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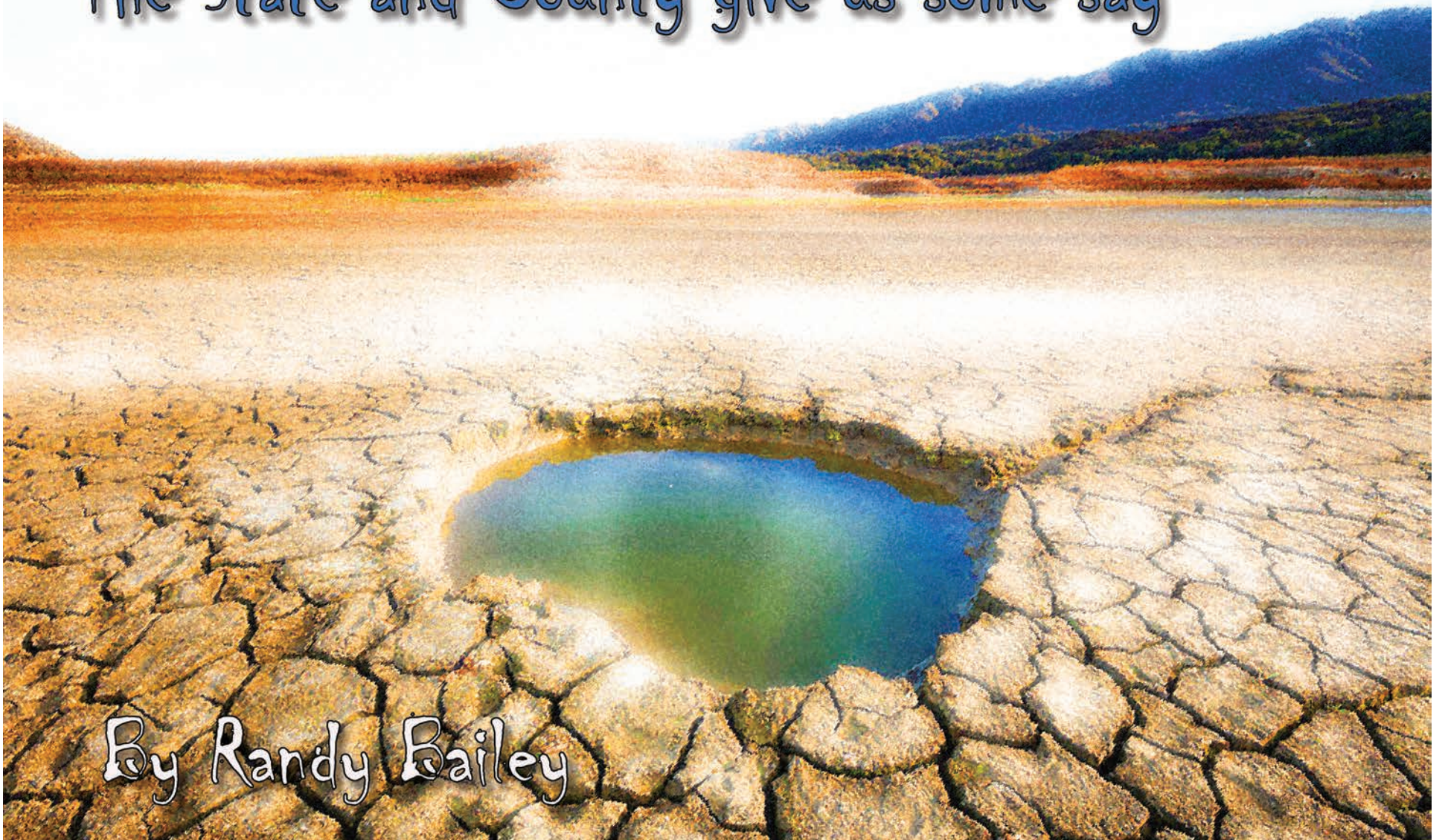
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50¢

## Our Groundwater

The State and County give us some say



By Randy Bailey

***In This Issue***

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Through Dec. 23, the state Department of Water Resources is accepting public comments on Groundwater Sustainability Plans that have been proposed for the Madera water basin. With a target date of 2040, the plans are intended to better manage groundwater for all users, including residents as well as agriculture.

At present, of the four plans being projected for the Madera water basin, the plans for the largest area is a “do nothing” plan that projects continuing declining water levels by maintaining the same level of pumping of groundwater by agriculture. Although protecting agriculture and thousands of ag-related jobs, this plan will virtually assure the failure of many domestic wells as the water level drops below pump levels. Of course, dropping water levels also tend to impact water quality.

Madera County, anticipating a possible problem, has come up with some plans to potentially help. Based on fees from water users, a fund could be created to drill new wells. Additionally, the County is looking at potentially putting a limit on the amount of water that can be pumped annually from those commercial wells. Added to that are

## Our Groundwater

The State and County give us some say



suggestions of groundwater recharge, all while trying to limit groundwater pumping. Reducing evaporation is also on the table and purchasing water from other areas of California is also being considered.

You can comment on any or all of the proposed plans, but be warned: The Madera plan is in excess of 3,000 pages. There is an executive summary that’s probably the best place to start. The Madera Ranchos is part of Groundwater Basin 5-

022.06. With that information, next go to [sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsp/all](http://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/gsp/all) you can access all four plans proposed for our area. After you click on any of the plans, there will be an “Action” column where you can “Add Comment.” You can also take a look at the Madera Subbasin Joint GSP in the same place and view the plan contents by selecting “Groundwater Sustainability Plan.”

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, or SGMA, was passed in 2014 in response to disappearing groundwater levels in California resulting from the drought coupled with ongoing over pumping and cuts to surface water deliveries. The law requires local officials to create groundwater sustainability plans by 2040 and then maintain “balanced” groundwater use through 2090.

The County and the State are giving everyday citizens a chance to weigh in on these decisions that will impact us all, but that window of opportunity is quickly drawing to a close. Dec. 23 is the last day to register a comment.

For further information, Stephanie Anagnoson is the director of the Madera County Water and Natural Resources Department. Her phone number is 559-662-8015.

## Ranchos Finally Gets Substation



The grand opening was celebrated with a ribbon cutting by Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce President Verlain Elinburg, center. Also in attendance were Madera County District 1 Supervisor Brett Frazier, left, with Sheriff Tyson Pogue next to him. Madera County’s Chief Administrative Officer, former Sheriff Jay Varney, far right, was also present.

The Madera County Sheriff’s Department opened a brand new Sheriff’s substation in the Ranchos on Saturday, Nov. 7.

“This will be a substation where the deputies are working and the community can come in and file reports, pull permits and do other business that they need to do at the sheriff’s office without having to drive all the way into Madera city,” said Madera County Sheriff, Tyson Pogue.

The substation, which had been in the plans for more than a decade, is located in the building in front of the Madera Ranchos Library on the corner of Berkshire and Fernwood.

## A Sensible Anti-COVID Strategy

By Jay Bhattacharya  
Stanford University

My goal today is, first, to present the facts about how deadly COVID-19 actually is; second, to present the facts about who is at risk from COVID; third, to present some facts about how deadly the widespread lockdowns have been; and fourth, to recommend a shift in public policy.

### 1. The COVID-19 Fatality Rate

In discussing the deadliness of COVID, we need to distinguish COVID cases from COVID infections. A lot of fear and confusion has resulted from failing to understand the difference.

We have heard much this year about the “case fatality rate” of COVID. In early March, the case fatality rate in the U.S. was roughly three percent — nearly three out of every 100 people who were identified as “cases” of COVID in early March died from it. Compare that to today, when the fatality rate of COVID is known to be less than one half of one percent.

In other words, when the World Health Organization said back in early March that three percent of people who get COVID die from it, they were wrong by at least one order of magnitude. The COVID fatality

rate is much closer to 0.2 or 0.3 percent. The reason for the highly inaccurate early estimates is simple: In early March, we were not identifying most of the people who had been infected by COVID.

“Case fatality rate” is computed by dividing the number of deaths by the total number of confirmed cases. But to obtain an accurate COVID fatality rate, the number in the denominator should be the number of people who have been infected — the number of people who have actually had the disease — rather than the number of confirmed cases.

In March, only the small fraction of infected people who got sick and went to the hospital were identified as cases. But the majority of people who are infected by COVID have very mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. These people weren’t identified in the early days, which resulted in a highly misleading fatality rate. And that is what drove public policy. Even worse, it continues to sow fear and panic, because the perception of too many people about COVID is frozen in the misleading data from March.

