarized. Stolen objects found in suspects' truck

One kind act met with a felonious gesture of thanks.

Four days after their arrest, two out-of-towners (claiming to be down on their luck) remain jailed – now charged with burglarizing a Madera Church, the same one where the Church Pastor had given the couple \$20 to help them buy gas.

The couple not only took the \$20 but are now charged with stealing gas that belongs to the church.

David Alan Safarik, 49, and 38-year-old Staretta Melvina Warren, both of Georgetown, Texas, are now in custody.

According to reports, on June 11 at around 3:19 a.m., Sheriff's Deputies Bryan Cutler, Darrell Swengel and their Sergeant responded to a tripped alarm at the Madera Baptist Church. While en route the Sergeant made a vehicle

stop – a stop that would help the department quickly close this case.

Evidence the Sergeant found inside the stopped truck made her suspicious and she told the pair she was detaining them to wait for another deputy to arrive who was responding to a crime. That's when Warren spontaneously offered the first of two pieces of information that would later implicate the pair.

"We were at the Church," Warren said.

At no time did the Sergeant tell the couple where the crime had occurred.

Warren went on to tell the Sergeant that she and Safarik stayed the night and the Pastor was even kind enough to give them \$20 for gas.

When the Deputy asked about



Staretta Melvina Warren, 38, (left) and David Alan Safarik, 49, both of Georgetown, Texas, are now in custody after allegedly taking advantage of a Madera-area pastor.

gas containers in the truck, Warren said they used them to get around. But the containers were filled with mixed gas, the type that is used in gas-driven power tools. Warren was advised by the deputy that this kind of fuel couldn't be used to "get around." Warren had nothing further to say.

When asked if they had bolt cutters or any other kind of cutting tools they both denied having anything like that. Deputies seized the

containers of mixed gas and also found cutting tools in the truck, including bolt cutters, a pry bar, a hacksaw and blades.

A Church employee was later able to positively identify the containers as belonging to the church.

Safarik remains jailed on burglary and vandalism charges with his bail set at \$15,000. Warren also remains jailed for receiving stolen property and her bail is set at \$5,000.



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PASTOR Continued from Page 8

again in their minds, "... it is too uncertain. What if he won't, what if he won't do this wondrous thing for me?" The thought of approaching the King to ask him to do this for them was more than they could bear. But the uncertainty they faced by not accepting the Kings ransom was the real uncertainty of life.

For some this is a sad story and for others it is a story of hope and promise. I believe the difference is in how you see yourself in the story. Were you one of the ones who once heard the words of the town crier and ran to the King and made the "Great Exchange," or were you among those who just couldn't believe this wonderful gift could be for you? Were you redeemed of the debts you knew you owed by the insignia of the King, or did you – even after hearing the words of the crier and your friends – walk away believing in your heart that the King would never do it for you?

I don't know which one you were in the story, but whichever you may be, I have "good news" for you today. You can still be redeemed by this King of whom I've spoken. You see I am the "town crier" and Jesus is the King.

He is still making this same promise to all who will listen and hear the voice of the one crying out, "HEAR YE, HEAR YE, HEAR YE" the voice of the Lord! He is telling me to cry out, "OLD HEARTS, FOR NEW!"

Would you like to exchange your old heart for new?

There are many "town criers" crying out here in the Madera Ranchos every Sunday morning crying out the same message: "OLD HEARTS, FOR NEW!"

Would you like to exchange your old heart for new?

If you still need the King to cancel all your debts today, come and see one of the Madera Ranchos "town criers" and we will show you the way to the King. There is still time.

It's not too late!

Ken Cooksey, Jr. is the pastor of the Ranchos' newest church, Liberty Worship Center, located at 37275 Ave. 12.

Ranchos Middle School Big Winner At 2006 Academic Pentathlon

Raymond-Knowles Elementary and Ranchos Middle Schools won the Madera County Academic Pentathlon Super Quiz on April 25.

Raymond-Knowles Elementary School won the seventh grade relay quiz and Ranchos Middle School won the eighth grade competition.

