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IN THE RANCHOS

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GOING, GOING, GONE!



Public Auction R Us, a Ranchos fixture since 2013, mysteriously burned down on Thursday, Sept. 16 and its owner, Kirk Vartanian, reported that everything in and outside the 30,000-square-foot building at Highway 41 and Avenue 11 was destroyed. Madera County Fire is investigating the blaze.

By Randy Bailey

Photo by Vicki Gathard

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Artists Needed!

District invites submissions for 2022 Kids' Calendar

Teachers and parents are urged to provide their students with crayons, markers and paper and let the creative juices flow as we invite submissions for the 2022 Healthy Air Living Kids' Calendar Contest. All San Joaquin Valley students from kindergarten through 12th grade are encouraged to enter this annual contest, allowing kids the opportunity to create their vision of Healthy Air Living.

While students were not in the physical classroom last year due to COVID-19, the District moved to a virtual version of the Kids' Calendar for 2021. This year, the District plans to return to printing and distributing calendars to schools, community groups, healthcare facilities and other clean-air partners, as in years past.



Entries are due by Friday, Oct. 8. Winners and their artwork are featured in this bilingual wall calendar, showing how residents can improve air quality and quality of life for all Valley residents.

Guidelines for creating a winning Healthy Air Living kids calendar entry:

- 8.5"x11" paper should be placed in landscape orientation.
- Artwork should be in VIVID color.
- Artwork should contain a message about how to live a "Healthy Air Life."
- Bilingual and Spanish-language messages are encouraged.

Include name, address, phone number, e-mail, age, grade and school on the back of the entry. Please mail art flat, not folded or stapled, to: 2022 Kids' Calendar Contest, Valley Air District, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726, or drop off your entry at the nearest District office in Modesto, Fresno or Bakersfield.

For an example of this year's calendar and additional contest information, visit www.valleyair.org/kidscalendar. For questions about the contest, email public.education@valleyair.org or call the regional office in Fresno at 559-230-6000.

By Randy Bailey

Around 11 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 16, a Ranchos business mysteriously burned down on the corner of Business Route 41 and Avenue 11. It was a 30,000 square foot industrial building that housed Public Auction R Us, an auction house that first opened in the Ranchos in November of 2013.

In interviews posted on the internet, owner Kirk Vartanian said that, "... everything in and outside the 30,000-square-foot building ... was destroyed."

Public Auction R Us featured an auction every Saturday and, in the age of Covid, had also transitioned into online auctions as well. At the time of the fire, the Public Auction R Us building was packed full of items anticipating its upcoming auction that Saturday. Many of the destroyed items in the building already had people bidding for them online.

Witnesses who were driving by and noticed the fire were stunned by the speed with which it spread, noting that it seemed the fire spread quickly from boxes around the outside of the building to the building itself, all under a shroud of thick black smoke. By the time local fire responders arrived on scene, they noted that the building was already "fully involved" in only a matter of minutes after being dispatched.



Madera, Fresno and Merced County firefighters, along with Fresno City Fire Department, were able to fully contain the fire by approximately 5 p.m. Business Route 41 and all of the side roads were shut down for the duration of the fire and were reopened at 5 p.m.

No one was hurt in the fire and neither a cause or estimated value placed on the loss have been determined.

Madera County Fire is investigating the fire.

Tesoro Viejo Gets Recycled Water for Community Use

California Water Service (Cal Water) has begun providing recycled water for Tesoro Viejo's customers and community needs through its Tesoro Viejo Master Mutual Water Company. Cal Water operates and maintains Tesoro Viejo's water, wastewater, recycled water and agricultural water systems, and oversees the installation of capital improvements to expand the utility systems. With operations commencing, recycled water will be used for community landscaping and agricultural irrigation.

Cal Water is currently providing 40,000 gallons of recycled water per day. As more homes become occupied and buildout of the development reaches completion, the volume of recycled water will increase.

Martin A. Kropelnicki, President and CEO of Cal Water said, "This is an important step to ensuring local water supplies remain reliable, both now and for decades to come, and particularly as our state sees more frequent and prolonged droughts."

Brent McCaffrey, President of Tesoro Viejo Development said, "Tesoro Viejo is committed to sustainability and water conservation. Our water conservation efforts help to preserve and protect this important natural resource, while servicing the water needs of the community for today and in the future."

Cal Water is the largest regulated American water utility west of the Mississippi River and the third largest in the country. Formed in 1926, the company serves 489,600 customers through 28 Customer and Operations Centers

throughout the state.

Cal Water is the largest subsidiary of the California Water Service Group. As a whole, the Group provides high-quality regulated and non-regulated utility services to approximately 2 million people in 100

communities. Company-wide, its commitment is to being the leading provider of water and wastewater services to its customers.

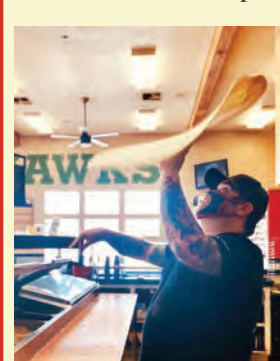
You can get more information about Cal Water online at www.calwater.com.

Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce Business of the Month

They Toss 'Em, They're Awesome

By Randy Bailey

When you've been in one spot for a quarter of a century, that lets you call yourself a bit of an institution. "We've owned the Ranchos Pizza Factory since 2012, but it's been here for 25 years," said Nicole O'Reilly, who along with her husband Ryun, have kept the Ranchos in pizzas the whole time. With a background in food service and customer service, the couple bought the store from Ryun's aunt and uncle, Maryann and Hal



Parks. After working for other people the better part of their adult lives, they decided it was time to strike out on their own.

Pizzas are important to them -- obviously -- but community is almost more important. "We're all about the Ranchos," Nicole said. "We have 22 employees and almost all of them are from the Ranchos. We hire high school kids without a lot of experience and give most of them their first working experience right before they leave for college."

The Ranchos Pizza Factory is famous for its support of local activities. From fundraisers to special events, the Pizza Factory is there. But when you are so active in a community, there can also be opportunity for problems to arise, as any retail establishment will tell you. Customer service is of utmost importance to Nicole. "We truly believe the customer is always right," she said. "If there's a problem, we make it right. We absolutely try our hardest." She said most problems can be corrected with a phone call.

The future looks bright and long-term with thoughts of possible expansion and new cooking equipment. Pizza Factory offers dine-in, pick up and delivery. "It's all about being convenient for the Ranchos," she said.

The Ranchos Pizza Factory is at 37184 Ave. 12. Call them at 645-7011.

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Letters

Dear Editor:

This was written one year ago today. It's almost like they could predict the future:

It's not about masks. Open your mind to the POSSIBILITY ...

In four months, the U.S. transformed into an obedient socialist country. Government dictated what events are acceptable to attend. Violent protests that instill fear are OK but church services, family funerals and patriotic celebrations are dangerous. And you bought it without a fight.

Standing in a graduation line is a "safety hazard." Small businesses were forced to close but crowds to support the corporate money machine at Walmart, Lowes and Home Depot are OK.

Come on. It's "just a mask" and "safety precautions."

How about a little hush money? Here's \$2,400 that we stole out of your paycheck in the first place. Enjoy. Buy something with it. From a big corporation.

Cash is dirty. We can't give change. There's a coin shortage. Use your card. In four months, they convinced you to use a traceable card for everything.

In less than four months, the government closed public schools then "restructured" education under the guise of "public safety." In less than four months, our government demonstrated how easily people assimilate to "guidelines" that have NO scientific premise whatsoever when you are fearful.

In less than four months, our government successfully instilled fear in a majority of the population in America that allows them to control every aspect of your life. Including what you eat, where you go and who you see.

And the most dangerous and terrifying part? People are not afraid of the government who removed their freedom. They're afraid of their neighbors, family and friends.

AND THEY HATE THOSE THAT WON'T COMPLY.

It's absolutely terrifying to me that so many people don't question "authority." They are willing to surrender their critical thinking skills and independence. They just ... gave up without thinking. Without a fight.

Do you know what's coming next?

"It's just a vaccine. Come on, it's for the greater good."

Wait until you're told that you can't enter any store or business without proof of the Covid-19 vaccine. Wait until you can't go to public events or get on a plane without proof of receiving the vaccine.

To everyone that doesn't believe this is possible - DO YOU UNDERSTAND that government successfully dictated to people WHEN they were allowed to be outside, WHERE they were allowed to go and HOW their children would be educated in less than four months? And that a majority of the population followed blindly because they were told to do so?

You're kidding yourself if you think this behavior won't be repeated with a vaccine. Or whatever the next step is. Six million Jews were exterminated in Germany because 97 percent of the population cowered to populist control. Nobody wanted to think about it. It's easier to just ignore it.

But that couldn't happen here, right?

Name Withheld Upon Request
Ranchos Cucamonga

Dear Editor:

Despite the statewide result of the recall, voters in California's 16th Congressional District should be feeling energized and confident as we head toward the 2022 midterm election.

Results from all three counties in the 16th District (Fresno, Madera and Merced) should truly worry Jim Costa.

President Biden carried Merced county by 10 percent but when all the votes are counted, it is likely that "Yes" will prevail. Likewise in Fresno County, President Biden won by nearly 8 percent, but it also appears on track to have voted "Yes" on recalling Newsom. Finally, in Madera County, President Trump won by 11 percent but the recall is poised to pass by almost double that margin.

In times of defeat we find strength. We have put the ruling party on notice and they are terrified. Now is not the time to let up. There is still history to be made.

