

The Ranchos Independent

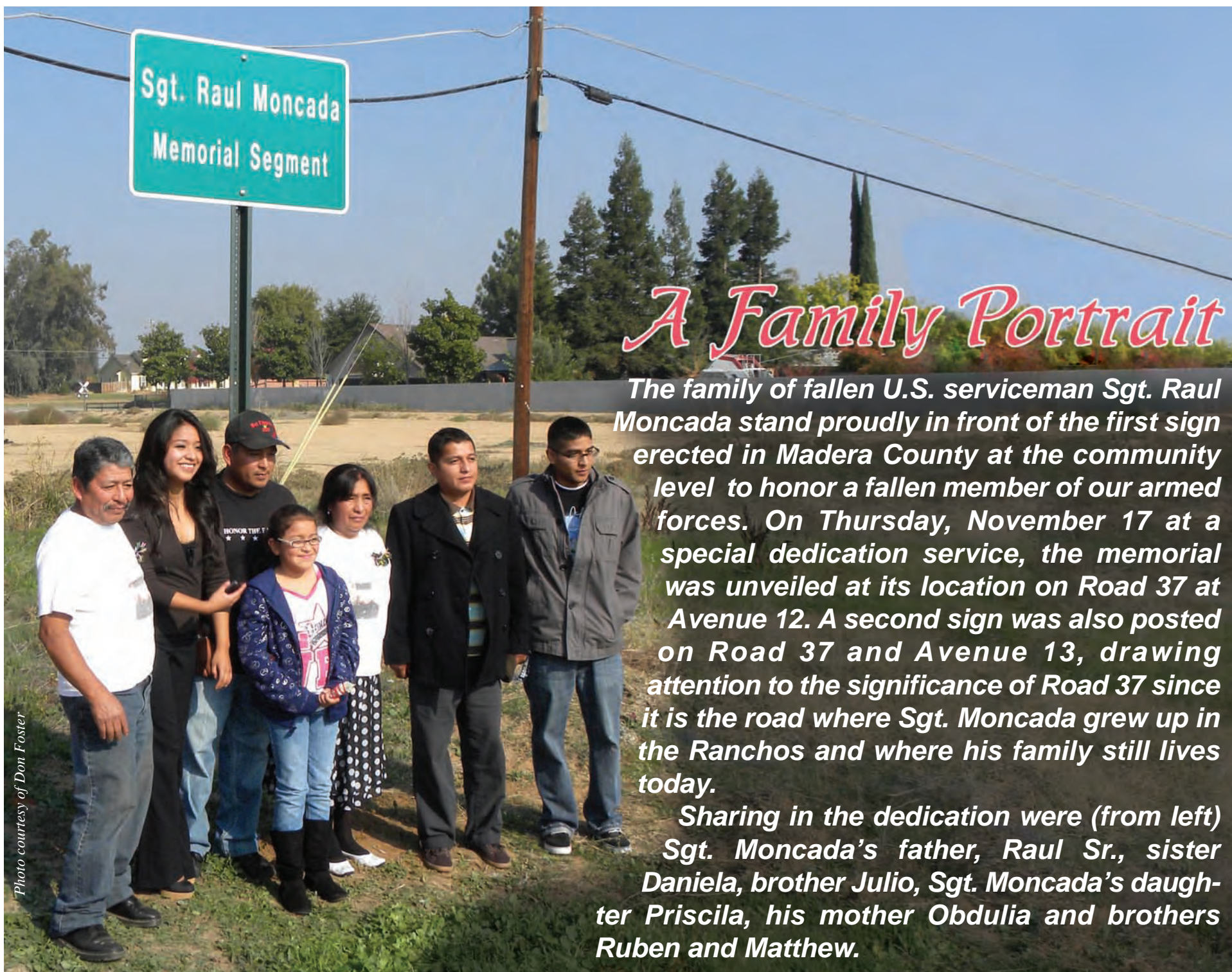


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A Family Portrait

The family of fallen U.S. serviceman Sgt. Raul Moncada stand proudly in front of the first sign erected in Madera County at the community level to honor a fallen member of our armed forces. On Thursday, November 17 at a special dedication service, the memorial was unveiled at its location on Road 37 at Avenue 12. A second sign was also posted on Road 37 and Avenue 13, drawing attention to the significance of Road 37 since it is the road where Sgt. Moncada grew up in the Ranchos and where his family still lives today.

Sharing in the dedication were (from left) Sgt. Moncada's father, Raul Sr., sister Daniela, brother Julio, Sgt. Moncada's daughter Priscila, his mother Obdulia and brothers Ruben and Matthew.

Photo courtesy of Don Foster

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Sgt. Moncada Memorial Placed

In a service that was both moving and historic, Madera County has placed a pair of memorial markers on Road 37 between Avenues 12 and 13 in the memory of Sgt. Raul Moncada, a Ranchos resident who was killed in action in Iraq in 2009. It is the first time that Madera County has so designated a roadway that is not a state or federal highway. Road 37 was selected because it is the street Sgt. Moncada grew up on and his family still lives there.

On Thursday, Nov. 17 at 11 a.m., a large crowd of dignitaries, veterans, news media and thankful citizens showed up to pay their respects and witness the unveiling of the road marker by Moncada's daughter, Priscila. A luncheon reception was held immediately following at the offices of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. Pictures of the event can be found on page 14.



Title Game for LHS Football

In an outcome that few could have predicted, the Liberty High School Varsity Football team finds itself playing for the Division V Championship against Fowler High School this Friday night at 7 p.m.

Liberty had gone into the post season with a 4 and 6 record and found itself ranked fourth in the playoffs of Division V schools. Its first game against number five ranked Granite Hills resulted in a 31-15 victory against the Porterville school, setting up a meeting last week with number one, Firebaugh. Heavily favored Firebaugh, with its impressive passing attack, could not get anything going against the Hawks and went down to defeat, 24-21 in a nail biter.

At the same time, number two ranked Fowler took on Orsi and spanked them, walking away with a 45-7 victory, and set in motion a championship game between the Fowler Redcats and the Liberty High Hawks.

Can you say Cinderella story? To go from being below the .500 mark to being in the championship game says a lot about our kids and what they're capable of.

I'll see you at the game.

Medicinal Marijuana in Madera: It's Already Here

By Christi McKinney

As the Obama administration and U.S. Attorneys in California outline their plans to shut down Medicinal Marijuana Cooperatives in California, the Madera County Board of Supervisors are working locally to create a new ordinance to regulate outdoor cultivation of Medicinal Marijuana. This new ordinance should be in place by March of 2012.

David Rogers, Madera County Supervisor in District 2 summarized the issues law enforcement is dealing with in his request to the Board of Supervisors. "There have been numerous complaints from constituents regarding the outdoor cultivation of Medicinal Marijuana. Law enforcement agencies have also had problems with these operations. The open cultivation has drawn a criminal element such as thefts and attempted thefts of marijuana into the neighborhoods where marijuana is grown. This has become a threat to the general population. Reports of theft in and around the marijuana cultivation operations have come from various law enforcement agencies in Madera, as well as in counties statewide. Tulare County has had three shootings, two of which were homicides. Madera County has also seen shootings at marijuana grow sites. Several counties have already adopted ordinances regulating marijuana cultivation. This is an attempt to protect the rights of legitimate medical marijuana users and the welfare and safety of the majority of Madera County constituents."

The smell of marijuana has been so prevalent in some neighborhoods this fall that you only need to walk or drive down the street to be overwhelmed by the pungent, sweet, skunky smell. Many people with allergies or asthma can have severe reactions to the smell of budding plants. Marijuana often grows to be 10-12 feet tall, so if you don't smell them you will often see the plants towering over back yard fences. Whether it's legal or not, growing 30-50 plants in your back yard is never a great idea; it not only exposes you to an increased risk from thieves but also home invasions. It's certainly the worst kept secret in the neighborhood. If you're worried about a situation in your neighborhood, call the Sheriff's Office to file a complaint. If you know that the home is a rental, please let them know that as well. They will investigate to determine whether or not the grower has a medical marijuana identification card or not, and whether they are in compliance with county ordinances and regulations.

Many times the county's hands have been tied because until now there have been

no ordinances in place specifically prohibiting the crop. Individuals who spend the time tending a crop are often times growing marijuana for themselves as well as for others whom they've been designated as the primary caregiver. Sheriff Anderson expects that a new ordinance regarding outdoor cultivation will be in place by March of next year.

Marijuana has been approved by California, as well as many other states and the nation's capital, to treat a range of illnesses, but in a decision announced recently the federal government ruled that it has no accepted medical use and should remain classified as a highly dangerous drug like heroin. The decision comes almost nine years after medical marijuana supporters asked the government to reclassify cannabis to take into account a growing body of worldwide research that



The New Image Health Center, located on Highway 41 just South of Avenue 15. When the smiley face is out, they're open.

shows its effectiveness in treating certain diseases, such as glaucoma and multiple sclerosis. Although California was the first state to decriminalize marijuana for medical use in 1996, it remains a federal crime to possess or sell it.

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) is a non-profit, public-interest lobby that has provided a voice for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition for more than 30 years. Their literature states they represent the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly and believe the recreational and medicinal use of marijuana should no longer be a crime. NORML estimates there are currently between 750,000 and 1,125,000 medical marijuana patients in California. While at the same time the Criminal Justice Statistics

Center reported a moderate decline in marijuana arrests in 2010.

How did this all get so confusing?

On Jan. 1, 2004, Senate Bill 420 became law, enacting the Medical Marijuana Program Act (MMP). The intent was to clarify Proposition 215 by stipulating how patients who could not grow their own cannabis should obtain it. The MMP permits a primary caregiver to be paid a "reasonable compensation" for services provided to a qualified patient "to enable that person to use marijuana." The MMP also states that a patient may cultivate up to six mature plants or possess up to half a pound of processed cannabis per person for medical purposes.

On Nov. 5, 1996, the people of California passed Proposition 215 titled "The Compassionate Use Act of 1996." This was passed to decriminalize the cultivation and use of cannabis by seriously ill individuals under a physician's recommendation when deemed appropriate. The physician must determine that their patient's health would benefit from the use of cannabis. This was meant to ensure that patients and their primary caregivers are not subject to criminal prosecution.

Supervisor Frank Bigelow, District 1 explains, "While California residents voted to allow the use of medicinal marijuana, the California law is not well defined. It is still illegal at the federal level and is a federal offense. Each county must determine what they will and will not allow in their county and control this with zoning ordinances and regulations. If there is ever any direct contradictions between state law and federal law, federal law prevails." Madera County Sheriff John Anderson puts it simply: "Businesses must have a business license and Madera County does not issue business licenses to medical marijuana dispensaries."

Amazingly, there is a local Medical Marijuana Dispensary here in the Ranchos. Sheriff Anderson and his department are very aware of it saying, "We've shut this particular location down repeatedly." The New Image Health Center – known just last month as California Medicinal Cooperative, Inc. – is located on Highway 41 just South of Avenue 15 in a small industrial park. There is a free-standing sign in the parking lot listing this location in Madera and another in Friant, however the Friant location was reportedly closed down several months ago by the Fresno County Sheriff's Department. The only thing identifying the Ranchos location from Highway 41 is a large yellow happy face banner hanging on the chain link

Please see **POT** on P. 3

POT cont. from P. 2

fence.

If it's up then they're open for business.

The New Image Health Center's website says, "By joining our collective, you are not only a patient of New Image Health Center, you are becoming a part of a greater movement in history for the Central Valley as we initiate the transformation of negative feelings and counterproductive ideas towards medical cannabis into understanding and healing. We welcome our patients to take responsibility as positive ambassadors for

medical cannabis and encourage them to combat the hindering attitudes we have been facing for nearly seventy years due to cannabis prohibition." Its products include "Super Banana Og Kush, Kryptonite or Bubba Kush," just part of the 28 "flavors" that are listed on their website's menu.

Calls to New Image Health Center for comment on this story were not returned. The person answering the phone refused to provide the owner's name.

