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GEORGE ORWELL'S

1984

was not meant as an instruction manual

By Larry Arnn



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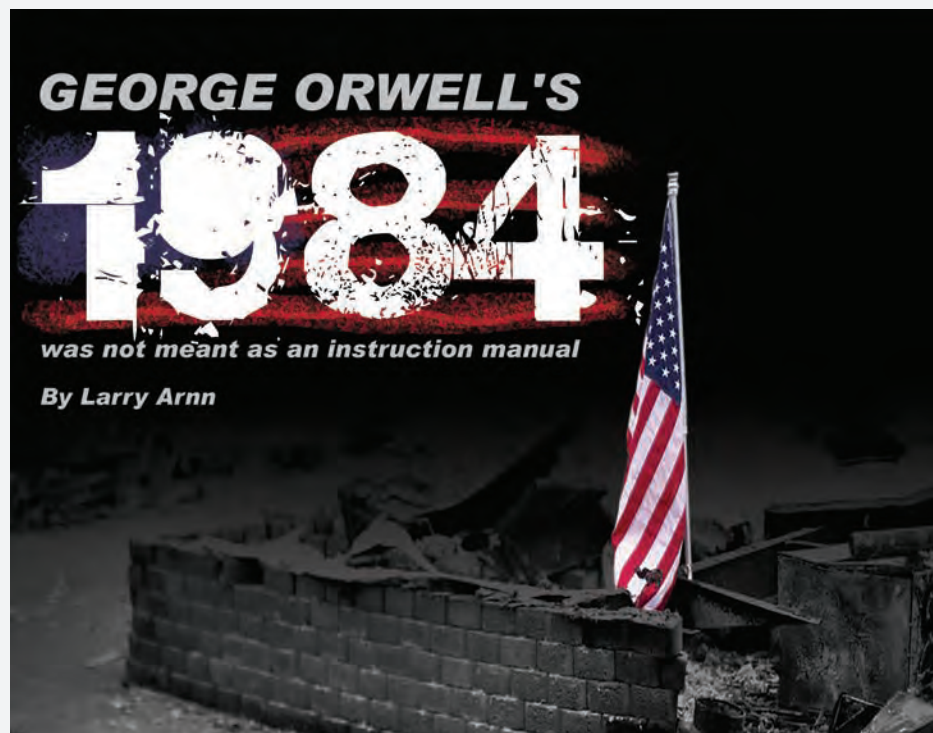


On Sept. 17, Constitution Day, I chaired a panel organized by the White House. It was an extraordinary thing. The panel's purpose was to identify what has gone wrong in the teaching of American history and to lay forth a plan for recovering the truth. It took place in the National Archives — we were sitting in front of the originals of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution — a very beautiful place. When we were done, President Trump came and gave a speech about the beauty of the American Founding and the importance of teaching American history to the preservation of freedom.

— This remarkable event reminded me of an essay by a teacher of mine, Harry Jaffa, called “*On the Necessity of a Scholarship of the Politics of Freedom.*” Its point was that a certain kind of scholarship is needed to support the principles of a nation such as ours. America is the most deliberate nation in history — it was built for reasons that are stated in the legal documents that form its founding. The reasons are given in abstract and universal terms, and without good scholarship they can be turned astray. I was reminded of that essay because this event was the greatest exhibition in my experience of the combination of the scholarship and the politics of freedom.

The panel was part of an initiative of President Trump, mostly ignored by the media, to counter the New York Times’ *1619 Project*. The *1619 Project* promotes the teaching that slavery, not freedom, is the defining fact of American history. President Trump’s *1776 Commission* aims to restore truth and honesty to the teaching of American history. It is an initiative we must work tirelessly to carry on, regardless of whether we have a president in the White House who is on our side in the fight. We must carry on the fight because our country is at stake. Indeed, in a larger sense, civilization *itself* is at stake, because the forces arrayed against the scholarship and the politics of freedom today have more radical aims than just destroying America.

I taught a course this fall semester on totalitarian novels. We read four of them: George Orwell’s *1984*, Arthur Koestler’s *Darkness at Noon*, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and C.S. Lewis’ *That Hideous Strength*.



The totalitarian novel is a relatively new genre. In fact, the word “totalitarian” did not exist before the 20th century. The older word for the worst possible form of government is “tyranny” — a word Aristotle defined as the rule of one person, or of a small group of people, in their own interests and according to their will. Totalitarianism was unknown to Aristotle, because it is a form of government that only became possible after the emergence of modern science and technology.

The old word “science” comes from a Latin word meaning “to know.” The new word “technology” comes from a Greek word meaning “to make.” The transition from traditional to modern science means that we are not so much seeking to *know* when we study nature, as seeking to *make* things — and ultimately, to remake nature itself. That spirit of remaking nature — including human nature — greatly emboldens both human beings and governments. Imbued with that spirit, and employing the tools of modern science, totalitarianism is a form of government that reaches farther than tyranny and attempts to control the totality of things.

In the beginning of his history of the Persian War, Herodotus recounts that in Persia it was considered illegal even to *think* about something that was illegal to do — in other words, the law sought to control people’s thoughts. Herodotus makes plain that the Persians were not able to do this. We today are able to get closer through the use of modern technology. In Orwell’s *1984*, there are tele-screens everywhere, as well as hidden cameras and microphones. Nearly everything you do is watched and heard. It even emerges that the watchers have become expert at reading people’s faces. The organization that oversees all this is called the Thought Police.

If it sounds far-fetched, look at China today: There are cameras everywhere watching the people, and everything they do on the Internet is monitored. Algorithms are run and experiments are underway to assign each individual a social score. If you don’t act or think in the politically correct way, things happen to you — you lose the ability to travel, for instance, or you lose your job. It’s a very comprehensive system. And by the way, you can also look at how big tech companies here in the U.S. are tracking people’s movements and activities to the extent that they are often able to know in advance what people will be doing. Even more alarming, these companies are increasingly able and willing to use the information they compile to manipulate people’s thoughts and decisions.

The protagonist of *1984* is a man named Winston Smith. He works for the state and his job is to rewrite history. He sits at a table with a telescreen in front of him that watches everything he does. To one side is something called a memory hole — when Winston puts things in it, he assumes they are burned and lost forever. Tasks are delivered to him in cylinders through a pneumatic tube. The task might involve something big, like a change in what country the state is at war with: When the enemy changes, all references to the previous war with a different enemy need to be expunged. Or the task might be something small: If an individual falls out of favor with the state, photographs of him being honored need to be altered or erased altogether from the records. Winston’s job is to fix every book, periodical, newspaper, etc. that reveals or refers to what used to be the truth, in order that it conform to the new truth.

One man, of course, can’t do this alone. There’s a film based on *1984* starring John Hurt as Winston Smith. In the film they depict the room where he works, and there are people in cubicles like his as far as the eye can see. There would have to be millions of workers involved in constantly re-writing the past.

Please see **1984** on P. 4

County to Hear “Unmet” Needs in Transportation

The Madera County Transportation Commission is holding a public hearing regarding “unmet” transportation needs within Madera County.

Members of the public, interested agencies and civic groups are encouraged to provide comments to Madera County Transportation Commission Staff regarding any transportation needs not being met by the current system. Testimony should be as specific as possible with regard to those citizens, or groups of citizens, not currently served by transit, the requested type and amount of transit service, the geographic area in which service is needed and any other supporting evidence of information, which will help in the evaluation of the “reasonableness” of the requested service.

Under the California Transportation Development Act, this hearing is provided annually to take testimony from the public on potential unmet transit needs within Madera County. The Com-

Please see **UNMET** on P. 17

Ranchos Schools’ In-Class Future

An open letter from Golden Valley Unified School District’s Board President, Andy Wheeler:

COVID and school closures have caused many struggles for our students, parents, teachers and staff. Our GVUSD school board has witnessed the struggles and has desired for our students to be in class since the beginning, yet concerns were raised that we are not fighting to re-

Please see **GVUSD** on P. 18



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Letters

Dear Editor:

Sitting here drinking my morning coffee, I've watched a half dozen people in as many minutes blow through the 4-Way stop in front of our house. I'm not talking about the so-called "California Stop" -- I'm talking about flat-out running the stop signs at high speed. One jackass even accelerated through it with tires screeching as if it's some kind of game. We've lived here for over 30 years and have always seen this behavior, but in recent years it's become progressively worse, and it has to stop. There are children in this neighborhood and many people have pets. Yes, I know, we're all supposed to keep our pets indoors or fenced, but the fact is that despite our best efforts at containment, pets do escape. As folks who have been through it, my wife and I know full well the heartbreak of finding a four-legged family member dead on

the roadway. Imagine if it was your child.

I remember when, a number of years ago, a man was killed near here while lighting 4th of July fireworks when some fool racing through the neighborhood hit him at a high rate of speed. Is it going to take another such incident before people start showing some level of responsibility while driving? We've also watched people blow through this stop sign at at least 50 m.p.h. on Halloween night with the streets full of children. What's wrong with these idiots? This is not a joke, and driving a 2-ton vehicle on public roadways is not some kind of game. Those of you who do this know exactly who you are. If you can't find it within yourselves to drive responsibly and with some regard for the lives of others then please stay out of our neighborhood.

Rick Hodgson
Madera Ranchos

1984 cont. from P. 2

One of the chief questions raised by the book is what makes this worth the effort? Why does the regime do it?

Winston's awareness of this endless, mighty effort to alter reality makes him cynical and disaffected. He comes to see that he knows nothing of the past, of real history: "Every record has been destroyed or falsified," he says at one point. "Every book has been rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street and building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And that process is continuing day by day and minute by minute ... nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right." Does any of this sound familiar?

In his disaffection, Winston commits two unlawful acts: He begins writing in a diary and he begins meeting a woman in secret, outside the sanction of the state. The family is important to the state, because the state needs babies. But the women are raised by the state in a way that they are not to enjoy relations with their husbands. And the children — as in China today, and as it was in the Soviet Union — are indoctrinated and taught to spy and inform on their parents. Parents love their children but live in terror of them all the time. Think of the control that comes

from that — and the misery.

