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**"California's redistricting scheme
is a brazen power grab that
tramples on civil rights and
mocks the democratic process."**



**U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi
announces that the Justice Department
has joined a lawsuit against Prop 50.**

By Megan Barth

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"California's redistricting scheme is a brazen power grab that tramples on civil rights and mocks the democratic process."



U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi announces that the Justice Department has joined a lawsuit against Prop 50.

By Megan Barth

On Nov. 15, the U.S. Department of Justice, led by Attorney General Pam Bondi, announced it has joined a lawsuit against California's redistricting ballot initiative, Proposition 50, which overwhelmingly passed in a special election last week. The lawsuit names Governor Gavin Newsom and Secretary of State Shirley Weber as defendants.

"Race cannot be used as a proxy to advance political interests, but that is precisely what the California General Assembly did with Prop 50," said Jesus A. Osete, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. "Californians were sold an illegal, racially gerrymandered map, but the U.S. Constitution prohibits its use in 2026 and beyond."

In a social media post, Bondi said, "Newsom should be concerned about keeping Californians safe and shutting down Antifa violence, not rigging his state for political gain."

In an emailed statement to the Associated Press, Bondi said, "California's redistricting scheme is a brazen power grab that tramples on civil rights and mocks the democratic process. Governor Newsom's attempt to entrench one-party rule and silence millions of Californians will not stand."

Newsom spokesperson Brandon Richards responded in a statement, "These losers lost at the ballot box and soon they will also lose in court."

The lawsuit cites, "Race cannot be used as a proxy to advance political interests, but that is precisely what the California General Assembly did with Proposition 50 — the recent ballot initiative that junked California's pre-existing electoral map in favor of a rush-job rejiggering of California's congressional district lines."

The Associated Press said, "The Trump administration ac-

cuses California of racial gerrymandering in violation of the Constitution by using race as a factor to favor Hispanic voters with the new map. It asks a judge to prohibit California from using the new map in any future elections."

This week, The California Globe reported that the United States Supreme Court could rain on Newsom's Prop 50 parade by finding that redistricting by race is unconstitutional, in that race-based redistricting could violate the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause.

A case currently with the U.S. Supreme Court about racial gerrymandering could nullify California's just-passed Proposition 50, the mid-decade redistricting scheme Governor Gavin Newsom and Democrats cooked up ahead of the 2026 midterm elections to secure more Democrat seats in Congress by redrawing district maps, or "gerrymandering" numerous California Republicans out of their congressional districts.

The Supreme Court will decide in *Louisiana v. Callais* whether the state's intentional consideration of race to create these voting districts violates the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. The Supreme Court could also invalidate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and require race-neutral maps.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a landmark U.S. federal law that prohibits racial discrimination in voting, aiming to protect the voting rights of all citizens, particularly racial minorities.

The high court appears ready to strike down Louisiana's 2024 congressional map as unconstitutional racial gerrymandering — a violation of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause.

Elections Law attorney Mark Meuser explained in detail that "The Supreme Court could soon change how every congressional map in America is drawn, including California. *Callais v. Louisiana*, is a case that could reshape redistricting for decades.

For years, federal courts have interpreted the Voting Rights Act (VRA) to require states to gerrymander congressional districts so minority groups are virtually guaranteed the ability to elect a representative of their same race. *Callais* challenges that approach, arguing that the current interpretation of the VRA violates the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution because it forces states to make race the predominant factor in drawing district lines.

Democratic-aligned advocacy groups have weaponized this reading of the VRA to carve out safe Democratic seats. Instead of drawing compact districts that follow cities, counties, and communities of interest, states are pressured to create bizarre, snake-like districts designed to hit racial targets. The result is a distorted Congress.

In 2024, Donald Trump won the presi-

Please see **LAWSUIT** on P. 12

Sup. Wamhoff Town Hall Results

By Supervisor Jordan Wamhoff

We had a fantastic turnout with over 80 people attending. Every time I host a town hall in the Ranchos, I'm reminded of the same thing: this community shows up, speaks up, and stays engaged. Whether it's a question about traffic, water, law enforcement, or local government transparency, Ranchos residents consistently bring thoughtful input — and that helps us make better decisions at the County level. Our Oct. 15 Town Hall was no exception.