With the Democrats clinging to a razor thin majority in the House, the people of the Central Valley now have the chance to help decide control of Congress and push back against the Democrats' radical agenda.

Unlike Governor Newsom, Jim Costa will not be able to count on radical far left voters in Los Angeles and San Francisco to save this seat and preserve the house majority. Our mission is strong, our mission is organized, and our mission will be successful.

David Giglio, Candidate 16th Congressional District
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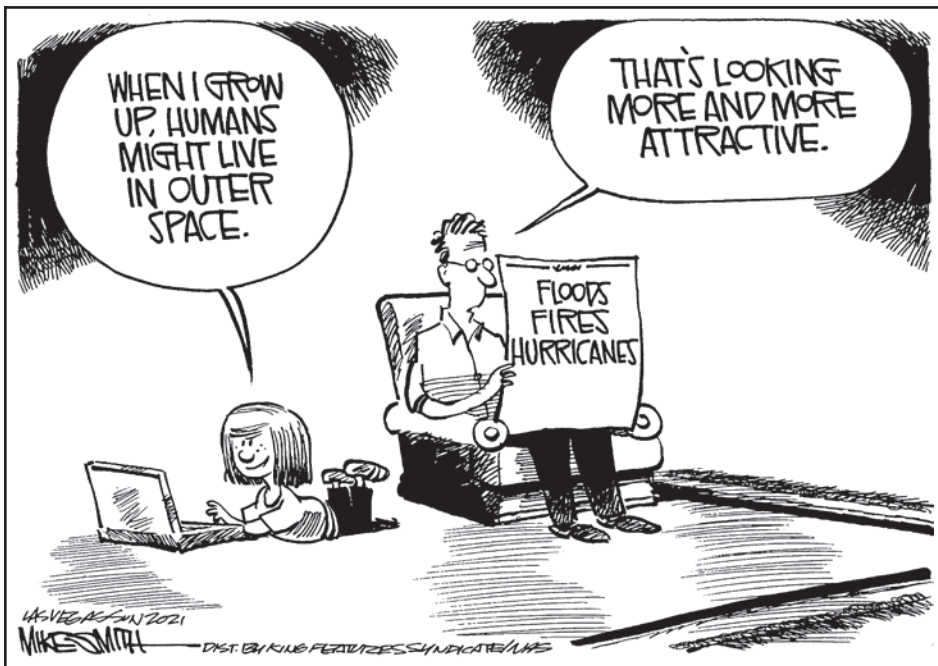
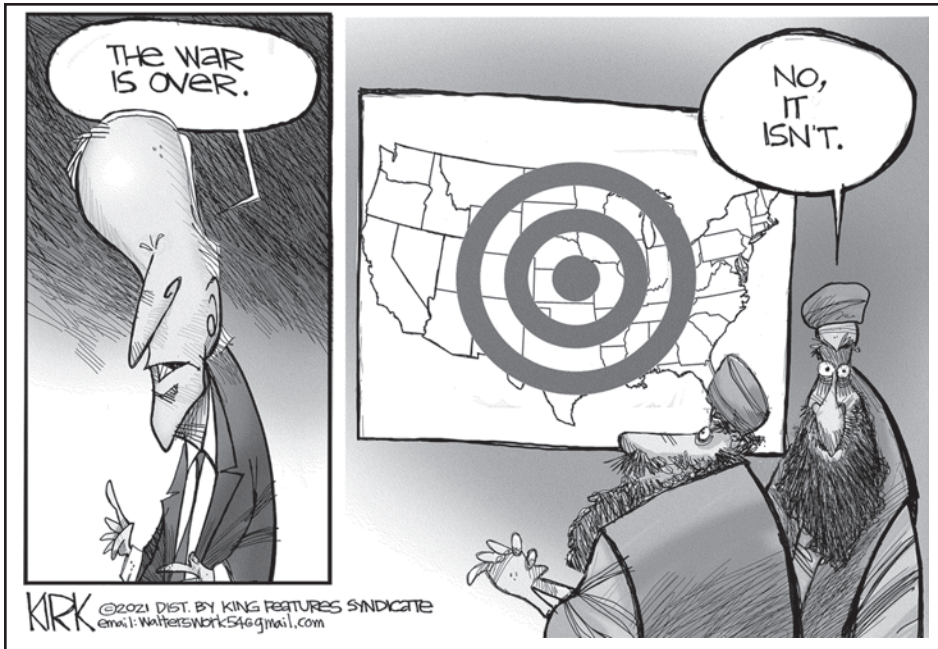
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Guest Editorial

Afghanistan the End of U.S. Power?

By Rich Lowry

It's hard to imagine more humiliating images than what we've seen in Afghanistan in recent weeks, from the hasty evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul to the chaotic scenes outside the airport.

Our surrender to a band of AK-47-bearing guerrillas after 20 years has, understandably, occasioned autumnal thoughts about American power.

Even the Soviet Union, on the cusp of full collapse, managed to get out of Afghanistan in good order and leave behind a government that endured for several years.

What does it say that we couldn't match that?

Writing in *The New Yorker*, Robin Wright says the pullout may serve as "a bookend for the era of U.S. global power." Allister Heath, editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, argues that "the botched exit is merely the latest sign that the American era is ending." Francis Fukuyama says the images in Kabul "have evoked a major juncture in world history," although he thinks "the end of the American era had come much earlier."

There is no sugar-coating our defeat in Afghanistan and the abject position we put ourselves in during the final days. The withdrawal is a blow to our counterterrorism capabilities, our

prestige and our geopolitical position.

For all of that, though, no one in the world has the formidable advantages of the United States, which still outstrips everyone else, including China, on every material metric that matters.

Great powers don't go away easily. The British could be forgiven for thinking that it'd be all downhill after losing their American colonies in a long war joined by their traditional rivals France and Spain. Instead, British imperial power had not yet peaked.

Our exit from Saigon in 1975, to this point the touchstone for modern American defeats, was followed by Communist advances all over the map. Yet, within 20 years, we'd win the Cold War and ascend to unprecedented global power.

We are still blessed with an extraordinarily favorable geographical position, as a continental nation with friendly neighbors, access to two oceans, enormous reserves of oil and gas, and vast amounts of arable land.

We produce about a quarter of global GDP, a share that has held up over the years.

We are responsible for an astonishing 40 percent of all military spending in the world. It was ridiculous that Biden made a bragging point of the evacuation, but it's true that no one else would have been capable of such an operation.

We dominate the list of top universities in the world.

There is no country people would rather come to. A Taliban spokesperson interviewed on Iranian TV, when challenged why so many people want to flee Afghanistan, rightly pointed out that if American planes were taking people out of Iran, there'd be a rush for the exits there, too.

In his book, "Unrivaled," Michael Beckley of Tufts University and the American Enterprise Institute rebuts the notion that China is overtaking us.

American workers are more productive than workers anywhere else. China's labor productivity has improved, Beckley writes, "but remains half that of Turkey, lower than Mexico's, and roughly on par with Brazil's."

We have demographic challenges,

Please see **EDITORIAL** on P. 14

The Ranchos Independent

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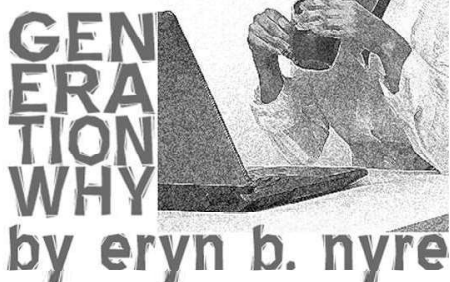
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"[U.S. MILITARY] WERE THE ONES OF WHOM CHRIST SPOKE WHEN HE SAID, 'BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD.'"

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

Youthful Lessons Needed Now



A long, long time ago in a land far, far away, my first real job was at a fast-food restaurant. When I am feeling particularly nostalgic, I reminisce about those days and think of how nice it might be to go back. Then I remember it was ten hours a day of standing on your feet in a hot kitchen trying to make rude customers happy for crappy pay. Still, I often look back fondly, not so much for the work, but I was young and didn't have all the responsibilities that come with each additional step deeper into the forest of adulthood. Okay, maybe I just miss not being a grown-up.

My first boss was a real tough lady. She barked orders, demanded perfection and her stink-eye capabilities were rivaled only by my own father's, which is saying something. None of us liked her because she was so hard on us, and as teenagers we hadn't yet figured out that work wasn't just a big social gathering, it's supposed to be

... you know ... work. As an adult looking back, though, I'm grateful that she never let up. It helped to shape not only the woman I have become but also the kind of employee I am today. She taught me how to prioritize and multi-task. She taught me a sense of urgency. She taught me how to count back change, something I wish more people knew. I'm not sure where she is these days, but I wish we could clone her and make her the restaurant manager of every eatery all over the country. Well, In-N-Out and Chik-fil-A seem to be doing okay for themselves, but every other chain.