There are three stratum in the society of 1984. There is the Inner Party, whose members hold all the power. There is the Outer Party, to which Winston belongs, whose members work for — and are watched and controlled by — the Inner Party. And there are the proles, who live and do the blue collar work in a relatively unregulated area. Winston ventures out into that area from time to time. He finds a little shop there where he buys things. And it is in a room upstairs from this shop

"Every record has been destroyed or falsified ... every book has been rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street and building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And that process is continuing day by day and minute by minute ..."
Does any of this sound familiar?

where he and Julia, the woman he falls in love with, set up a kind of household as if they are married. They create something like a private world in that room, although it is a world with limitations — they can't even think about having children, for instance, because if they did, they would be discovered and killed.

In the end, it turns out that the shopkeeper, who had seemed to be a kindly old man, is in fact a member of the Thought Police. Winston and Julia's room contained a hidden telescreen all along, so everything they have said and done has been observed. In fact, it emerges that the Thought Police have known that Winston has been having deviant thoughts for 12 years and have been watching him care-

Please see 1984 on P. 14

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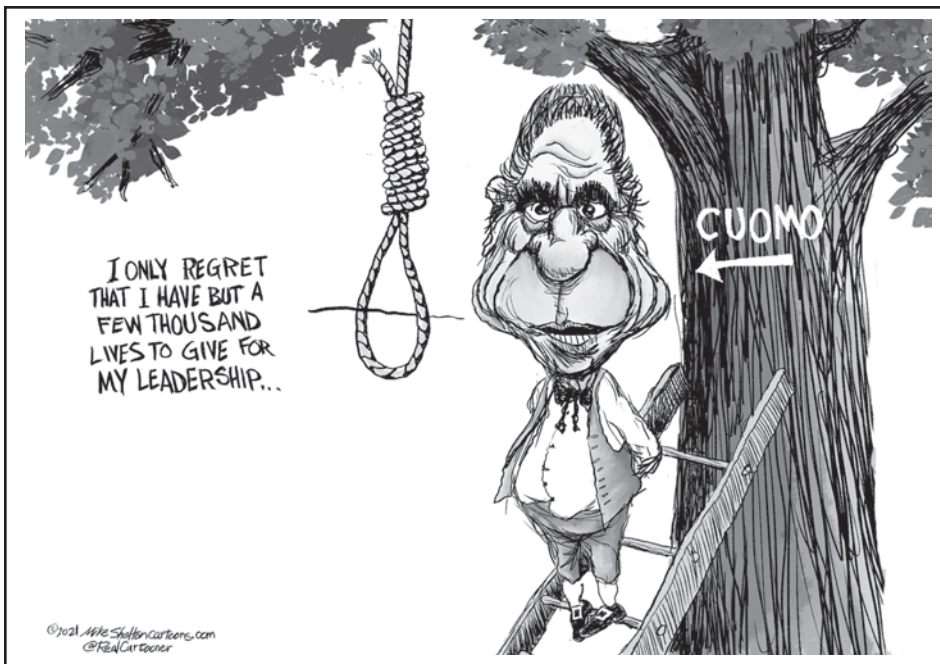
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Guest Editorial

A Generation Without Freedom

By Jared Dyson

As I scrolled through some news articles on Thursday, one particular article caught my attention. CNN ran the article and it was talking about a new generation that is being referred to as “Gen C” or Generation COVID. The concept is that the global pandemic which has struck our world is creating changes among a generation of kids that are growing and developing through all the craziness.

Throughout the article, several examples were shared of how this pandemic is affecting this “Gen C” in ways that others may have not experienced in the past. It spoke of canceled birthday parties, the inability to see family and more. Images filled the page showing kids that were in masks, in contact with other people behind glass doors and images of a child where the parent was creating a TikTok video explaining how the child had yet to know what a playdate was really about.

As I sat and read through the article and saw the images, there were two things that came into my mind vividly. The first was the statement that we continue to hear from the Left that our world has changed forever. The idea continues to be shared that our world will never be the same post-COVID as it was before COVID. Mainstream media says that work is changed for-

ever, as some may never return to regular offices or even return to their jobs.

Others say that school has been changed forever. Some have suggested children may never return to the classroom fully, but rather with a hybrid model that includes at-home learning. Even the Left’s anointed expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, has indicated that he believes we can get back to “normal” but what is that normal? They have planted the seed in everyone’s mind so that many across our society are already using the language and saying similar things.

Now that they have the idea in everyone’s mind that things may never be the same, everyone will be more accepting of what their ultimate goal is. That’s not to push us into universal income or housing necessarily. Those are part of the plan, but it’s not the ultimate plan. The ultimate plan is that Democrats across the country realized they needed to take the indoctrination of young people a step further than simple “socialism.”

For this exercise, they went directly after American freedom through public health. They convinced Americans that they must give up their rights to free enterprise, religion, speech and more amid this “health crisis.” They convinced them they were safer at home, relying on government intervention. They convinced them that they were better off relying on the government for income, food, housing and more. They have worked to convince Americans that the government must be trusted and that anyone who is not focused on their health is spreading disinformation and cannot be trusted.

Enter Gen C, a generation that may never know American freedom. These children have witnessed Americans that willingly gave up their freedom for a bit of personal security. They have heard the stories about how a former president and his supporters were crazy to say that lockdowns, mandatory orders and more were unconstitutional. They have heard that if someone is not interested in your personal health and willing to sacrifice for your comfort, they are not religious, concerned, or perhaps they deserve to be silenced and cut off from society.

We have a generation that is com-

Please see **EDITORIAL** on P. 10

The Ranchos Independent

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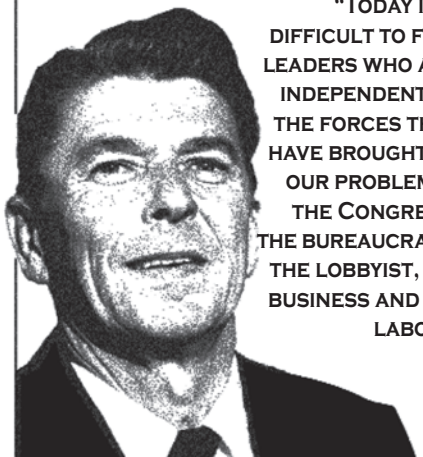
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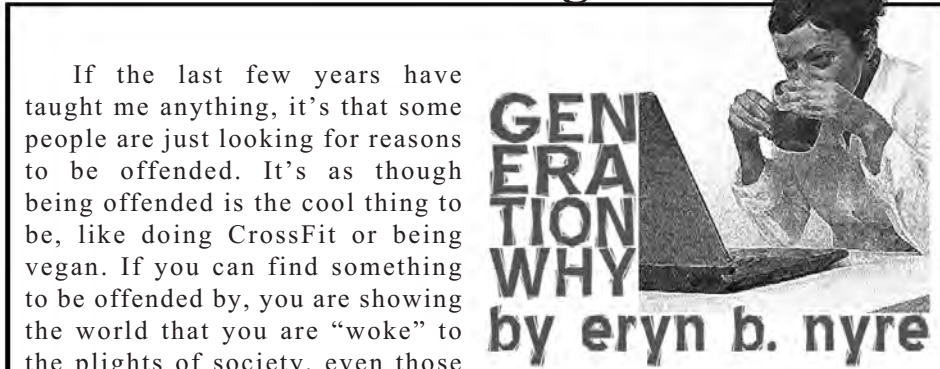
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Can We All Get Along ... No?



GENERATION WHY
by **eryn b. nyre**

If the last few years have taught me anything, it's that some people are just looking for reasons to be offended. It's as though being offended is the cool thing to be, like doing CrossFit or being vegan. If you can find something to be offended by, you are showing the world that you are "woke" to the plights of society, even those plights that are completely made up and really only exist in the concerningly small minds of a limited portion of the population. It doesn't even seem to matter what the topic is. By finding something – *anything* – offensive you are showing the world (well, mostly social media and their army of social justice warriors) that you stand with them. You are on the "right" side of history, because clearly it's people on the "wrong" side of history that think you should leave Looney Tunes and Dr. Seuss alone.

What's even more nefarious is that these groups don't just want their opinions heard, they want the "offenders" muzzled. This is a direct attack on freedom of speech and expression. It's unfortunate that smartphones and social media have made vicious anonymity so ubiquitous. It's true that we live in a time where everyone, including the dregs of society who can't even form a cohesive thought, can freely spew their opinion across every page of social media they can click to. But to actually work to silence those you disagree with because you don't like their opinions ... what's next? Locking people in the tower for disagreeing with the king? I thought we fought a revolution against that.

The problem with trying to conform all of society to a single set of beliefs is that, in spite of what the SJWs are trying to convince you, society is actually already diverse in beliefs and opinions. Just read any comments thread for evidence of that. Heck,

look what's happening within their own ranks. You can be their little darling as long as you completely agree with absolutely everything in their manifesto, but coloring outside those lines will get you in hot water with your own people. We have already seen instances of them turning on each other for not properly toeing the company line. Soon we will have more SJW

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groups who are battling it out with each other and the rest of us will be stuck in the line of fire. The thing is, you can't design a set of social rules that includes everyone or excludes everyone. The best you can do is allow personal freedom, which we have courtesy of those who have fought for it and continue to fight for it since we declared our independence. Accept the fact that you are actually in control of yourself and can simply choose to stop listening to a talk radio show or watch a TV program or listen to a song if you don't like what it has to say. You can choose to not support a brand, or an actor or a politician. You can choose to cancel your subscription to a news source that you feel does not meet your needs, or even toss a free paper out if you don't like one of the contributors. But the more restrictions we put on everything in an attempt to avoid offending anyone, the less freedom we will all have to make decisions for ourselves.