So how do we get an accurate fatality

Please see **COVID** on P. 4

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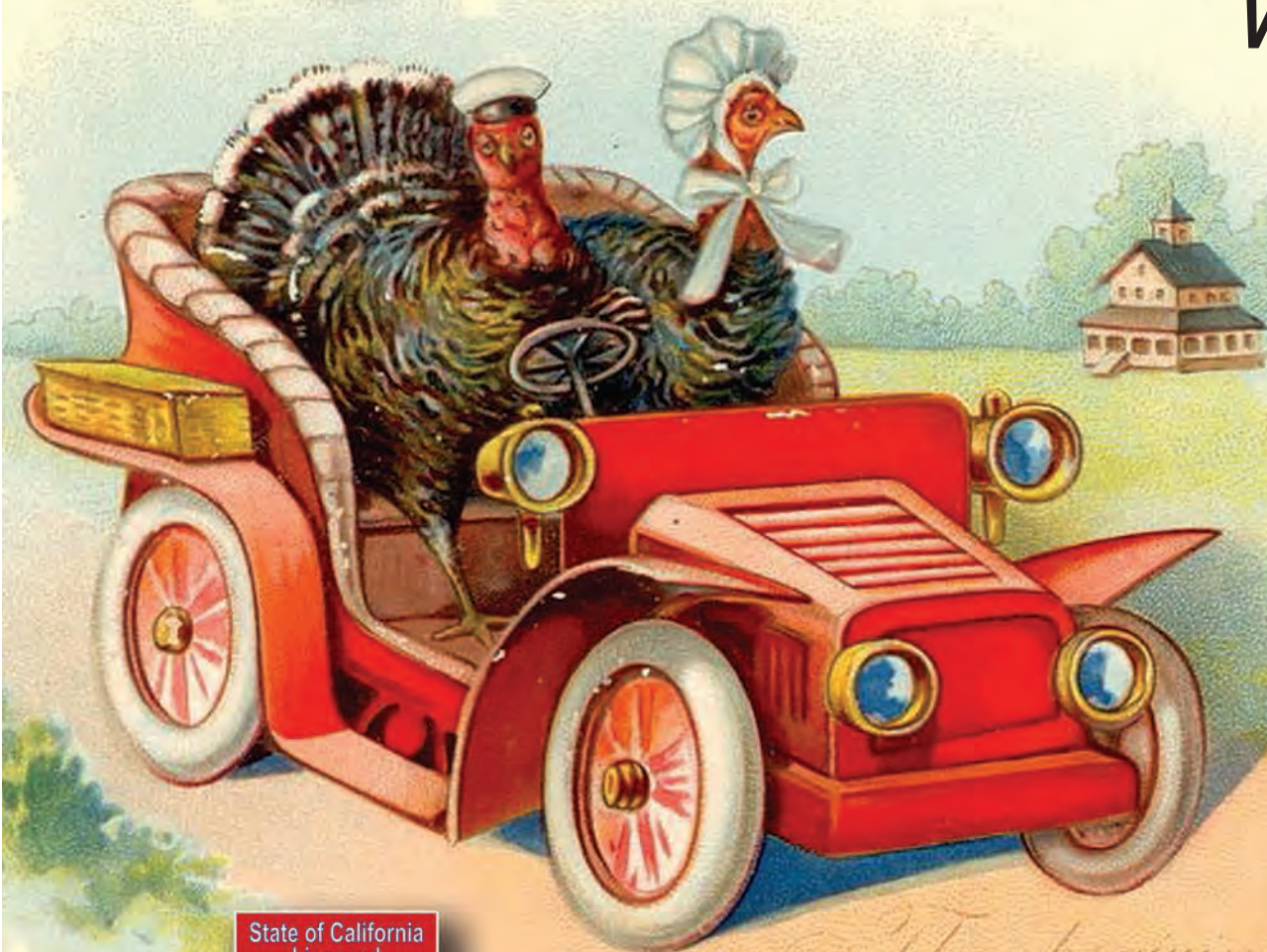
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*Thanksgiving day*

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COVID cont. from P. 2

rate? To use a technical term, we test for “seroprevalence” — in other words, we test to find out how many people have evidence in their bloodstream of having had COVID.

This is easy with some viruses. Anyone who has had chickenpox, for instance, still has that virus living in them — it stays in the body forever. COVID, on the other hand, like other coronaviruses, doesn’t stay in the body. Someone who is infected with COVID and then clears it will be immune from it, but it won’t still be living in them.

What we need to test for, then, are antibodies or other evidence that someone has had COVID. And even antibodies fade over time, so testing for them still results in an underestimate of total infections.

Seroprevalence is what I worked on in the early days of the epidemic. In April, I ran a series of studies, using antibody tests, to see how many people in California’s Santa Clara County, where I live, had been infected. At the time, there were about 1,000 COVID cases that had been identified in the county, but our antibody tests found that 50,000 people had been infected — i.e., there were 50 times more infections than identified cases. This was enormously important, because it meant that the fatality rate was not three percent, but closer to 0.2 percent; not three in 100, but two in 1,000.

When it came out, this Santa Clara study was controversial. But science is like that, and the way science tests controversial studies is to see if they can be replicated. And indeed, there are now 82 similar seroprevalence studies from around the world, and the median result of these 82 studies is a fatality rate of about 0.2 percent — exactly what we found in Santa Clara County.

In some places, of course, the fatality rate was higher: In New York City it was more like 0.5 percent. In other places it was lower: The rate in Idaho was 0.13 percent. What this variation shows is that the fatality rate is not simply a function of how deadly a virus is. It is also a function of who gets infected and of the quality of the health care system. In the early days of the virus, our health care systems managed COVID poorly. Part of this was due to ignorance: We pursued very aggressive treatments, for instance, such as the use of ventilators, that in retrospect might have been counterproductive. And part of it was due to negligence: In some places, we needlessly allowed a lot of people in nursing homes to get infected.

But the bottom line is that the COVID fatality rate is in the neighborhood of 0.2 percent.

**2. Who Is at Risk?**

The single most important fact about the COVID pandemic — in terms of decid-

ing how to respond to it on both an individual and a governmental basis — is that it is not equally dangerous for everybody. This became clear very early on, but for some reason our public health messaging failed to get this fact out to the public.

It still seems to be a common perception that COVID is equally dangerous to everybody, but this couldn’t be further from the truth. There is a thousand-fold difference between the mortality rate in older people, 70 and up, and the mortality rate in children. In some sense, this is a great blessing. If it was a disease that killed children preferentially, I for one would react very differently. But the fact is that for young children, this disease is less dangerous than the seasonal flu. This year, in the United States, more children have died from the seasonal flu than from COVID by a factor of two or three.

Whereas COVID is not deadly for children, for older people it is much more deadly than the seasonal flu. If you look at studies worldwide, the COVID fatality rate for people 70 and up is about four percent — four in 100 among those 70 and older, as opposed to two in 1,000 in the overall population.

Again, this huge difference between the danger of COVID to the young and the danger of COVID to the old is the most important fact about the virus. Yet it has not been sufficiently emphasized in public health messaging or taken into account by most policymakers.

**3. Deadliness of the Lockdowns**

The widespread lockdowns that have been adopted in response to COVID are unprecedented — lockdowns have never before been tried as a method of disease control. Nor were these lockdowns part of the original plan. The initial rationale for lockdowns was that slowing the spread of the disease would prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed. It became clear before long that this was not a worry: In the U.S. and in most of the world, hospitals were never at risk of being overwhelmed. Yet the lockdowns were kept in place, and this is turning out to have deadly effects.

Those who dare to talk about the tremendous economic harms that have followed from the lockdowns are accused of heartlessness. Economic considerations are nothing compared to saving lives, they are told. So I’m not going to talk about the economic effects — I’m going to talk about the deadly effects on health, beginning with the fact that the U.N. has estimated that 130 million additional people will starve this year as a result of the economic damage resulting from the lockdowns.

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Please see COVID on P. 14

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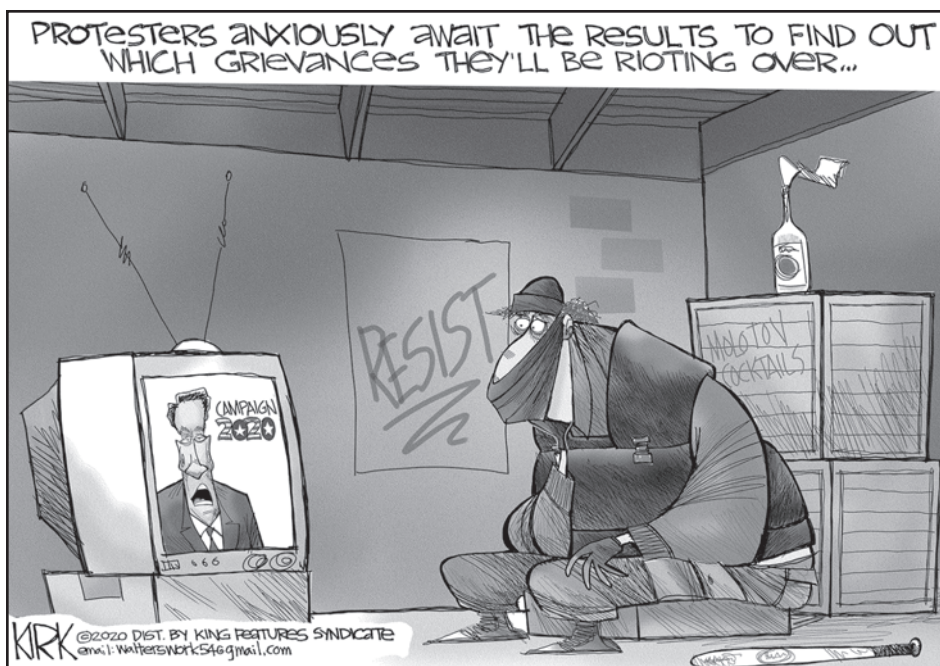
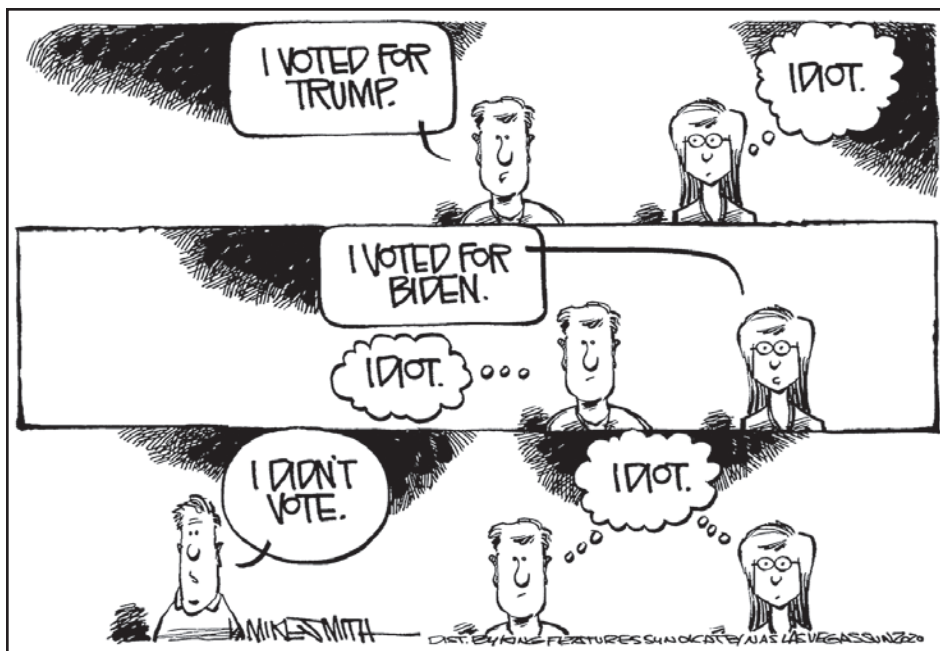
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Guest Editorial

# Trump's Staying Power

By Rich Lowry

Pending the outcome in a few key states, Donald Trump may be leaving the White House, but he's not exiting the room.