I thought of her the other day when I was stuck in a drive through. I was tired after a long day and I didn't feel like cooking so I did what most red-blooded Americans do, I settled on some greasy fast food that would fill my belly until the next morning when I promised I would be back on my diet. I chose the place that looked the least busy because I was so hungry I could hear my stomach growling over my radio. There was only one car in front of me, at the window, when I pulled up to the speaker. This place turned out to be so slow I could have made my own three-course meal, cleaned the kitchen, then wrote the great Ameri-

can novel by the time a voice came through the speaker asking for my order. I would have backed out but another car had pulled in right behind me. I was stuck and frustrated. I could see the distinct lack of customers in the lobby from where I sat so I know they weren't backed up. They didn't appear to be short-staffed either as evidenced by the many kids in matching shirts and hats all in the kitchen area. For whatever reason the dude working the drive-thru station had trouble handling

more than one thing at a time. He didn't start taking my order until the car at the window drove away. Then, as I pulled away from the window a billion years later, I could hear him just take the order of the car that was behind me when I was stuck at the speaker. See, now if my old boss ran that branch that wouldn't have happened. Sure, she would probably have reduced him to tears a time or two, but polishing a diamond takes heat, pressure and friction. In the end he would be stronger for it, or free to pursue other employment opportunities.

I had a similar experience with a young girl working as a server in one of my favorite haunts for "girls' night." She was clearly overwhelmed but her go-to way to handle it was to keep her head down and just pretend she didn't see the customers with their hands in the air trying to get her attention. I remember that feeling back in my own food service days. I wanted to hide in the walk-in and welcome a slow and agonizing death by freezing as opposed to having to look one more demanding customer in the eye. I also remember hearing my boss snap at me to move faster, do more and be nicer. Having her push me made me a better

Still, I often look back fondly, not so much for the work, but I was young and didn't have all the responsibilities that come with each additional step deeper into the forest of adulthood. Okay, maybe I just miss not being a grown-up.

Please see **GENWHY** on P. 7

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GENWHY cont. from P. 6

crew member, a better worker and eventually a better restaurant manager. I don't think this young woman had such a leader to push her. Had my boss seen her wandering through the restaurant on her cell phone ignoring customers, that phone would have likely found itself lodged in the most uncomfortable of places in which a phone ought never to be lodged.

Had my boss seen her wandering through the restaurant on her cell phone ignoring customers, that phone would have likely found itself lodged in the most uncomfortable of places ...

Some people would say having such a harsh, pushy, demanding manager is more damaging than helpful. They would suggest that the only way to have healthy, confident adults is to never correct, push, or demand excellence from them as children and adolescents. They must be treated like delicate little flowers too precious to pick and prune. That way, when they get out into the big, scary world they have complete confidence in themselves as a person, which is far more important than having any marketable skills or experience. No adult needs that when they have sense of self and an understanding of their own individuality, right? Good plan.



Imagine That

My granddaughters are master pretenders. Last time I babysat we were all dragons with detailed descriptions. Pretending isn't my forte, but I hang in there until we move on to coloring — that's where my strengths lie.

Today as I was cleaning my guest room window blinds, I was thinking about how we get ourselves to do things we don't like to do. Often there are special people, specific circumstances or a deadline that prompts action. Company coming for the weekend did it for me this time — special people, specific circumstances, and a deadline. I know they would be gracious had the blinds not been freshly cleaned, but it made me feel good.

I'd much rather reorganize a closet than clean windows and

blinds. You might be the opposite. Cleaning may be your forte but organizing, not-so-much. Maybe the last time you decluttered a closet was when you remodeled or moved. The longer you wait, the bigger the project. The bigger the project, the easier it is to procrastinate. So, what do we do when there are no special people, circumstances, or deadlines prompting us to action?

You can Pretend

Imagine that you're preparing to put your house on the market.

Set a date for your "open house" to provide yourself a deadline. Start by decluttering the common areas. Get rid of old magazines, mail and other items that have been strewn about. To borrow from my granddaughters'

So, what do we do when there are no special people, circumstances, or deadlines prompting us to action?

You can pretend.

imaginings, pretend the floor is "hot lava." Clear it of all unnecessary items before they burn. Provide "orphans," another favorite pretending theme, a home alongside a family of items with which they belong. Relocate things that go in other places. Donate things you no longer need. Continue this process throughout your rooms and closets. On "open house" day, buy yourself some flowers, bake some chocolate

chip cookies and enjoy your accomplishment. Far too many people wait to create a home environment they enjoy only when they're about to leave it.

For more creative folk, imagine that you're baking, sewing, crafting or building. Write out your organizing steps, like you would see on a recipe, sewing pattern or project instruction sheet. "Trim the excess from the hall closet." "Combine like items." "Strain old paperwork and set some aside for shredding." Make a list of

ingredients like bags for trash, recycle, donations and containers for organizing similar things. Envision the finished product like you

would your favorite project. Then, follow your steps till complete.

If you're of the left-brained variety, you may prefer a more concrete plan. Generate your own circumstances and deadline by scheduling a dinner or game night with friends or family at your place. Make sure to give yourself a realistic period of time to first

Please see CLEAN on P. 18

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(September 2011)

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

Recently we went out to Randy's after church for lunch. Rachael had made two pans of lasagna – one with meat (which was absolutely delicious) and the other meatless. Rachael is a vegetarian and pretty strict about it. So I decided this article will be dedicated to Rachael and as close to vegetarian as I can make it. It will be a challenge because I like meat, fowl and fish, cheese, eggs and all the rest of forbidden food of a vegetarian.

I read online that, "It's not just 'rabbit food' and alfalfa sprouts; today's vegetarian food is complex, and flavorful." In the *Every Day is a Holiday* book I've talked about in prior articles, October 1 is World Vegetarian Day.

My favorite vegetable dish is the zucchini casse-
role my sister makes for most family dinners. I'm not going to print the recipe in this issue as I've had it in two back issues. If you want it, let me know. In my Mom's recipe cards she had a couple of vegetable dishes that sound interesting.

Impossible Garden Pie

2 C Chopped Zucchini
1 C Chopped Tomatoes
1/2c Chopped Onion
1/3 C Grated Parmesan Cheese
1 1/2 C Milk
3/4 C Bisquick
3 Eggs
1/2 tsp. Salt
1/4 tsp. Pepper

Heat oven to 400. Lightly grease a 10" pie plate. Sprinkle zucchini, tomatoes, onions and cheese in bot-



by Jean Briner

tom of pie plate. Beat remaining ingredients until smooth. About 15 seconds on high in a blender or about one minute with a hand mixer. Pour into pie plate. Bake until golden brown and a knife inserted in center comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Be careful not to over bake. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting. If using a 9" pie plate, decrease milk to 1 C, baking mix to 1/2 C and eggs to 2.

Cheesy Broccoli Rice Casserole

8 oz. Frozen Chopped Broccoli – cooked for about 3 minutes in rapidly boiling water.

2 C White Minute Rice (Put rice in 2 cups boiling water, turn burner off, cover and let sit for 5 minutes).

2 Well Beaten Eggs

2/3 C Milk

1/2 C Oil

1 Can Cream of Chicken Soup **

1 Medium Onion – Chopped Fine

16 oz. (4 C) Shredded Cheddar Cheese

Salt, Pepper and Garlic Powder to taste

Heat oven to 325. Spray a 13x9x2 baking dish with baking spray, set aside. Cook and drain well the broccoli and cook and fluff the rice. In a large mixing bowl combine the eggs, milk, oil, and soup. Add the chopped onion. Blend

well. Add the cooked broccoli and rice, mixing well. (The broccoli and rice should be cooled slightly or you might get scrambled eggs.) Pour mixture into prepared baking dish. Bake for about one hour – if brown and bubbly remove from oven. It may take up to 1 1/2 hours, but watch carefully – don't overcook. **Recipe calls for Cream of Chicken soup, but a vegetarian might want to use Cream of Mushroom instead.

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

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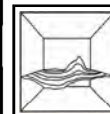
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RECIPE cont. from P. 8

The following two recipes are from Rachael's favorites.

Vegetable Black-Bean Burgers

- 1 Can Black Beans (Drained)
- 1 Slice of an Onion
- 1 tsp. Cumin
- Garlic Salt
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 1 C Shredded Cheese
- Hamburger buns
- American cheese

Sauté one slice of onion in butter until brown. In medium sized bowl crush the black beans. Add cumin, dash of garlic salt and salt and pepper. Mix well. Add shredded cheese and one hamburger bun that has been torn into small pieces. Mix well, and add to pan with the onion and let cook on medium heat until it gets crispy. Pull

off and put on hamburger bun with a slice of American cheese.

Vegetarian Lasagna

This recipe takes a lot of work. It is best to prepare the day before and then let it sit in the refrigerator overnight so all the flavors can mix.

- ½ C Minced Onions
- 2 Cloves Garlic, Crushed
- 1 (28 oz.) Can Crushed Tomatoes
- 2 (6 oz.) Cans Tomato Paste
- 2 (6.5 oz.) Cans Canned Tomato Sauce
- ½ C Water
- 2 T White Sugar
- 1 ½ C Fresh Basil Leaves
- 1 tsp. Italian Seasoning
- 1 T Salt
- ¼ tsp. Black Pepper
- 4 T Chopped Parsley
- 2 Zucchini Sliced
- 2 Heads Broccoli Cut Into Florets

- 2 C Shredded Carrots
- 24 Large Lasagna Noodles
- 16 oz. Fresh Ricotta Cheese
- 1 Egg
- ½ tsp. Salt
- 2 pounds Fresh Mozzarella Cheese, Shredded
- 2 pounds Fresh Grated Parmesan Cheese

In large skillet cook onions and garlic until browned. Stir in crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, tomato sauce and water. Season with sugar, basil, Italian seasoning, 1 T salt, pepper and 2 T parsley.

Fill two large bowls with warm water and lay out the lasagna noodles and allow to soak.

In large mixing bowl, combine ricotta cheese with egg, remaining parsley and ½ tsp. salt.