Freedom actually comes at a

Please see **GENWHY** on P. 7

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Make Your Closet a Happy Place

Walking into the dentist's office. Meeting with an auditor. Being summoned by your boss during layoffs. These and other stressful situations naturally stir up negative emotions. But walking into your closet doesn't have to be one of them.

To which of these do you relate?

- **Overwhelmed** from too many choices
- **Frustration** from not enough choices
- **Shame** of not fitting into what you want to wear
- **Stress** of not finding what you want to wear
- **Disgust** with piles of dirty laundry
- **Exasperation** from piles of clean

laundry

Can an organized closet really combat this negativity? If organized means having what you need, use and love in designated spaces where they fit comfortably, and maintaining those spaces with supporting routines, then yes! You can make your closet a happy place. Let's break it down.

What do you need? You need clothes that fit well and look good on you — regardless of your shape or size. You don't need clothes that cause shame for not being the size you want to be, or for having spent money on something you don't wear. You also don't need clothes you're not using anymore. Give yourself permission to let go of professional, maternity and bridesmaid dresses you no longer need.

Action: Pull out the clothes that don't fit, don't look good on you, you don't like and you no longer need. If you want to hang onto three – five outfits that you love from a size you hope to be, place them in an underbed bin or plastic tote with a label. Put the rest in a box or bag for donation. Bless someone else.

Action: Purchase clothes, as needed, that fit well and look good on you.

What do you use? You have categories of clothes: Staying home, going out, work, formal, etc. The quantity of clothes you have for each category

should align with how often you use them. Granted, COVID has decreased our need for going out and formal wear, but let's not give up on the return of those activities.

Action: Pull out one category at a time. Lay the items on the bed. Determine the appropriate number of items you need based on use. Let go of the excess.

Action: If you discover a category is lacking, create a specific shopping list of items to purchase.

Action: Return each category of clothes to your closet and assign it a section. Organize by color and season as desired.

What do you love? This can be tricky. Do you love how it looks on the hanger, but not on you? Do you love the good deal you got, but not so much the item? Do you love the person who gave it to you, but you never wear it? None of those are valid reasons for keeping something, except the third if it's going to impair the relationship. Even though you'll feel a twinge of guilt giving them up, your closet will be a happier place.

Action: Let them go.

Designate spaces where they fit comfortably. If your clothes are still crammed together, you're not quite there yet. Easy access means space between hangers to see and rehang items.

Action: Store off-season clothes in a bin or another closet. Place bulky items on a shelf or in a dresser drawer. If it's still packed, purge some more.

Maintain with supporting routines. Your closet won't remain a "happy place" without supporting routines.

Action: Don't put it down; put it away. Hang clean clothes. Place dirty clothes in laundry bin. Every time.

Action: Hang a white kitchen trash bag for donations in your closet. When you try on something and decide not to wear it, consider placing it in the donation bag.

Action: Out with the old, in with the new. Maintain inventory with the one in, one out rule.

Action: Hang your hangers backwards until you wear the item, then hang it correctly. Whichever items are still hanging backwards at the end of the season, go.

Now you can confidently walk into your happy place and choose from clothes you want to wear.

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GENWHY cont. from P. 6

price, and part of that price is that you won't always like what you see and hear. You are going to come across things in this life that make you uncomfortable, but we are all afforded the autonomy to choose for ourselves what we watch, what we listen to and what we let into our homes. We shouldn't limit freedom for the sake of comfort because then we have to talk about who gets to be comfortable and who doesn't. Instead, let's all agree that because of the liberty granted to us by our constitution we can choose to spend our money, time and resources on the things we support, and avoid putting our money, time and resources into that which we do not agree. If you don't like a store's policy, don't shop there. If you don't like what a production company stands for then don't watch their movies. If you think an actor or musician is offen-

sive, don't watch their shows or listen to their music. If enough people agree with you, then the free market will take care of the problem for us as no one will put their resources in that basket. But if you find yourself not in the majority, then you are still the winner because by not participating in that, by simply avoiding what offends you, you will actually be happier.

So how about this: We all agree that people need protection from things like abuse, violence and theft. But can we also agree that offensive is, by nature, subjective and we have to put the power – and responsibility – back in the hands of the citizenry to be in charge of reconciling their own feelings of offense. Turn off the TV, change the radio station, don't shop in that store, don't buy that brand. Support those you agree with; simply let those you don't agree with live their lives. Sounds like a free society to me.

Say you saw it in the Ranchos Independent

Happy Easter

(March 2011)

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



by Jean Briner

desserts. Oh, and deviled eggs. NOT the ones that were up in a tree, behind a lawn chair or stepped on a couple of times earlier that day.

I start the eggs (I usually boil about two- or three-dozen) in cold water, and after they start boiling, turn the fire down and cook at a light boil for about 10 minutes. After the 10 minutes I usually test one to make sure it is done then IMMEDIATELY drain the hot water into the sink and turn the cold water onto the eggs. I let the cold water run on the eggs until you can pick up an egg easily then crack and peel them, leaving them whole. I have found this method the easiest to peel the egg without tearing it up. I have read of other methods but this one works best for me – if you have a method you have used, then by all means use it. After you have peeled them and they have cooled enough

that you can handle them, cut them in half from top to bottom with a sharp paring knife, putting the yolks into a bowl and the whites on a flat surface. I have a Tupperware cake saver that I use. If you aren't going to finish deviling them at this point be sure to put them in the

refrigerator.

When the eggs have been separated, put the whites in the fridge until you have the yolks ready. All I do is smash the yolks with a fork until they are kind of like corn meal. Add enough mayonnaise or Miracle Whip (I prefer Miracle Whip for most things, but in these eggs, I use half mayonnaise and half Miracle Whip) to make them moist, but not runny. If you aren't used to doing this, start with only a couple of tablespoons, and add a little at a time until you get

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

Since Easter is my favorite holiday of the year, either Christian or secular, I couldn't let it slide by without writing about it. We celebrate Easter Sunday because Jesus was crucified for our sins (John 3:16) died on the cross on Friday, was buried and rose from death on Sunday (Mark 16:6). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the fundamental principles and beliefs of Christianity. It's why we say, "Christ is Risen – He is Risen Indeed!"

Egg Dying Time

In our families, Saturday before Easter is egg dying day. Each family with children begins with two- or three-dozen eggs but don't always end up with that many. There are the one or two eggs that crack during the boiling and invariably there are always the ones that "accidentally" hit the floor.

On Easter Sunday when we get home from church, there is always egg hunts

for the kids – seems like every year there is one egg that just can't be found (until about July). Eggs are a traditional symbol of new life. According to the book *Festivals and Celebrations* by Rowland Purton, eggs were dyed in ancient times by the Egyptians and Persians who exchanged them with their friends. "It was in Mesopotamia that Christians first gave eggs to their friends at Easter to remind them of the resurrection of Jesus," Purton wrote.

Our Easter Feast is real simple – Baked Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, green beans, green salad, rolls and

My favorite Easter Hymn is Christ Arose! I get goose bumps when the chorus is sung, "Up from the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph o'er His foes, He arose a Victor from the dark domain, and He lives forever, with His saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!" Have a blessed Easter.

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RECIPE cont. from P. 8

the consistency you want. Add a squirt of mustard (not too much) and salt and pepper to taste. Last year I added just a couple of tablespoons of sweet pickle juice. After you have the yolks tasting the way you want, put them in the whites and refrigerate until ready to serve. I use a teaspoon to fill my whites, but a pastry bag with a pretty tip would make them more festive.

The Easter Ham

As far as the ham goes, I think everyone has their favorite glaze – and some people don't like any – but it is entirely whatever your family prefers. We drain the juice from a can of pineapple chunks into a bowl; add enough brown sugar to make a paste – not real thick – and a squirt of mustard. When the ham is almost done (about 30

minutes before it is ready) take it out of the oven and score the outside (not real deep) in diamond shapes. With toothpicks put the pineapple chunks on the ham and spoon the juice mixture over that. Put back in the oven until it is done.

When it comes to the potatoes we really cheat here! We have found that the boxed ones are good, and a lot less trouble. With our gang, usually between 15 and 20, we usually use 10 to 12 boxes. Can you imagine peeling that many potatoes? You'd feel like you were on KP

duty in the Army. We use about four disposable aluminum baking pans, cooking two pans at a time.

The balance of the meal is simple, and just whatever your family likes.

Like so many of our meals (we have seven households coming together) there are always a lot of desserts. My sister usually

makes a coconut cake, I make a pineapple upside down cake (probably won't this year as my oven is on the fritz, and doubt if I can get it replaced before Easter), Adam will

bring a couple of his apple pies and there will probably be a banana pudding (I can remember my grandma always made one for Thanksgiving dinner. But she made real pudding, not the boxed ones we use today).

I'm looking forward to more recipes from the Ranchos', Rolling Hills' or Bonnadelle's good cooks. Or how about kids? I'd love to do an article on kids' favorite foods – anything from hot dogs to s'mores.

An Easter Favorite

My favorite Easter Hymn is *Christ Arose!* I get goose bumps when the chorus is sung, "Up from the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph o'er His foes, He arose a Victor from the dark domain, and He lives forever, with His saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"

Have a blessed Easter.



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EDITORIAL cont. from P. 5

ing up that has been conditioned by the Left that government intervention is the best. They are convinced that “experts” always have the best ideas and that you simply should not think for yourself. They are convinced that they should willingly give up their freedom for a little comfort.

This brings me to the second thing that comes to my mind. Back in 1967, there were words to a speech that were given that ring ever true today. On Jan. 5, a governor stood and said these words: “Freedom is a fragile thing and it’s never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by way of inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes only once to a people. And those in world history who have known freedom and then lost it have never known it again.

As he gave the speech, Ronald Reagan was imploring his state to continue the fight for freedom. He was encouraging his generation to continue pressing for freedoms in order to secure them for future generations. I wonder how surprised he would be to see just how close we are to losing those freedoms he loved so dearly?