As a presidential candidate, Barack Obama said the federal government should not raid medical marijuana users and care-

givers. Three months after Obama was inaugurated, his attorney general announced that it would be the administration's official policy. Earlier this year, however, the Obama Justice Department released a memo declaring that it may prosecute large-scale medical marijuana cultivation operations and dispensaries, defined as growers that deal with 1,000 plants a year, even in states where they are operating in compliance with state laws. Federal prosecutors are now threatening to shut down medical marijuana dispensaries throughout the state. They've sent letters to warn landlords to stop sales of marijuana

within 45 days or face the possibility that their property will be seized and they will be sent to prison. Because the warning letters have just now been sent, and no actual properties have been seized, it's unclear exactly what effect the Obama administration's latest assault on medical marijuana will have throughout the state. According to a recent Washington Post article, ever since the announced crackdown, the feds have been targeting dispensaries, not underground cultivation networks like the ones run by the

Please see POT on P. 20





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Europe's Humiliation

By Rich Lowry

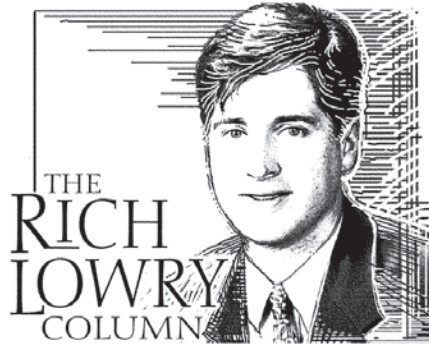
One hundred and fifty years ago, no one could mistake the relative power of Europe and China. When the British defeated the Chinese in the First Opium War, they imposed an indemnity, took Hong Kong and forced open more Chinese ports to British merchants. They demanded extraterritoriality for British citizens, exempting them from Chinese law. Other Western powers extracted similar privileges.

When this wasn't enough, the British launched the Second Opium War after the Chinese seized a ship flying the British flag and refused to apologize. The French joined in, and the two together captured Beijing, and burned the emperor's summer palaces for good measure.

The Chinese refer to the period from the middle of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th as "the century of shame." Now, the shame is all on their former tormentors as the Europeans beg the Chinese to help bail them out from their debt crisis.

The Europeans share a misbegotten single currency that is amplifying the inherent problems attendant to the practice of spending money that you don't have. Perhaps the Greek crisis can be contained, but what if Spain and Italy spin out of control? Europe is trying to fund a "bazooka" big enough to fend off doubtful markets, but doesn't want to -- and perhaps can't -- fund it all by itself. Germany is Europe's economic powerhouse, yet its public debt-to-GDP ratio is already larger than ours.

This is where China and its \$3.2 trillion in foreign reserves come in. If China were to contribute to a bailout fund that Europe wants to build up to \$1.4 trillion, it would surely ask for concessions in return, like the Europeans dropping their criticism of China's undervalued currency. China also might wonder why it should come to the



rescue of a European Union that still has it under an arms embargo. History comes full circle, with the ascendant Chinese in a position to extract concessions from erstwhile colonial powers.

So far, though, Beijing is not showing any eagerness to jump into the European bailout business. While it wants a robust European export market, China might be doing the math and realizing that Europe has a problem too big for serial bailouts. The official Xinhua News Agency ran a piece explaining, "Amid such an unprecedented crisis in Europe, China can neither take up the role as a savior to the Europeans, nor provide a 'cure' for the European malaise."

This reversal in fortunes was a long time in coming. Nothing could have stopped the Chinese from adopting more rational, market-friendly policies a few decades ago, and it has proven immune to appeals to allow its currency to appreciate so its exports don't have such an advantage. What Europe could control was its own destiny. It chose a comfortable, if bankrupting, social democracy and a vast experiment with a single currency. The euro was supposed to be the vehicle and symbol of Europe as a world power, and instead is laying bare its debt-adled decay.

For the United States, listing in a similar direction, the turnabout in Europe's global position should be of the utmost interest -- as a cautionary tale.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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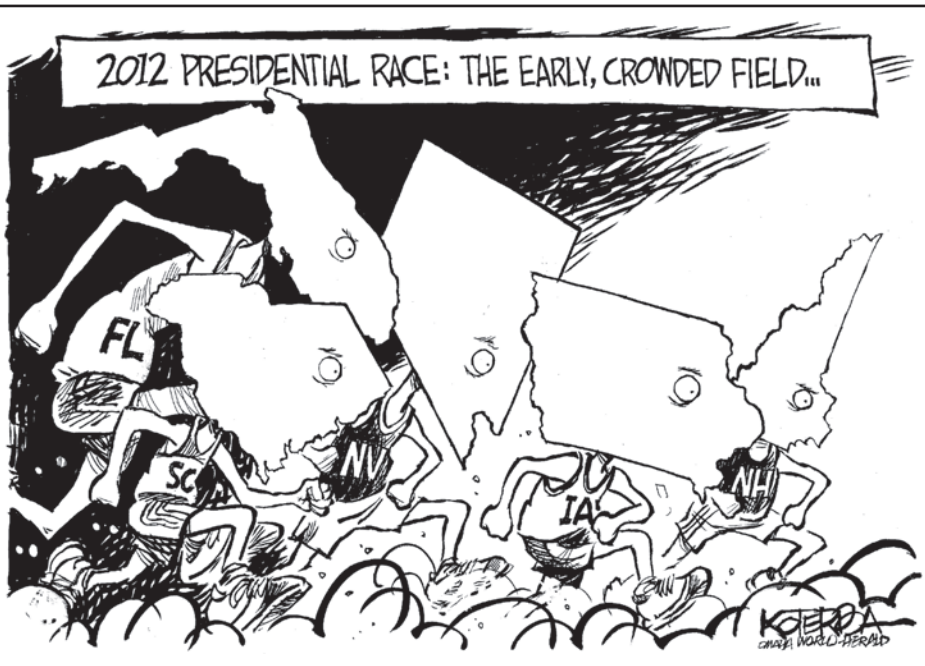
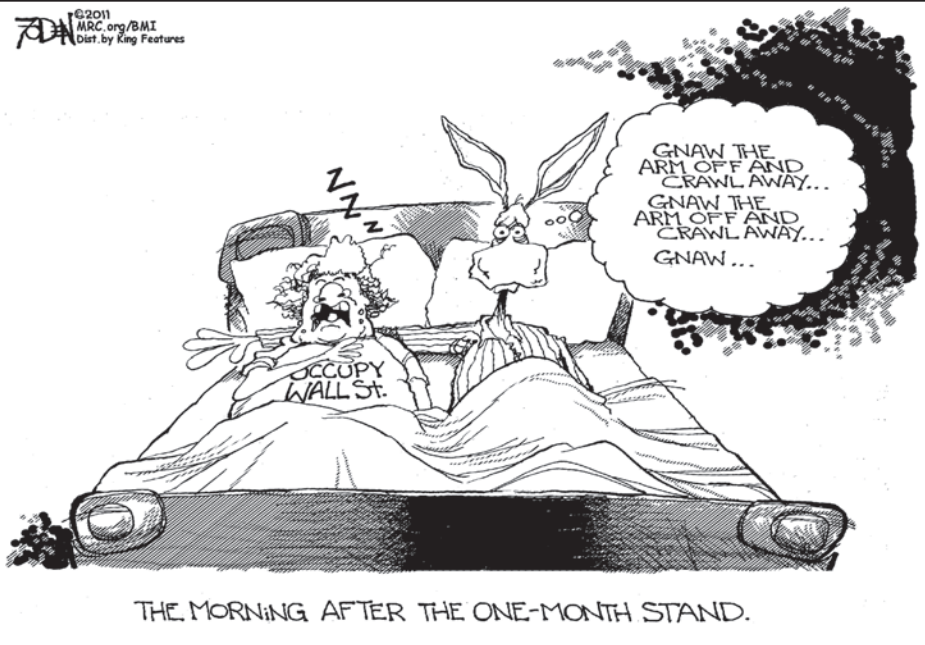
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Editorial

The Ongoing Cost of Freedom

By Randy Bailey

On Thursday, Nov. 17 the Madera Ranchos got to make history. On that day, for the first time ever in Madera County, an area roadway was dedicated to the memory of a fallen U.S. serviceman. The Ranchos' own Sgt. Raul Moncada, who was killed in the line of duty in Iraq in 2009, had the segment of Road 37 from Avenue 12 to Avenue 13 designated in his honor. It was the street that he grew up on and where his family still lives.

As President of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce I got to say a few words at the ceremony and I'd like to share them with you here.

Editor

My name is Randy Bailey. I'm the president of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce here in the Ranchos and I want to thank you for coming today and would like to share a few thoughts about Sgt. Moncada with you.

There are some in our country today, some in very high places, that would have you believe that Sgt. Moncada died in vain. That he gave his life for nothing. That he was in the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Those people are wrong.

Sgt. Moncada understood that we don't live in a vacuum. That actions

taken in one place have consequences somewhere else, often thousands of miles away. Sgt. Moncada knew that plans hatched in caves in the Middle East could result in planes flying into the World Trade Center, killing 3,000 of his countrymen, half way around the world. And Sgt. Moncada understood that the minds responsible for creating such death and destruction were actively spreading their gospel of terror throughout the Middle East. He understood that we could fight them there, or most assuredly we would one day have to fight them here.

The freedoms that we enjoy as Americans, like being able to gather on an autumn morning to pay tribute to a fallen hero, come at a cost. Sgt. Moncada understood that if his actions thousands of miles away stopped just one person from being able to one day bring destruction to the Madera Ranchos, destroying Sgt. Moncada's home, his family, his friends and neighbors, then it would all be worth it. What he grasped was that if that same person got through, ANYWHERE, the destruction he would bring would be to SOMEONE'S home, to SOMEONE'S family, and to SOMEONE'S friends and neighbors, just like in New York on September 11.

The world is a dangerous place. Thankfully we have people like Sgt. Moncada willing to stand on that front line, ready to give the ultimate sacrifice without hesitation or equivocation. Ready to say, "You'll be safe tonight. I'll see to that."

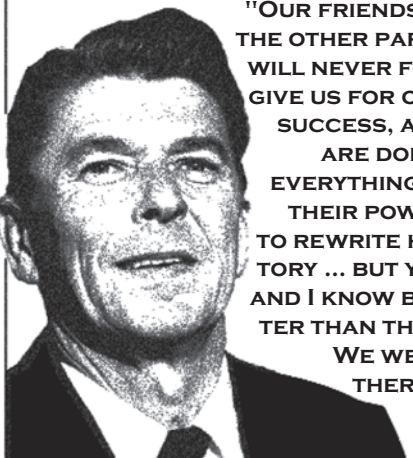
The Madera Ranchos is a better place for having people like Sgt. Moncada, and it's a little emptier with him gone. But what he stood for and what he believed in should make us all swell with pride. He is the embodiment of our American spirit. He didn't ask what his country could do for him; he asked what he could do for his country.

And then he did it.

On behalf of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce and a grateful nation, we thank you Sgt. Moncada for your service. God bless you, God bless your family, and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you.

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"OUR FRIENDS IN THE OTHER PARTY WILL NEVER FORGIVE US FOR OUR SUCCESS, AND ARE DOING EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO REWRITE HISTORY ... BUT YOU AND I KNOW BETTER THAN THAT. WE WERE THERE."

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REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR OUR PRESIDENT
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'Tis the Season for ... Parking

Once again the season of giving is upon us, the season of family and sharing, of faith and reverence, and most notably the season where people forget their parking lot manners. Clearly the threat of ending up on the naughty side of Santa's list isn't enough to make people so much as use their blinker.

In every other way, Christmas is my favorite season. I love the weather, the music, the movies and the decorations. What I can't stand, however, is the complete disregard for parking lot decorum during this otherwise magical time.