Each team consisted of five members answering 15 questions out of 30 each. Their total scores were added up to determine the winning team.

The second place seventh grade team was Ranchos Middle School and third place went to St. Joachim School.

Coarsegold Elementary School ranked second in the eighth grade competition with St. Joachim School and North Fork Elementary tying for third place.

All teams were awarded rosettes during the awards ceremony which immediately followed the Super Quiz.

During the awards ceremony medals were also handed out to the top three students in each grade for three of the other five events.

Kazia Hart, from North Fork Elementary received a gold medal in the speech event for the seventh grade competition.

Karamjot Kaur from Thomas Jefferson Middle School received the gold medal for eighth grade.

The essay gold medals were awarded to seventh grader Kara Grimes from Howard Elementary and eighth grader Alina Grady from Coarsegold Elementary.

In the seventh grade Literature competi-

tion two students tied for first place. Elizabeth Avina from Rivergold Elementary and Evan Ewert from Coarsegold Elementary both received gold medals.

Eighth grader Naomi Reimer, also from Rivergold Elementary received the gold medal for the eighth grade Literature competition.

Certificates for first place teams competing in Destination Imagination were also awarded. Teams CDJZN and Live!Love!Music! from Rivergold Elementary and CADI's from North Fork Elementary received recognition plaques for placing first in their division in the Region IX competition.

Medals for the Math Tournament were awarded to the students on March 14. Madera Unified School District hosted the event at Jack G. Desmond Middle School.

Madera County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Sally Frazier, recognized Coarsegold Elementary School at the awards ceremony with a plaque for winning the Math Tournament in both 7th and 8th grade competitions.

More than 250 students participated in the competitions which span throughout the school year.

The Super Quiz was held in the Liberty High School gymnasium in Madera. The event began at 7:00 p.m. and the awards ceremony concluded at 9:00 p.m.

The Super Quiz concluded the five-event junior high academic competition for the 2005-2006 school year.

Auto Accidents Top Cop Killer

According to a nationwide study, more officers lose their lives to traffic-related accidents than to gunfire.

A nationwide study released by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund suggests that "the number of traffic-related deaths nationwide in both 2004 and in 2005 was greater than the number of deaths by gunshot."

In 2005, out of 155 officers who died in the line of duty 63 "lost their lives in traffic related incidents - 41 percent of total deaths for that year."

Not since the tragic deaths of Madera County Sheriff's Matron Lucille Helm and Sgt. George Harvey Terry - both killed in a traffic accident July 13, 1959 - has the Sheriff's Department suffered the loss of a deputy due to a vehicle-related accident.

In California last year, three officers from Tulare County, San Bernardino County and the California Highway Patrol died after losing control of their vehicles responding to emergency calls, and a fourth died while on assignment for the Department of Justice.

Recognizing the critical need for continuous training in Madera County, Sheriff John Anderson enforces mandatory driver's training classes for all uniformed officers, including Community Service Officers, as well as members of the department's volunteer program,

Citizens On Patrol. "Routine refresher courses are critical in order to keep our deputies adequately trained," Anderson said. And while the training can be costly, Anderson added, "You can't put a price tag on an officer's life or that of our citizens."

On a number of occasions deputies have actually refused to take life-threatening chances during pursuits, scaling back considerably when driving in dangerous conditions - like icy roads in the mountains and fog-related near zero visibility on the valley floor.

Supervisor Vern Moss of District 1 in Chowchilla shares the conviction that refresher courses are critical in order to keep driving skills of deputies up to speed.

Supervisor Moss said he personally understands how crucial continuous training is and he recognizes that while it comes with a price tag, "Without proper training too many lives would be at stake. One life lost is one life too many and that includes both law enforcement as well as the citizens of our county."

Since 2002, the Madera County Sheriff's Department has retired 1.5 vehicles a year due to collision. "To the credit of our deputies, the number of vehicle-related accidents in which an officer has been seriously injured or has died is zero," Anderson said.