The fiercest Never Trump critics hoped for -- and wishfully predicted -- a cleansing landslide that would wipe out every trace of Trump and his enablers from the GOP.

That's not happening. Trump's poll- and pundit-defying surge toward the cup of a second term vindicates Trump's approach enough to give him and his potential successors continued traction, if not a dominant voice, in the party.

Trump's possible loss is nothing like the shellacking the GOP experienced in 2008, when Barack Obama won in a landslide together with a 60-seat Senate majority.

Trump's party has a chance to retain its Senate majority and will pick up House seats, while the margin of his own defeat may be a whisker in the Blue Wall states, just as his margin of victory in 2016 was a whisker.

He did his own side the inadvertent favor of perhaps buffering it from the worst consequences of his own possible loss -- first, by filling the Ruth Bader Ginsburg seat on the Supreme Court that otherwise would have fallen to Joe Biden, and by performing well enough to aid the cause of Republican Senate candidates,

who will check a Biden presidency from the outset if they do indeed manage to hold the majority.

Trump's voters were still there for him -- in fact, more so than ever. His tack of doubling down on his base wasn't quite as insane as we were always told by commentators. His strong close proved his power as a campaigner, with his signature madcap rallies serving as effective organizing and messaging vehicles.

This is not to deny that Trump's own failings helped sink him. There are a thousand pitfalls he could have avoided if he weren't so self-involved and undisciplined. No single one of them made the difference, but cumulatively they blighted his presidency and made him radioactive in the suburbs.

No one should want to repeat them, and the party should never again get behind such a flawed personal figure.

Nevertheless, Trump points to a viable GOP future. He posted startling gains among Latino voters. This shows it's possible to imagine a working-class-oriented Republican Party that isn't a demographic dead end, but genuinely crosses racial lines, even if this potential is still inchoate.

Given how Trump's base showed up massively in the past two presidential elections, it's also unlikely that these voters are going to be jettisoned anytime soon by some other Republican presidential candidate. Indeed, the education- and class-based re-sorting of the GOP -- affluent suburbs peeling off and working-class voters coming on board -- predated Trump.

The concerns of these voters have to figure prominently in the agenda of the GOP going forward. That doesn't require embracing any particular Trump policy, but it does mean the party will inevitably have a populist coloration.

Trump will remain an outside presence. His supporters will still consider him a legendary warrior, a totem of resistance to the media and the cultural elite. His endorsements will continue to be valuable, and ambitious 2024 candidates will seek to inherit his mantle.

Trump might not win the biggest, most important prize of a second term in 2020, but there's no doubt he has staved off political irrelevance.

*Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.*

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# The Ranchos Independent

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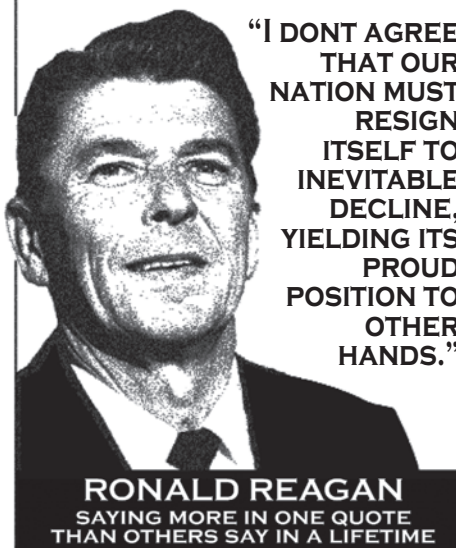
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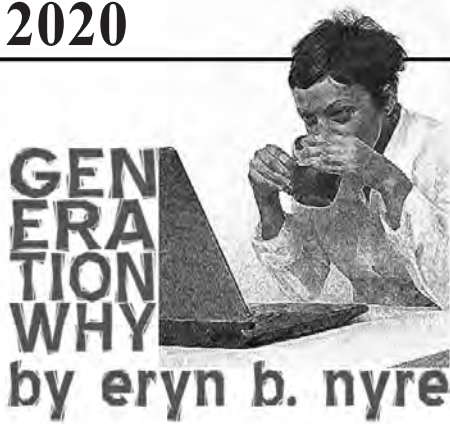
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## THE RAY GUN SHOOTING STRAIGHT TO THE HEART



# Giving Thanks in 2020



I believe that one of the most important times to express gratitude is when you struggle to find things for which to be thankful. To put it another way, the best time to count your blessings is when you don't think you have any. With state and local governments imposing *Lockdown: The Sequel* on their citizenry and going so far as to tell us how many people can visit us in our own homes, this is definitely one of those times when finding things to be thankful for seems out of reach. Nevertheless, that's what I am going to do.

First and foremost, I am thankful for our Lord and Savior. I am thankful for His redeeming sacrifice. I am thankful that He made us in His image and filled our minds with the desire to seek knowledge and truth. I'm thankful that He blessed me with intelligence and critical thought which has allowed me to have a full understanding of what is happening in the world today and not be bamboozled by lies, leftist rhetoric and social engineering.

I am thankful for my parents and how I was raised. I was lucky enough to have a childhood filled with not only love, affection and support, but also structure, discipline and the strictest of expectations. My youth was filled with spectacular memories of a mom and dad who were wholly present and fully participated in my upbringing. There were one-of-a-kind birthday parties and incomparable vacations. On the other side of that coin, though, there were high standards of excellence and an unyielding dedication to ensuring I wasn't a screeching bonehead intent on tearing apart a nation in the name of expecting other people to blindly agree with me and give me free stuff.

I'm grateful to have known all of my grandparents. Many people

*I'm grateful to have known all of my grandparents. Many people lost their parents' parents at a young age and I was blessed to have all four of them well into adulthood. It's a precious thing to get to know the elders of your family. They can share information with you that, believe or not, Google doesn't know.*

lost their parents' parents at a young age and I was blessed to have all four of them well into adulthood. It's a precious thing to get to know the elders of your family. They can share information with you that, believe or not, Google doesn't know. They tell you funny little stories about how your mom chipped her front tooth when she was a little girl by chasing a little boy over a fence with a broomstick because he called her a bad name. They talk about growing up in a tiny little town in central California during WWII. I'm also completely convinced that a

grandparent makes the absolute best fan and cheerleader. We often take for granted all our grandparents can teach us, but I know that I have a respect for past generations, family history and the wisdom of those who have lived more years than I, all because of the grandparents with which I was blessed.

I am thankful for my very first boss. Way back when I was in high school, I started working at a Taco Bell for a general manager who was – I'll say affectionately – referred to as "the beastie." I think the only person who demanded a higher level of perfection than she was, perhaps, my own father. He at least gave me a place to live and told me he loved me. The beastie was tough, unyielding and demanding,

Please see **GENWHY** on P. 7

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**Kiwanis Korner**

By Nancy Wayne

Kiwanis would like to wish you all a Happy Holiday Season. This year Ranchos Kiwanis will be sponsoring a Drive By Christmas Lights House Decorating Contest. Please join us for our kickoff event, Saturday, Dec. 12 from 6-8 p.m.

Drive through the Fernwood Nursery parking lot, 12090 Fernwood Dr., and pick up a map of homes (one per family). It will be part of the contest and allow you to see the contestants from the safety and comfort of your vehicle. Your map will enable you to see many of the beautifully decorated homes in our community, including the ones who have signed up for this contest. Vote for your favorite decorated house and drop off your ballot at the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce office in the Maywood Shopping Center, 37167 Ave. 12 #5C in the Madera Ranchos. If you cannot make the Saturday kickoff event, you can pick up a map and ballot at the Chamber office or

local businesses between Dec. 12-15. Be sure to return your ballot to the Chamber office before noon on Dec. 16, when the contest ends. The winner of the event will be announced in the January edition of the Ranchos Independent.

To be part of the contest and receive the \$50 1st Place prize given by the Madera Ranchos Kiwanis, it is necessary that you sign up by Dec. 10. Only those who have signed up are part of the contest and can be on the map for voting.



Text 559-974-2450 and leave a message and your phone number. We will call you to confirm that you are a contestant in the Christmas Decorating Contest and answer any questions you may have at that time.

Sign up, decorate your home, get a map of contest participants, drive around enjoying the festive lights of the Ranchos community and vote for your favorite decorated house.

Merry Christmas from Kiwanis

**GENWHY** cont. from P. 6

but you know what? She was consistent. There was absolutely no ambiguity where she was concerned. You knew her expectations and you most assuredly knew when you were not meeting them. This served to strengthen the work ethic that my parents instilled in me. I don't expect employers to coddle me and cater to unreasonable demands. I do expect employers to treat me well, pay me fairly and create a safe and healthy work environment and in exchange I am a dedicated and hard worker, and all of that because I had a boss that demanded nothing less from me.

Finally, I am grateful to live in a country where I have the right – although some have tried to take it away from me – to speak my mind. I am grateful that I have a constitution that secures these rights for me. I am grateful for a strong and faithful military that defends these rights for me. I have the right to review the

numbers, read the available information and form my own opinion for how to conduct myself. I have the right to agree with experts who say that lockdowns, other than to reset healthcare and first responder supplies and staff, do nothing except strip some people of their livelihoods and rob everyone of their freedom. I have a right to think that the health of our economy far outweighs the possibility that someone might contract – and yes, even die – from a virus, and I am including myself in that. And I have the right to invite my entire family into my home for Thanksgiving, and you know what, they have the right to decline.