He said freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. Meet Gen C, the generation that the Left has conditioned to willingly give up their freedoms believing it to be normal. Now, it’s our generation’s time to stand up and fight for freedom before it is lost. Because if we continue down this same path, our future generations will never know freedom again.

Jared Dyson is the Editor-in-Chief at The Liberty Loft and host of The Jared Dyson Show. This editorial originally appeared on www.TheLibertyLoft.com.

By Wyatt Morgan and Corinna Martinez

Sierra Shadows 4-H is making the most of the year. Projects are having meetings as much as possible and the Public Speaking group members are working on their County Presentation Day speeches, working hard to get them memorized before March 27, Presentation Day. Joshua’s Ways group members volunteered their time, and muscles, at Bowe’s Animal




Rescue in February. They also met earlier in the month to make crunchy dog toys to donate. The Swine group, Goat group and Beef group have started preparing for Large Animal Expo. Members have their own study guides for their level and are reviewing everything they need to know. The Arts & Crafts group still meets every month and does a craft together over Zoom. The craft for February was string art in the shape of a heart, which members enjoyed and even made multiples. The Floral group has been busy with a new project every month. Outdoor Adventures is staying active and just finished a San Joaquin River walk. The Shooting Sports group is busy getting ready for a statewide contest coming up. The Poultry and Rabbit groups are busy studying for the Small Animal Expo in April. Sierra Shadows 4-H is keeping on doing as much as they can to make the most of 2021.



Sierra Shadows 4-H members of the Joshua's Ways group volunteering at Bowe's Animal Rescue in the Ranchos.

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Thank You! Ranchos Community

Our community yard sale on Saturday, March 6 raised over \$600 for the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce.

When's the NEXT Chamber of Commerce Meeting?

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, Wednesday, April 14 at 6:30 p.m., 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C in the Maywood Center. Come join us and see what's going on in your community. Call us TODAY at 645-4001.

3/21

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Senior Report

Member's Pride in Family *and* Ranchos/Hills Senior Center Shows

By Margaret Tynan

If you are out and about in the Madera Ranchos, you may see Ana Colorado out for her brisk morning walk. It is a longtime habit of hers. In the days before COVID, she would make her way to the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Center to help set up the room for the Exercise Program -- something she sorely misses.

A member since 2003, Ana shared that she came to the United States on a Resident Visa in 1965 when she was 19 years old. It was her first time flying, leaving El Salvador in a very small propellered plane, then changed flights onto a huge jet bound for San Francisco. Five years later she became a citizen

Ana worked for the U.S. govern-

ment for many years and it's where she met her husband. They eventually moved to Fresno and after 30 years of government service, Ana moved with her husband to the Ranchos to be close to their daughter.

Ana is very proud of her family. You can hear it in her voice. Her daughter works for a non-profit organization serving youth in the Valley, while her son is an air traffic controller in the Bay Area. She is especially proud of her four grandsons.

Ana spends her time now working in the yard. She and her husband are putting in another garden, planting zucchini, tomatoes and onions. She is anxious for the Center to open again and to reconnect with everyone.

Now that more and more of the

Center's members are receiving the COVID vaccine, the very popular exercise program will be held every Monday and Wednesday mornings in April at 10 a.m. Also, on Tuesday, April 27, from 1:30 to 3:30 we will hold a puzzle building competition on the outdoor patio. Adults 50+ yrs. Are welcome. A \$5 donation is suggested. Call or email Margaret Tynan at 645-4930, or email at mtynan@sbcglobal.net.

We hope to see you at the monthly Outdoor Sale on Saturday, April 3 from 8 a.m. to noon. The Treasure House will be open and of-

fers many interesting useful items for all ages. Please wear a mask and maintain physical distancing while shopping.

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

Thought for April: "*April is the kindest month. April gets you out of your head and out working in the garden.*" – Marty Rubin

The Bookshelf

Library's "Backpack Literacy"

By Jerrica Edmundson

Spring is here, and with its lost hour of sleep it also brings some hopefully sunny weather and a break from the drear of winter. Here at the library, we are preparing for spring by continuing work with our awesome participants in our Backpack Literacy Program, expanding our public hours and refining our procedures within the library.

The Backpack Literacy Program has been going fantastically so far and we are so thankful for the partnership with First Five of Madera. They have given us the opportunity to provide the Ranchos community with a free take-home beginning literacy program for children ages 4-5 who aren't currently enrolled in a formal schooling program, and we are about halfway through the program.

You have all been asking for more availability to come in and browse the shelves and we have definitely been listening. As such, we have expanded our public access hours to include 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. every Friday. This makes our public hours out to be Wednesday from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Curbside pickup remains available on Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., but this gives patrons a bit more of a chance to come inside the branch and browse. Masks are still required, as well as temperature checks at the door for entry into the building.

We have been working on getting our book drop fixed and hopefully that will be

replaced soon through the County, but until then we will continue to have the rollaway box available during business hours and have been adjusting check-in dates to accommodate this. We do understand that it is an inconvenience to not be able to access the drop box as much as might be needed, but we are really doing all we can to try to get this fixed as soon as we can. We do appreciate your understanding during this time though and hope it is resolved shortly.

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

Jerrica's Shelf: Jade War by Fonda Lee

Jade War is a science fiction/fantasy novel set in a world where jade imbues carriers with superhuman senses and strength so long as they have the proper genetic makeup to handle the strain. As such, jade has become a commodity that is highly sought after and — as human nature consistently seems to cause — a mob-like ring has risen up in the society, one built on violence and fear with a power structure that has many safety nets. The leaders of this society focus on honor and refuse to allow slights to their character to go by unpunished.

I've just started this book and honestly had a hard time getting into the swing of things, but as I've gotten a bit further along, I keep finding myself wanting to know what is going to happen next. Lee has done a great job creating a realistic world that seems not too far off from our own, with a bit of magic thrown in the mix — which I always love.

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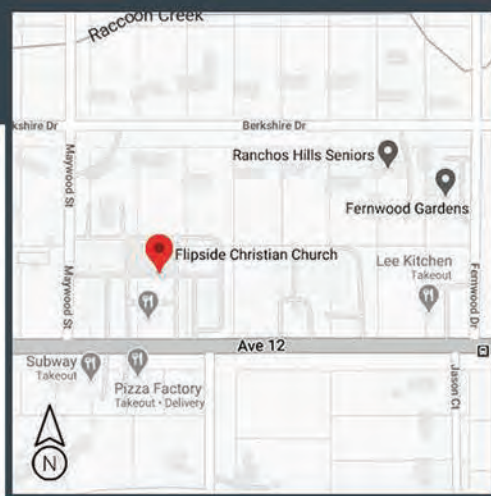
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1984 cont. from P. 4

fully. When the couple are arrested, they have made pledges that they will never betray each other. They know the authorities will be able to make them say whatever they want them to say — but in their hearts, they pledge, they will be true to their love. It is a promise that neither is finally able to keep.

After months of torture, Winston thinks that what awaits him is a bullet in the back of the head, the preferred method of execution of both the Nazis and the Soviet Communists. In Koestler's *Darkness*

at Noon, the protagonist walks down a basement hallway after confessing to crimes that he didn't commit, and without any ceremony he is shot in the back of the head — eradicated as if he were vermin.

Winston doesn't get off so easy. He will instead undergo an education, or more accurately a *re-education*. His final stages of torture are depicted as a kind of totalitarian seminar. The seminar is conducted by a man named O'Brien, who is portrayed marvelously in the film by Richard Burton. As he alternately raises and lowers the level of Winston's pain, O'Brien leads him to knowledge regarding the full meaning of the totalitarian regime.

As the first essential step of his education, Winston has to learn doublethink — a way of thinking that defies the law of contradiction. In Aristotle, the law of contradiction is the basis of all reasoning, the means of making sense of the world. It is the law that says that X and Y cannot be true at the same time if they're mutually exclusive. For instance, if A is taller than B and B is taller than C, C *cannot* be taller than A. The law of contradiction means things like that.

In our time, the law of contradiction would mean that a governor, say, could not simultaneously hold that the COVID pandemic renders church services too dangerous to allow, and also that massive protest marches are fine. It would preclude a man from declaring himself a woman, or a woman declaring herself a man, as if one's sex is simply a matter of what one wills it to be — and it would preclude others from viewing such claims as anything other than preposterous.

The law of contradiction also means that we can't change the past. What we can know of the truth all resides in the past, because the present is fleeting and confusing

and tomorrow has yet to come. The past, on the other hand, is complete. Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas go so far as to say that changing the past — making what has been *not* to have been — is denied even to God. Because if something both happened and didn't happen, no human understanding is possible. And God created us with the capacity for understanding.

That's the law of contradiction, which the art of doublethink denies and violates. Doublethink is manifest in the fact that the state ministry in which Winston is tortured is called the Ministry of Love. It is manifest in the three slogans displayed on the

"Why do you think you are being tortured?" O'Brien asks Winston. "The Party is not trying to improve you," he says, "the Party cares nothing about you."

state's Ministry of Truth: "War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength." And as we have seen, the regime in 1984 exists precisely to repeal the past. If the past can be changed, anything can be

changed — man can surpass even the power of God. But still, to what end?

"Why do you think you are being tortured?" O'Brien asks Winston. "The Party is not trying to improve you," he says, "the Party cares nothing about you." Winston is brought to see that he is where he is simply as the subject of the state's power. Understanding having been rendered meaningless, the only competence that has meaning is power.

"Already we are breaking down the habits of thought which have survived from before the Revolution," O'Brien says. "We have cut the links between child and parent, and between man and man, and between man and woman. No one dares trust a wife or a child or a friend any longer. But in the future, there will be no wives and no friends. Children will be taken from their mothers at birth, as one takes eggs from a hen. The sex instinct will be eradicated. Procreation will be an annual formality like the renewal of a ration card ... there will be no loyalty, except loyalty toward the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy ... all competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always — do not forget this Winston — always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of

Please see 1984 on P. 17

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3/21

Strange

BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

wait for it -- frostnip.