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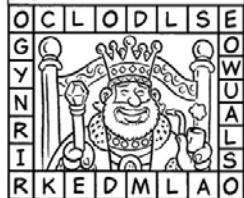
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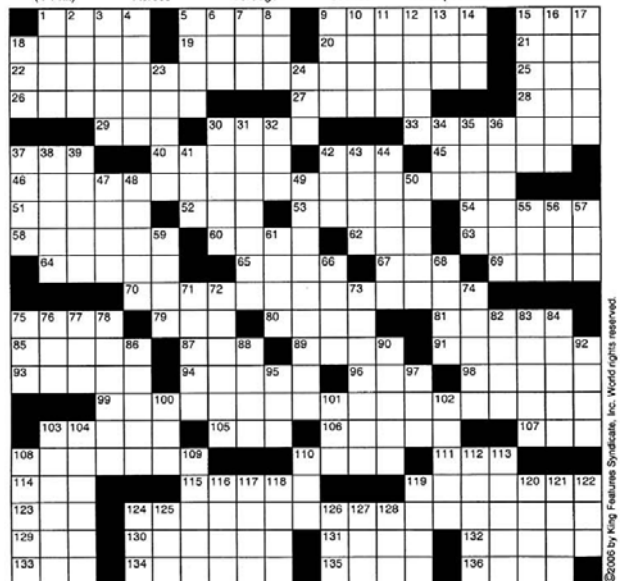
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- ACROSS 1 Skilled 5 1482 vessel 9 Proclaimed pompously 15 With 103 19 Tart 20 Texas city 21 Flat hat 22 If at first you succeed ... 25 Actress Gardner 26 Long-running Western 27 Ed of "Lou Grant" 28 Actor Young Turner or Cole 30 "Yo!" at the library 33 Triangle type 37 - Na Na 40 Build 42 Cartoon 45 Nitrous - Save the whales... 51 Conductor 52 Magle or Mineo 53 "The Sheriff" (74 hit) 54 Spiked the punch 58 Keanu of "Speed" 60 Forsaken 62 Erwin or Giesler 63 Night noise 64 No-nonsense Athenian 65 Musical finale 67 Poem of praise 69 "My Favorite" (82 film) 70 He who laughs last... 75 Type of pear 79 Mine find 80 Act like a Crabbe 81 Sample the soufflé 85 Activist Medgar Evers 87 Unwell 89 Italian rumber 91 California town 93 Robert of "The Citadel" 94 Insomnia cure? 96 Triac of tennis 98 Tales 99 A penny saved is... 103 See 15 Across 105 Maestro de Vaart 106 More appealing 107 It may be white 108 Giesler characters 110 "Shame" (70 song) 111 Excellent 114 Citrus cooler 115 Eventual oak 119 Returns from a trip 123 Sundial numeral 124 Honk if you... 129 "Cheers" prop 130 Negative terminals 131 - Spumante 132 Travis or Quaid 133 - blond 134 "The Trap" (61 film) 135 Competition 136 incites Rover 137 DC figure 138 Trauma aftermath 139 Sharpened a skill 140 Change location: abbr. 142 Surprised sounds 143 PA hours 144 Buck's beloved 145 Put on 146 Deep gorge 147 Persona barked 148 Peter out 149 Montezuma, for one 150 "The Wind in the Willows" critic 151 Pansy part 152 Junk 153 Sault - Marie, MI 154 - Cob, CT 155 Jumps on the ice 156 Catalogue 157 Trauma aftermath 158 Sharpened a skill 159 Change location: abbr. 162 Surprised sounds 163 Reacts to fireworks 164 "Martha" composer 165 Across 166 output 167 Vote in 168 Like some beaches 169 Practice piece 170 Runner Sebastian 171 "Ab -" (70 song) 172 PA hours 173 Manhattan area 174 MacDonald 175 Disarm 176 Punta del - 177 Coming from Cork 178 Nervous - 179 Literary collection 180 Roberts or Tucker 181 You can retire on 182 "Ab -" (from the start) 183 DC figure 184 Nook's companion 185 Strike-breaker 186 Innsbruck's locale 187 Boredom 188 Fend the fire 189 Expect back 190 Major artery 192 Word form for "bone" 195 Conceit 197 Dundee denial 199 Product 201 UN Day month 202 Glenside 203 "Good Night" - (1853 song) 204 USNA anthem word 208 First dog in space 209 Relish 210 Pine or Balin 211 Alphabet sequence 213 Neighbor of Calu 216 Surrender 217 Ready for business 218 Be still 219 Component 220 Pres. Bush, e.g. 221 Converse competitor 222 Pig's digs 224 Fold over 225 "Sat -" tuffet... 226 Machine part 227 Language suffix 228 Tackled a tax