To assemble, spread 1 1/2 C of

sauce in the bottom of a deep 9x13 baking pan. Arrange a layer of noodles lengthwise over sauce. Spread with part of the ricotta cheese mixture. Top with mozzarella cheese. Layer vegetables over cheese. Spoon 1 ½ C sauce over vegetables and sprinkle with ¼ C Parmesan cheese. Repeat layers and top with remaining parmesan and mozzarella cheese. Cover with foil. To prevent foil from sticking to cheese, spray foil with cooking spray.

Allow to sit in the fridge overnight.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes. Remove foil, and bake an additional 25 minutes. Cool 15 minutes before serving.

Well, there you have it – I got through the article without using the four letter word “MEAT.”



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Kiwanis Korner

Community Park in the Ranchos' Future? Kiwanis Support its Development

By Sally Rowden

“Kiwanis International is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world one child, one community at a time.”

Upon leaving the Pizza Factory this evening at the conclusion of our Kiwanis meeting—to our surprise—it was raining. The weather report earlier called for double digit temperatures for the next several days but didn't mention rain—although rain is always welcomed. Just in time for the soon-to-be fall weather.

Our guest speaker for tonight's Sept. 9 meeting was Matt Trevor from Madera County Public Works. He gave a complete overview of the Madera County MD-10A – Madera Ranchos Water System Improvement Project. Highlighting the installation of a storage water tank along with a manganese treatment plant. Matt said costs are being covered through awarded grants and a loan process and planning to keep any possible costs to

Madera Ranchos homeowners to a minimum. Thank you, Matt. Your willingness to take our questions and answer in open discussion was appreciated.

Larry Loucks from the Clovis Kiwanis was also a visitor. He is our Kiwanis Division 5 Lieutenant Governor. He invited the Madera Ranchos Kiwanis to share in an Ice Cream Social gathering in Clovis he is hosting in early October. Thank you for the visit and invite, Larry.

A reminder: The Run 4 The Miracle sponsored by Kiwanis Division 5 happens Saturday, Sept. 25. Four of our members: Marie Cameron, Leslie Carella, Bev Delk and Richard Wayne will be in attendance. Thank you for your volunteer support.

At our last meeting in August, our guest

speaker was ... me, Sally Rowden. I did a presentation on the possibility of a playground being developed in the Ranchos. In talking with Marie Castro, Division Director at Madera Public Works, Parks and Recreation – General Services, and Melissa at Supervisor Brett Frazer's office, unofficial talk has taken place of a park being constructed. The thought is once the Madera Ranchos Water System Improvement Project, consisting of the completion of the storage water tank and the manganese treatment plant, the land in excess could be constructed into a park. The location is the County owned property currently under construction next to our Library. There are no formal plans or funding, yet there is talk and understanding of the need for a park in our community. The Kiwanis Club will stay informed

by attending our Supervisor Brett Frazier's Coffee and Conversation gatherings, be it virtual or in-person, every third Wednesday of the month. Your thoughts are welcome. Send an email to Sally Rowden at sllrowden11@gmail.com (Note: sll are letters and the 11 at the end is the number eleven).

On Sept. 17, our installation of officers will take place. Mona Diaz will be our new in-coming president, Leslie Carella will continue as our secretary, Ollia Ridge will be our new in-coming co-secretary and Marie Cameron will continue as our treasurer. A dinner will be provided in their honor. Congratulations and the best of success to each of you. Of course, we want to thank Richard Wayne, our out-going president, for his leadership and his future continued support as our past-president official.

For thought: *“There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million.”* (The Wonders of the World by Scott Booker—Oct. 22, 2018—Kiwanis Club of Indy)

www.RanchosKiwanis.com

“I did a presentation on the possibility of a playground being developed in the Ranchos ... There are no formal plans or funding, yet there is talk and understanding of the need for a park in our community.”



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Say you saw it in the Ranchos Independent

Senior Report

Third Annual Ranchos Senior Center Craft Fair Right Around the Corner

By Margaret Tynan

Ranchos Hills Seniors Craft Fair

It's almost here. The 3rd Annual Holiday Craft Fair is only a few weeks away. Over 30 artists and crafters from the local community and surrounding area will exhibit their work on Saturday, Oct. 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ranchos/Hills Seniors Center at 37330 Berkshire Dr. in the Madera Ranchos. You won't want to miss this event. It's a great place to start your holiday shopping and to find that perfect gift or item to add that special touch to your home. Choose from a wide array of lovely things, including handcrafted soaps, candles, pottery creations, various woodwork art and garden pieces,

photo and hand painted art cards, one-of-a-kind needlework creations, jewelry, holiday ornaments, glass art and so much more. The Center's garden shop will also be open with great plant selections to add beauty to your yard. Come early and enjoy coffee and a pastry. Stay for a hamburger or hot dog for lunch. Parking for the event will be in the vacant lot on Avenue 12, just west of Lee Kitchen. Look for the parking signs and the persons who will direct you. Bring your friends and family. We look forward to seeing you there. If you have questions, contact the Center at 645-4864.

Everyone had a great time at the White Elephant Bingo game that was held last month. Carol Wood outdid herself decorating the tables and creating the game board. One of our newest members, Amy Emrany, helped Carol call the numbers. The game winners were ex-

pecting stereotypical white elephant gifts but got quite a pleasant surprise. Out of brown grocery bag packaging came lovely and useful prizes from wild colorful socks to delicate decorative items. Lots of yummy snacks were shared by all. It was a great way to spend a hot summer afternoon.

If you are a community member who is 50 years and older, the Ranchos/Hills Seniors invites you to become a member of the Center. We'd love to have you join. It is an opportunity to meet new friends and participate in many interesting and enjoyable activities. We offer an Exercise Group, discussion and informational sessions, a writing group, cards and other games, crafts, potlucks, holiday gatherings and birthday and anniversary celebrations to name a few. We are always open to new ideas. Get engaged. We look forward to seeing you.

The regular monthly Treasure House, Garden, Boutique and Bake sale will be held Saturday, Oct. 2

from 8 a.m. to noon. The Planning Meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 5 at 12:30 p.m. The Board Meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 12 at 12:30 followed by the General Meeting at 1:30 p.m. The Exercise Group meets at the Center. Call or email the Center for information on the Writing Group schedule.

Thought for October: "Every block of stone has a statue inside it and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it." – Michelangelo



Carol Wood called the numbers for the White Elephant Bingo game at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center on Thursday, Aug. 19.



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4H Happenings Sierra Shadows 4H Club

By Sarah Morgan

Between Aug. 28 and Sept. 8, the Sierra Shadows 4-H participated in contests at Madera County Fair. Members showed their horses and chickens, rabbits and ducks, pigs and cattle, goats and even their arts and crafts.

Colie Tickel won Reserve Champion Poultry Meat Pen, 1st place in Intermediate 4-H Poultry Showmanship, and 1st place in Intermediate 4-H Small Animal Master Showmanship.

Jacob Garzon had 1st place Bantam Rooster, 4th place Bantam Hen, 3rd place Breeding Pair, and 4th place in Intermediate 4-H Poultry Showmanship.

Jake Poore placed 3rd in Poultry Meat Pen with his pair of ducks and 2nd place in Advanced 4-H Poultry Showmanship.

Hailey Martinez was the high point winner for Gymkhana with her horse.

Aubrey Rocca placed 1st with her Sock Gnome, String Art piece, and two ceramic crafts.



Sierra Shadows 4-H Members at the Madera Fair small animal show.

Please see 4-H on P. 16

In Memoriam



Harlan Michael "Mike" Bailey
May 31, 1965 ~ September 3, 2021

Mike passed away on Sept. 3, 2021 and is now resting and at peace.

He was a beloved son, brother, father, uncle, cousin and friend. Mike was born on May 31, 1965 in Los Banos, Calif. to Harlan and Lavada Bailey. He had three older sisters, Roselynn, Rebecca and Sheila. Mike grew up in Fresno, graduating from Bullard High School and went on to get his Associates Degree from Fresno City College. Mike was an avid sports fan and went to his first Giants game at Candlestick Park when he was only 8 years old. He remained one of the team's biggest fans for the remainder of his life. In 1994, Mike became a father to his first pride and joy, Matthew Louis and in 1995 had his second pride and joy, John William.

He is survived by his mother, Lavada Bailey. His sons, Matthew Louis Bailey; John William Bailey and his wife, Rebecca; his sisters Roselynn Muzzy and husband Joe; and Becky Nunes. His nieces and nephews, Justin and Janell Nunes, Christie and Andy Blind, Josh and Christa Nunes, Shannon and Todd Metcalf and Madelynn Rose Gordon.

He was preceded in death by his father, Harlan Bailey and sister, Sheila. A memorial service will be held at Kerman Covenant Church, 15495 Whitesbridge Rd. Kerman, Calif. 93630 on Oct. 2, 2021 at 10:30 am.

First West Nile Death in Madera Co.

On Sept. 10, Madera County's Department of Public Health confirmed the first death this year in Madera County from the West Nile Virus. The victim was a man who was one of two West Nile cases identified in August. Both people were put in the hospital, but the other person was determined to have a non-fatal form and was released.

According to the Madera County Department of Public Health, West Nile Virus is transmitted via infected mosquitoes to people. Health officials report that the majority of people infected with West Nile Virus show no symptoms. When symptoms are present, they usually consist of fever and headache, other "nonspecific" symptoms and they only occur in about 25 percent of



people with the virus. It's estimated that fewer than 1 percent develop into more serious symptoms of severe or "neuroinvasive" disease, with accompanying symptoms of fever, headache, a stiff neck, confusion and decreased alertness. Just as with Covid, people over the age of 50 or with weakened immune systems are at greater risk. There is no vaccine for West Nile Virus.