I knew that the Yuletide season was upon us when I had an unfortunate altercation in the parking lot at the mall. Intending to do a little shopping and

catch a movie with a friend, I pulled into the parking lot blissfully unaware that we were about to encounter a jerk who learned to drive behind the wheel of a bumper car. I don't know if this kid just didn't understand the layout of the parking lot, or perhaps he thought the other cars were simply figments of his imagination, but the

sheer reckless abandon with which he maneuvered through the lot was scary. I tried to avoid him as best I could by turning down opposite aisles, back-tracking to steer clear of his path. But I couldn't evade him for long, and our first close encounter came when he decided to take a sharp corner and cut me off, literally skidding into my lane. Obviously there was a sale I had not yet heard of, and he was a twit on a mission. Our paths crossed again for the final time when he jammed his car into reverse and just about backed up into me, all in the name of stealing someone else's parking

GENERATION WHY
by **eryn b. nyre**



space. My anger got the better of me and I slammed my car into park and threw my door open. I was halfway to him, shouting every adjective I could come up with in his general direction, when the driver of the exiting car, and another on-looker obviously had the same inclination. Derogatory epithets flying from all directions, this punk had been rounded on by just

A parking lot is not a shoe clearance bin; you can't just dive in all willy nilly. A shoe to the head would likely hurt and leave a mark, but running over someone is often fatal. Note the subtle difference. Remember people, we are talking about big dangerous machines driven by fallible, imperfect humans. A scary enough combination when everyone is paying attention; deadly when someone is driving like a maniac and someone else is texting behind the wheel.

about everyone in the area. Obviously fearing a public stoning, he threw his hands up and retreated and the couple in the SUV who had been patiently waiting for the space was able to pull into the spot that was rightfully theirs.

Not Alone
Not that the youth of America is the only demographic guilty of forgoing common courtesy for

their own convenience. When I pulled into the bank just the other day to handle a little business that could not be done from the convenience of my lap top, I had a dandy of a time finding a parking place. Because the bank was overly busy? No, because someone decided to circle around the wrong direction, and rather than back up and try it again, thought, hey, I'll just take up three extra spaces with my spaceship sized boat of a car. How long could it take in the bank? Those tellers, after all, are known

Please see **GEN WHY** on P. 15

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The Stock Report

Merry Christmas Drawing Nearer

By Audrey Stock

Hi neighbors.

Well here we go! The holiday season is upon us. Daylight savings saving time is over. It is dark at 5 p.m. and I want another hour of light to get everything on my list done. I am making lists of things that have to be done before Christmas. I have just finished putting my Thanksgiving menu together. Now I have to go shopping. I will buy 2 turkeys since I am cooking one turkey for the Ranchos Hills Seniors annual Thanksgiving dinner and one for my family. I am writing this article on November 15th and I feel that I am late in writing my annual Christmas letter. Since I send out about 100 Christmas cards with letters each year I need to get started right away.

In the last issue of the Ranchos Independent I told you about the five day trip to Laughlin, Nev. that was sponsored by the Ranchos Hills Seniors. Let me tell you I have been on a lot of trips but our tour director Jolene Mason was the most well-organized tour direc-

her mood. There was no whining or complaining on this trip. The next day was a trip to Oatman, Ariz. and the wild burros. There were burros all over the place and I got the pictures to prove it. Next day was the excursion to the Hoover Dam/Colorado River new bypass bridge that spans from the Nevada side to the Arizona side of the Colorado River. This bridge is a true engineering marvel. It was a challenge to climb up the bank to get on the bridge and then a challenge to walk over the bridge to the end and back down the steps or ramp down the mountain side to where the bus was parked. I am so glad I was able to do this. It was so worth it. Thanks to Jolene for finding this great experience and sharing it with us. The next day many

of the group took the jet boat down the Colorado River to see the London Bridge. I chose to stay at the hotel and rest. That was one of the best parts of this trip: you never felt rushed or pressured into doing something you didn't feel like doing. It was restful and fun. Our fearless leader Jolene made it all happen. Jolene is planning more trips for the Ranchos Hills Seniors. If you would like to hear about any senior trips call the Senior Center at 645-4864.

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tor that I have ever traveled with. This was a delicious trip because Jolene knew where every good restaurant was all the way to Laughlin. She got us in the mood for the trip by playing card bingo and telling us about the different side trips that she had planned for us. Then she broke out homemade macaroon cookies that she had baked for us in her spare time. She was directing the bus driver where to stop along the way so that we never got too tired. Next she brought out chocolate chip cookies and white chocolate fudge. When we got to Laughlin our rooms at the Edgewater Hotel were ready for us and no one had a bad room. If you have ever taken a tour with a group of people you know that in itself is unusual. Since Jolene was so happy and full of fun we all tried to match

pen. Jolene is planning more trips for the Ranchos Hills Seniors. If you would like to hear about any senior trips call the Senior Center at 645-4864.

Some of the upcoming events are the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting at Maywood Center at 6 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 2. This event is put on by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. Come to the program and pick a star for a Veteran at the Fresno Veteran's Hospital. The next morning the Ranchos Hills Seniors on Dec. 3 will be having their monthly sale. The Senior's Christmas Boutique will begin at 8 a.m. to noon on December 3, 10 and 17. I hope that you all had a good Thanksgiving and didn't eat too much. You need to save some room for all of the Christmas celebrations.

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Chip Off the Ol' Cookie

When we were young my two sisters and I couldn't wait until the Christmas catalogs arrived from Sears and Roebuck or Montgomery Ward. The first half of each catalog was household items, clothing and such – but the back half was toys! They were grouped into boy's and girl's toys. We would sit on the couch, each with a different colored crayon and start at the first page of the girls toys and mark on each page the items we wanted. Of course we never got what we wanted, but we always had a good Christmas. In "those days" we didn't have Target, K-Mart or Wal-Mart. We had the dime store, and sometimes the hardware store and drug store would put in a row of toys.

Gift Solution

In those days times were tough, similar to the times as they are now.

People couldn't afford to purchase big gifts, so a lot of people made their Christmas gifts. My mom always made my aunts an apron, and of course we would always make mama and daddy and our grandparents something. I worked with a girl that made cookies for all

In those days times were tough, similar to the times as they are now. People couldn't afford to purchase big gifts, so a lot of people made their Christmas gifts. My mom always made my aunts an apron, and of course we would always make mama and daddy and our grandparents something.

her family and friends. She would start just after Thanksgiving and make dozens and dozens of cookies. Betty's kitchen looked like a bakery from Thanksgiving until just before Christmas. She would make all kinds of cookies – the typical chocolate chip and oatmeal – and some I had never heard of before, like the Cherry Blinks (make the dough according to the recipe and roll each cookie in crushed Wheaties or Corn Flakes and when you put them on the cookie sheet you flatten them out a bit and put half a maraschino cherry on top) or the Thumbprint (make the dough according to the recipe and roll them into balls and roll each ball in either finely chopped nuts or coconut and as you put them on the cookie sheet you flatten them out a bit and put your thumb print indentation in each



cookie and, in that, you put a teaspoon of your favorite jam). I worked with another girl that made gallons upon gallons of the Chex Party Mix – before you could buy it in a bag. And I knew a girl that crocheted slippers for everyone. And I've told you about my grandmother who made homemade candy every Christmas.

Cookie Time!

This month I thought I'd give you some recipes for different cookies. You can find Chocolate Chip recipes on the back of any chip bag, or Oatmeal Cookies on the oatmeal box, but these cookies are a little different.

The first cookie recipe I'm sending you was given to me by a reader. It sounds yummy, gooey, and easy to make. Thank You!

Buttery Gooey Cookie Bars

- 1 Pkg. Yellow Cake Mix
- 1 Stick Butter
- 3 Eggs
- 8 oz. Cream

Cheese

- 1 Box (1 Lb.) Powdered Sugar
 - 1 tsp. Vanilla
 - 1 C Crushed or Chopped Nuts
- Preheat oven to 350

Mix cake mix, butter, 1 egg together and pour into a greased and floured 9 x 13 pan. Beat together cream cheese and powdered sugar (reserve enough powdered sugar to sprinkle on top). Add 2 eggs and vanilla and mix. Pour over cake mixture.

Bake 30 minutes or until tan. After it is cool, sprinkle nuts and reserved powdered sugar on top. Cut into bars.

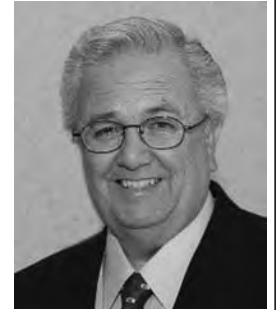
The next one is one from the Aunt Jean's collection from last month's article:

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 11

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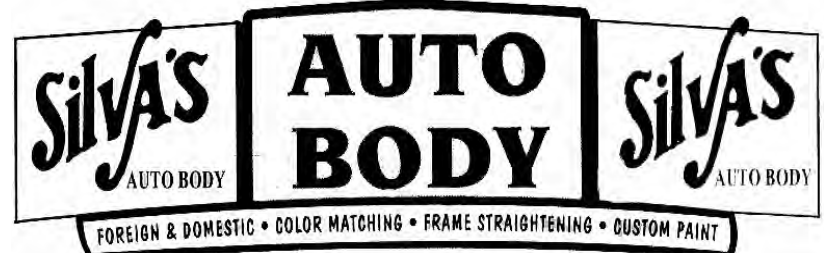
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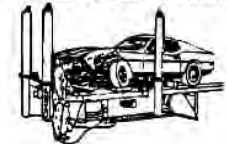


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The Pastor's Desk

On Being *TRULY* Thankful

Again this month we have a guest writer for the Pastor's Desk. He is not a pastor but he has a message. With approximately 17.6 million Americans adults who abuse alcohol or are alcohol dependent, his message is timely and relevant.

Editor

By Mike B.

During this wonderful time of the year when we are to give thanks, I am truly THANKFUL! You see, I should not be here. I had always planned to be dead by the time I was 43. Seriously, I used to tell people all the time, "What does it matter? I'm going to be dead before my 44th birthday anyway." That was my plan and, as the saying goes, "Man plans; God laughs." My plan did not go as I had expected. God had a whole different plan for me. For that I am grateful and very thankful.

In reality, the old Mike did die and a new Mike was born. As Paul writes in 2nd Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old life has gone, the new life has come." In retrospect, my plan and God's plan were not that different. I died a worldly death at 43 and was born unto him at 44.

In my new life I have grown too be thankful for everything: the good, the bad and the ugly. Before, I was not happy with anything; the grass was always greener somewhere else. What I had was not enough. If you had it, I wanted it. And when I got it, it still was not enough. I wanted more and I would do anything I would have to do to get it. No matter who I hurt or whatever the cost, I did not appreciate anything, and I mean anything. I was the type that would complain about how I was going to carry the free brick of gold that someone had given me. "It's too

heavy! How do you expect me to carry it?" Yes, I was that ignorant and selfish and inconsiderate.

By the grace of God and the blood of Jesus the veil has been lifted and for the first time in my life I can see how wonderful life and all the blessings, good and bad, actually are. It is no longer, "Oh crud. I have to go to work." It is, "Thank you Jesus, I have a job." Or, "Oh man, I have to go to my parents' and clean their backyard." Instead, "I will be there as soon as I can get there. Thank You Jesus, I still have parents." Have you ever thought while you were stuck in traffic because of an automobile accident that happened in front you, "Oh great! Now I'm going to be really late!"? The first thing I do is pray that no one was hurt and thank the

Lord it was not someone I care for or myself. It is an attitude of gratitude.

A few months after I came home, my best friend was slow in accepting me. For good reason: I had hurt him and many others. He would call or come by my work and we would talk and just be cordial. One day I noticed that I had not heard from him in a while. I called

him and asked where he had been and how come he was not coming by or returning my calls. His reply was, "Well, every time I see you I ask how it is going, how are things? You always reply that things are great and life is wonderful. How can that be? You live in a men's sober living home. You don't have a car. Your kids don't live with you. Your parents don't speak to you. How can life be great and wonderful?" I told him that this was a conversation that we need to have in person and that I would see him that night. When I got to his house, we sat down and I explained how my life, the one that lived in a sober living home, where my kids did not live with me and parents did not talk to me, was so won-

Please see **THANKS** on P. 10

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derful. I started out with that I at least have a roof over my head, my children were at least talking to me, my parents still loved me and one day, maybe not right now, but one day it would all work out. It is not about what I have, it is about what God would do for me as long as I did one thing. That one thing, the only thing I have to do is put God first, rely on Him and He will restore me and give me more than I ever wanted, needed or deserve. Life was wonderful and great because I knew that God had my back and all He wants is the best for me. He will never leave me or forsake me.