Despite our current crisis, despite the ineptitude of our leaders and despite the media's relentless narrative of fear and misdirection, there is still plenty to be thankful for this year. From my family to yours, however you choose to celebrate and whomever you choose to celebrate with, Happy Thanksgiving!

## Thanks for Thanksgiving

(November 2010)

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



When I sat down to write this month's column, I thought of Thanksgiving, but then I realized some of you wouldn't get this paper until *after* Thanksgiving, and those of you that *did* get it before would have already made all your preparations for the big day. But I decided to do it any-way.

Those of you of my generation, do you remember getting up at five o'clock in the morning to get an 18-pound turkey stuffed and in the oven so it would be

ready for dinner at two in the afternoon? And remember how the frozen turkey would sit on the counter to defrost? And we're all still alive!

On the day before Thanksgiving we would toast the bread in the oven on big sheet pans and mama would always make a pan of cornbread for the stuffing. And in-between toasting the bread she would make the pies. It was a busy time. I was my mom's official stuffing "tester." I'd get up when she did so I could help her fix the turkey. Did it have enough salt? Or enough sage? Too dry? I loved doing it as I love "raw" stuffing as much as I like cooked. Mama's recipe was simple: We would chop an onion and about a head of celery and sauté them in butter with some salt and pepper. We'd break up the bread and pour the vegetables in on top and add enough salt and pepper

and the only other seasoning she would use was dry sage. She preferred rubbed sage instead of chopped (it is very hard to find rubbed sage today), then add chicken broth and water and mix it up with our hands until it was just right.

When the turkey is defrosted, I put it in the roasting pan and put it on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator awaiting Thursday morning. With

*For those of you that read this before Thanksgiving, I hope you have a very Happy Thanksgiving. And for those of you that read this after Thanksgiving, I hope you had a glorious day and you have lots of leftovers.*

the perfection of the turkeys over the last 50 years you don't have to get up at five o'clock in the morning it get it in the oven. We would figure about 22 minutes per pound of stuffed turkey, taking about seven and a half to eight hours. It only takes four to five hours to cook a stuffed 18- to 20-pound bird today as opposed to all morning 50 years ago.

As for the stuffing, I do it the same way mama did 50 years ago, except I don't toast the bread. I cheat and buy three boxes of Mrs. Cubbison's - two boxes of bread and one of the cornbread. Add the sautéed vegetables, salt, pepper and even though the bread is somewhat seasoned, I usually add some more sage. Then start mixing in chicken broth and water until it tastes just right. I don't use the giblets but sometimes I do cook the neck and take off the meat and add to the stuffing. Take the bird out of the refrigerator, rinse it out and pat dry, cover inside and out with butter (or margarine), salt inside and out

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

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# SAY YOU SAW IT IN the Ranchos Independent

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By Brenda McElroy

**How to Have a "Happy" Thanksgiving**

A section of the registers were closed due to COVID-19. The woman in line behind me began to complain. "They should have more registers open. It's hot in here ..." If 2020 has given us anything, it's plenty to complain about. Complaining in negative circumstances is normal, but how does it serve us?

Dennis Prager, author of *Happiness is a Serious Problem* offers some insight. "We tend to think that it is being unhappy that leads people to complain," says Prager. "But it is truer to say that it is complaining that leads to people becoming unhappy. Become grateful and you will become a much happier person."

Joshua Brown and Joel Wong's research affirms this notion. The results of their study are found in *How Gratitude Changes You and Your Brain* (www.greatergood.berkeley.edu). Out of 300 individuals receiving counseling services for anxiety and depression, one third of them were given the task of writing a letter of gratitude to someone every week for three weeks. Not only did those given this assignment have significant improvements to their mental health, the activity lasted four to 12 weeks beyond the writing assignment.

The benefits of gratefulness don't end with our emotional health. In the article, *A Serving of Gratitude May Save the Day* (nytimes.com), John Tierney says that cultivating an "attitude of gratitude" has been linked to better health, sounder sleep and kinder behavior toward others. With all these great benefits, what's holding us back from cashing in?

Our brains create pathways for things we do repeatedly, which makes them easier to do. For many, the pathway for complaining is etched in the brain, making that the default. Fre-

quent complaining releases more of the stress hormone cortisol which impairs the immune system. Our brains, however, have the remarkable ability to change. Creating new pathways requires intentionality. If you're seeking the benefits of gratitude, here are some ways to do that.

**Transform complaints into thankfulness:** Search for things to be grateful for tucked inside the very things you're tempted to complain about. We can be grateful that the store lines aren't as long as they appear, due to the fact we're spread six feet apart. Maybe turkey isn't your favorite, nor the people with whom you spend Thanksgiving. You can be grateful it's just once a year.

**Schedule gratitude:** Set aside time each day to ponder things for which you are grateful. Link it to something you do regularly. While showering or brushing your teeth, focus on that for which you are grateful. The first thing I do each day is sit down with my Gratitude Prayer Journal and record things for which I'm thankful.

**Verbalize gratitude:** Last week Costco welcomed back the sampling stations. Yay! As I picked up the pre-packaged samples, I thanked them not only for the sample, but for returning to work. Many people perform acts of service all around us. Choose to be aware and verbalize your gratitude for their services, especially to those at home.

**Put your gratitude into writing:** Let others know in a card, letter, email or even text, how much you value them. Tell them specifically how they have impacted your life. It's a win/win. You will both experience joy.

Like many in our nation today, those celebrating the first Thanksgiving had much to complain about. They suffered a great deal through that year, and yet, in the fall of 1621 they focused on their blessings and gave thanks. Without Prager's book or the university study results to guide this choice, what motivated them to be grateful? The words of King David in Psalm 92: "It is good to give thanks to the Lord." Indeed, it is.

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## Senior Report

# Staying Together While Apart

By Margaret Tynan

With the colder weather, thankfully, the air is much improved. The Ranchos/Hills Seniors took advantage of the nicer days with an outdoor, physically distanced, masked get-together. The small group of members engaged in lively discussion of how they are spending their time. Rosemary Janis and I shared how much the Writing Group appreciates the bi-weekly Zoom meetings. The group is hoping to have their work in a publication sometime next year. We got to see samples of cute, bearded gnomes and other craft items that Carol Wood and members have been working on for the upcoming Christmas Boutique. Community service is filling time for some of the

members. Joliene Mason brought tickets and information on the opening of the Madera Sheriff substation in the Ranchos. Lou Janis is volunteering some of his time tutoring Madera Community College students in Intermediate Algebra, as well as students at Fresno City College in Digital Logic. It was so good to see everyone.

Vicki Dougherty, a relatively new member of the Center, also attended the gathering. Later, I was able to interview her by phone.

Originally from the Fresno area, Vicki spent 34 years in Lodi before she and her husband, Greg, moved to the new Riverstone development about a year ago. She retired, after a long career in the medical field, first as a licensed x-ray technician and then as a medical assistant. The motivation to move back to the area was to be closer to their two daughters and three grandchildren.

I asked Vicki how she heard about the Senior Center and what prompted her to join. She read about the Center in the Ranchos Independent's Senior Report. Having liked her experience in a Lodi senior center, she was excited to join here. She became a regular participant in our exercise program and had fun at the

Thursday night potlucks and games. Currently, she helps Jo Chase and others getting the Treasure House ready for the monthly sales. She looks forward to the day the Center opens again. As other members have said, the Center activities and social interactions are very much missed.

Vicki has many interests. She sews, does needlework and beading. She especially likes wood-burning craft, making decorative wooden boxes and cutting boards for example. She is a woman after my own heart. Like me, she also enjoys doing difficult jigsaw puzzles. Greg keeps occupied with his hobby, which is doing precision metal work. Both manage to stay busy, making the days fly by. Vicki says that during these unusual times, she and Greg



*New Senior Center member, Vicki Dougherty.*

miss traveling and seeing their California friends. But the hugs of loved ones are what they miss most.

With the holidays close at hand, the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Center will hold two outdoor sales on consecutive Saturdays in December, Dec. 5 and 12 from 8 a.m. to noon. The Christmas Boutique features lovely holiday decorations and handmade items, and great gifts for family and friends. Find plants for your yard at the Garden Sale. Of course, the Treasure House is full of interesting, unique finds. Please wear a mask and maintain physical distancing while shopping.

Donations are always welcomed and appreciated. Make your check out to Ranchos/Hills Seniors and mail to 37330 Berkshire Dr., Madera, CA 93636. Please note: At this time, we are only able to accept donations of physical items by appointment. Call 559-645-4864.

The Ranchos/Hills Seniors members wish you and yours a happy, healthy, and safe Holiday Season.

Thought for December: *"May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope; The spirit of Christmas which is peace; The heart of Christmas which is love."* -- Ada V. Hendricks

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COVID cont. from P. 4

billion people worldwide out of poverty. This year we are reversing that progress to the extent — it bears repeating — that an estimated 130 million more people will starve.

Another result of the lockdowns is that people stopped bringing their children in for immunizations against diseases like diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and polio, because they had been led to fear COVID more than they feared these more deadly diseases. This wasn't only true in the U.S. Eighty million children worldwide are now at risk of these diseases. We had made substantial progress in slowing them down, but now they are going to come back.

Large numbers of Americans, even though they had cancer and needed chemotherapy, didn't come in for treatment because they were more afraid of COVID than cancer. Others have skipped recommended cancer screenings. We're going to see a rise in cancer and cancer death rates as a consequence. Indeed, this is already starting to show up in the data. We're also going to see a higher number of deaths from diabetes due to people missing their diabetic monitoring.

Mental health problems are in a way the most shocking thing. In June of this year, a CDC survey found that one in four

young adults between 18 and 24 had seriously considered suicide. Human beings are not, after all, designed to live alone. We're meant to be in company with one another. It is unsurprising that the lockdowns have had the psychological effects that they've had, especially among young adults and children, who have been denied much-needed socialization.