The mosquito abatement control agency is planning on spraying the areas where the positive tests were reported. For more information about West Nile Virus, visit: westnile.ca.gov • www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html • maderamosq.org/

The first case of the virus in the Valley was in Fresno County in July.

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5. Because I feel a sense of personal obligation to improve the quality of life in the Ranchos.

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When's the NEXT Chamber of Commerce Meeting?

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, Wednesday, October 13 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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9/21

SEMUCU speaks

California Wildfires and Prevention

By Matt Maringer

Dixie – By far the state’s largest fire this season, it grew by 23,000 acres from Sept. 9 to Sept. 10. The mandatory evacuation area at its northern end was expanded as a 10-mile run crossed Highway 44.

Caldor – Despite high winds on Sept. 9, the fire was largely held to its footprint and repopulation efforts continue.

Antelope – This fire, in the high desert northeast of Mount Shasta, experienced the greatest growth, going from 79,702 acres on Sept. 8 to 143,512 acres on Sept. 10. The evacuation area was expanded north to the Oregon line and east to Modoc County

McCash and River Complex – Mandatory evacuations have been in place for weeks for the lightning-sparked fires in the Siskiyou Mountains. McCash’s evacuation zone hasn’t grown since Sept. 1. The evacuation zone for the River Complex — which includes the Haypress and Summer fires — was expanded this week to include the town of Callahan.

Monument – Evacuations were ordered in the Hayfork area as this Trinity County fire passed 200,000 acres on Sept. 10.

The above updates are a big reason SEMUCU is offering FREE discing around the perimeters of properties to qualified residents in the SEMUCU area of Southeast Madera. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and schedule a discing appointment by emailing info@semcu.org or calling 559-363-9095.

Delta Variant Info and More
As most of us know by now, the Delta variant is currently the most prominent strain of COVID-19. There are additional variants that are likely to emerge, which is why we have chosen to continue to have our monthly SEMUCU meetings via teleconference. For example, the Lambda variant out of South America is also emerging. Health experts urge that if people want to get back to normal, a significant portion of the population needs to be vaccinated. As long as a chunk of people across the world are unvaccinated, new strains of the virus will continue to develop and cause problems.

We are always interested in adding to our Board and would appreciate any nomination of community members who are interested in helping with ideas and the direction SEMUCU should move forward. If you are not available, maybe you know of someone that may be interested and could help our community by spending one hour per month at our monthly meeting. Although the time required is minimal, the importance of caring for our community is invaluable.

SEMUCU Meeting Notice
As part of the practice of social distancing, our monthly board meetings on the third Monday of each month will again 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 SEMUCU for more information, call 559-363-9095 or you can reach the organization by email at info@semcu.org. You can also visit the website at www.semcu.org.

SEMUCU is “By the Community, For the Community”

EDITORIAL cont. from P.5

but other big powers, especially China, will be aging faster. Over the course of the century, Beckley notes, China will lose half of its workforce, or 470 million people.

Our alliance system is an enormous force-multiplier, a network that, according to Beckley, "encompasses 25 percent of the Earth's population and accounts for 75 percent of world GDP and defense spending." China's formal ally, in contrast, is North Korea.

None of this is to deny that the contemporary United States is racked by self-doubt, poisonous politics and institutional failure.

It is only to say that if we are determined to squander our global position, it will take much more time and folly to do it. A further downward slide, like the disastrous withdrawal from Kabul itself, will be a choice, not an inevitability.

Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*.

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The Bookshelf

New Offerings from the Ranchos Library make it Fit in Your Lifestyle

By Jerrica Edmundson

School is in full swing now and we love seeing all the people coming in to pick up books and even spend time studying at our laptop stations, computers and spacious tables. We absolutely adore that we are growing to accommodate the educational needs of our community and that people are finding out just how much we have to offer. On top of a quiet space for studying, countless books on different subjects and knowledgeable, helpful staff, we have even more available for you. We have a copy machine available during business hours as well as the ability to fax documents for you for a small fee. Our online resources include a full Chilton library for looking up vehicle service information, online encyclopedias covering so many different subjects, Pronunciator for learning a new language (or 50!), and so much more all accessible from home or the library using your Madera County Library card through maderalibrary.org.

We absolutely adore that we are growing to accommodate the educational needs of our community and that people are finding out just how much we have to offer.

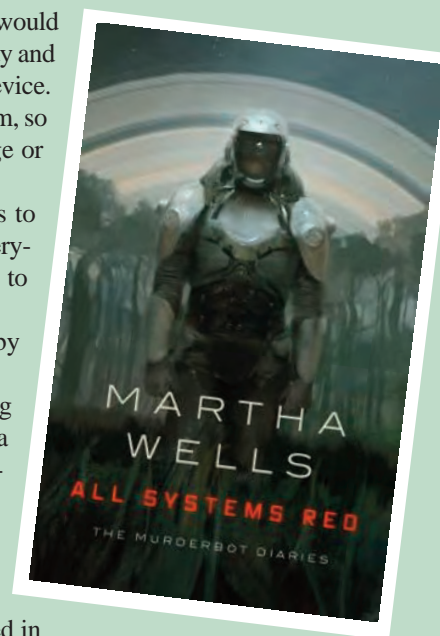
Coming soon we will even have the ability to check out mobile hotspots for you to take home and get internet access from the comfort of your home. We will have multiple hotspot devices for checkout to the Ranchos community specifically, with each of our Madera County Library branches having their own allocated devices. These will provide filtered internet, just like you would get in the branch itself, making it a perfect tool to assist in school

projects, job hunting or almost anything you would need at home, all while maintaining the security and safety of those using the internet from the device. More details will be coming in for this program, so be sure to keep an eye on our Facebook page or come into the branch for more information.

We have so many projects in the works to make the library even more accessible for everyone around, and I truly can't wait to be able to share it all with you.

Jerrica's Bookshelf: *All Systems Red* by Martha Wells (*The Murderbot Diaries*)

Martha Wells has done such a good thing for the world by giving us *Murderbot*. This is a series of quick novellas that all give the "inside" view of a Security Bot who has overridden his governor module and started learning how to feel. It sounds sappy and corny, but I completely devoured this series in a matter of a week. It's everything I didn't know I needed in a book: witty, sarcastic, emotional, action-packed and futuristic all at the same time. I honestly can't recommend this series enough, and if you have a hankering for a book about a science fiction world with technology and humanity combining to the point where they have managed to produce robots with anxiety — this is the book series for you.



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Convert This!

Hello 93636,

It's been hard not to notice the large increase in vehicle catalytic converter theft this year. We have probably replaced 10 stolen catalytic converters this summer. This week alone we installed two.

Last month, one of my commercial accounts had five converters stolen in one night. His vehicles, from 2017 to 2019, are large moving vans with Ford V-10 engines and large converters. The thief scaled the barbed wire fence, slid under the vehicles where he wouldn't be discovered, and removed the converters with a battery powered saw. It probably took less the 15 minutes to steal them all. Since converters are underneath the vehicle, the theft isn't discovered until the engine is started. It sounds like a race car. Some repairs are covered by insurance, but most are not.

The cost for each of his catalytic converter replacements was roughly \$2,900. \$15,000 lost in one night. This was his second converter theft.

This angers me. It is illegal to install a used catalytic converter on a vehicle. I cannot go to an auto dismantler and purchase a used converter. There is no market for used converters except for their recycle value. The value is in their rare-earth metals. How is it possible recyclers do not know these

relatively new converters aren't stolen? It's also hard not to notice that larger trucks and PZEV vehicles like Toyota Prius and Honda Accords are being targeted. There have been so many thefts some converters are now on national back order from manufacturers.

The catalytic converter is located in the exhaust system close to the exhaust manifold. There is an internal ceramic structure which is wash coated with three different rare-earth metals. The platinum, palladium and rhodium are suspended in the wash coat. The internal core is usually a ceramic monolith with a honeycomb structure. The surface area of these tiny passages when added together is greater than the surface area of several football fields. As the exhaust gas flows through these passages it comes into direct contact with the rare-earth metals or catalysts. A properly functioning converter stores the free oxygen contained in the exhaust gas. When hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrous oxides enter the converter, their bonds are broken and they are reduced to simple elements. As the carbon and hydrogen atoms come into contact with the rare-earth metals, oxygen atoms are donated so carbon atoms and transform into carbon dioxide and hydrogen atoms transform into water vapor. The nitrogen, which is 78 percent of our



The surface area of the tiny passages within a catalytic converter that are coated with rare earth materials -- when added together -- is greater than the surface area of several football fields.

air, is released back into the atmosphere. It's just chemistry.

Cars, light-duty trucks and motorcycles average about 2-6 grams of these precious metals. Larger-engine SUVs and trucks can range from 6 to 30 grams. Roughly 28.35 grams equals one ounce. As of the writing of this article, rhodium -- the most expensive of the metals -- was selling at \$14,500 per ounce on the spot market. Both rhodium and palladium reached all-time high prices early this year.

OK, it's easy to understand why trucks are being targeted but what is a PZEV and why are they being targeted?

In January 2012, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) formally adopted the Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program and its requirement that by 2025,

10 percent of all new cars sold in California must be electric-drive vehicles. Because of the excessive costs and time needed to develop electric-drive technology, the automotive manufacturers were unable to meet the ACC requirement. The Partially Zero Emission Vehicle (PZEV) is CARB's compromise.