- Boeing uses potatoes to test their in-flight Wi-Fi, as they reflect and absorb the signals in a fashion similar to humans. The process is called Synthetic Personnel Using Dialectic Substitution, or SPUDS.
- The first roller coaster was used to transport coal down a hill. After people found that it could reach speeds up to 50 mph, tourists started asking to ride on it for a few cents.
- Thought for the Day: "By walking on the right path, you create a golden fate for yourself and you also become a silver lining for the others!" -- Mehmet Murat ildan

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- Ladies, before you put a ring on it, you might want to consider that a survey of 17,000 people across 28 countries found that the amount of time a man spends doing chores on a weekly basis decreases significantly after he marries.
- In 1862, the King of Siam offered Abraham Lincoln many elephants on the grounds that a "country as great as the United States should not be without elephants." President Lincoln politely declined.
- The stage before frostbite is called --

SEM CU speaks

Ranchos Update

By Jeff McGrath

We are now at a point where more people are qualifying for the COVID-19 vaccination, including food producers and farm workers. The Madera Farm Bureau is helping to advance the vaccination by coordinating with farmers and setting up locations for immunizations. Here is a synopsis of the vaccine creation process.

There are more vaccine candidates simultaneously in the pipeline for COVID-19 than ever before for an infectious disease. All of them are trying to achieve the same thing: Immunity to the virus and the possibility some might also be able to stop transmission. They do so by stimulating an immune response to an antigen, a molecule found on the virus. In the case of COVID-19, the antigen is typ-

ically the characteristic spike protein found on the surface of the virus, which it normally uses to help it invade human cells. There are four categories of vaccines in clinical trials: Whole virus, protein subunit, viral vector and nucleic acid (RNA and DNA). Some of them try to smuggle the antigen into the body, others use the body's own cells to make the viral antigen.

Many conventional vaccines use whole viruses to trigger an immune response. There are two main approaches: Live attenuated vaccines use a weakened form of the virus that can still replicate without causing illness; inactivated vaccines use viruses whose genetic material has been destroyed so they cannot replicate but can still trigger an immune response. Both types use well-established technology and pathways for regulatory approval, but live attenuated ones may risk causing disease in people with weak immune systems and often require careful cold storage, making their use more challenging in low-resource countries. Inactivated virus vaccines can be given to people with compromised immune systems but might also need cold storage.

Subunit vaccines use pieces of the

pathogen – often fragments of protein – to trigger an immune response. Doing so minimizes the risk of side effects, but it also means the immune response may be weaker. Therefore, they often require adjuvants to help boost the immune response. An example of an existing subunit vaccine is the hepatitis B vaccine.

Nucleic acid vaccines use genetic material – either RNA or DNA – to provide cells with the instructions to make the antigen. In the case of COVID-19, this is usually the viral spike protein. Once this genetic material gets into human cells, it uses our cells' protein factories to make the antigen that will trigger an immune response. The advantages of such vaccines are that they are easy to make and less expensive. Viral vector vaccines also work by giving cells genetic instructions to produce antigens, but they differ from nucleic acid vaccines in that they use a harmless virus, different from the one the vaccine is targeting, to deliver these instructions into the cell. One type of virus that has often been used as a vector is adenovirus, which causes the common cold. As with nucleic acid vaccines, our own cellular machinery is hijacked to produce the

antigen from those instructions in order to trigger an immune response. You can go to www.gavi.org for more vaccine information.

Board members will be elected at the next SEMCU meeting. Any community members who are interested in helping with ideas and the direction SEMCU can be nominated. If not you, maybe you know someone that may be interested in helping our community by spending one hour per month at our monthly meeting. Although the time required is minimal, the importance of caring for our community is invaluable.

As part of the social distancing, our monthly board meetings on the third Monday of each month will be held via telephone conferencing. The public is invited and encouraged to listen in and offer ideas of projects that can help improve our community. To join in at 6 p.m., call 312-757-3221. When prompted, dial the access code 715657949#. To call SEMCU for more information, call 559-363-9095, or reach the organization at www.semcu.org or by email at info@semcu.org.

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

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Letter Answering Time

Hello, 93636.

When the Ranchos Independent editor originally approached me about writing an automotive column, he envisioned readers submitting questions with me offering automotive advice. This month I received an email from an Independent reader so let's see how his concept works out.

"Hi Warren. Your In Good Hands articles are always very informative and entertaining at the same time. Your recent article Checking Check Balls was one of my favorites. I even read parts to my wife. She asked me a question I really don't have a good answer for. She drives a 2014 Nissan 370Z but since COVID she is driving less than 3,000 miles per year. Some people think she should have her oil changed every 3 months anyway. Prior to having a company car, I would change my personal vehicle's oil every 3,000 miles. Interesting to me my 2015 Ford Pick-Up service intervals were every 10,000 miles but my new 2020 Ford Pick-Up interval is 7,500 miles with the same 3.5L Eco Boost engine. My company car service agreement is 5,000 mile service intervals. What do you say?"

"I'm also interested in your views concerning service items like radiator flushes, differential gear oil changes, fuel injector service, etc. Some of these seem to me to be over the top. Would love to hear your take. Rodney."

Thank you, Rodney, for your kind words and questions.

My way of thinking is this: Vehicle manufacturers are hoping you will be brand loyal and purchase your next new vehicle from them also. If their vehicle's reliability is too low or its maintenance costs are too high, it would be a deterrent. The manufacturer's recommendations are designed to ensure the greatest reliability at the least costs.

Your owner's manual shows two different maintenance schedules: "Normal" and "Severe Duty." Severe duty driving conditions include primarily short trips of five miles or less, stop and go and/or dusty driving conditions, very hot, very cold, heavy loads or towing a trailer. All Ranchos vehicles fall into the severe duty category due to the valley's summer heat, dust and wildfire particulates. Depending on driving style and vehicle, I generally recommend a

service interval exactly in the middle. I do not recommend "normal" maintenance service recommendations, Rodney.

Many newer vehicles have an in-vehicle maintenance reminder system that records a number of operating conditions like cold starts, average distance traveled per trip, engine temperatures, average speed, etc. It calculates the maintenance strategy and turns on the "Maintenance Reminder Lamp" when it's time for an engine oil change, fluid level checks, component inspections and other car maintenance services. I endorse the Maintenance Reminder Systems and I rely on them to service my family's vehicles.

With regard to oil change intervals, sludge is the greatest determinate. Sludge is oil that has turned into a thick black goo which clings to everything and restricts small oil passageways. Sludge is created when engine oil is contaminated with carbon from the combustion process and water vapor from condensation. A few minutes at freeway speeds allows the oil to warm up enough to evaporate the water. Sludge also forms when high heat conditions cause oil breakdown. Fortunately, sludge and varnish deposits are something oil manufacturers can control. Synthetic oil is a highly refined oil with high-performing additives created in a lab for uniformity and a more consistent oil flow during all normal engine temperature fluctuations. Under a microscope, a drop of synthetic oil shows millions of molecules all nearly the same size and structure. Full synthetic oils use synthetic base stocks with high performing additives. Conventional oil is refined from crude oil and under a microscope shows millions of molecules all with different shapes, sizes and structures. An American Automobile Association study of conventional oils vs full synthetic oils found on average full synthetic oils outperformed conventional oils by 47 percent with shear stability, deposit formation, volatility, cold-temperature pumpability, oxidation resistance and viscosity changes.

At my shop the engine oil change is only ONE component of the vehicle service interval process. The proactive visual vehicle inspection is just as important. Although I'm not opposed to a yearly oil change at 3,000 miles, I don't like the increased risk of break downs that comes with the lower inspection rate.

In my personal daily drivers, I use conventional oil unless the manufacturer recommendation is otherwise. Mine all have 200,000 - 330,000 miles on the clock so I would rather spend the money on frequent inspections instead of expensive oil. That's just my opinion.

Cooling system services are generally rec-

ommended every five years or 150,000 miles. Ethylene glycol does not wear out, but the lubricants, silicates, phosphates and other coolant additives do. The proper pH range for a modern cooling system is 9.8-10.5. Neglecting your cooling system will cost you BIG. I strongly agree with the manufacturer's recommendations.



Transmission fluid service recommendations are generally 100,000 miles. I prefer 60,000 - 90,000 miles. I also prefer fluid exchanges rather than filter replacements. Keeping the fluid clean will keep the filter clean.

Differential fluid replacement recommendations are generally 150,000 miles. I agree.

At my shop we test the brake fluid every oil service and our recommendations are according to the test results.

Power steering fluid is the most neglected

fluid in my opinion. It's hard to gauge and the Bureau of Automotive Repair frowns on recommendations based on color. Power Steering fluid exchanges are inexpensive, so my general recommendation is every 60,000 with synthetic fluid.

With regard to fuel injection service, the typical gasoline port fuel injection service recommendation is every 60,000 to 90,000 miles. If your fuel mileage is normal and there are no drivability issues, it's not something I automatically recommend. If your vehicle is a Gasoline Direct Injection vehicle the recommendation is 40,000 - 60,000 miles. Based on my training I strongly agree.

OK Rodney, that's all for this one. Hope this helps.

As always, if any readers have any suggestions, recommendations, general or specific questions about a vehicle, I can be reached at complete_car_care@hotmail.com or text to 559-907-7661.

God bless America and God bless 93636.

Warren Parr, a two-time ASE/NAPA California Technician of the Year and 2013 ASE/NAPA National Technician of the Year 2nd Runner-Up



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3/21

SAY YOU SAW IT IN the Ranchos Independent

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1984 cont. from P. 14

the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — forever.”
 Nature is ultimately unchangeable, of course, and humans are not God. Totalitarianism will never win in the end — but it can win long enough to destroy a civilization. That is what is ultimately at stake in the fight we are in. We can see today the totalitarian impulse among powerful forces in our politics and culture. We can see it in the rise and imposition of doublethink, and we can see it in the increasing attempt to rewrite our history.