In effect, what we've been doing is requiring young people to bear the burden of controlling a disease from which they face little to no risk. This is entirely backward from the right approach.

4. Where to Go from Here

Last week I met with two other epidemiologists — Dr. Sunetra Gupta of Oxford University and Dr. Martin Kulldorff of Harvard University — in Great Barrington, Mass. The three of us come from very different disciplinary backgrounds and from very different parts of the political spectrum. Yet we had arrived at the same view — the view that the widespread lockdown policy has been a devastating public health mistake. In response, we wrote and issued the Great Barrington Declaration, which can be viewed — along with explanatory videos, answers to frequently asked questions, a list of co-signers, etc. — online at [www.gbdeclaration.org](http://www.gbdeclaration.org).

Please see COVID on P. 17

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**• ANNOUNCEMENTS •**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and current decrees from Sacramento, the following annual events have been cancelled. The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce hopes to be able to sponsor these events again in the future.

- Annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting
- CASA gift collection for foster children
- Supplies for VETERANS at Fresno V.A. Hospital

*Thank you for your understanding.*

**When's the NEXT Chamber of Commerce Meeting?**

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, Wednesday, December 9 at 6:30 p.m., 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C in the Maywood Center. Come join us and see what's going on in your community. Call us at 645-4001.

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# SEMUCU speaks

## Covid and School

By Matt Maringer

We understand this is a troubling time for students and families while trying to balance education and work, respectively. What is appropriate for each district will vary owing to Covid-19 infection rates, local resources, and state recommendations. Ultimately though, school this year has not resembled what has been normal in previous years. Nearly 93 percent of people in households with school-age children reported their children engaged in some form of “distance learning” from home. Data from the Household Pulse Survey show the percentage of households with children using online resources at different income levels.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also

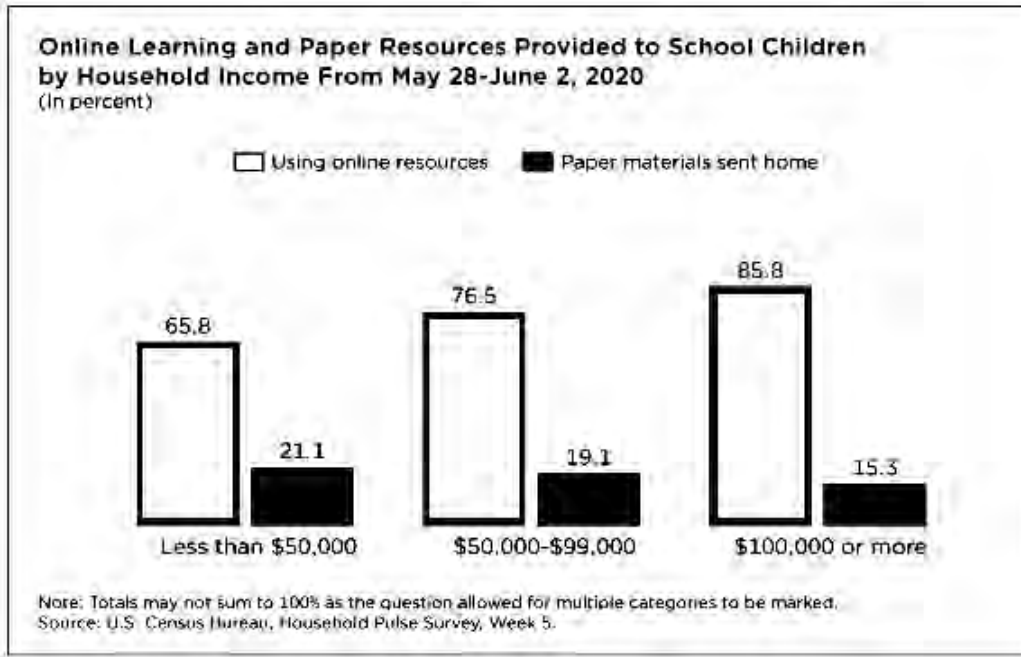
caused challenges across the agri-food supply chain. At the same time though, it has also created new opportunities to innovate and teach people about farming and the food system. It’s critical that California school children continue to receive education in core areas such as math, science and English. But they should also be learning in areas that provide important enrichment and

life skills, such as nutrition and agricultural literacy. Below are some available and useful resources for schools, students, and families:

- [www.ed.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ed.gov/coronavirus)
- [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html)
- [dealhack.com/blog/free-resources-during-the-covid-19-pandemic](http://dealhack.com/blog/free-resources-during-the-covid-19-pandemic)
- [www.healthyeating.org/](http://www.healthyeating.org/)

As part of the social distancing and contending with COVID-19, our monthly board meetings on the third Monday of each month will be held via telephone conferencing. The public is invited and encouraged to listen in and offer ideas of projects that can help improve our community. To join in at 6 p.m. dial 312-757-3221. When prompted, dial the access code 715657949 #. To call SEMCU for more information, call 559-363-9095. Or reach the organization at [www.semcu.org](http://www.semcu.org) or by email at [info@semcu.org](mailto:info@semcu.org).

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### Ready or Not, ONLY Electric Vehicles?

Hello 93636,

When the Ranchos Independent editor asked me to write this monthly column, he envisioned readers writing in for automotive advice. In the absence of community inquiries, I try to write about related and interesting automotive topics.

It is not my intention to write an automotive "political opinion" column, but sometimes I feel compelled to defend my industry. If California wants to drive Electric Vehicles (EV's), I'm fine with that. I'm prepared. I'm one of 1,540 ASE Certified Hybrid/EV technicians in the United States.

EV's have some very distinct advantages such as no transmissions, differentials, starters or alternators. They don't use fuel pumps, fuel injectors or spark plugs. I wish I owned an EV but they are way outside my financial comfort zone.

I knew Gov. Newsom would blame fossil fuel vehicles for the 3.6 million acres burned from California's wildfires. Quote: "Our cars shouldn't make wildfires worse — and create more days filled with smoky air." I guess Gov. Newsom didn't read the Science & Environment article dated Nov. 15, 2018 which states some estimates suggest the northern California wildfires of 2018 emitted as much CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere in one week as all the cars and

trucks in California emit in one year.

Pacific Gas and Electric now turns off power to homes across California during the wildfire season to prevent additional wildfires. Why? Over the previous decades, California's leaders have diverted billions of dollars from electrical grid maintenance to solar and wind power projects. California's wildfires have nothing in common with global warming and everything to do with California's forest mismanagement.

California's poor management, costly regulation and high taxes are so intrusive many companies are now exiting the state. One of those companies is Tesla Inc.

Following a heated exchange with the Alameda County and California regulatory authorities who were preventing Elon Musk from reopening his Fremont Tesla factory due to Covid-19, Musk announced he's leaving California for Texas. Musk is relocating the Tesla company headquarters and manufacturing to a 4 million square foot facility on a 2,100 acre site in Travis County about 15 minutes from downtown Austin.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said Elon Musk chose to build in Texas partly because the state offers more "freedom" than places such as California. "Musk wanted to get into a state where he could expand the way he wanted to expand." In the previous 12 months, Texas has gained 123,700 new jobs.

"In MY opinion" Gov. Newsom's recently signed executive order banning the sale of new fossil fuel cars and trucks in Califor-

nia by 2035 is a gift to appease California's 34 EV manufacturers. Newsom said his order would be an EV economic boom. The ban will create an all-EV new car sales market five years earlier than the previous order. Where is California going to get the additional electricity needed to power the state's new electric fleet? Last summer the state's electrical grid operator asked customers to voluntarily reduce electricity use. After power reserves fell to dangerous levels, "Stage 3 emergencies" were declared cutting off power across the state at 6:30 p.m. The immediate reasons for the power black-outs were the failure of a 500-megawatt power plant and an out-of-service 750-megawatt facility.



Will Gov. Newsom's decree outlawing internal combustion engines put a massive strain on California's ability to produce electricity, in a state already plagued by brownouts and blackouts?

The direct result was California's climate policy banning natural gas and nuclear electrical generation.

Last December, a PG&E report concluded the utility's customers could see black-outs double over the next 15 years and quadruple over the next 30.

Even though solar panel costs have declined, their downfall is they are weather-dependent. Summer's peak power demand, primarily from air conditioning use, is the several hours before and after sunset. Solar generation ends when the highest demand begins. Let's now add millions of new EV's coming home from work and plugging into the grid. EV Lithium Ion high voltage batteries are massive. The Nissan Leaf EV battery I removed was under the car, from frame rail to frame rail, from front axle to rear axle, and nearly 500 volts. It takes a LOT of electricity to fill an EV battery. In order to

have solar electricity available at peak demand and around the clock, large new storage facilities and transmissions infrastructure will need to be constructed.

Without new massive and costly infrastructure, I'm imagining every California EV home will need their own home solar storage system to avoid the black-outs. With installation and additional costs, a home system is roughly \$11,000 to \$18,000.

The statewide move to solar electricity also comes with the additional high cost of transmission from inland industrial solar farms to coastal populations. What's the solution to the Valley's short, foggy and rainy winter days? More massive storage facilities I assume. A 1,000-megawatt nuclear power facility needs about 1 sq. mile of land mass. In comparison, a solar farm needs 75 sq. miles to produce the same 1,000-megawatts of power.

California's lone standing nuclear power plant, Diablo Canyon, is scheduled to go offline in 2025. The Diablo Canyon plant can generate about 2,240 megawatts of electricity. If I do my math correctly, it will take roughly 168 sq. miles of solar panels to recover the loss from Diablo Canyon's closure.

The city of Madera has a total land mass of 15.8 square miles. The area needed to replace Diablo Canyon's production is 10.63 times larger. How much of our Central Valley will be re-imagined into solar farms? I believe our Valley agriculture, our homes and our way of life is under great threat if we continue on our current path.

OK guys and gals, that's all for this one. As always, if you have any suggestions, recommendations, general or specific questions about a vehicle I can be reached at [complete\\_car\\_care@hotmail.com](mailto:complete_car_care@hotmail.com) or text to 559-907-7661.