A PZEV vehicle is a gasoline powered vehicle with a robust catalytic converter. PZEV catalytic converters use much more rare-earth metals than non PZEV's to obtain zero tailpipe

emissions. For now, manufacturers can count PZEV's as ZEV's (Zero Emission Vehicle/electric or hydrogen powered) in order to meet California's ACC manufacture compliance goals. In addition, with the implementation of the federal EPA's Tier 3 Vehicle Emissions Standards passed in 2014, every new car (not truck) sold in America must also be PZEV compliant by 2025. The federal EPA adopted California's ACC standard.

It's my opinion these two regulations have created a much higher demand than can currently be sustained. From my investigation, I discovered several contributing factors. South African platinum supplies have been reduced by 40 percent due to Covid-19 disruptions. Several mines in the USSR were closed due to severe flooding. The third reason is because of tightening emissions standards in China and Europe. It appears the world is competing for the same few natural resources. I hope we don't go to war over cleaner air.

Hey, I have a great idea. California's wildfires create more emissions in one week than all California's vehicles create in one year. Why don't we manage our forests better?

Fortunately for local residents, the San Joaquin Valley Air District and its Valley Clean Air Now program is helping with Catalytic Converter replacement costs. You can get more information on the Valley Clean Air Now program at info@valleycan.org or call 1-800-806-2004.

OK Guys and Gals, that's all for this one. If you have any questions regarding this article, suggestions for future articles, ideas, recommendations and/or any general or specific automotive questions, please text me at 559-907-7661 or email complete_car_care@hotmail.com.

God Bless America and God Bless 93636. Happy Motoring.

Warren Parr, a two-time NAPA/ASE California Technician of the Year

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9/21

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4-H cont. from P. 11

Lucy Lee placed 1st in Junior 4-H Horse Showmanship, 4th in Junior 4-H Swine Showmanship, 2nd in class with her market hog and had several 1st places with her arts and crafts.

Sarah Morgan placed 1st in Junior 4-H Rabbit Showmanship, 3rd place in Junior 4-H Swine Showmanship, 1st in class with her market hog, Best of Division livestock poster contest, and several 1st places with her arts and crafts.

Griffin Williams-Smith placed 2nd in Doe under 1 year, 3rd in Doe over 2 years, 4th in intermediate 4-H Meat Goat Showmanship, 3rd in Intermediate 4-H Poultry Showmanship, and placed well with his Breeding Chickens.

Hunter Williams-Smith placed 1st Cockerel, 5th Hen, 4th Breeding Pair, 5th Intermediate 4-H Poultry Showmanship,

5th place Doe over 2 years, 2nd place Dam and Daughter, and 8th in Intermediate 4-H Meat Goat Showmanship.

Wyatt Morgan placed 2nd in his Market Beef class, 3rd Junior Heifer, Champion Cow/Calf Pair, 6th in Intermediate 4-H Beef Cattle Showmanship, and Best of Division livestock poster contest.

Micah Lee had Reserve Champion 4-H Duroc Market Hog and placed well in Intermediate 4-H Swine Showmanship; Marisa Sheehan had Champion 4-H Yorkshire Market Hog and placed well in Intermediate 4-H Swine Showmanship; Hunter Weathers placed well with his two market hogs and Intermediate 4-H Swine Showmanship. Marisa, Micah, and Hunter also placed first in 4-H Club Pen of Market Hogs.

Great job for all of the hard work our club members put in over the last few weeks to their projects.

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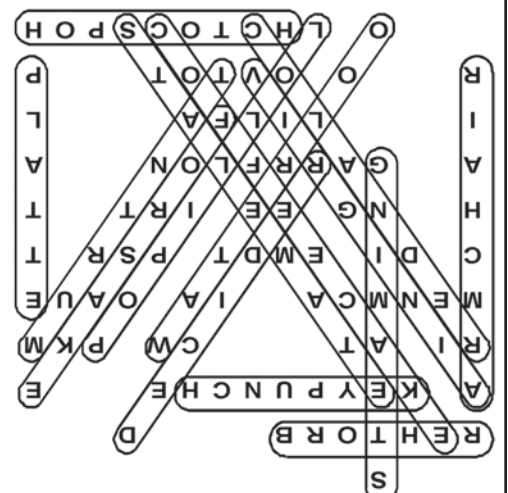
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ANSWERS

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



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CLEAN cont. from P. 7

complete your project. Take "before" pics and tape them to the calendar to designate specific start dates for each room. As soon as you're finished with an area take an "after" pic. Buy a little 4x6 photo album for your "before and afters" and admire your accomplishment. Enjoy opening your home to the special people in your life.

None of the above strategies will make you love organizing, if you don't already, but just like I pretend to like pretending with my granddaughters, the process will be a little more pleasurable.

Contact Organized by Choice at P.O. Box 26152, Fresno, CA 93729, call 559-871-3314 or email info@organizedbychoice.com. You can visit www.organizedbychoice.com when you go online.

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.

	÷		+		10			
×		×		÷				
	-		×		12			
-		+		+				
	÷		+		10			
7		8		11				
1	2	3	4	5	5	6	8	9

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SUDOKU
 by Linda Thistle

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		6			9			1
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	9		3			1		
		2			6		8	

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say you saw it in
 the
Ranchos Independent



Tea Time

Father, forgive Biden, for he knows not what he is doing.

By Betty Van Valkenburg

No doubt Joe Biden was experiencing some form of mental decline when he announced his presidential candidacy ... and while he campaigned ... and when Democrats voted for him ... and when he was sworn into office ... and he surely is experiencing mental decline now.

This writer takes no pleasure in pointing out his or anyone's battle with any form of dementia. It is a heart-breaking problem afflicting too many Americans, and we may all experience it. But we are now living in an Alice in Wonderland bizarro time and country in which it is no secret that "the emperor has no clothes," and the problem must be acknowledged and faced. We can sympathize with Biden and his loved ones as fellow human beings, but meanwhile the country needs and deserves a leader with both oars in the water, or at least to know who is responsible for sinking the boat.

Pointing Out the Obvious

Six months ago, this column attempted to point out the obvious, that because of his conspicuous mental decline, Biden was president in name only and that we had a right to know who was *really* making the decisions he tried so hard to articulate. Let's face it, even with a teleprompter or notes in his pocket, he couldn't and can't string together two coherent sentences or remember world leaders' names or find his way out of a one-door room. Surely Americans deserved then and deserve now to know *who* was and *is* leading, or misleading, the country. It was and is blatantly obvious that nothing substantive that Biden manages to say necessarily reflects his *own* convictions or original

ideas, if he has any. However, his presidential campaign for socialist and progressive policies suggests that, in any rare lucid moments, he would agree with the disastrous policies he and his unnamed handler are responsible for enacting.

Six months later, we still don't know who is putting words in Biden's mouth, which he can only manage to bungle. But we do know that the safety and security of the United States of America and the God-given rights of all citizens are in jeopardy of extinction.

In comparison, there can be no doubt that, for four years, the previous president spoke his *own* words, perhaps not eloquently, but forcefully. Indeed, it was painfully apparent that no one could tell him what to say or *not* to say. Even his supporters cringed at remarks and tweets they found to be "non-presidential." But actions still speak louder than words, and the former president's America-first policies furthered – not diminished as Biden's policies do – America's peace, prosperity and national security, as well as the American people's liberty and safety. And as he left the White House in January, the United States of America was safer, more prosperous and respected around the world. Yes, actions count!

Then vs. Now

Let's compare the two presidencies, then and now.

Then, America was energy independent.

Now, Californians pay well over a dollar *more* at the pump. One of Biden's first consequential acts was to shut down the U.S. XL pipeline, causing gas shortages and higher prices for us here at home. Then he helped pave the way for the Russian pipeline to Germany and then asked Russia to produce more oil. Not surprisingly, critics say the pipeline is a major geopolitical prize for the Kremlin.

Then, the economy was growing and stable, and Trump opposed raising taxes.

Now, Biden's inflation is killing family budgets and the economy. Not only gas, but *everything* costs more. Have you taken out a loan to buy bacon

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lately?

Later, the worst may come as the \$3.5 trillion spending package looms on the horizon, loaded with job-and-prosperity-killing spending, progressive schemes and tax hikes.

Then, the number of illegal border crossings was on the decline due to a firm immigration policy, the Remain in Mexico agreement and the new border wall that was effective and nearing completion.

Now, may God help us, there is chaos at our southern border, with illegal migrant crossings at a 21-year high of 200,000 or more per month – including no doubt human traffickers, drug smugglers and terrorists who then scatter or are bused at taxpayer expense to American cities. Biden's first major actions were to stop building the wall, even where materials were already paid for and on site, and to entice more migrants by promising financial perks, health care, education and eventual citizenship – and of course the right to vote Democrat. Paying for this will result in more inflation and migrants will compete with American citizens for available jobs.

Note that this president mandated Covid vaccinations for American citizens while at the same time encouraged migration of people who certainly have not been vaccinated and may be sick with or carrying the virus.

Just now (as of this writing) many more thousands of migrants are at the interna-

tional bridge in Del Rio, Texas. Biden's Department of Homeland Security is sending agents from other parts of the country (leaving those places more vulnerable) and has shut down the Del Rio Port of Entry which, some pundits say, is like waving a white flag to the cartels. How can this be when this president's spokespersons have insisted that the border is closed.