For that I am THANKFUL.

Oh, by the way, my kids now live with me, in our own place. My parents not just talk to me; they let me go to their house. And I have a car. How about that for a wonderful life?

I have many people to thank. Most of all I would like to thank the great people of Woodward Park Church of Christ. They opened their hearts and their home to me. It's their commitment to their outreach programs. Not just to me, but to the thousands of people they have touched and served over the years.

From the whole of my heart, thank you.

Mike

Ranchos Tip Thwarts Possible Burglary in Rolling Hills



In custody are Shawn Williams, 27, of Fresno; Benjamin Wallace, 30, also from Fresno; and James "Jimmy" Hale, 28, of Madera.

Thanks to an aware citizen last month, three men are behind bars following a tip phoned in about suspicious activity in the Madera Ranchos. In custody are James Hale, 28, of Madera; Shawn Williams, 27, of Fresno; and 30-year-old Benjamin Wallace, also from Fresno.

The 911 call came into the Madera County Sheriff's Department before noon describing suspicious activity in the Rolling Hills area on Avenue 11, just west of Highway 41. What was reported to the 911 operator was that a vehicle with three men inside appeared to be casing homes on the block, having driven at least four times through the

neighborhood.

Deputy Ian Roth responded to the call and found the vehicle parked at a gas station on Highway 41 and with help from Deputy Toinie Jackson quickly detained all three without incident.

Two of the suspects were wanted in Fresno and the third was found to be in possession of heroin. Fresno resident Shawn Williams was wanted in Fresno on a \$160,000 warrant for burglary. Fresno resident Benjamin Williams, who told deputies his name was Payton Ely, was also wanted in Fresno on a felony no-bail drug warrant and a \$10,000 drug warrant. Madera resident James Hale, or

"Jimmy" as he is known, was the driver of the vehicle and was found to be in possession of heroin.

All three were transported to Madera County Department of Corrections where Williams was booked on the burglary warrant as well as on suspicion of conspiracy to commit burglary. Wallace was booked on the two warrants as well as suspicion of conspiracy to commit burglary and identity theft and Hale was booked on suspicion of conspiracy to commit burglary, possession of burglary tools and drug charges.

The case remains open because deputies believe others may be involved.



What's Lurking with Your Linens?

Is your linen closet one of those that you open with one hand and hold back the avalanche with the other? Or maybe it's storing stuff that you think you probably have, but go buy anyway because it's too hard to find.

Reduce your stress and spending by carving out some time for a linen closet overhaul. Start by emptying its contents and sorting it into categories, i.e. towels, sheets, household supplies, etc.

Directly remove anything that be-

longs in the trash, recycle, relocate, or donate pile. In Julie Morgenstern's book *Organizing from the Inside Out*, she lists the "no brainers" such as "stained or ripped towels and linens, anything broken that's gone unrepaired more than two years, mangled wrapping paper, cleaning supplies you haven't used in a year, and duplicates and triplicates of anything nonconsumable."

Now determine how many of each item is really needed. Usually two to three sets of sheets per bed is adequate. In order to make it easier to distinguish between sizes and sets, consider using a specific color sheet set for each bed. Fold the pillow cases and fitted sheet into the flat sheet, or store the set inside one of the pillow cases.

The number of towel sets per person will depend on how often you replace with clean ones, and how often you do laundry. Just make sure there are enough per per-

son to hold you over until the next laundry load is clean. If there's space in the bathroom consider moving them there so that they're closer to where they're used. When placing them on the shelf, put the folded side out so they're easier to grab and look neater. Shelf dividers (available online from Amazon.com) will keep the towels and sheets from becoming a jumbled mess.

The sheets and towels are probably used most often and therefore earn the prime shelves for accessibility. The rest of your closet contents — light bulbs, batteries, candles, gift wrap, sewing supplies, party supplies, etc.

should be containerized in labeled plastic or canvas storage bins or baskets. Stackable bins make the best use of widely spaced shelving and are retrieved easily, even from higher shelves. You can also label the edge of the shelves so that it's clear to all who use them where to find and replace items.

When you complete this project you'll not only retrieve supplies without fear, you'll probably want to open the door just to see a job well done.

For seasonal items like beach/pool towels and throw blankets place the off-season items in an underbed bag or vacuum-sealed bag on a high shelf. Keep the in-season items on an accessible shelf. Switch them when the season changes.

Here's a great idea from www.getorganizednow.com: If you store a supply of spare toiletries and paper goods, consider placing a labeled sticky note on the last one in the row. When it's used, the person who removes it from the closet is responsible to place the sticky note on the grocery list or some other designated place. That way you'll never run out of a product!

When you complete this project you'll not only retrieve supplies without fear, you'll probably want to open the door just to see a job well done.

You can contact Brenda McElroy to have questions answered at *Organized by Choice* (because things don't always fall into place) at P.O. Box 26152, Fresno, CA 93729, email her at info@organizedbychoice.com, visit her website www.organizedbychoice.com or she can be reached by phone at 559-871-3314.

RECIPE cont. from P. 8

Chocolate Crackle Cookies

1 C Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips
 1 C Brown Sugar Packed
 1/3 C Salad Oil
 2 Eggs
 1 T Vanilla
 1 C All-Purpose Flour
 1 tsp. Baking Powder
 1/4 tsp. Salt
 1/2 C Chopped Nuts (Optional)
 Powdered Sugar
 Preheat oven to 350

Melt chocolate in microwaveable bowl. In a mixing bowl combine the chocolate with the sugar and oil, mixing well. Add eggs, one at a time into the cooled chocolate mixture, beating well. Stir in vanilla. In a separate bowl mix all the dry ingredients; add to chocolate mixture (add nuts if using) and beat well until blended together. Chill dough in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.

Drop teaspoons of chilled dough in powdered sugar, rolling to coat and place on slightly greased cookie sheet about an inch apart. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes.

One of Randy's favorite cookies is a coconut macaroon.

Coconut Macaroons

14 oz. Sweetened Shredded Coconut

1 Can Sweetened Condensed Milk
 1 tsp. Vanilla
 2 Large Egg Whites – at Room Temperature
 1/4 tsp. Salt
 Preheat oven to 325

Combine the coconut, condensed milk and vanilla in a large bowl – set aside. Whip the egg whites and salt with an electric mixer in a large bowl. Beat at high speed until egg whites make medium-firm peaks. Carefully fold the egg whites into the coconut mixture – DO NOT BEAT.

Drop the batter onto sheet pans lined with parchment paper using a small ice cream scoop or two teaspoons. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown.

Cool and serve.

This was the first Thanksgiving for us since the loss of our sister and Randy and his brothers' mom, Faye. It was sad, but comforting in knowing she is at rest. As with all of you who have lost loved ones this year, we miss them terribly, try to adjust, and life goes on. This year, tell your loved ones how much you love them and how thankful you are that they are with you – we have no idea what tomorrow will bring.

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Pick a star for a Veteran at VA Hospital.*

*Items needed for Veterans: Instant coffee, white hand towels, white socks, lap blankets, toothpaste, toothbrushes, L and XL white t-shirts, new books.

Items may be brought to the tree lighting!

More Santa Pictures Available!

This year Santa will be taking pictures with Ranchos children (both naughty and nice) at B&D Holiday Center on Ave. 12 across from the Ranchos Market. He'll be there every weekend from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. until Christmas. Pictures are ONLY \$10!!!

11/11



for more information, contact
the Golden Valley Chamber at **645-4001**

Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce
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Robbers Caught Stealing on Tape

Surveillance Video Captures Two Men Stealing Rims, Radiators from Road 29 and Avenue 12 Wrecking Yard

Help Asked Solving Early Morning Crime

Sheriff John Anderson is asking for the public's help in identifying two men caught on surveillance tape stealing rims and radiators from an auto wrecking yard in Madera at around 8:55 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 15.

The two men entered the wrecking yard located on Road 29 just north of Avenue 12 in a green-colored, third generation Toyota Tacoma truck with left front body damage. Surveillance video shows them loading four rims and 12 radiators onto their truck before taking off.

These two still pictures taken from the surveillance camera clearly depicts one of the suspects captured on tape. The second suspect is hard to make out, other than he is wearing a dark colored hooded jacket and has facial hair.

Anyone who may have information about this theft or the men caught on tape is urged to call the Madera County Sheriff's Department at 559-675-7770 or CRIME STOPPERS AT 498-STOP. An anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers that will result in the capture of these two men could be worth up to \$1,000.



So Much Happening at Senior Center

By Verlaine Elinburg

On November 6 the long awaited Bus trip to Laughlin, Nev. arrived. The Ranchos/Hills Seniors were on their way to fun, laughter and adventure. The trip was coordinated by Jolene Mason from the Ranchos/Hills Seniors, the solo committee for short trips. At the membership meeting held in November she received a standing ovation for a job well done. The members experienced an abundance of fun on the bus and in Laughlin. Joann Blancett, our long distance trip solo coordinator, is putting together a trip to Georgia and South Carolina next.

On Thursday, Nov. 17 the Seniors celebrated Thanksgiving dinner. As always there was so much food. The turkey was provided by the center and all the trimmings were brought in by the members. A total of 72 members were present at the dinner and after dinner the card games commenced.

On Sunday, Nov. 20 the seniors enjoyed their monthly dance session. For those that did not participate on the dance floor there were dreams of yester-years.

The fun is over, temporarily, so it's back to work, which can also be fun. The Holidays are upon us and this is our major fundraiser month. We begin with our Holiday Boutique and Bake Sale which begins on Saturday, Dec. 3. On the Saturdays of the 3rd, 10th, and 17th it is from 8 a.m. to noon and during the weekdays it is from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The Holiday Boutique will be retailing home-baked goods such as cakes, cookies, pies, candy, jams and jellies. There will be handcrafted items such as aprons, quilts, afghans, hot pads, hats, scarves and much more. There will also be a craft sale

with all-occasion handcrafted gifts, baskets and jewelry. And from Grandma's Attic are gently used items. Your shopping will be complete at 37330 Berkshire Drive in the Ranchos.

The Department of Health comes periodically to the Center for free checkups. The screenings include: Personal health history review, blood pressure and blood sugar test, nutrition and health education and a low-cost blood test is available. The health screenings are for 50 and above. For referrals to medical providers and community services, the contact number is 675-7893 to make an appointment.

A nutritionally balanced lunch program is available Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. A suggested price for 60 years and older is \$1.75. Reservations are needed 24 hours in advance prior to 11 a.m. so remember to call Joann at 645-4864 and also notify the center if you need to cancel or change your reservation.

We have a growing exercise program being held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 a.m. The participants are getting more than just exercise by attending. They have fun, share laughs, meet new friends and get updates on old friends, their fellow members and get current news on what is happening at the Center. There is room for

you and you may attend all three days or just one or two of them.

New to the agenda on Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. are a variety of cards games to be enjoyed. Come and learn new games.

Check your calendar for daily events for each day of the week. If you do not have a copy, stop by the Senior Center for a copy. Additional copies are available at the Ranchos Market and Hurst Hardware.



Turkey time at the Ranchos/Hills Seniors as Thanksgiving was celebrated in style.



On the road to Laughlin, Nev. the Ranchos/Hills Seniors prepare for a great time.



The Ranchos/Hills Seniors practice their dance steps as part of their ongoing exercise.

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Sheriff Launches Citizen Web Alerts

Sheriff John Anderson recently announced that the Madera County Sheriff's Department has launched a Citizen Web Alerts webpage covering specific crimes throughout Madera County.