God bless America and God bless 93636. Warren Parr, an ASE/NAPA 2013-14 California Technician of the Year.

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## COVID cont. from P. 14

The Declaration reads: As infectious disease epidemiologists and public health scientists we have grave concerns about the damaging physical and mental health impacts of the prevailing COVID-19 policies and recommend an approach we call Focused Protection.

Coming from both the left and right, and around the world, we have devoted our careers to protecting people. Current lockdown policies are producing devastating effects on short and long-term public health. The results (to name a few) include lower childhood vaccination rates, worsening cardiovascular disease outcomes, fewer cancer screenings, and deteriorating mental health — leading to greater excess mortality in years to come, with the working class and younger members of society carrying the heaviest burden. Keeping students out of school is a grave injustice.

Keeping these measures in place until a vaccine is available will cause irreparable damage, with the underprivileged disproportionately harmed.

Fortunately, our understanding of the virus is growing. We know that vulnerability to death from COVID-19 is more than a thousand-fold higher in the old and infirm than the young. Indeed, for children, COVID-19 is less dangerous than many other harms, including influenza.

As immunity builds in the population, the risk of infection to all — including the vulnerable — falls. We know that all populations will eventually reach herd immunity — i.e., the point at which the rate of new infections is stable — and that this can be assisted by (but is not dependent upon) a vaccine. Our goal should therefore be to minimize mortality and social harm until we reach herd immunity.

The most compassionate approach that balances the risks and benefits of reaching herd immunity, is to allow those who are at minimal risk of death to live their lives nor-

mally to build up immunity to the virus through natural infection, while better protecting those who are at highest risk. We call this Focused Protection.

Adopting measures to protect the vulnerable should be the central aim of public health responses to COVID-19. By way of example, nursing homes should use staff with acquired immunity and perform frequent PCR testing of other staff and all visitors. Staff rotation should be minimized. Retired people living at home should have groceries and other essentials delivered to their home. When possible, they should meet family members outside rather than inside. A comprehensive and detailed list of measures, including approaches to multi-generational households, can be implemented, and is well within the scope and capability of public health professionals.

Those who are not vulnerable should immediately be allowed to resume life as normal. Simple hygiene measures, such as hand washing and staying home when sick, should be practiced by everyone to reduce the herd immunity threshold. Schools and universities should be open for in-person teaching. Extracurricular activities, such as sports, should be resumed. Young low-risk adults should work normally, rather than from home. Restaurants and other businesses should open. Arts, music, sports and other cultural activities should resume. People who are more at risk may participate if they wish, while society as a whole enjoys the protection conferred upon the vulnerable by those who have built up herd immunity.

I should say something in conclusion about the idea of herd immunity, which some people mischaracterize as a strategy of letting people die. First, herd immunity is not a strategy — it is a biological fact that applies to most infectious diseases. Even when we come up with a vaccine, we will be relying on herd immunity as an end-

Please see **COVID** on P. 18

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## Housecleaning

**40 yrs of experience - References available** - Lupe's House Cleaning, residential, one-time service, move-ins/move-outs, windows, construction clean up. **LupePrado25@yahoo.com. 559-916-1528 or 650-771-2915.**

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**Funds support Ranchos community organizations.**

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## COVID cont. from P. 17

point for this epidemic. The vaccine will help, but herd immunity is what will bring it to an end. And second, our strategy is not to let people die, but to protect the vulnerable. We know the people who are vulnerable, and we know the people who are not vulnerable. To continue to act as if we do not know these things makes no sense.

My final point is about science. When scientists have spoken up against the lockdown policy, there has been enormous pushback: "You're endangering lives." Science cannot operate in an environment like that. I don't know all the answers to COVID; no one does. Science ought to be able to clarify the answers. But science can't do its job in an environment where anyone who challenges the status quo gets shut down or "cancelled."

To date, the Great Barrington Declaration has been signed by over 43,000 medical and public health scientists and medical practitioners. The Declaration thus does not represent a fringe view within the scientific community. This is a central part of the scientific debate, and it belongs in the debate. Members of the general public can also sign the Declaration.

Together, I think we can get on the other side of this pandemic. But we have to fight back. We're at a place where our civilization is at risk, where the bonds that unite us are at risk of being torn. We shouldn't be afraid. We should respond to the COVID virus rationally: Protect the vulnerable, treat the people who get infected compassionately, develop a vaccine. And while doing these things we should bring back the civilization that we had so that the cure does not end up being worse than the disease.

*Jay Bhattacharya is a Professor of Medicine at Stanford University, where he received both an M.D. and a Ph.D. in economics. He is also a research associate at the National Bureau of Economics Research, a senior fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research and at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies and director of the Stanford Center on the Demography and Economics of Health and Aging. A co-author of the Great Barrington Declaration, his research has been published in economics, statistics, legal, medical, public health and health policy journals.*

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## SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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## GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

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

	÷		+		14
-		×		÷	
	×		-		9
×		+		+	
	×		-		20
14		10		9	

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1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

# Tea Time

By Betty Van Valkenburg

## Happy Maskgiving and Dreary Christmas!

It's the holiday season, 2020 style.

Watch out! The political turkeys have sucked up too much free socialist cider, they're drunk with power and they're transforming America one lockdown at a time! Power is intoxicating, after all.

Sarcasm aside, our nation's situation is serious on two fronts. While a virus is infecting and killing Americans on the one hand, power-hungry politicians are bludgeoning our Republic to death on the other, crushing our rights and using the coronavirus as an excuse. And if scheming politicians manage to kill the Republic that protects our God-given rights, it will be 100 percent fatal to the liberty of every American.

If there is good news, it is that the virus is deadly to a relatively small *percentage* of the population, with most who are infected not knowing it unless they are tested. CDC estimates survival rates of those who are infected as 99.92 percent for people under 49 and 94.6 percent for those over 70. And we should have a vaccine at some point. It may be small comfort, but the numbers of reported cases and deaths are actually lower than reported, perhaps significantly.

COVID-19 cases are over-reported as positive. The U. S. Food and Drug Administration warned on Nov. 3 that false positive results "can occur with antigen tests ..." A New York Times article reviewed a report stating that PCR nasal swab tests don't indicate the degree of viral load or contagiousness, *so positive results can be misleading*. According to ICD10Monitor.com, false positives occur in PCR tests for COVID-19 (Covid) *often enough to be a significant problem*. The tests are obviously unreliable when some people test positive one day and negative the next, including even a candidate for the U. S. Senate in Georgia.

COVID-19 deaths are over-reported. Death certificates can list more than one probable cause of death, one of which might be the virus. Some poor soul who might have Covid (or not) could die of a completely different cause such as a heart attack and the death

could be reported as "with" Covid. When reading news reports, take note of whether the person died *with* or *of* COVID-19.

And some deaths were reported as *caused* by Covid before tests were available. Consider this timeline: The first U. S. case was reported on January 19. The first U. S. death was reported on February 29. Widespread testing wasn't approved until March 3. Fresno ordered a shutdown on March 12. California was shut down on March 19.

Meanwhile, politicians are using the virus as an excuse to take away our freedoms of assembly, religion, speech and pursuit of happiness. Are freedom of speech and the right to bear arms next? They are shutting down our livelihoods, schools, entertainment choices, travel, sports and restaurants. They have kept us from beauty shops, nail salons and gyms. They have banned funeral services as well as visiting loved ones in hospitals and care facilities, and mothers from

holding their newborn babies. Holiday gatherings are now to be regulated. And the same hypocritical politicians who have demanded the onerous regulations for all of us are the first ones to break the rules.

We know the problems. We're all living through this. We know the politicians' lockdowns make no sense and have no basis in "science." We know they are overreaching. We know the heartache and harm that the lockdowns are causing. What is not known is how to stop the madness. Perhaps the best thing we can do is to personally tell the culprits who are locking us down what we want, in no uncertain terms. Call them, visit them, email and text them – often. Vote them all out of office (assuming that our vote will be counted). And recall Governor Newsom.

Whew! Right now, a good laugh might be in order. I just heard this: "Six people are allowed at Thanksgiving but 25 are allowed at a funeral. So, I'll be holding a funeral for my pet turkey who will pass away on Thursday, Nov. 26 A meal and refreshments will be served."

And for an entertaining treat, you might watch Congressman Tom McClintock's "In defense of Gavin Newsom" video at McClintock.house.gov.

Stay safe. And may you have a truly blessed Thanksgiving and find a meaningful way to celebrate with family and friends ... with condolences to the turkey.

*Stay safe. And may you have a truly blessed Thanksgiving and find a meaningful way to celebrate with family and friends ... with condolences to the turkey.*

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• If you have a panic button for your car alarm, keep your keys by the bedside. If you experience a problem during the night, trip the panic alarm. Let your trusted neighbors know about your intention, and they will be able to assist you.

• "Great gravy is only a plastic bag away! I take a quart-size plastic bag and set it in a glass measuring cup. Pour the pan drippings through a strainer, right into the bag. Let it sit for 15-20 minutes, and the fat will separate to the top. Seal the bag, and snip a small hole in a bottom corner, drain the liquid into a saucepan to make gravy. It's that easy." -- T.C. in Idaho

• Whenever I am baking and the recipe calls for, say, 1 cup of honey (or some other sticky substance), I used to pour the honey into the measuring cup but then

have a hard time getting all the honey back out of the cup and into the mixing bowl. Now I rinse the measuring cup with water right before measuring, or spray with non-stick cooking spray. It slides right out!

• To create a self-watering area for potted plants while you are on vacation, set plants in the bathtub or in a kiddie pool and use a length of cotton rope to wick water from the bathtub to the plant's roots. You can either stick it up the holes in the bottom of the pot or dig it down a few inches into the soil. This should get you by for a week or so.

• If you have a table that's wobbly because of an uneven leg, and you are a wine drinker, you're in luck. Take a wine cork, cut it in small slices and glue the slices to the uneven leg until the table no longer wobbles. Easy!