“An informed patriotism is what we want,” Ronald Reagan said toward the end of his Farewell Address as president in January 1989. “Are we doing a good enough job teaching our children what America is and what she represents in the long history of the world?”

Then he issued a warning.

“Those of us who are over 35 or so years of age grew up in a different America. We were taught, very directly, what it means to be an American. And we absorbed, almost in the air, a love of country and an appreciation of its institutions. If you didn’t get these things from your family you got them from the neighborhood, from the father down the street who fought in Korea or the family who lost someone at Anzio. Or you could get a sense of patriotism from school. And if all else failed you could get a sense of patriotism from the popular culture. The movies celebrated democratic values and implicitly reinforced the idea that America was special. TV was like that, too, through the mid-sixties.

“But now, we’re about to enter the [1990s], and some things have changed. Younger parents aren’t sure that an unambivalent appreciation of America is the right thing to teach modern children. And as for those who create the popular culture, well-grounded patriotism is no longer the style ... we’ve got to do a better job of getting across that America is freedom — freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of enterprise. And freedom is special and rare. It’s fragile; it needs protection.

“So, we’ve got to teach history based not on what’s in fashion but what’s important — why the Pilgrims came here, who Jimmy Doolittle was, and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant. You know, four years ago on the 40th anniversary of D-Day, I read a letter from a young woman writing to her late father, who’d fought on Omaha Beach ... she said, ‘we will always remember, we will never forget what the boys of Normandy did.’ Well, let’s help her keep her word. If we forget what we did, we won’t know who we are. I’m warning of an eradication of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit.”

American schoolchildren today learn two things about Thomas

Jefferson: That he wrote the Declaration of Independence and that he was a slaveholder. This is a stunted and dishonest teaching about Jefferson. What do our schoolchildren not learn? They don’t learn what Jefferson wrote in *Notes on the State of Virginia*: “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just.” He wrote in that book regarding the contest between the master and the slave. “The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest.” If schoolchildren learned that, they would see that Jefferson was a complicated man, like most of us.

They don’t learn that when our nation first expanded, it was into the Northwest Territory, and that slavery was forbidden in that territory. They don’t learn that the land in that territory was ceded to the federal government from Virginia, or that it was on the motion of Thomas Jefferson that the condition of the gift was that slavery in that land be eternally forbidden. If schoolchildren learned that, they would come to see Jefferson as a human being who inherited things and did things himself that were terrible, but who regretted those things and fought against them. And they would learn, by the way, that on the scale of human achievement, Jefferson ranks very high. There’s just no question about that, if for no other reason than that he was a prime agent in founding the first republic dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Depriving the young of the spirit of freedom will deprive us all of our country. It could deprive us, finally, of our humanity itself.

The astounding thing, after all, is not that some of our Founders were slaveholders. There was a lot of slavery back then, as there had been for all of recorded time. The astounding thing — the miracle, even, one might say — is that these slaveholders founded a republic based on principles designed to abnegate slavery.

To present young people with a full and honest account of our nation’s history is to invest them with the spirit of freedom. It is to teach them something more than why our country deserves their love, although that is a good in itself. It is to teach them that the people in the past, even the great ones, were human and had to struggle. And by teaching them that, we prepare them to struggle with the problems and evils in and around them. Teaching them instead that the past was simply wicked and that now they are able to see so perfectly the right, we do them a disservice and fit them to be slavish, incapable of developing sympathy for others or undergoing trials on their own.

Depriving the young of the spirit of freedom will deprive us all of our country. It could deprive us, finally, of our humanity itself. This cannot be allowed to continue. It must be stopped.

Larry Arnn is the president of Hillsdale College. This article is adapted from a speech he delivered at a Hillsdale College reception in Rogers, Arkansas, on Nov. 17, 2020. Hillsdale College’s website is www.hillsdale.edu. Used with permission.

UNMET cont. from P. 2

mission will then make a determination after the hearing as to whether the needs presented are “reasonable.” After all existing services, or the creation of new transit systems, have been expanded to their fullest and County transportation needs are still unmet, the Commission may release remaining Transportation Development Act funds for street and road purposes, such as repair, reconstruction or other uses.

The hearing will be held to take testimony on Wednesday, April 21, 3 p.m., via GoToWebinar. Due to these unprecedented times, this meeting will only be held virtually. To participate in the live hearing, you must follow this link: attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5495449689009231375 and register to attend. After registration, you will receive important information about how to call-in to the Webinar.

Those that are unable to participate in the hearing via GoToWebinar are encouraged to submit their comments in writing prior to April 21 for inclusion in the public record. You may email publiccomment@maderactc.org, call 559-675-0721, send your comment to 2001 Howard Road, Suite 201, Madera, CA 93637 or take the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/UTN2021.

Madera County Transportation Commission Staff strongly encourages you to submit your comments utilizing other strategies such as the online survey, email, mail or by phone. Each comment received will be read to the Board directly to make sure your voice is heard. Using the techniques listed will be the best and most effective way to have your comments heard.

If you would like to testify in a language other than Spanish or English, please contact the Commission by April 15 by 3 p.m.

ANSWERS

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GVUSD cont. from P. 2

turn to in-person instruction. From the very beginning, we have fought the requirement to remove our kids from their classrooms. Last year, our school board and district held out as long as we could prior to sending kids to distance learning. Even then, we pushed to honor our seniors by not only doing a virtual graduation, and with the help of the LHS staff, we held a scaled-down, in-person graduation that was well received.

At the beginning of this school year, we were very clear: Our goal was to open the doors and have students in front of their teachers. Unfortunately, one of the biggest ideals of an elected school board was removed: Local control. The Governor opted instead to make the decision under emergency powers to force everyone into distance learning. This did not sit well with this Board, and we asked for a closed session conversation with legal counsel to discern our options and clarify what would happen if we choose to move forward and open schools anyway. The potential penalties to the district – and frankly, to us as individuals – was great enough that we were forced to comply with the order. Since that day, however, we have been looking for every possible way to return our students to in-person instruction. We have also worked hard to offer choices for our students and families because we feel it is important to give families choices to meet their needs. We were the first in the County to receive the waiver and return elementary schools to in-person instruction. This waiver process, however, could not include our high school and middle school population.

In October, the principals from Liberty High School and Ranchos Middle School presented to us their approach to returning kids to campus based on the rules at that time. We felt like we were close in Madera County to being able to meet the requirements to open our doors, but unfortunately, as a County, we did not meet the Red Tier requirements for long enough, like our neighboring counties of Merced and Fresno did. At that time, we passed a resolution, which we reviewed and updated at Tuesday's board meeting, to give instructions to

open the doors as soon as we can.

With the lifting of the recent stay-at-home order, we are planning for, yet again, a return to some version of in-person instruction at each of our school sites. In preparation, we have been able to work with Brett Frazier, our local county Supervisor, to make the vaccine available for our staff age 50 plus and even a quick clinic for all of our educational staff. The latter was performed on very short notice, and we still have some staff that want to take advantage of this. I have asked the principals to be ready with a list of those staff who are still wanting the vaccine, so that I can work with the County in hopes to finish that project.

At our February 9 board meeting, we announced we were able to work with Madera County Public Health to have them reevaluate their view on what should constitute our campus staying open. This reevaluation of the waiver was not just a matter of reading the waiver closer; actual changes were made at the County level regarding the interpretation of the waiver. This was accomplished because of the diligent work by our nurse, teachers, and staff about following the safety guidelines and diligently contact tracing. Thank you.

At the February 23 board meeting, the opening plans for our secondary schools were presented as well as the expanded view of cohorts that Dr. Paul talked about earlier this month. The board also reviewed the resolution reaffirming our commitment to putting our students back in their desks on campus as soon as we legally can. We are exploring every opportunity and avenue to fast track our approach and will continue to work toward the end goal of full in-person instruction for all of our students.

Andy Wheeler
GVUSD Board President

SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

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Who is the REAL Wizard Behind the Curtain?

By Betty Van Valkenburg

In the 1939 movie, The Wizard of Oz, four desperate and needy characters battled the Wicked Witch of the West to reach the Emerald City where they were promised by the Good Witch that a powerful wizard – who for some reason was always hidden behind a curtain – would grant their wishes.

Dorothy wished to find her way home, the tinman wanted a heart, the cowardly lion needed courage and the scarecrow wanted a brain. But to their dismay, after risking their lives to reach the wizard, the curtain was pulled to reveal that he was nothing but a fraud; just a man projecting his voice and likeness outside the curtain and using the hoax for his own purposes. And as it turned out, he was as lost as they were.

Of course, the movie ended happily. Dorothy woke in her own bed to find that the adventure had been merely a bad dream – a nightmare. All the while, she had been safely asleep, dreaming up the assorted characters based on real people at her family’s farm. No harm was done. End of a great movie.

Today, in the crazy year 2021, the United States of America is going through a real – not imagined – national nightmare from which we may or may not awaken. There is no Good Witch to help us, no magical ruby slippers to click together and transport us and no yellow brick road to follow.

To our dismay, it seems that there is a modern-day “wizard” or perhaps “wizards” – a real person or persons hidden behind a figurative curtain. His, her or their words are miraculously – although bumblingly and sometimes incoherently – voiced by the current president of the United States with the aid of cue cards, tele-prompters, notes in pockets and carefully rehearsed prepared short speeches.

It is painfully obvious that the sitting president is incapable of leading a nation and deciding national and international policy. He

frequently appears not to know what he is doing or where he is. It must be assumed that his wizards go beyond the role of traditional advisors to actually controlling the president of the United States.

Someone is spearheading Biden’s disastrous, and in some cases unconstitutional, Executive Orders. *Someone* is directing the actions and policies creating havoc at the southern border which will have dire consequences for the entire country. *Someone* plans to raise taxes. *Someone* decided to cancel the XL pipeline, thus insuring American dependence for oil on foreign countries once again and higher gas prices at the pump for all of us. *Someone* is leading the country down a disastrous path of chaos and ruin to be followed by full-blown socialism or a dictatorship.