Now posted on the Madera County Sheriff's website, Citizen Web Alerts provides information about burglaries, fraud alerts and warnings about deceptive advertising. This page also offers tips and valuable resources to help citizens avoid falling victim to theft, money scams and identity theft. Anderson said that the Citizen Web

Alerts page will make monthly updates available as well.

Anderson said the Department is building a series of maps that will highlight specific locations in which burglaries are taking place. He says those maps should be available to the public in the coming weeks. At present this site shows the number of burglaries occurring in areas located in eastern Madera County as well as the Valley floor.

The Citizen Web Alerts webpage can be found at www.madera-county.com/sheriff/alerts.html.

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Kiwanis Korner

Kiwanis, Key Club and Kids

By Carla Hart

After a few weeks of a well-deserved break at the end of the summer, the Ranchos Kiwanis is reenergized and charging full speed ahead again with our sponsorships and fundraising activities. There's so much to say and so little time that I'll get right to the key points.

On Oct. 12, we sponsored "Teens and Trucks" for the LHS Driver's Education students. The program, in cooperation with the California Trucking Association and the CHP, is the first of its kind in the state that teaches young drivers how to safely share the road with big rigs. Officers touched on important information regarding distracted driving with emphasis on injury and fatality statistics followed by interactive demonstrations of the stopping distance and blind spots on these 80,000 lb. trucks.

Thank you to Kiwanians Mona, Charles and Casey Diaz of Charles Diaz Trucking for the use of their rig; to Hal and MaryAnn Parks of Pizza Factory for the post-event pizza; Kiwanian John

Minney; the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and to all the participants who were instrumental in bringing this life saving program to our kids.

Congratulations to our LHS Key Club for a first place win in the Homecoming Parade float competition on Oct. 21. Their theme was the Swingin' 60s complete with go-go dancers in cages and peaceful protestors. Thank you Kiwanian Travis Hart for the construction of the float and to Key Club President Andrew Hart and all the club members whose hard work made another award winning design for the second straight year. Groovy, Key Clubbers! Very Groovy! That evening, several Kiwanis members dedicated their Friday night working the booster's snack bar at both Jr. Varsity and Varsity Homecoming games and our newest member, Bryan Lee, personally donated \$300 for the festive game day balloons and decorations lining both sides of Avenue 12 for Hawk Spirit Homecoming Day. Thank you Brian and all the members who rolled up their sleeves on the big game day that brought our Hawks a 27-14 victory.

On Oct. 29, we sponsored a table at the Valley Teen Ranch charity auction event at Tominos. The theme of this year's event was "Animal Party" and our decorating chairperson, Ollia Ridge, really outdid herself with a beautiful, jungle animal display. All proceeds of this event benefit the kids at Valley Teen Ranch.

The Ranchos Kiwanis, along with Vulcan Materials and several local residents and business owners, sponsored a memorial and dedication ceremony honoring Sgt. Raul Moncada on Nov. 17 at Ave. 12 and Road 37. A second memorial sign was placed at Ave. 13 and Road 37. Sgt. Moncada, a Ranchos resident, was killed in action in Iraq while serving in the U.S. Army. We are honored to be part of a lasting tribute to our local hero and his family who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

So much of the good work Kiwanis does for its community doesn't always come in outward, grand displays. In fact, many of our most meaningful accomplishments are often the most subtle, and still make a real and lasting impact. Our past year's efforts didn't go unnoticed when our club was named Division 5 Kiwanis

Team of the Year, beating out more than 20 other clubs. The prestigious Division Award Bell for Best Club was presented to outgoing President Mona Diaz by our Lt. Governor, Dave Hillman. Congratulations Ranchos Kiwanis



Mr. Tarango's Liberty High School Driver's Education class participate in the Teens and Trucks event on October 12.

team! We truly are the best, but we knew that all along, didn't we?

Kiwanis exists solely for the purpose of making a difference in the lives of others, particularly children. We are looking for people who are interested in serving the community, making new friends and having fun with a purpose. If you are interested, contact President, John Glueck at 559-706-5215. We meet the first Thursday of every month at 6:45 a.m. at The Coffee Spot and every Thursday thereafter at 6:30 p.m. at the Ranchos Pizza Factory. Come join us at a meeting for fun and fellowship and see what being a Kiwanian is all about.

www.ranchoskiwanis.com

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John Herrera
Jolene Mason

A HISTORIC EVENT IN THE RANCHOS REMEMBERING A FALLEN WARRIOR

All pictures courtesy of Don Foster and Bill Whyman



Before the event got underway, the memorial placard was covered with a red and black cloth emblazoned with the symbol for those killed in action in service to their country.



The American Indian Veteran's Association provided the presentation of colors at the beginning of the event and stood silently by throughout the presentation.



A stirring version of the Star Spangled Banner, and later a rendition of God Bless America, was provided acapella by Briana Vick.



Madera County District 1 Supervisor Frank Bigelow was the master of ceremonies for the event. It was his office that coordinated the dedication.



The parents of Sgt. Moncada, Raul Sr. and Obdulia, were recognized by the crowd with an extended ovation in honor of their sacrifice.



There was quite a crowd on hand at 11 o'clock in the morning on Nov. 17, including all of the local news programs, veterans, Ranchos community members and others.



The man who really pulled it all together, Ranchos resident John Herrera. He started the ball rolling, made the contacts and the next thing you knew we had a memorial for Sgt. Moncada.



The moment of truth when Sgt. Moncada's daughter, Priscila, had the honor of unveiling the marker for her father as the Moncadas and the Liberty High band look on.



A first for Madera County. Sgt. Moncada's memorial is the first time a section of road has been dedicated to an individual. All other dedicated roadways are state or federal highways.



Immediately following the presentation at Road 37 and Avenue 12, the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce opened its doors for a reception for all attendees.



The beautiful fall weather made the tables setup outside of the Chamber office a perfect place to enjoy a meal and reminisce about the life and service of Sgt. Moncada.



An unexpected surprise for the family was when their daughter, "Alex" was able to show up, having just completed her second tour of duty.



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11/11

Say you saw it in the *Ranchos Independent*

GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

for their sense of urgency. Not in the best of moods, when I pushed through the doors to find one lady standing in line, I shouted, "Whoever owns the silver sedan out front, your car is being ticketed and towed." Not my proudest moment, but I consoled myself by taking her place in line. As I watched her scurry to the parking lot to try and save her car, I figured that more than made up for the three-block hike I had to take because she never bothered to read *Parking for Dummies*.

More Important?

It's not that I don't appreciate time sensitive matters, or that people might have legitimate urgent business, but who are you to say your business is more urgent than the person to your left? Protocol and procedure are there for a reason; stand in line and wait your turn. But sadly, the squeaky wheel gets the grease in our culture and the people with the patience of Job tend to refrain from squeaking, even when they have reason to. And as a result they often get trampled by the mob, which would just as soon go

over you than take the half second to go around. At some point we have to stop, look around and think: would I be inconveniencing anyone if I used four spaces instead of just the one? Am I putting that other driver out by swooping in and stealing the parking spot they are waiting for? Oops, I forgot, thinking might take too long.

A parking lot is not a shoe clearance bin; you can't just dive in all willy nilly. A shoe to the head would likely hurt and leave a mark, but running over someone is often fatal. Note the subtle difference. Remember people, we are talking about big dangerous machines driven by fallible, imperfect humans. A scary enough combination when everyone is paying attention; deadly when someone is driving like a maniac and someone else is texting behind the wheel.

So I beg of you, this Christmas, in the spirit of the season, please remember to be cautious, courteous, watch out for other cars and pedestrians, and most importantly, for goodness' sake, those giant white lines on the pavement are there for a reason: they are not part of the decorating scheme.



FLIPSIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH 2011 Christmas Calendar

Youth "Malldo" - Dec. 10th @ 3:00 - 5:00 PM
Fashion Fair Mall

Children's Musical - Dec. 11th @ 6:00 PM

Memory Tree Service - Dec. 13th @ 6:00 PM

Children's Christmas Crafts - Dec. 17th
@ 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Christmas Caroling - Dec. 19th @ 7:00 PM

Christmas Eve - Dec. 24th
@ 4:00 & 6:00 PM

Christmas Day - NO CHURCH

New Years - ONE Service
@ 10:00 AM

All events take place at Flipside Christian Church unless otherwise stated. Address: 37193 Avenue 12, suite 3H Madera, CA 93636
For more information on these events and other church activities visit our website at www.acts176.com or email info@acts176.com

11/11



Hawk's Girls' Tennis Team Building a Legacy

When Greg Ruland and Bill Gorman got together 11 years ago as coaches of the Liberty girls' tennis team, they knew they had to build from the ground up.

Fast forward 11 years and the pair are celebrating their second straight Division V Central Section championship with a group of girls they will have next season as well.

However, the more amazing fact is that none of the players on this year's Valley Championship girls' tennis team had picked up a racket until they were freshmen at Liberty.

"We like being the behind-the-scenes team," Ruland said. "We get kids that are hard-working and want to put the time and effort in. We saw that this year with the best team I have ever coached."

Last season, the Hawks went on a Valley Championship run as the Cinderella team. As the third seed, they knocked off second-seeded Coalinga 5-4, and then beat No. 4 seed Strathmore 5-4 in the Valley Championship match. And that was with a team full of sophomores. With basically his entire team returning this season, expectations were high for the tennis team, although they weren't on anyone's radar.

The tennis team went undefeated in 17 matches this season. In fact, their closest win of the season came in the Valley Championship match against Strathmore where they won 6-3 and two of the losses came after the Hawks had already clinched the title.

"They were a perfect group of girls," Gorman said. "The chemistry on this team couldn't be more perfect."

The Hawks are loaded for next season as well as the top six players return next season.

"I tell the kids at the end of every year that each position is up for grabs next year," Ruland said. "It's up to them to put in the work to get better."

Leading the Hawks were Annie Er-

ickson and Eunice Castro, who shared the No. 1 singles position this year and were a dominating force at No. 1 doubles. Erickson and Castro were on the court, as they were last year, when the No. 3 doubles team of Amanda Matthews and Nicole Ray shook hands to signify a victory. It was the fifth for the team and secured the Valley title. Erickson and Castro began celebrating be-



The Liberty High Girls Tennis Team defeated Strathmore High on Nov. 3, 6-3 to win the Division V Valley Championship and remain undefeated for the season with a record of 17-0. Congratulations to Coach Greg Ruland and all the girls for a superb performance this season. From left are Kinsey Carlson, Corrie Talbert, Megan Lee, Jordyn DeChamplain, Nicole Ray, Amanda Matthews, Renee Ortega, Bethany Butchnoff, Julianna Wilson, Jocelyn Hernandez, Eunice Castro, Chloe Doyle, Maritza Rivera Medrano, Annie Erickson and Coach Ruland and Coach Gorman.

fore a point was played and had to double-check they were Valley Champions.

"At least we were better than last year," Erickson said. "This makes it completely, 110 percent worth all the work we have put in."

Last season, Erickson and Castro began their celebration in the middle of a point in No. 1 singles.

For the second year in row, Matthews and Ray sewed up the Valley Championship with a victory in No. 3 doubles.

"This feels amazing," Ray, a senior, said.

"She hit her ball long and it didn't register at first," Matthews, also a senior, said. "It's amazing."

Also returning next season will be Jordyn DeChamplain, Bethany Buch-

noff, Chloe Doyle and Jocelynn Hernandez.

Doyle came back from a game down in the second set in the Valley Championship match at No. 5 singles for a 7-5 win to get the fourth win for the Hawks.

"They are like my kids," Gorman said. "We take care of them. They are a fun group to coach."

Like he has done for the last 10 seasons, Gorman will host a tennis camp over the summer where all of next year's Hawks players will participate, and even future Hawks.

"I look for players who have an athletic background," Gorman said about finding diamonds in the rough.

"Eunice played shortstop in softball so I knew she had good footwork and a good swing," Gorman said. "I tried to talk her into playing when she was a freshman, but she didn't come out. She came out last year and hasn't stopped playing since."

Castro, who didn't pick up a racket until she was a sophomore, says that her primary sport now is tennis.