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TRIVIA TEST By Fifi Rodriguez

- 1. GEOMETRY: How many sides does an octagon have? 2. ENTERTAINERS: Who was George Burns' partner in show business as well as life? 3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the theme song of the Harlem Globetrotters? 4. HISTORY: When did Newfoundland vote to join Canada as a province? 5. FOOD & DRINK: The alcoholic beverage ouzo is associated with which nation? 6. GEOGRAPHY: Okinawa is a region of which nation? 7. LANGUAGE: What is something that is insipid? 8. LITERATURE: Which author has penned the thrillers "Hatteras Blue" and "Bahamas Blue"? 9. TELEVISION: Who portrayed Sgt. T.J. Hooker on the TV show of the same name? 10. MUSIC: What is a piccolo?

Answers

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- 1. Eight 2. Gracie Allen 3. "Sweet Georgia Brown" 4. 1948 5. Greece 6. Japan 7. David 8. David Poyer 9. William Shatner 10. Small, shrill flute

Attempted Murder Charged in Bloody Fight

Four months after completing their investigation into a bloody battle between two men in Raymond, Mountain Deputies have made an arrest of 30-year old Daniel Robert Mitchell on charges of suspicion of attempted murder.

Sergeant Karl Hancock and Deputies Larry Rich and Paul Chetwood took Mitchell into custody after receiving a tip that they would find Mitchell (who also goes by the name Jacob Daniel Dunn) at a residence located on High Point Court in Ahwahnee.

Monday's arrest follows a four-month long investigation into a bloody brawl that ended with one man shot and another man stabbed.

On Feb. 13, Deputies say at around noon the bloody confrontation erupted between the pair, roughly a half block away from the famous Frontier Inn in Raymond. The stabbing victim managed to make his way to the bar where someone inside called 911. Mitchell was then taken to an area hospital in critical condition suffering from gunshot wounds while the



Daniel Robert Mitchell, 30, has been charged with attempted murder.

other man, listed in serious condition, was also transported to an area hospital, suffering from multiple stab wounds.

After completing their lengthy investigation, Mountain Detectives secured a warrant for Mitchell's arrest and he remains jailed with bail set at \$1 million.

Donation Pick-Ups

Tina is now collecting items for this year's Dinner/Dance & Auction!

If you are interested in donating an item or items for our annual Station 19 Fire Dept. Dinner/Dance & Auction Fundraiser on Aug. 19, please call Tina Shannon at 645-4948 or cell 352-5441 and she will be happy to pick up your items by July 31. The earlier the better!



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- 6/23-Souled Out
- 6/30-Chain Reaction
- 7/7-Joe Lenigan Little Big Band
- 7/14-Mo Fo Band
- 7/21-'nuff said
- 7/28-After Dinner Mints
- 8/4-Souled Out
- 8/11-Chain Reaction
- 8/18-Nite Flite
- 8/25-After Dinner Mints
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3717 LOS OSOS CT. MADERA • 4 bed, 2 ba. Approx. 2,100 sq. ft. Great cul-de-sac location. Vaulted ceilings, fireplace, walk-in closets. New kitchen appliances, countertops. Tons of cabinets. Three-car garage and fully landscaped front yard, fully fenced backyard. Must see! \$416,000