Afghanistan, the Ultimate Insanity

There are no words to describe the disaster that was the American withdrawal from Afghanistan on Joe Biden's watch. Through the miracle of television, we saw and felt the terror inflicted on innocent Americans and Afghans by the Taliban, whom Joe Biden has said he trusts. We saw people hanging onto and then falling from airplanes to escape a worse fate. We saw people slogging through sewage canals trying to reach the airport and eventual freedom. We saw babies thrown over barbed wire fences for their "safety."

On another day we wept over the dignified transfer of 13 coffins bearing the remains of 13 American soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan – while our president in decline absentmindedly checked his watch.

We heard Biden's promise to get every American out, and then he left them behind at the mercy of the Taliban, from whom they were trying to escape in the first place.

Who's in charge here?




• If you need to pick up small shards of glass, use a cotton ball that's been moistened, or a slice of white bread (insides only) wadded up. • Glass and chrome will shine if you clean them with newspaper. You can mist the paper with water first, but not too much. Rub ... and the shine comes right out, plus no

streaks or lint! • When you are frying up ground beef, add a tablespoon or two of water. It will help the excess grease to pull away from the meat, making it easier to drain off. • "To speed the healing of bruises, try eating pineapple. Drink lots of water, too. I play contact sports, and this has always helped me." --

R.E. in Missouri • "Use purified water in your coffeemaker to lengthen its life. Water deposits build up and affect both the flavor and function of your machine." -- M.E. in Wyoming
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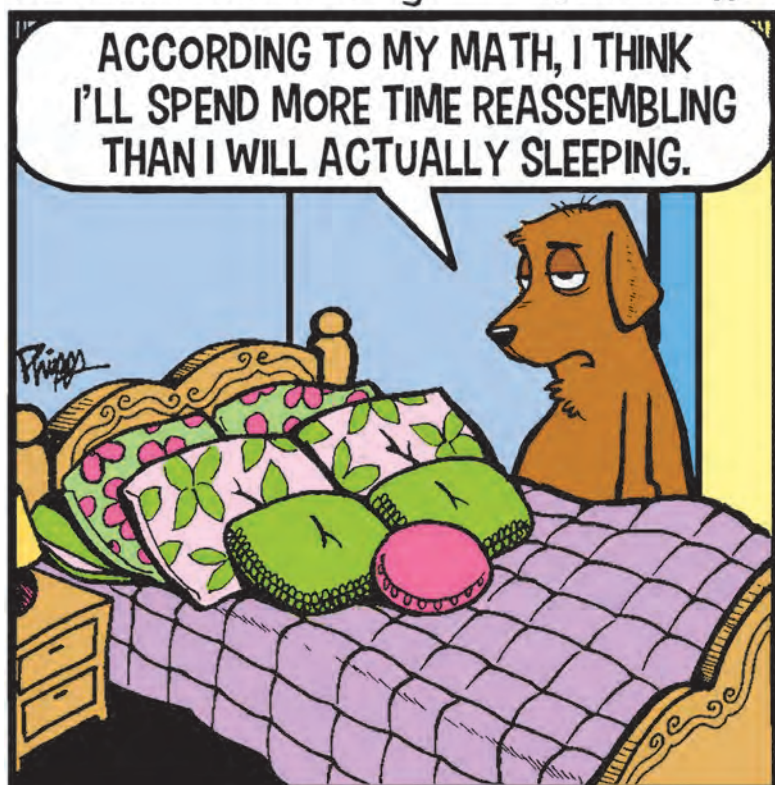
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by Dave T. Phipps





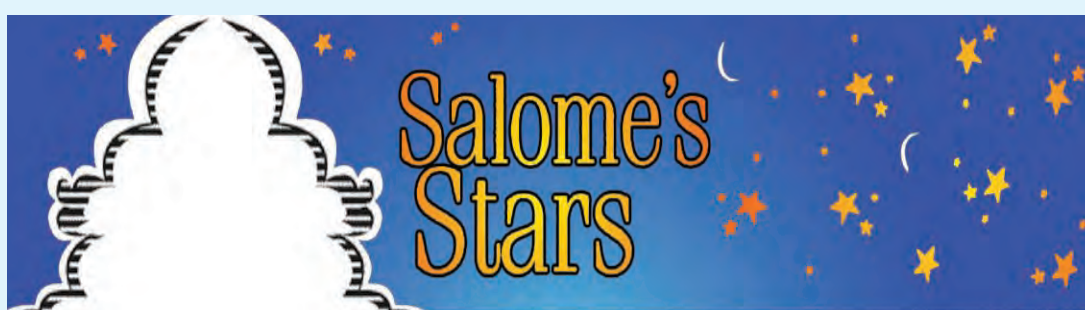
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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Decisions involving your finances might seem to be foolproof. But they could have underlying risks you should know about. Don't act on anything until all the facts are in.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Keep that keen Bovine mind focused on your financial situation as it begins to undergo some changes. Consider your money moves carefully. Avoid impulsive investments.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You'll need to adjust some of your financial plans now that things are changing more quickly than you expected. All the facts you need haven't yet emerged, so move cautiously.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Personal and professional relationships dominate this period. Try to keep things uncomplicated to avoid misunderstandings that can cause problems down the line.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) That elusive goal you'd been hoping to claim is still just out of reach. But something else has come along that could prove just as desirable, if only you would take the time to check it out.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) This is a good time to get away for some much-needed rest and relaxation. You'll return refreshed and ready to take on the workplace challenge that awaits you.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Confidence grows as you work your way through some knotty situations. Watch out for distractions from well-meaning supporters that could slow things down.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Consider spending more time contemplating the possibilities of an offer before opting to accept or reject it. But once you make a decision, act on it.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) You're in a very strong position this week to tie up loose ends in as many areas as possible. Someone close to you has advice you might want to heed.

APRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Congratulations. This is the week you've been waiting for: After a period of sudden stops and fitful starts, your plans can now move ahead with no significant disruptions.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) You're in an exceptionally strong position this week to make decisions on many still-unresolved matters, especially those involving close personal relationships.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) The new moon starts this week off with some positive movement in several areas. A special person becomes a partner in at least one of the major plans you'll be working on.

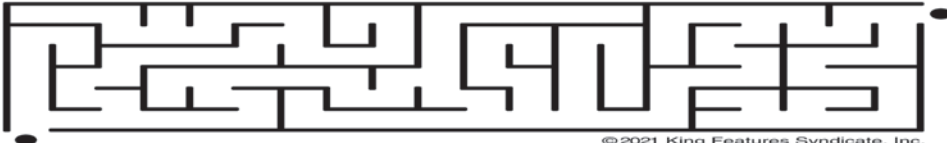
Born this Week

You work hard and get things done. You also inspire others to do their best. You would do well heading up a major corporation.

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FUN PAGES

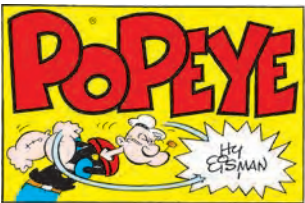
Kids' Maze



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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO



PETTING ZOO
HOOF ON DOWN! How many animals and birds can you find in this picture of the local petting zoo? We counted over 25.

AN ODD PROBLEM! Professor Flunkum challenges you to arrange five odd numbers so that they add up to 20. The same number can be used more than once. (There's a catch, natch.)
Answer: 13 + 3 + 3 + 1 = 20. (13 counts as two odd numbers.)

FIND THE HATS! Hidden in the grid are the names of eight types of hats. Starting at any letter, spell a name by going from letter to letter horizontally, vertically or diagonally. You can use each letter only once when spelling any one name. As an example we've given you a CAP by circling the letters.

A	P	O	S	W
C	E	T	A	Z
Y	B	R	E	D
O	W	L	O	F

COIN COIL BOIL BOLL BILL

DOWN THE LADDER!
In this puzzle, you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example we changed COIN to BILL in four moves. See if you can change the following five words in four moves.

1. FIND to LOSE
2. MUTE to TALK
3. BIKE to WALK
4. BECK to CALL
5. MEAT to BALL

1. FIND, FINE, LINE, LONE, LOSE
2. MUTE, MATE, MALE, TALK
3. BIKE, BILE, BALK, WALK
4. BECK, BACK, BALK, BALL, CALL
5. MEAT, MELT, MALT, BALL

Wishing Well

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

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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WORDS CONTAINING A DRINK

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: A LIGHTWEIGHT CORD

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Armchair | Decider | Lollipop | Tantrum |
| Brother | Forsake | Platte | Virginia |
| Coffecake | Hopscotch | Stalemate | Waterloo |
| Colander | Keypunch | Steaming | |

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Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. TELEVISION: What was the name of Tim Taylor's friend and sidekick on the "Home Improvement" sitcom?
2. GEOGRAPHY: Which U.S. city has the nickname "Big D"?
3. LITERATURE: Which novel begins with the line, "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again"?
4. MEDICAL: What usually causes rickets in children?
5. MUSIC: Which novel is referenced in The Police's song "Don't Stand So Close to Me"?
6. FOOD & DRINK: Cafe du Monde is a famous restaurant in what city?
7. ENTERTAINERS: Which famous actor was born Maurice Micklewhite?
8. MEASUREMENTS: What scientific unit of measurement also is the name of a mammal?
9. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is a thalassophile?
10. ANATOMY: What is the colored part of the eye called?