"Hitting the ball hard is fun," Castro said. "I get my strength from softball."

In the past 11 years, Ruland has had just a handful of players that have come out to the team with tennis experience. The last one Ruland had was Ann Soghomonian, who graduated in 2009. And she almost didn't come out for the team.

"I was in the office talking about the girls' tennis team and Ann was in there," Ruland said. "She said she didn't know that we had a team and I had to convince her to come out. At first, she wasn't accepted by the team because she was so good, but after a while, she became an integral part of the team."

With two straight Valley Championships under their belts, the Liberty Hawk girls' tennis team is primed to add a third straight next season.

Create a LHS Scholarship

On May 31, 2012, the next graduating class of Liberty High will leave our Hawk's nest destined to fulfill their college dreams. However, many of these graduates face the daunting challenge of figuring out how to pay for rising costs of attending college and we need your help.

Liberty High School would like to extend an opportunity to the members of the community to establish a scholarship fund, which will promote the attainment of our graduates' post-high school goals. The creation of these scholarship funds will support the continued growth and educational opportunities for Liberty High's graduating seniors and the future professionals of this community.

It's not too late to establish a scholarship fund for the Class of 2012. If you or someone you know is interested in donating a one-time or annual scholarship opportunity to support college-bound students of Liberty High, please contact Karie Hannigan, Scholarship Coordinator, at 645-3500 extension 2003 or email khannigan@gvusd.k12.ca.us by January 13.

GVUSD Calendar

District wide

Dec. 19-Jan. 7 - No school- Winter break

Sierra View Elementary

Dec. 8 - Parent Club meeting

Dec. 15 - Winter Program

Webster Elementary

Dec. 2 - Intermural Game with Sierra View at Webster (football and volleyball)

Dec. 7 - Character Counts event

Dec. 14 - Winter Program

Ranchos Middle School

Dec. 7-8 - Drama Production

Dec. 13 - Band Concert

Liberty High School

Dec. 3 - Winter Formal

Dec. 8 - Band/Choir Winter Concert

Dec. 9 - Winter Food Fair

Click on "Local News" at

Middle School Enjoys Fall Food Fair

At the first food fair of the year, the quad was abuzz with hungry students looking for the best food and a fun time.

This year, there were more booths than before. With many booths meant many choices of goodies and snacks.

Top Foods

According to the students, the top two favorite foods were the Pizza Factory breadsticks and the Otter Pops.

The Drama Class sold breadsticks for four tickets (\$2) for a half order. They sold full orders for eight tickets. The breadsticks were the most expensive item at the food fair, but one of the best.

The Otter Pops, on the other hand,

were sold very cheaply at one ticket each. They were sold by the Photography Club.

There were two different kinds of

candy apples for sale, caramel and cinnamon. The Dance Club sold cinnamon apples for two tickets and sold caramel apples for three tickets.

“The cinnamon apples were less popular than the caramel apples so they offered those at a lower price,” said

Carissa Miller, vice president of the Dance Club.

The Ranchos Food Fair was a fun time for students and staff. Some students are already saving up for those Pizza Factory breadsticks.



A group of students at Ranchos Middle School enjoy the fall food fair.

Boys vs. Girls at RMS Spirit Rally

On October 28, the boys faced off against the girls in a rally. The Girls came out on top.

In the first event, the girls held up in a game called The Human Chair. In the Cheeto Toss, Mrs. Forester and Coach Norris donned a shower cap and covered it in shaving cream. Both teams tried to toss cheetos onto the shaving cream and the boys came out on top by two.

In the Make-up My Gender game, two boys and two girls were dressed in the opposite gender. The girls came out on top. Jackson Watts and Eddie Green dressed up as girls and Karissa McFerrin and Kaylee Saar dressed as boys.

With the girls leading 2-1, the heel race was next. Each gender put on a pair of high heels and took off running. The boys took the victory and tied up the rally.

In the game called Suicides, the boys and girls got geared up in heels and backpacks. The girls took the victory and ruled the rally.

TV Weatherman Visits Webster

Kristi Forshee's Webster Elementary class got a surprise when ABC-30 weatherman Kevin Musso paid the class a visit. The local meteorologist showed a video to the class depicting the different types of weather that can be seen right here in the San Joaquin Valley.

“We were surprised to learn that we have had snow, floods and even tornadoes,” Forshee said.

Musso spent an hour in the classroom an-

swering a variety of questions about weather from the students. He also taught the students about what causes weather, how meteorologists predict weather and the various parts that make up a thunderstorm. He also explained how elevation affects the weather to answer a student's question about why it snows at Chukchansi.

“We had a great time with Mr. Musso and look forward to seeing him on Channel 30,” Forshee said.



ABC 30 weatherman Kevin Musso spent more than an hour talking to Kristi Forshee's Webster Elementary classroom about weather.

Business Review

Brewing Up a New Ranchos Spot

Danny and Audra Damore are the proud owners of the newest business in the Madera Ranchos. The Coffee Spot is located at 37164 Avenue 12 Suite 102, next to Subway.

The Coffee Spot is proud to serve fresh roasted coffee from the Santa Cruz Roasting Company, and they hand brew it while you wait. In addition to all the different coffees, specialty coffees and teas they serve frappuccinos, smoothies and ice cream from Superior Dairy. There are several special flavors available just for the holiday season like Pumpkin Spice, Peppermint Latte and Egg Nog.

Danny and Audra had always talked about wanting to open a coffee shop and when the opportunity arose at this location they jumped at it. “We felt the Ranchos needed not only a coffee shop but a place where everyone in the community could gather to talk about school projects or fundraising projects,” Audra said. She recalls, “Growing up in Santa Cruz and having a coffee shop where

everyone felt comfortable just hanging out and sipping coffee with friends. The type of spot where high school kids could meet after school to visit or go to use the free wi-fi service. A place where everyone feels safe and welcome.”

On weekends they have fresh donuts and pastries and they would love to have local artists display their work inside The

Coffee Spot. Watch for an announcement about “Open Mic” Night for musicians and poets who would like to perform.

The Coffee Spot's hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Audra and Danny have lived in the

Ranchos for 2 ½ years and they are the proud parents of two beautiful daughters, Julia age 10 and Victoria age 9. Both daughters attend Webster Elementary School. They enjoy being involved in the local Girl Scout Troop and just completed a shoe box drive where they collected over 50 boxes of shoes. They are now collecting blankets to donate for Christmas and their Troop is looking for nominations for a local family to receive a special Christmas surprise from the Troop. You can pick up a nomination form at The Coffee Spot.

Danny is the artist in the family. He sings with a rock group called “South

of Sanity.” The band has played at the Whiskey-A-Go-Go in Los Angeles and performs at the Starline Theatre in Fresno. Danny also paints and has painted some of his own artwork currently displayed at The Coffee Spot.

Stop by, have a cup of coffee and say hi.



The Coffee Spot owner, Danny Damore, will make your coffee just how you like it, providing you like it delicious, whether hot or cold.



Hurst Hardware owner Cheryl Hurst knows what it takes to get going in the morning and The Coffee Spot is glad to oblige.

“Three Sisters” Wants Visitors

By Verlaine Elinburg

The “Three Sisters” (squash, beans and corn) is a demonstration garden located behind the Madera Community College Center, 30277 Ave. 12, Madera. The garden is a two acre plot of land designed by Robert Boro. The acreage was donated by State Center Community College District. The Master Gardeners broke ground in March of 2010 after a memorandum was drawn up between the State Center, Madera County UC Cooperative Extension and the Master Gardeners. The Master Gardeners will cultivate and maintain the Three Sisters Demonstration Garden.

The garden is divided into different sections, including the ornamental trees, fruit trees and California native plants. The Girl Scout troop from the Madera Ranchos raised money for the California native plants section and planted them under the supervision of the Master Gardeners.

There is also a two-part rose garden, the children’s garden and a corn maze. A



The donated playhouse was obviously the best part of the Three Sisters Demonstration Garden for these discerning visitors.



The people who helped make the Three Sisters Demonstration Garden a reality, your Madera County Master Gardeners.

dream playhouse was donated by Shirley Mariel, completing the section of the garden. A ribbon cutting on November 4 was spearheaded by Jill Cholewa to commemorate the sections that were finished. Madera County District 1 Supervisor Frank Bigelow was present for the celebration.

The Master Gardeners have an ongoing time period of approximately four years to complete their project. The plan is to have wildlife, butterfly, seasonal and perennial gardens. There will be sections for herbs, vegetables and

vines and sustainable landscapes. The “Three Sisters” represent a Native American legend in which corn, beans and squash are three inseparable sisters that must be planted together to thrive. The stalk of corn provides a pole for the bean vines to climb and the beans stabilize the corn plants and improve the soil. Squash, the shortest and the youngest sister, squashes out the weeds.

The Three Sisters received a grant from Chukchansi that made the purchase of trees, plants and other necessary items to make the demonstration garden possible. The Master Gardeners’ only other fundraiser is the annual Spring Garden Tours.

The Master Gardener plan is to host demonstrations and teach classes for Madera residents to learn to grow and maintain plants that thrive in this area. Madera Ranchos residents are encouraged to travel the few miles down the road and visit the Three Sisters Demonstration Garden at the Madera Community College Center.



Every area is a play area when you have the right attitude, as these young visitors to the Three Sisters Demonstration Garden showed.

Deputy Stops to Help, Jails All Three

Three people attempting to change a flat tire toward the beginning of the month are now behind bars -- captured during their rush hour commute on Avenue 12 near Highway 41. Arrested were 54-year-old Hannie Eugene Rice of Oakhurst, 21-year-old Randall Carlson of Fresno and 22-year-old Heather Ballinger of Madera.

According to reports, Deputy Sheriff Ian Roth was heading west on Avenue 12 roughly a quarter of a mile west of Highway 41 when he spotted a Saturn 4-door on the shoulder. Deputy Roth pulled over to render assistance when he discovered the Saturn 4-door was reported stolen out of Fresno.



Arrested were 54-year-old Hannie Eugene Rice of Oakhurst ...

Additional Deputies arrived on the scene to assist Deputy Roth. Inside the stolen vehicle they seized U.S. currency, a digital scale, small plastic bags and marijuana. A check on Rice showed he was on bail for drug related sales and was also carrying an expired medical marijuana card.



... 22-year-old Heather Ballinger of Madera ...

Probation, Drugs, Fraud, Stolen Property

Carlson was on probation for drugs and found to be in possession of a glass smoking pipe commonly used to smoke Methamphetamine and Ballinger was wanted on a no-bail warrant for fraud out of Fresno. Ballinger remains jailed without bail. She was booked on the outstanding warrant for fraud, as well as suspicion of attempting to buy/sell stolen property. Carlson is also being held without bail. He was booked on attempt to buy/sell stolen property, possession of marijuana, possession of a controlled substance, and transportation of marijuana



... and 21-year-old Randall Carlson of Fresno when their stolen Saturn got a flat.

Rice is accused of committing a felony while out on bail, attempting to buy/sell stolen property, possession of marijuana and transporting marijuana. His bail was set at \$25,000.

GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	÷		+		11
×		×		+	
	+		+		24
÷		+		-	
	×		-		2
12		11		11	

1 2 3 4 6 7 8 8 9

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Are you on the Cain Train ... *Still?*



By Serafin Quintanar

If the Republican presidential primary race has reminded us of anything, it is that things can change in an instant and that nothing is a sure thing in politics. Take a look at the once GOP savior, Rick Perry, who imploded after looking like he was invincible. Then there is the painfully hard to watch decline of Michele Bachmann. The latest sensation, Herman Cain, was written off as having no chance at all and then he shot to the top seemingly overnight. However, now that he is under the microscope, he may be the next victim in the polls. Regardless, another sensation from the "written off" category may be in the wings ready to take Cain's place at the top: Newt Gingrich. Gingrich has been steadily climbing in the polls week after week.

Regardless of who the flavor of the month is, one thing is certain: we won't know who the Republican nominee

will be until the actual voting starts in Iowa and beyond. The first four states may very well determine who will go against Obama in 2012, but then again anything can happen.