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36711 Ave. 12 MADERA RANCHOS • 4 bed, 2 ba. Approx. 2,600 sq. ft. Attached office or Mother-in-law set up for residential or commercial use. New construction! Built-ins, jacuzzi tub, lots of cement work and yard to be landscaped. Wheelchair access, wide doors, handrails. Sprinklers, gas appliances. Must see! \$599,000

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5/3ba., 2400 sq. ft., Large home & pool, home is vacant, lockbox. Bonus room could be used for guests, it has its own private bathroom. Almost 2 acres, 3 car garage, easy access to Freeway 41, minutes to Fresno, shopping and Valley Children's Hospital. Zoned for large animals. Owner is a licensed Real Estate Agent.

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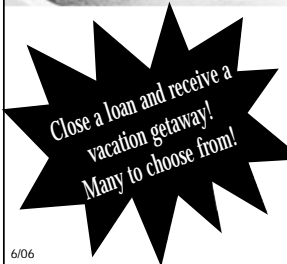
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**3 Bed
2.5 Ba.
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36875 Ave. 12

Beautiful home on 1/3 acre corner lot. Perfect for home or business. Great Room w/ soaring ceilings masonry fireplace & french doors, spacious kit. w/ breakfast bar. Master w/ huge walk-in closet & deluxe ba. Finished 3 car garage includes bath, built-in cabinets.



**4 Bed
3 Ba.
\$439,000**

36729 Blanca

Custom home on 1.15 ac. Nice floorplan, living room w/bay window, fam. rm w/vaulted ceiling & plantshef, master w/walk-in closet. Isolated bedroom & bath, spacious open kitchen, dining nook w/bay window, walk-in pantry, laundry room, finished 2-car garage.



**3 Bed
2 Ba.
\$459,000**

35949 Ave. 13

2 story home on 2.25 ac. zoned for horses. Tiled entryway, hardwood floors, covered front porch and wraparound patio. Bay windows, French doors, freshly painted and new roof too! Huge detached garage and all located approx. 1 mile from Liberty High.



**6 Bed
4 Ba.
\$590,000**

16252 Paula Rd.

2 yr. old home on 2.25 ac. nestled in orange trees. Kit. w/ breakfast bar. Lrg. great room w/ vaulted ceiling. Master w/ slider to backyard, jack & jill ba., indoor utility, rain gutters, ceiling fans, landscaping in front & back, zoned for large animals.



**5 Bed
3 Ba.
\$549,000**

17308 Paula Rd.

Lovely brand new home on beautiful high 2.25 ac. lot zoned for horses. Home includes upgraded tile flooring & counters, double ovens, gas cooktop, walk-in pantry, isolated bedroom and bath, covered patio, 3-car garage, fenced and cross-fenced.

Call the listing office for all of the amenities of any of these properties

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25786 AVE. 19, MADERA - 2,706 sf. 4/3 NEW CONSTRUCTION! 9 ft. ceilings, granite counters, jacuzzi. \$610K. Owner/Agent Related. CALL!



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2266 E. TYLER, FRESNO - 3 BR, 1 BA. 910 sf. Open floor plan, fenced yard, lg. back yard, Cottage look, ready to move in. \$195,000.

2544 SAMPLE AVE., CLOVIS - 1,475 sf. 3/2, Roman tub, sprinklers, high ceilings, tile roof, skylights, RV parking. \$325K. MUST SELL! MAKE OFFER.

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For Sale- Hot Tub/Spa, Absolute all new 2006, loaded digital, 44 chrome jets, ozone, waterfall, never used. Cost \$8,200. Sacrifice \$3,875. w/warranty Call 360-9047

For Sale - Spa, brand new, loaded, warranty, \$2,375 Call 275-8813

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For Sale - Queen Pillowtop mattress/box, cost \$500 sacrifice \$195. Never used. In plastic Call 230-0486

For Sale- Queen Plush Pillowtop brand new mattress/box. Cost \$700 Sacrifice \$275. King, cost \$900, sacrifice \$395 in plastic w/warranty. Call 277-2511

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