Answers

1. Al Borland
2. Dallas
3. "Rebecca"
4. Lack of Vitamin D
5. "Lolita"
6. New Orleans
7. Michael Caine
8. Mole, which is used to measure parts in a substance
9. A lover of seas and oceans
10. Iris

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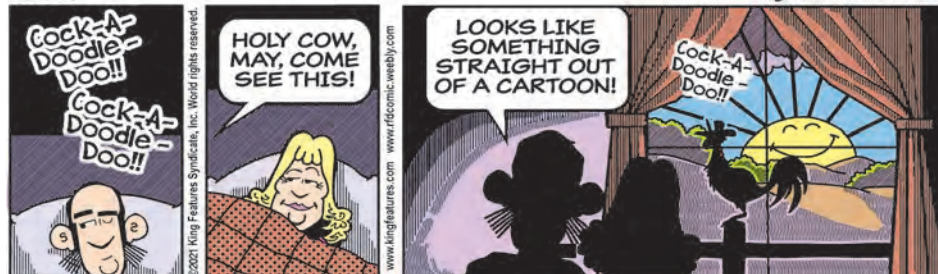
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



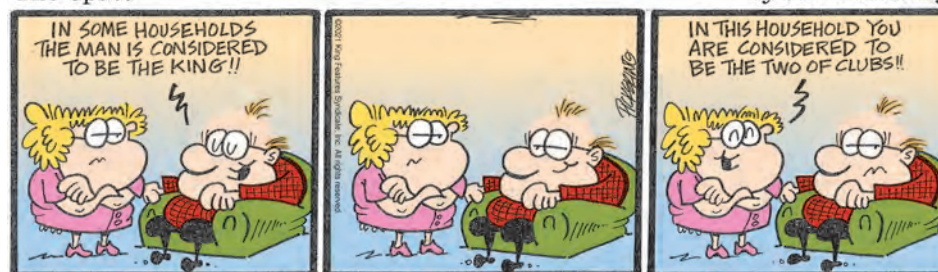
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



HOCUS-FOCUS

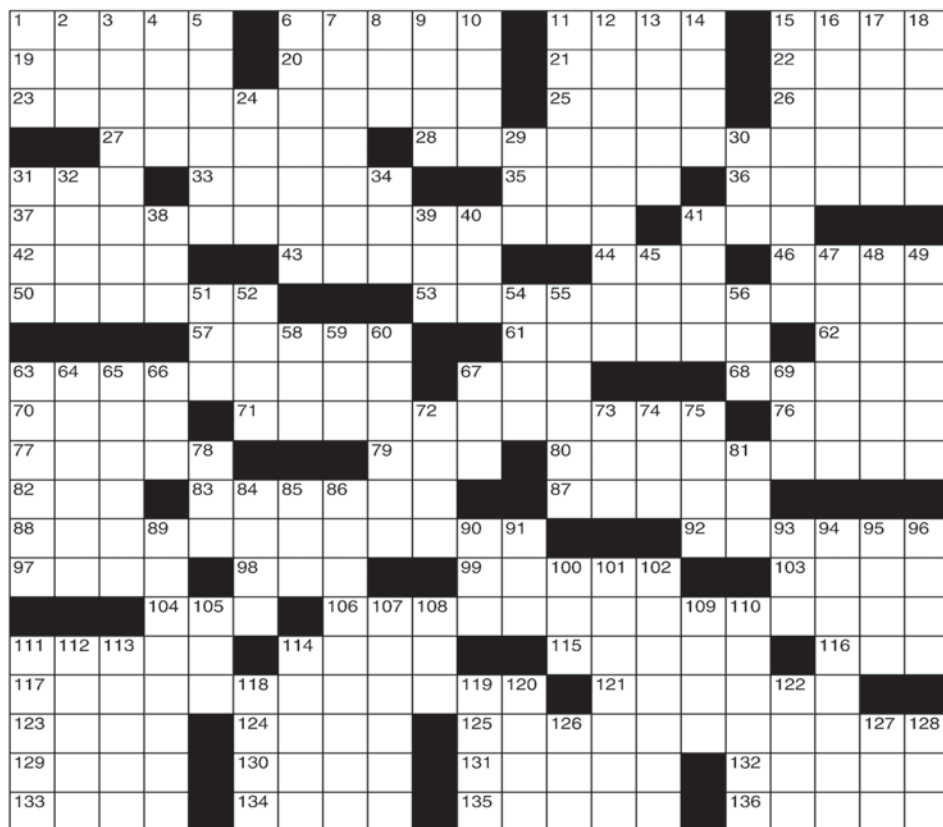
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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Find at least six differences in details between panels. Differences: 1. Spots are different; 2. Eyes are closed; 3. Sweater is missing; 4. Tail is longer; 5. House is missing; 6. Bricks are added.

Super Crossword



- | | |
|--|--|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Father | 1 Very close bud |
| 6 Gather | 2 Eternally, in poetry |
| 11 No. on a car lot sticker | 3 "Glitter rock" group |
| 15 Quaint letter salutation | 4 Sicilian spewer |
| 19 Pool table fabrics | 5 "For shame!" |
| 20 Large town, in Italian | 6 Circus tumbler |
| 21 Bum slightly from a palm | 7 "Glee" actress Lea — |
| 22 Purple fruit | 8 Pt. of NCAA |
| 23 Candid bow wielder? [Anne] | 9 Pear waste |
| 25 Green Hornet's valet | 10 Actress Gilbert |
| 26 Lisa formerly of "The View" | 11 Poet Rod |
| 27 Bread eaten at Passover | 12 Razor feature |
| 28 Gallic senior citizens? [Victor] | 13 Hotel listing |
| 31 Subside | 14 U. lecturer |
| 33 Earnest and solemn | 15 Slashed-price product |
| 35 D.C. VIPs | 16 Pastry bag fill |
| 36 Four doubled | 17 Cowboy's workplace |
| 37 Ebony-colored card given on February 14? [Karen] | 18 Vision |
| 41 Stable scrap | 24 127-Down between Russia and Ukraine |
| 42 Writer Ayn | 29 Prefix with plane |
| 43 Houston site | 30 Stephen of the screen |
| 44 Little bit | 31 Spanish river |
| 46 A Great Lake | 32 Boring |
| 50 Cry of worry | 34 T. — |
| 53 Precious gem that formed just recently? [Neil] | 38 B-F linkup |
| 57 Port in Italy | 39 "No" vote |
| 61 Boot leathers | |
| 62 Chi preceder | |
| 63 Hueless Focus or Fiesta? [Oliver] | |
| 67 Self-help writer LeShan | |
| 68 Butts in | |
| 70 Long-eared hopper | |
| 71 Undersized carriage with a fold-down top? [Martin] | |
| 76 Prefix with plane | |
| 77 University of Maine's town | |
| 79 Reply to "Are you?" | |
| 80 Annoyed small songbird? [Christopher] | |
| 82 PD alert | |
| 83 Mutiny | |
| 87 Pioneer in graph theory | |
| 88 Sweetheart prone to sulk? [Ron] | |
| 92 Sailor who flew on a roc | |
| 97 Absorbed by | |
| 98 Follower of "Co.," often | |
| 99 Little bit | |
| 103 The last Mrs. Chaplin | |
| 104 Showery | |
| 106 Robust artisan working in precious metal? [Oliver] | |
| 111 Venue | |
| 114 Byte lead-in | |
| 115 Brand of fake fat | |
| 116 Wee, in brief | |
| 117 British noble who feels no affection? [Patty] | |
| 121 Quartets doubled | |
| 123 Oratorio solo | |
| 124 "Der —" (nickname for Konrad Adenauer) | |
| 125 Clear quartz fashioned to look like a suitor's flower? [Billy] | |
| 129 Mets' clubs | |
| 130 In tatters | |
| 131 Tickle pink | |
| 132 Long-term con | |
| 133 Louver strip | |
| 134 ERA or HRs | |
| 135 Quick | |
| 136 Up to now | |
| 40 General on Chinese menus | 81 — Lanka |
| 41 Stage prize | 84 Revise copy vehicle |
| 45 Total up | 85 Ryder conducts it |
| 47 More stringy | 86 A maestro in Maine |
| 48 Possible follower of "Psst!" | 89 Doze off |
| 49 Menlo Park "wizard" | 91 Dude |
| 51 Grow mellow | 93 — de plume |
| 52 Ring arbiters | 94 Removes via very hot water, as impurities |
| 54 Meat stamp inits. | 95 "No" voter |
| 55 Subtlety | 96 Writer Rold |
| 56 Horned viper | 100 Oxfam or Amnesty Intl. |
| 58 Osaka drama | 101 Huge statues |
| 59 "— y plata" | 102 Voted in —!" ("Red alert!") |
| 60 "This is not —!" ("Red alert!") | 105 Twisty fish |
| 63 Self-reflective question | 107 Gung-ho |
| 64 Talk about ad nauseam | 108 Writer Santha Rama — |
| 65 1950 Asimov classic | 109 See 69-Down |
| 66 Five doubled | 110 Fishhook lines |
| 67 Elegant tree | 111 Hefty slices |
| 69 With 109-Down, unprocessed facts | 112 Deep pink |
| 72 "Mon Oncle" star Jacques | 113 Madonna musical |
| 73 Actress Joanne | 114 Groove for a letter-shaped bolt |
| 74 MSN rival | 118 Ingests |
| 75 Employs | 119 Old Chrysler |
| 78 Suffix with audit or arm | 120 Bombeck of humor |
| | 122 Sextet halved |
| | 126 "I reckon so" |
| | 127 Body of water |
| | 128 Drop the ball |

FUN PAGES

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south east madera county united

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