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip,  
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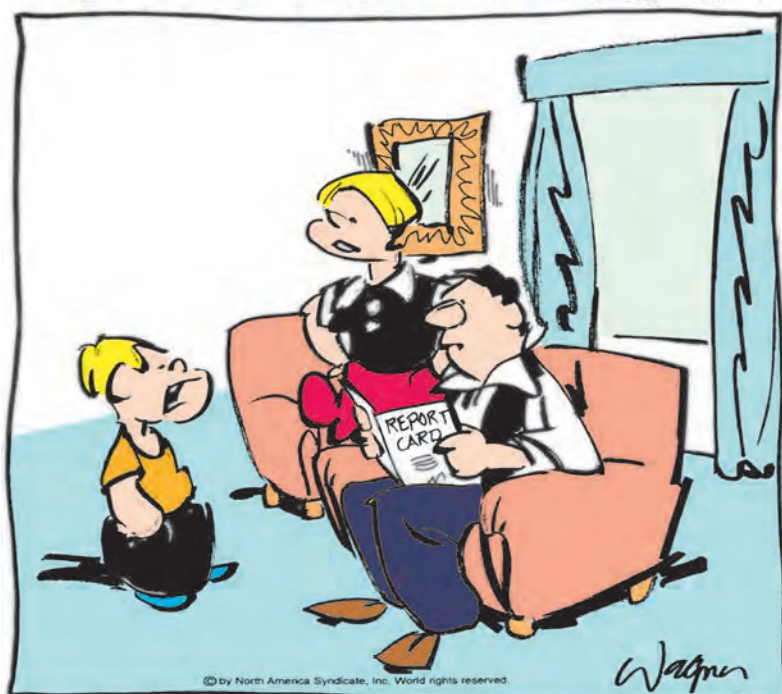
by Dave T. Phipps



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**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Your ruling planet, Mars, allows you to assume a sense of command that can help you turn a chaotic workplace situation into one that's orderly, productive and, yes, even friendly.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) Getting a relationship that's been stuck in a rut up and running again depends on how far you want to run with it. Be honest with yourself as you consider which decision to make.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) Be wary of rumors that seem to be coming from everywhere this week. Waiting for the facts before you act means never having to say you're sorry you followed the wrong lead.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) A difficult personal matter might prompt you to turn to a trusted friend to help you sort through a maze of emotional conflicts. The weekend should bring some welcome news.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) Some of the new people coming into the Lion's life could play pivotal roles in future personal and professional matters. Meanwhile, an old friend might have an important message.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) A delay in getting things moving on schedule can be a blessing in disguise. Use this extra time to do more research so you can buttress any of the weaker points with solid facts.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) You might need to get involved in a personal matter before it becomes a serious problem. Also, be wary of someone offering to mediate, unless you can be sure of his or her motives.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Taking sides in a workplace or domestic dispute could prolong the problem. Stay out and stay cool. Then you can be friends with both parties when things settle down.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) A friendship has the potential to become something more, and with this week's aspects favoring romance, you might feel that this possibility is worth exploring.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) The new job you want might require you to relocate. If so, keep an open mind and weigh all the positives and negatives before making your decision.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) A new relationship seems to be everything you could have hoped for. Congratulations. Meanwhile, it's not too early to get some feedback on that new project you're working on.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) You might have decided to get out of the fast-moving current and just float around hither and yon for a while. But you might find that the new opportunity is too tempting to turn down.

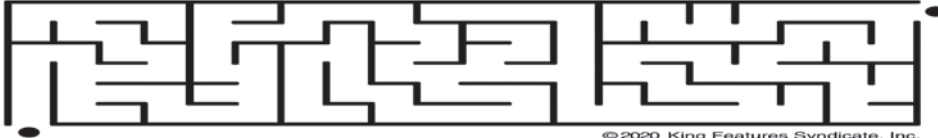
**Born this Week**

*You believe in bringing out the best in people with kind deeds, loving words and recognition of their "special" selves.*

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# FUN PAGES

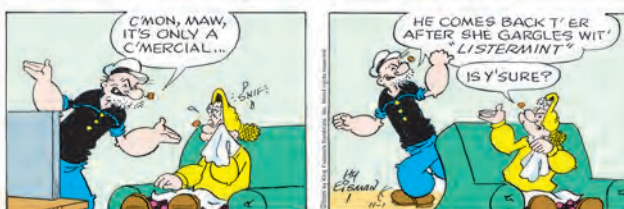
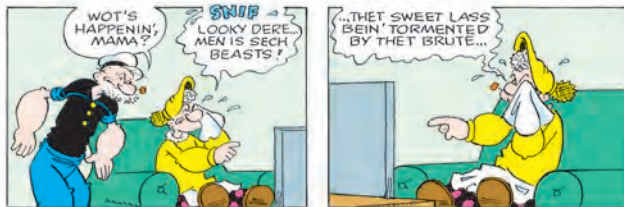
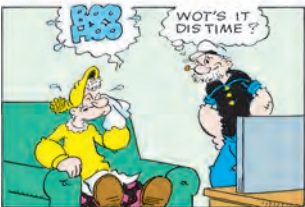
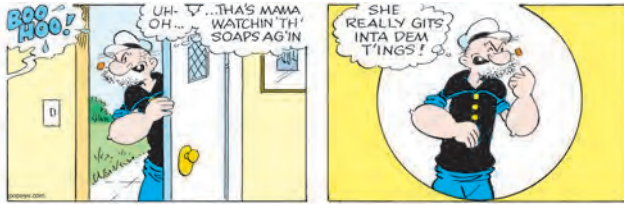
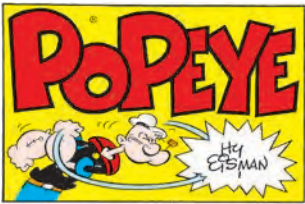
## Kids' Maze



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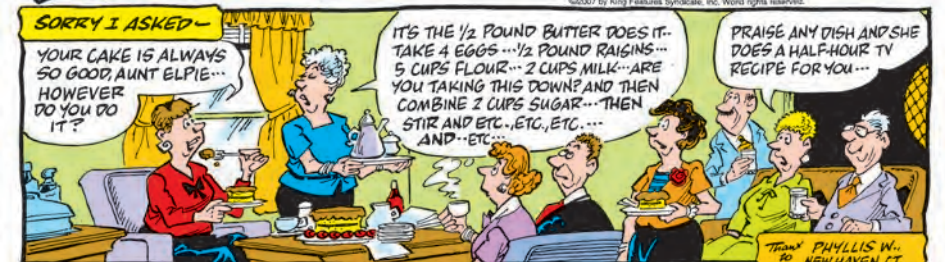
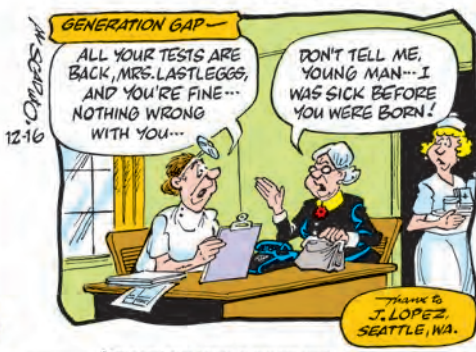
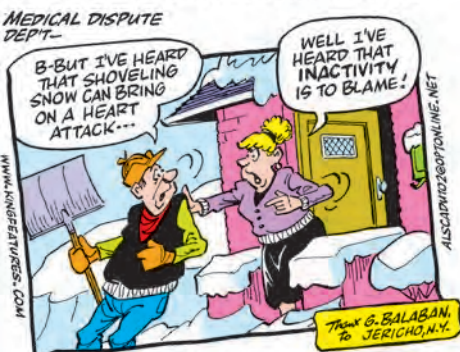
## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO



THE POST HALLOWEEN SALE! The local novelty store has masks left over from last week. Can you spot two that are exactly alike?

Answer: Masks 2 and 8

A NEAT BET! Here's how you can prove that "six plus five equals nine." Lay out six ice cream sticks as shown in Fig. 1. Now add five more sticks to the layout so that they spell out the number "nine" (see Fig. 2). Another win for the math genius!



FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the Word Square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "TANDEM." See if you can replace these letters in the square so that you will have four 3-letter words across and three 4-letter words down.

T		E	
A	O		E
N		G	E
D			
E	M		

Answers: (from the bottom up): Davenport, pronounced, aproned, pardon, adorn, roan, car, or, o.

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

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

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## MAGIC MAZE • POLITICAL JARGON

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: Rescue a Failing Company

Beltway	Grassroots	Polls	Spin
Blue	Horse race	Pundit	Straw vote
Earmark	Leak	Red	Swing state
Extender	Left	Right	

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## Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



### THE PYRAMID OF WORD POWER!

Starting with the word DAVENPORT at the bottom of our word pyramid, try dropping one letter at a time as you work your way up, so that the remaining letters at each level spell out a new word. To make the challenge harder, the following helpful hints are NOT in ascending order:

- Used to propel.
- To release from penalty.
- A horse coloring.
- Turned hand palm down.
- A vowel.
- Old name for a sofa.
- To decorate.
- Indicates an alternative.
- Dressed for cooking.

## TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

- GEOGRAPHY: The country of Equatorial Guinea lies on which continent?
- MOVIES: Which 1989 movie contains the line, "Have you ever danced with the devil by the pale moonlight?"?
- U.S. STATES: Which state's official flower is the Rocky Mountain Columbine?
- LITERATURE: Which 17th century Spanish novel includes the line, "Wit and humor do not reside in slow minds"?
- HISTORY: How many crewed moon landings has the United States made so far?
- TELEVISION: Which 1980s sitcom features a character named Al Bundy?
- LANGUAGE: What action is described in the term nephelococcygia?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What color is cyan?
- MUSIC: Which group had the 1989 hit "Love Shack"?
- ANATOMY: What is a goiter?