The point of all this is that we should all do our own research and come to our own conclusions about each candidate's principles, proposed policies and his or her viability in the general election. However, we should also keep an open mind and not get emotionally attached to only one candidate. It might be a better idea, both practically and emotionally, to narrow down our top three choices and make a decision ahead of time that we'd be happy with any of those three being the nominee. At the same time, we can support our favorite candidate, but not do so with blind passion and emotion. We should be open to learning more about any candidate: the good, the bad and the ugly.

There is nothing wrong with switching who you support if you learn new information that makes you like or dislike a certain candidate more than how you felt about them before. For example, you may have really like

Rick Perry until you learned about his immigration policy in Texas. Or you may think that Newt Gingrich is proving himself to be the most qualified and capable candidate. You may think that Cain is going to have too much baggage going forward. Or you might feel that immigration is not a big deal or that Newt is past his prime or that what doesn't ruin Herman Cain only makes him stronger.

If nothing else, this primary continues to be exciting. That is a healthy thing for this important time in our nation's history.

If you haven't already, please take the time to join us. We would appreciate your presence allowing you the opportunity to discuss current issues, ideas or just listen. These educational meetings keep us well-equipped with facts and banish the many untruths that are consistently spread throughout the mainstream media. A recent example is the unknown culprits who have encouraged women to try and damage Herman Cain's reputation and campaign. Who convinced these women to come

The point of all this is that we should all do our own research and come to our own conclusions about each candidate's principles, proposed policies and his or her viability in the general election. However, we should also keep an open mind and not get emotionally attached to only one candidate.

forward after 15 years, the despicable lawyer, Gloria Allred? Would someone or group pay her to do it? This shell game is often played to steer us away from facts. We have many important issues to discuss regarding our country's survival than this ridiculous sensationalism. The de-

bate between Cain and Gingrich had substance and not this typical media drivel.

Madera Tea Party Chapter Meetings

The November 17th meeting presented guest speaker Sam Paredes of the Gun Owners of California who talked about the 2nd Amendment rights and confrontational politics.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. at Di Cicco's, 516 So. "T" Street in Madera. Next meeting is December 15. Confirm meeting dates on the Central Valley Tea Party website at www.centralvalleyteaparty.com.

For more information contact Madera Ranchos Tea Party Coordinator John Smedley by e-mail at jcsmedley@comcast.net or call him at 559-645-7031. Or you can email Madera Tea Party Coordinator Rick Farinelli at richardfarinelli@sbcglobal.net or call him at 559-706-5386.

In Madera and beyond we hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas with the promise of having "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"!

4H Happenings
 4H Happenings
 4H Happenings
 4H Happenings
 4H Happenings
 Sierra Shadows 4H club
 By Anahi Rivera



4-H Club Not Slowing Down

The Sierra Shadows 4-H club would like to express a heartfelt THANK YOU to all who supported the club's car wash fundraiser which was held on Oct. 22 at the Ranchos Market. The club would like

to thank the Ranchos Market for allowing us to hold the car wash fundraiser in their parking lot. We would also like to thank Napa Auto Parts for donating the soap. We appreciate it and we also appreciate the support from our community.

The swine project had a meeting this past month. The swine leader barbecued pork sausage for the group, which tasted fantastic. The leader also showed the swine members the items/equipment they would need for showmanship. We will also need these items and others for any upcoming fairs we will be participating in.

The rabbit project held its monthly meeting which was very interesting. The

group viewed and handled the heart, liver, kidneys and intestines of a rabbit. They were also able to view them under a microscope. We also discussed the anatomy and skeletal system of a rabbit.

The community pride project held its monthly meeting and worked on cutting blankets which were finished at the November community club meeting. The "blankets" are a community service project for the Sierra Shadows 4-H club. The club hopes to donate 20 blankets to the Ronald McDonald House for Christmas. The members also donate spare change to the Heifer International and soda pop tabs to the Ronald McDonald House. We also work with "Kids for Recycling"

with Diana VanWagenen. Thank you Diana for all that you do for us.

Many of the members have started studying for the small animal expo and large animal expo.

Youth between the ages of 9 to 18 years old may join 4-H. To join for this 4-H year, you will need to join before January 1.

The Sierra Shadows 4-H club leader is Terri Fernandez, who can be reached at 645-4836 or at trrfernandez@yahoo.com. The next club meeting will be the December meeting and will be the annual Christmas party on Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. at the Sierra View Elementary School cafeteria. Hope to see you there.

SPREAD THE NEWS!

Have friends or family who love the Ranchos Independent but live outside the area? Are you moving but you still want to keep in touch with what's happening in the Madera Ranchos?



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For Rent

Home for Rent - 2 bdrm, 2 bath mobile home. Rent \$800 per month. Corner of Ave. 11 and Colorado. Pets OK. Call agent at **706-0301**.

For Sale

For Sale - Portable Basketball Backboard - Spalding polycarbonate backboard with all the features. Bought this new one year ago for \$250, hurt my knee and haven't used it since. First \$150 takes it. Call (cell) **905-8311**.

For Sale - Refrigerator - Whirlpool - Stainless Steel side by side, ice/water dispenser. \$700 or best offer. Washer/Dryer - Whirlpool - White. Propane ready. \$300. each. Located in Ranchos. Call cell **661-333-2771**.

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Painting Services - 40 years of experience. Licensed and insured. **Frank Kramer Exteriors.** Lic. #273099. Call **645-4113**.

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9. Cheese Rolling
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Source: InventorSpot.com

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SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

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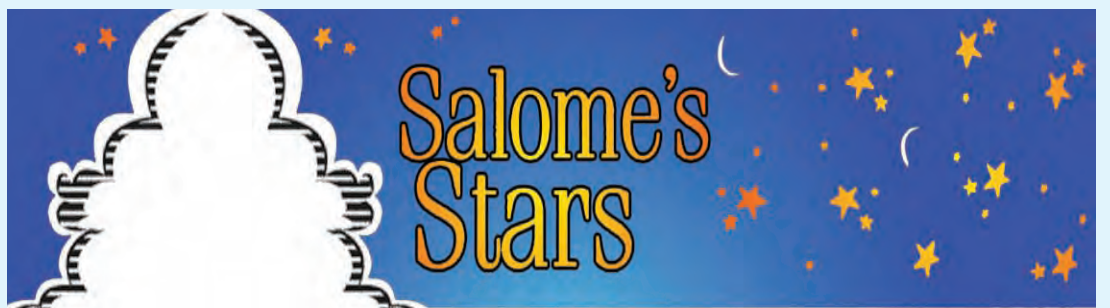
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The Ranchos Independent

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



ARIES (March 21 to April 19) This is a good time to let that intrepid Aries temperament take charge. Your strong leadership will help settle those still-unresolved situations. Support comes from a surprising source.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your problem-solving talents shine as you move to cool down heated emotions. You also inspire trust in all parties when you act with careful consideration of their feelings.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) That long-delayed commitment begins to look better to you. But there's still a crucial fact or two you need to know about it. A health problem needs to be taken care of.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Don't waste time trying to learn why someone you relied on is wavering in his or her support of your stand on a workplace issue. Move on with the help of more steadfast allies.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Relationships enter a brighter period, both at home and in the workplace. Prospects also look good for single Leos and Leonas, who can expect a welcome visit from Cupid.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Those mixed signals that were complicating your life are giving way now to clear, definitive guidelines. This makes it easier for you to weigh your options and make decisions.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Ask your partner for an explanation of what seems to be a sign of strain in your relationship. The sooner you understand the problem, the sooner you can both act to resolve it.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) A new challenge in the workplace holds an exciting promise for the future. But be aware of the fact that you haven't been told about all the demands you might have to meet.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Your financial picture brightens as you get into sorting out realistic goals and those that are not reachable at this time. "Caution" remains your fiscal watchword.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) You're deep into your new project, and that's just fine. But don't neglect your family and friends. Spending time with people you care for is always a wise investment.

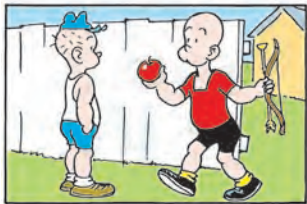
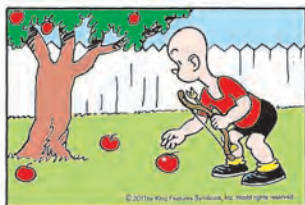
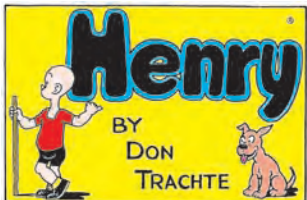
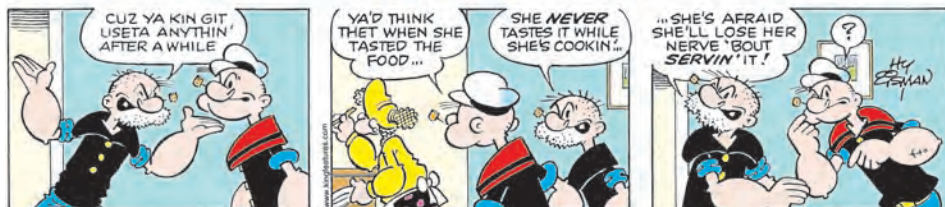
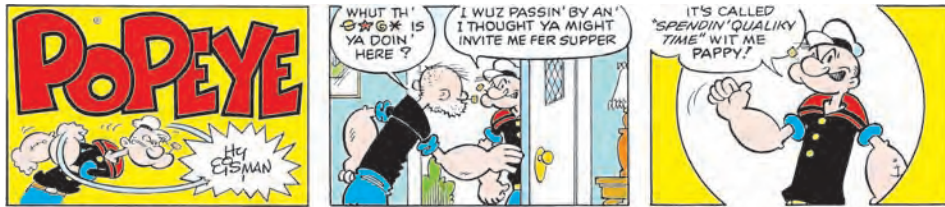
AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Past feelings are suddenly reawakened. This could make you emotionally vulnerable. Be careful about decisions you might be asked to make at this time.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) You've come to a place where you'll be facing important decisions that can affect your future. Rely on your strong moral compass to guide you toward making the right choices.

Born this Week

You're gifted with both natural wisdom and wit -- a good combination for success as a writer, a teacher and, most importantly, a parent.

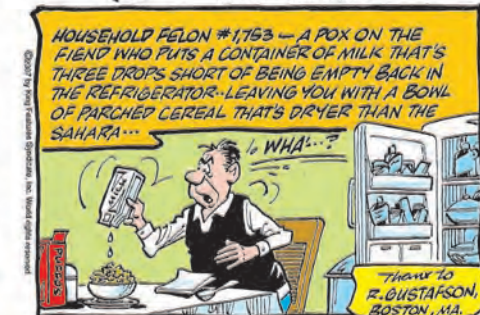
FUN PAGES



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



BY AL SCADUTO



DON'T BE SCARED OF THIS ONE! Hidden in the above frame is an old saying. You can find it by reading every other letter as you go around it clockwise. The trick is finding the right first letter.

Answer: Starting with the 'H' in the bottom left, this bark is worse than his bite.

TRY SEWING THIS ONE UP IN FIVE MINUTES! To solve this problem you must replace the letters in our AlphaMath puzzle with the digits 0, 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, so that you have a correct addition expression. The same letters get the same digits. Try to get a higher total than we did.

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

Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Make, make, make, make, mole, mole, moon, moon.

Wishing Well

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

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

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MAGIC MAZE ● FEMALE NAMES IN SONGS BY THE BEATLES

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

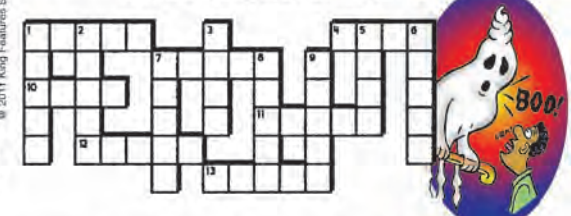
Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

- Anna
- Doris
- Joan
- Julia
- Lady Madonna
- Lucy
- Martha
- Mary Jane
- Michelle
- Molly Jones
- Prudence
- Rita
- Rose
- Sadie
- Sally

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Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



Below are 15 words associated with scary stories and places. You must place them in the crossword puzzle grid shown above. Use the trial-and-error method, and keep a good eraser handy.