American citizens need to know who is today’s “wizard,” or who are the “wizards” behind Biden’s curtain. Like it or not, Joseph R. Biden was sworn in as President of the United States. He alone has presidential authority and responsibility. He alone can sign bills into law. He alone – so far – can authorize the launch of nuclear missiles. We need to know, *must* know, who is pulling his strings so that we can

hold them accountable for their subterfuge and so we can take actions and vote based on facts and not propaganda.

Please note that this is not to let Joe Biden off the hook. His track record is hardly one of America First. He’s been known for some time as a gaffe machine. He *must* know, even while operating at less than full capacity, that he is being used. His and his son’s substantial financial gain and questionable dealings with China are despicable and well known, although denied by news outlets favoring the Left (media bias and cancel culture are subjects for another time). Also please note the obvious, that this writer is not a mind reader. But really, doesn’t everyone recognize that our president is not in charge – of himself or the country? And that lunacy reigns supreme?

Sticking our heads in the sand is not acceptable for a free, proud people. We everyday citizens must reject propaganda, carefully search out the facts on each issue and then speak up, regardless of threats or opposition – unafraid and unashamed – and become active with conservative/political groups and causes. If not “now,” then there may not be a “when.”

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You might feel more encouraged about changes in your personal and/or professional life. However, it might be best not to rush things but rather work with them as they evolve.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) The Bovine's business sense is especially keen this week. But remember that it's always best to investigate before investing. Make sure there are no hidden factors that can rise up later on.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Working on a family project could create tension between and among those concerned. Your good sense and your patience can help reduce bad attitudes and raise positive feelings.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You should be seeing more progress in the development of your plans and more supporters joining in. News from the past could help change someone's long-held position.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) With personal aspects strong this week, Leos and Leonas might want to spend more time with family and others who are especially close to them. Also expect news of a possible career change.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Taking a strong stand can be helpful this week. But be careful you don't cross the line into obstinacy. Best to take a position on facts as they are, not as you want them to be.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You have a strong sense of the needs of others. This week, turn some of that sensitivity into an honest self-appraisal, and let it find places where you can help yourself.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Creating an emotional comfort zone to handle a personal problem helps at first. But by midweek, you'll realize you need to deal with it directly or it could linger for too long.

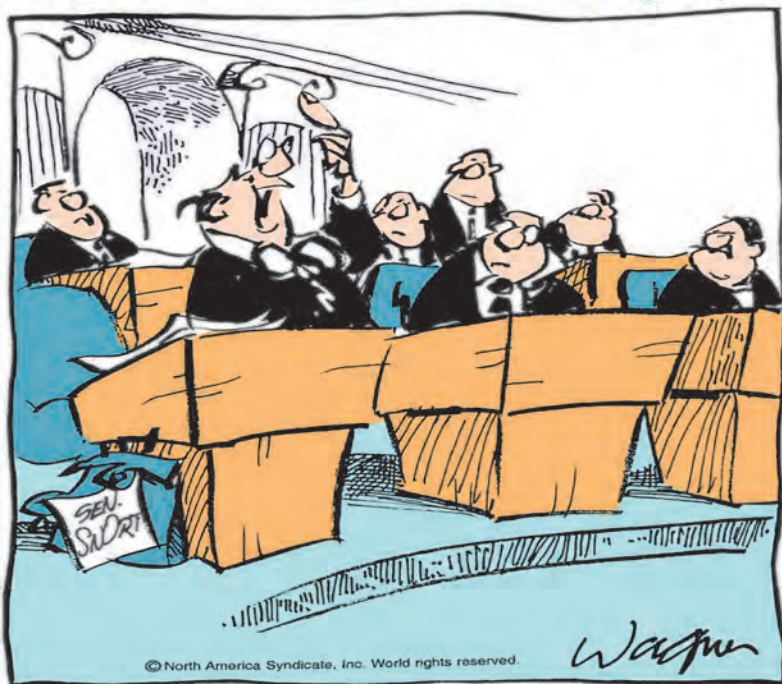
SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Turning the page on a mistake to start fresh might not be the thing to do. Better to go over each step that led up to the decision you made and see which one misled you.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Goats enjoy a varied diet, but eating crow isn't on the menu -- at least not this week. An embarrassing situation might have gone wrong before you got into it. Check it out.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Your sense of honesty might impel you to speak up about a situation you disapprove of. That's fine. But do so without sounding accusatory. You might not know all the facts behind it.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Being asked to create a reassuring attitude in the middle of chaos isn't easy, but you can do it. Support for your efforts comes slowly, but it does come. Enjoy an arts-filled weekend.

GRIN and BEAR IT *by Wagner*



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"The time has come to put aside party differences and do what's right for the country. ... What am I saying?"

www.TheRanchos.com

Born this Week

Your honesty about people and issues is expressed in a positive, not painful, way.

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FUN PAGES

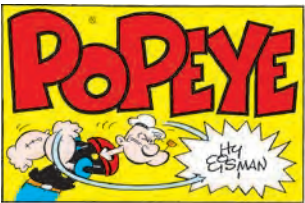
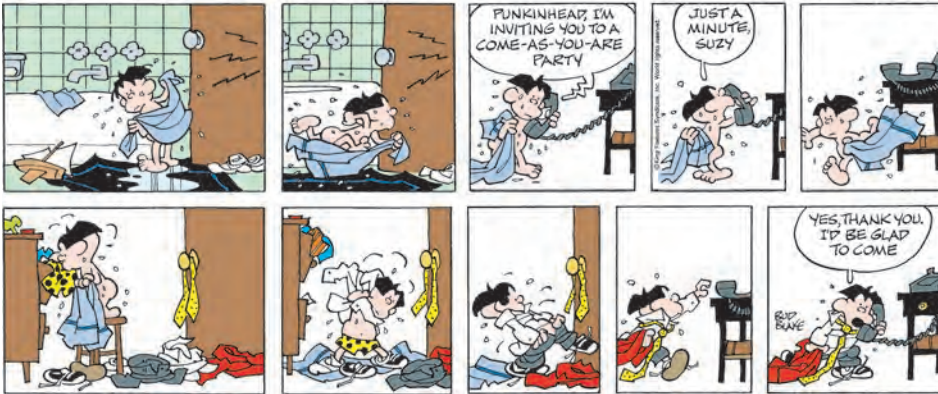
Kids' Maze



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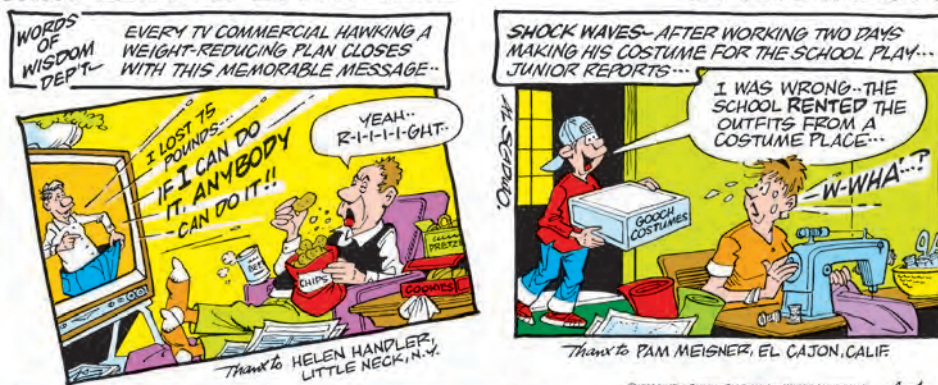
TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO



Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



LADDER PUZZLES

LADDER puzzles have been around for over a hundred years. They were made famous by Lewis Carroll, the author of "Alice in Wonderland." In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example we changed WARM into COLD in four moves. See if you can change the following four words:

1. BOAT COAT COST COST CAST CASH
2. MORE LOSE LOSS LESS
3. FISH FIST FIAT FEAT MEAT
4. SICK SILK SILL SELL WELL

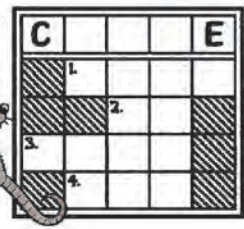


RIDDLE-DOTS! "Hey, Mike! What can go up a chimney down but can't go down a chimney up?" Connect the dots and solve the riddle.

SOMETHING IN COMMON: What do the following two sentences have in common? 1. No lemons, no melon. 2. Was it a car or a cat I saw?

FIND-A-WORD! On the top line is our mystery word. You need to fill in the missing letters. Clue words (smaller words contained in letter-by-letter order within the mystery word) are defined below.

1. Cost per unit.
2. In or near.
3. Spoiled --.
4. Long-tailed critter.



Wishing Well

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

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

MAGIC MAZE • "IT" WORDS



- Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: AN ESTABLISHED CUSTOM
- | | | | |
|---------|-------------|---------|----------|
| Acquit | Counterfeit | Forfeit | Transmit |
| Bandit | Credit | Inherit | Unit |
| Benefit | Deposit | Profit | Whodunit |
| Circuit | Explicit | Solicit | |

TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. TELEVISION: Which 1980s-'90s sitcom featured the Conner family?
2. LANGUAGE: What does the Greek prefix "pan" mean in English?
3. MOVIES: Which artist sang the song that inspired the movie title "Pretty Woman"?
4. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the first primary color that babies can see?
5. GEOGRAPHY: What is the world's longest cave system?
6. MEDICAL: What is a fasciculation, the medical term for a common ailment?
7. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was the only one to be elected a U.S. senator after leaving office?
8. GEOLOGY: Emerald and aquamarine are types of which mineral?
9. U.S. STATES: What was the first state to ratify the U.S. Constitution?
10. MEASUREMENTS: What dosing measurement (metric) is used to administer liquid medication?