### Answers

- Africa
- "Batman" (The Joker)
- Colorado
- "Don Quixote"
- Six
- "Married ... With Children"
- Finding shapes in clouds
- Greenish blue
- The B-52's
- Enlargement of the thyroid gland

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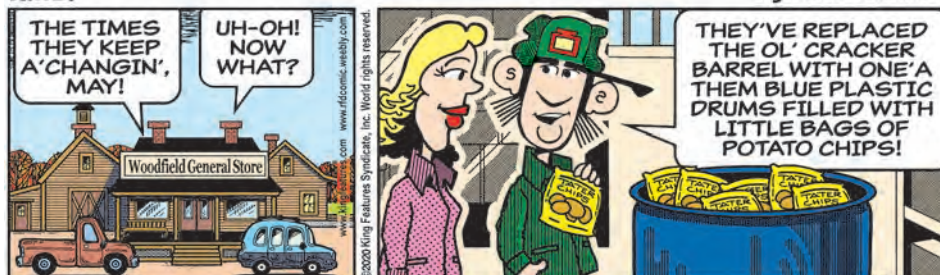
### Amber Waves

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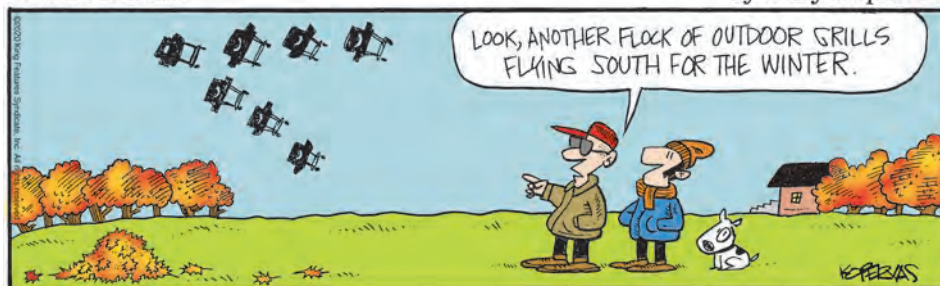
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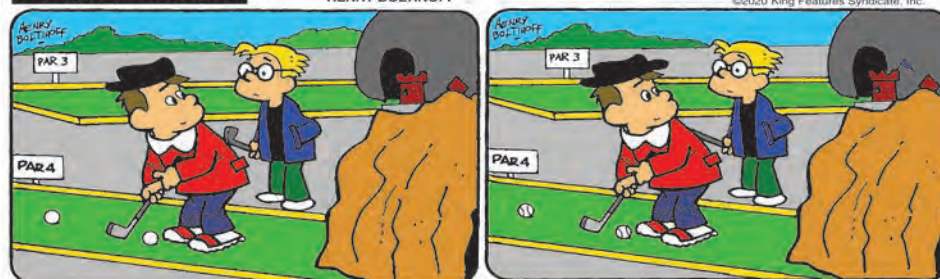
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### HOCUS-FOCUS

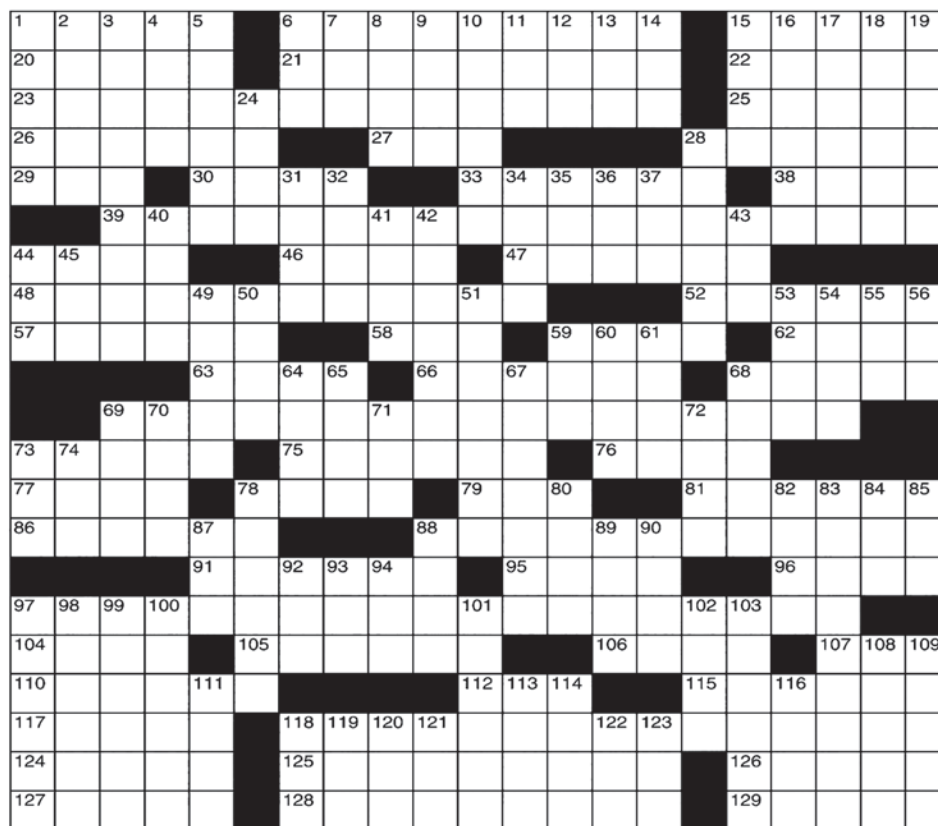
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Differences: 1. Boy's hat is different. 2. Castle has a flag. 3. Par 3 sign has moved. 4. Golf balls have become baseballs. 5. Golf club is longer. 6. Some distant trees are missing.

## Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Talk big
  - 6 Generally speaking
  - 15 Lhasa — (little dogs)
  - 20 Ed of "Gus"
  - 21 Small drying item on a bathroom bar
  - 22 Obama's successor
  - 23 Start of a riddle
  - 25 Have a blast
  - 26 "Yummy!"
  - 27 "Exodus" actor Mineo
  - 28 Lyric
  - 29 "Yippee!"
  - 30 "Forbidden" perfume
  - 33 Common pet lizard
  - 38 Warlike deity
  - 39 Riddle, part 2
  - 44 India's place
  - 46 Brand of contact lens cleaner
  - 47 Place to exit
  - 48 Riddle, part 3
  - 52 Unfurled, e.g.
  - 57 Former Disney head
  - 58 Uncle, in Spain
  - 59 Depict by drawing
  - 62 Met maven
  - 63 No, in Essen
  - 66 — bow (upper lip shape)
  - 68 A-list person
  - 69 Riddle, part 4
  - 73 "Neon" fish in a tank
  - 75 Naturally illuminated at dusk
  - 76 Duel weapon
  - 77 Baldwin of "Andron"
  - 78 Morse E's
  - 79 Jet grounded in '03
  - 81 "— Fideles" city
  - 86 West Texas
  - 88 Riddle, part 5
  - 91 Munchkin
  - 95 Farm baby
  - 96 Crimson and carmine
  - 97 End of the riddle
  - 104 Actress Tara
  - 105 Write the score to
  - 106 Polo of "The Fosters"
  - 107 Time of note
  - 110 Official seal
  - 112 — Na Na
  - 115 Lopsided
  - 117 Lopsided
  - 118 Riddle's answer
  - 124 Plow maker
  - 125 Consensus
  - 126 Acting teacher
  - 127 "90210" actor
  - 128 Quality of sharp pain
  - 129 Ex-NFLer
  - 17 Actress Mena
  - 18 Eggy dish
  - 19 Belly flop result
  - 24 Fake display
  - 28 "The Far Side" cartoonist
  - 31 Hamilton dueler Aaron
  - 32 Web surfer, say
  - 34 Great joy
  - 35 Brand of fleecy boots
  - 36 — Lingus
  - 37 Vegas-to-Helena dir.
  - 40 Violin virtuoso
  - 41 Having a shot to win
  - 42 Shaped like a die
  - 43 Purported psychic gift
  - 44 Suffix for an enzyme
  - 45 Fashion's Anna —
  - 49 Skin dye
  - 50 State north of Calif.
  - 51 Like a boor
  - 53 Blissful site
  - 54 Aswan's river
  - 55 Woman in 53-Down
  - 56 Little bit
  - 59 Actress Tyler or Ullmann
  - 60 Concept, in Calais
  - 61 New car sticker fig.
  - 64 Words in an analogy
  - 65 Food box datum: Abbr.
  - 67 Miniature couch for a pooch
  - 68 Female college students, outdatedly
  - 69 One foot forward
  - 70 Two-tone whale
  - 71 Part of HRH
  - 72 52-week unit
  - 73 — Bo (fitness option)
  - 74 Certain pipe fitting
  - 78 Neglects to
  - 80 "How Great — Art"
  - 82 To be, in Le Havre
  - 83 Vile
  - 84 Danson of "Mad Money"
  - 85 Gp. activated by a 911 call
  - 87 Snoop (on)
  - 88 Whence one wicked witch
  - 89 Whence one wicked witch
  - 90 Sheltered from the wind
  - 92 Immodesty
  - 93 Saturated
  - 94 Abbr. at LAX
  - 97 Pinball parlor
  - 98 Hires out
  - 99 Wire arch on a croquet course
  - 100 Hold fast
  - 101 Tabloid monster
  - 102 In — (stagnant)
  - 103 Karaoke problem
  - 108 Fleming of opera
  - 109 Spitting nails
  - 111 Lambs' mothers
  - 113 Many a carol
  - 114 See 122-Down
  - 116 Within: Prefix
  - 118 In the role of (Lat.)
  - 119 Dad's bro
  - 120 — de
  - 121 House pest
  - 122 With 114-Down, "Not true!"
  - 123 Part of CBS: Abbr.

# **SEM CU**

**south east madera county united**

## **Monthly SEMCU Meetings**



**As always, the public is invited to participate at the monthly scheduled SEMCU meetings. Feel free to ask questions and bring up any concerns you would like addressed. The highlighted area below has the info and instructions for the December 21 meeting.**

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

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

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**559-363-9095 • [www.semcu.org](http://www.semcu.org) • [info@semcu.org](mailto:info@semcu.org)**