- ATTIC
- BEAST
- BODY
- CRASH
- CROSS
- CRYPT
- CURSE
- GHOST
- GLOOM
- HOWL
- MOANS
- MUMMY
- OWLS
- RATS
- YELLS

Answers: (Across) 1. Crash, 4. Body, 7. Gloom, 10. Rats, 11. Moans, 12. Curse, 13. Crypt (Down) 1. Curse, 2. Attic, 3. Howl, 5. Ovis, 6. Yells, 7. Ghost, 8. Mummy, 9. Beast.

TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

- MUSIC: What artist is the subject of a 1970s Don McLean song that begins, "Starry, starry night"?
- HISTORY: When and where did the first African slaves arrive in America?
- ANIMATION: What was the name of the craggy peak overlooking Whoville in "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"?
- MEASUREMENTS: What is absolute zero measured in Celsius?
- MOVIES: What was the home planet of the "Transformers" alien robots (2007) who came to Earth?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a baby horse called?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which U.S. president proposed the Great Society?
- LITERATURE: Who wrote "The Canterbury Tales" in the late 14th century?
- MEDICAL: What is the tine test used to diagnose?
- SCIENCE: What elements were discovered by Pierre and Marie Curie?

Answers

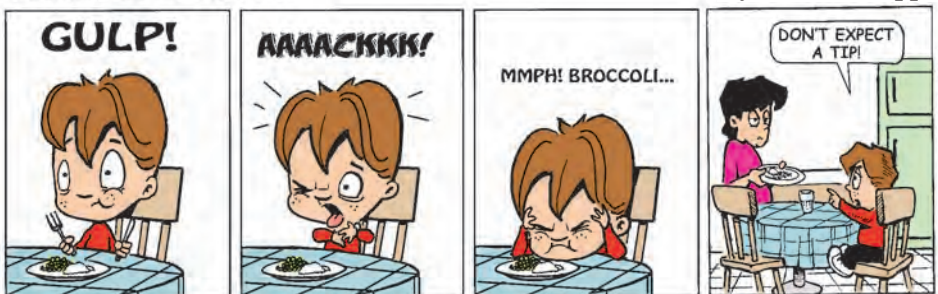
- Vincent Van Gogh
- 1619 (Jamestown, Virginia)
- Mount Crumpit
- 273 degrees
- Cyberton
- A foal
- Lyndon Johnson
- Geoffrey Chaucer
- Tuberculosis
- Polonium and radium

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Click on "Local News" at

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



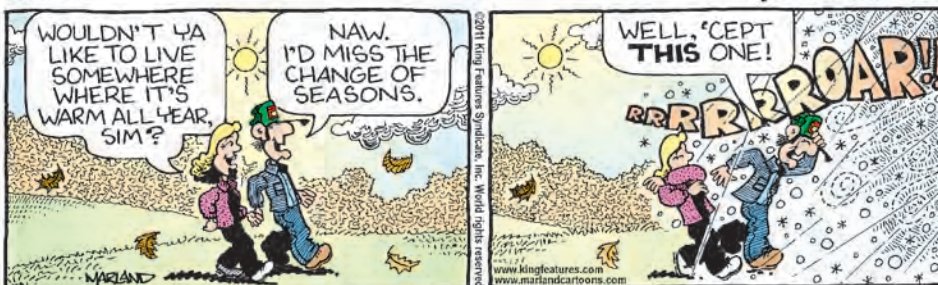
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



R.F.D.

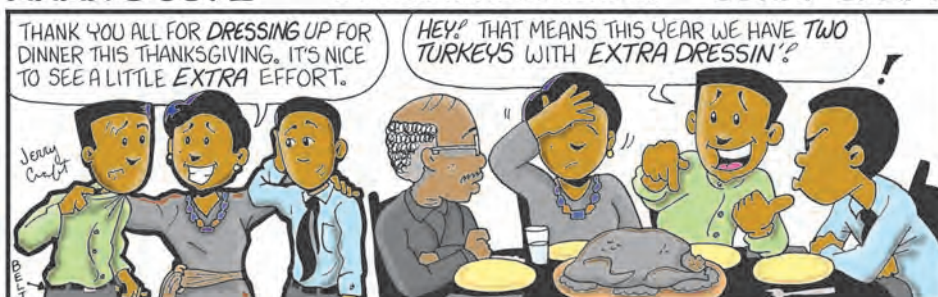
by Mike Marland



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JERRY CRAFT



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



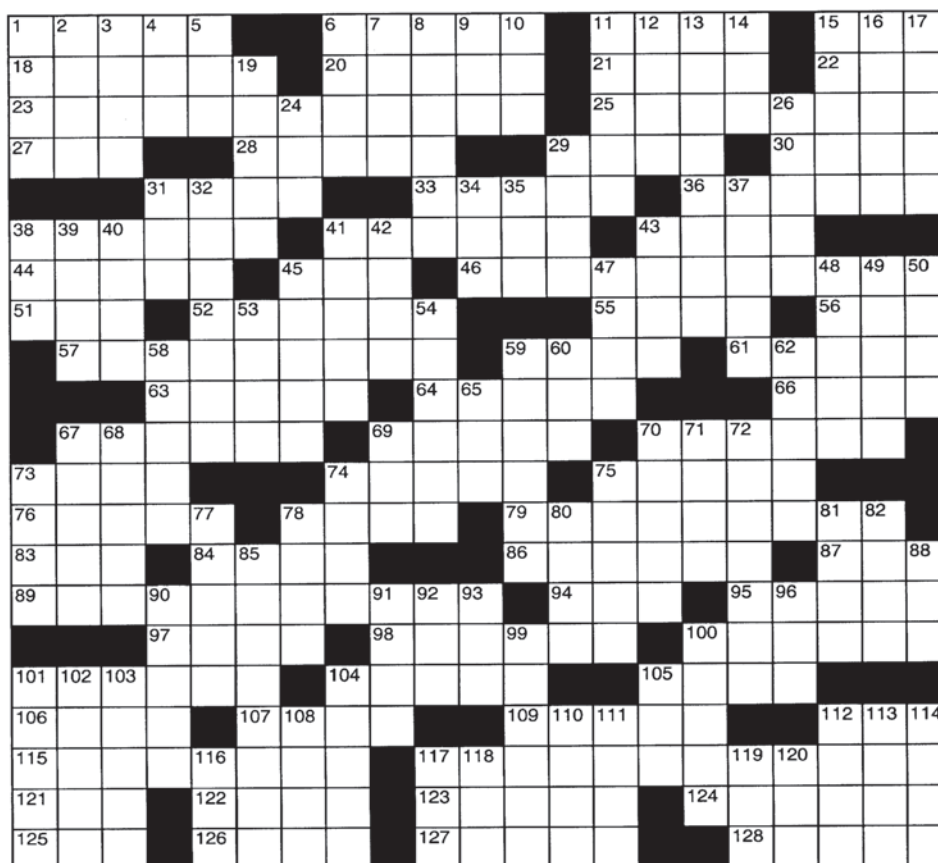
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Differences: 1. Plant is on wall. 2. Woman's bow is missing. 3. Picture is hung on wall. 4. Box is different. 5. Shoes are black. 6. Cabinet has no doors.

Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Off-the-wall
 - 6 Ukrainian city
 - 11 Peepers, to Pope
 - 15 Arrange type
 - 18 Repeated
 - 20 French spa
 - 21 Rain heavily
 - 22 Gob
 - 23 Start of a remark
 - 25 Earmark
 - 27 Asian holiday
 - 28 Annual award?
 - 29 Shake — (hurry)
 - 30 Hurries
 - 31 Depraved
 - 33 Pile up
 - 36 Squirrel's stash
 - 38 Snake-charmer's crew
 - 41 Outcast
 - 43 Globule
 - 44 Riyadh religion
 - 45 Damone or Dana
 - 46 Part 2 of remark
 - 51 Neighbor of Fla.
 - 52 Rice dish
 - 55 Waikiki wing-ding
 - 56 Salute for Caesar
 - 57 Unaware
 - 59 Wee serving
 - 61 Poe crow
 - 63 Ain't right?
 - 64 Type of cabbage
 - 66 Part of NB section
 - 67 High-rise building?
 - 69 Part 3 of remark
 - 70 Know-it-all
 - 73 Semester
 - 74 Prickly plant
 - 75 Hellman's "The Little —"
 - 76 Marsh sight
 - 78 It should be square
 - 79 Put an end to
 - 83 Carnival site
 - 84 Dentist's directive
 - 86 "The — Kid" ('84 film)
 - 87 Meyers of "Kate & Allie"
 - 89 Part 4 of remark
 - 94 Corn portion
 - 95 Broadcast in July
 - 97 Bates or Rickman
 - 98 Cheerless
 - 100 One of the Waughs
 - 101 Elegant
 - 104 — terrier
 - 105 Salchow kin
 - 106 Sludge
 - 107 Bloomsbury buggy
 - 109 Bookstore
 - 112 Actress
 - 115 Managers
 - 117 End of remark
 - 121 Be human
 - 122 MD's area
 - 123 Riser's relative
 - 124 Home on the range?
 - 125 "So there!"
 - 126 Man, for one
 - 127 At daybreak
 - 128 Gushes
 - 8 One-dimensional
 - 9 Label
 - 10 Whichever
 - 11 Iridescent stones
 - 12 Hamlet or Herman
 - 13 Where to spend leva
 - 14 Smash letters
 - 15 Flight segment
 - 16 Consumed
 - 17 Lock
 - 19 Name of a Day
 - 24 "My Gal —" (1905 tune)
 - 26 Butcher-shop display
 - 29 '75 Wimbledon winner
 - 31 Age
 - 32 Garlic hater
 - 34 Bad start
 - 35 Contented sigh
 - 37 — d'Alene, ID
 - 38 Spy org.
 - 39 '52 Winter Olympics site
 - 40 Spill the beans
 - 41 Navigate
 - 42 Bill of Rights grp.
 - 43 — major leaves
 - 45 Like some
 - 47 Chew out spot
 - 48 Sheltered
 - 49 Happening
 - 50 Russo of "Get Shorty"
 - 53 Maintain
 - 54 Beset
 - 58 Delibes opera
 - 59 "Rusalka" composer
 - 60 Ely or Darling
 - 62 Disconcert
 - 65 "Stroker —" ('83 film)
 - 67 Get cracking
 - 68 It's kept in a quiver
 - 69 Bikini part
 - 70 Opposite
 - 71 Way out
 - 72 Merit
 - 73 Hatcher of "Lois & Clark"
 - 74 Crooked
 - 75 Raid
 - 77 Adz and awl
 - 78 Chow —
 - 80 Actor Parley
 - 81 Viscount's better
 - 82 Cart items
 - 85 Nursery
 - 88 Hotel
 - 90 Desert refuges
 - 91 Dutch town
 - 92 — Lanka
 - 93 "— the fields we go..."
 - 96 Smoked delicacy
 - 99 Response
 - 100 Be
 - 101 Sheep sheds
 - 102 "M" man
 - 103 Blue hue
 - 104 Social group
 - 105 Sternward
 - 108 TV's "— People"
 - 110 Barbecue fuel
 - 111 The — 500
 - 112 Mature
 - 113 From the top
 - 114 Gets by (with "out")
 - 116 Mai —
 - 117 Ideologue's suffix
 - 118 Singer's syllable
 - 119 Cock and bull
 - 120 Dem.'s opponent

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FUN PAGES

SEMUCU
south east madera county united

**SEMUCU
REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday, December 19 at 6:30 p.m.
Ranchos Pizza Factory**

SEMUCU is looking for new members and volunteers to join the SEMUCU committees dealing with water, schools, parks, library, roads and grants. The grant writing classes SEMUCU recently sponsored have already started. Please look for more information in the near future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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