Answers

1. "Roseanne"
2. All
3. Roy Orbison
4. Red
5. Mammoth Cave, Kentucky
6. Involuntary muscle twitch
7. Andrew Johnson
8. Beryl
9. Delaware
10. milliliter or ml

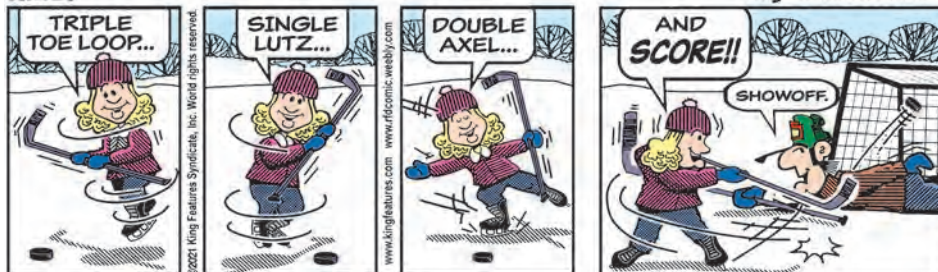
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



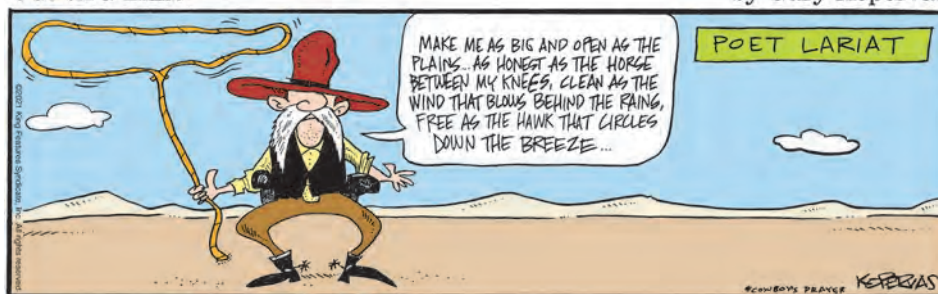
R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



HOCUS-FOCUS

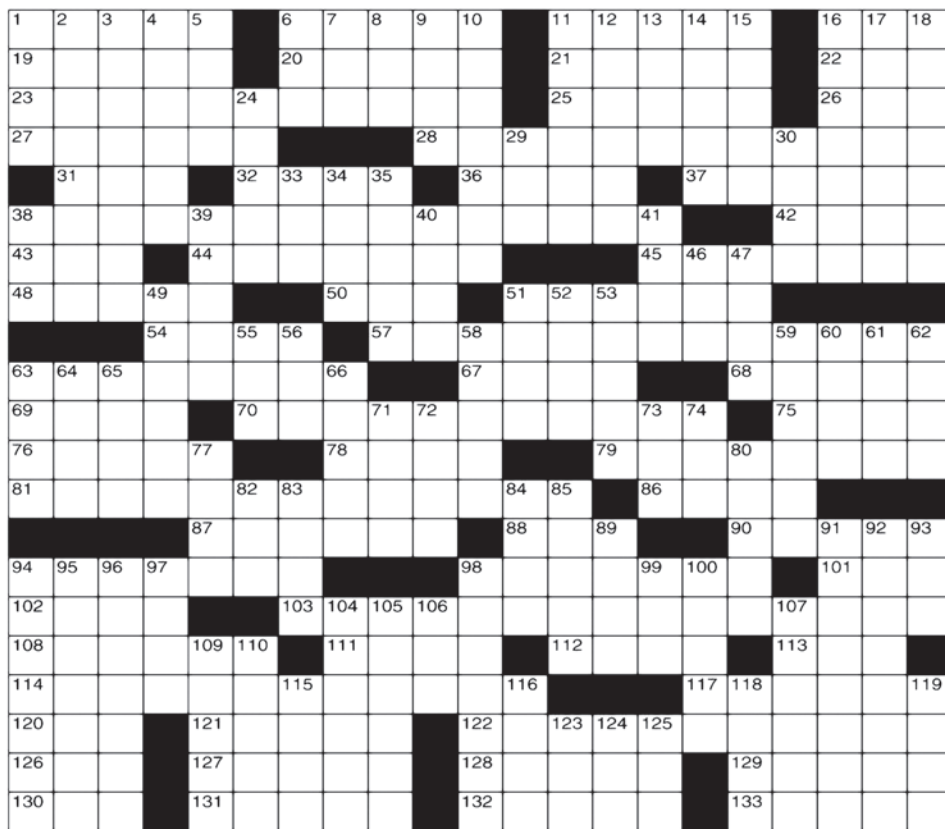
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Window is different. 2. Frog is missing. 3. Doorknob is higher. 4. Falling is missing. 5. Cap is reversed. 6. Earring is missing.

Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Plates, e.g.
 - 6 "Star Wars" villain — the Hutt
 - 11 Longtime fashion mag
 - 16 "Got it!"
 - 19 Muslim god
 - 20 Has left the office, say
 - 21 Bilbao locale
 - 22 "Whether — nobler ..."
 - 23 Sudden-death extra in a golf tournament
 - 25 Supermodel Klum
 - 26 Hi-fi platters
 - 27 Cook gently
 - 28 Behave obsequiously
 - 31 Secretive U.S. org.
 - 32 Redding of song
 - 36 Opp. of horizontal
 - 37 Film preview
 - 38 Sort who's at hand whenever needed
 - 42 Part of a hunting outfit
 - 43 Lucy of "Kung Fu Panda"
 - 44 French painter Rosa
 - 45 Narcissists
 - 48 Bone: Prefix
 - 50 Insult, informally
 - 51 YWCA part
 - 54 Yule, briefly
 - 57 Small Vlasic offering
 - 63 Domestic
 - 67 Explorer Ericson
 - 68 Glossy surface
 - 69 "As above," in a footnote
 - 70 Morning joe, maybe
 - 75 Tear to bits
 - 76 Gambols
 - 78 Inventory
 - 79 Board, as a ship
 - 81 One who's distraught with feelings
 - 86 1/16 ounce
 - 87 Perfectly
 - 88 "— aboard!"
 - 90 Baker's unit
 - 94 Pec-building exercises
 - 98 Tiling tools, to Brits
 - 101 King, in Caen
 - 102 Old Peruvian
 - 103 Connections making people feel close
 - 108 Big name in hygiene products
 - 111 "QED" part
 - 112 Beneficiary
 - 113 Certain PC readout
 - 114 Purplish fruit spread
 - 117 Male ducks
 - 120 — Lingus
 - 121 Rivulet
 - 122 What the last word of 23-, 28-, 38-, 57-, 70-, 81-, 103- or 114-Across is a synonym of
 - 126 Hang behind
 - 127 Giant in life insurance
 - 128 Televised
 - 129 "... and vice —"
 - 130 Hip-hop "Dr."
 - 131 Hide, as loot
 - 132 Old Russian dynasts
 - 133 German city
 - 7 Volcano stuff
 - 8 Startling cry in a socket
 - 10 Had dinner at a friend's house, e.g.
 - 11 Note equivalent to 66-Down
 - 12 Not necessarily against
 - 13 Spoke
 - 14 In the — of (during)
 - 15 In readiness
 - 16 Map-filled references
 - 17 Most with it
 - 18 Alleges
 - 24 Ice-cream alternative, for short
 - 29 "Scream" director
 - 30 Sitarist Shankar
 - 33 Weight unit
 - 34 With a sharp picture, briefly
 - 35 Shrek creator William
 - 38 "Gigli" co-star, familiarly
 - 39 Certain nuclear weapon, for short
 - 40 "Be silent!"
 - 41 Adolescent
 - 46 Country's econ. measure
 - 47 Suffix of medical conditions
 - 49 Free (from)
 - 51 Plump bird
 - 52 "— From Muskogee" (1969 hit)
 - 53 Annoys
 - 55 Circle part
 - 56 Ionian, e.g.
 - 58 Upper crust
 - 59 Purity of a color
 - 60 Razor-sharp
 - 61 Advanced
 - 62 Lead-in to skeleton
 - 63 Give a job to
 - 64 Former Laker Lamar
 - 65 Office letter
 - 66 Note equivalent to 11-Down
 - 71 Do a tax task
 - 72 J.D. Salinger title girl
 - 73 "— be my pleasure"
 - 74 Baby of a boomer
 - 77 In — (as first found)
 - 80 Big name in beer brewing
 - 82 "Alley —!"
 - 83 Condé —
 - 84 Mall lure
 - 85 Spill clumsily
 - 89 Guitar's kin
 - 91 Con artists
 - 92 Abridge
 - 93 Took cover
 - 94 Patchy horse
 - 95 Vague
 - 96 Plague
 - 97 Fit as a fiddle
 - 98 Sound of falling hail
 - 99 F-J link
 - 100 One of two in "crocodile"
 - 104 Wading birds
 - 105 R&B singer — Badu
 - 106 — Mahal
 - 107 Accuses
 - 109 PLO head Mahmoud
 - 110 Brimless cap
 - 115 "The Godfather" score composer Nino
 - 116 Some med. scans
 - 118 All-night bash
 - 119 Comic Laurel
 - 123 Eon subunit
 - 124 Bonn article
 - 125 TSA requests
- DOWN**
- 1 Does a fist bump, colloquially
 - 2 Chicago's home
 - 3 Close loudly
 - 4 The Caribbean's — Islands
 - 5 Slipper, e.g.
 - 6 Peanut butter brand

FUN PAGES

SEM CU

south east madera county united

We would appreciate any nomination of community members who are interested in helping with ideas and the direction SEMCU should move forward. Maybe you know of someone that may be interested and could help our community by spending one hour per month at our monthly meeting. Although the time required is minimal, the importance of caring for our community is invaluable.

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

**Our next Meeting is Monday, Apr. 19 at 6 p.m.
The teleconference number is 312-757-3121
and the Access Code is 715-657-949.**

Please let us know if you have any questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

559-363-9095 • www.semcu.org • info@semcu.org