Madera County District 1 Supervisor, Jordan Wamhoff.

We had outstanding participation and were joined by several key agency partners who were eager to share updates and answer questions directly. Below is an overview of the major topics we covered, along with some of the progress happening right here in our backyard.

District Attorney Sally Moreno

District Attorney Sally Moreno introduced Callie the Court Dog, a rescued emotional-support dog who comforts victims navigating the court process. The DA's Office has also launched a new texting program to give victims and witnesses real-time updates on their cases. The Text Line is found at 559-377-7500.

Public Works Department

Public Works presented updates on road improvements and major infrastructure upgrades, including: • Avenue 12 Widening (Road 40–Hwy 41) — Completion Summer/Fall 2026 • Highway 41 Expansion (Ave 10½–Ave 15) — Construction begins March 2026;

Please see **WAMHOFF** on P. 4

Click on "Local News" at

Chamber of Commerce Board Seat Nominations Open

The Madera Ranchos' Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is now accepting nominations for seats on the 2026 Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce Executive Board. Applications will be taken through Dec. 2, 2025 and all seats are now open.

As per the Chamber of Commerce's By-Laws; If you are interested in being nominated as a Board Member you must be a current Member of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce as of Oct. 1, 2025 and

your dues must be current.

All nominations will be taken until December 2 and then, at the regular Board Meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m., all nominations will be heard. Voting will take place by the end of the year.

You can stop by the Chamber office at 37167 Avenue 12 Suite 5C, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for more information and to put in your nomination. You can call the Chamber at 559-645-4001.



Kiwanis Korner

Turkey Day Heralds Beginning of Fall Season for Kiwanis

By Sally Rowden

We are now heading toward Turkey Day for many. Our pleasantly pleasing fall days have been with us for a while. Jackets and gloves will greet us soon.

The Kiwanis are moving forward too into new adventures. Our first discovery was pulling Jolene Mason's name as the grand winner of our Halloween/Fall Raffle Basket. That happened on Saturday, Oct. 18 at our Kiwanis Division 5 meeting. Such a joy to be the one to call Jolene about her winnings. Lots of special treats and surprises tucked into that basket. Congratulations Jolene.

At our Kiwanis General Meeting on Thursday, Nov. 13, the guest speaker Was be Dave Hillman. He was providing our annual mandatory Youth Protection Training program. There is no cost for Kiwanis members to complete this training. A requirement by Kiwanis International that all Kiwanians worldwide complete this training for the children of our communities.

We will be starting to sell tickets for our Christmas/Winter Raffle Basket. Again, lots of special treats and surprises are included in this basket. A Christmas Throw Blanket, a decorative Christmas Deer, a Cowboy Nutcracker with Cowboy Hot Chocolate Mix, Vonda's Cashews and Vonda's Christmas Ceramic Tree.

Plus, a Gift Certificate from Pizza Factory of a large one topping pizza each month for a year, and a \$50 Gift

Certificate from Popolo's Pizza. Find the Kiwanis Club Members out and about selling the tickets. Tickets are \$5 for six. The winning ticket will be drawn on Dec.11 at our Kiwanis General Meeting. You do not need to be present to win.

We will have a booth at the Christmas Tree Lighting Event provided by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce on Dec. 5. The Scouts of America will be joining us. The Scouts will have Hand-Picked Mistletoe to purchase. Cost for a Mistletoe Cluster is \$3. And, if you haven't already purchased tickets for our Christmas/Winter Raffle Basket, it will be on display with tickets available to purchase. Come on out and enjoy the festivities. I believe Santa will be visiting, too.

Please note that we have changed our meeting times. We still meet the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at Second Sons Brew in the Maywood Shopping Center on Avenue 12. With our General Meeting now starting at 6 p.m. Guests are very much welcome and/or if you would like to be a guest speaker certainly contact us. Email Sally Rowden at rowdensally2@gmail.com.

We are at the time of the year where being thankful is at the forefront. Therefore, the Kiwanians of Madera Ranchos want to sincerely thank the folks in our communities for their giving attitudes and actions in supporting all our events, projects, and activities.

May your Thanksgiving season be full of thankful blessings.



Get ready for the Christmas/Winter Raffle Basket, fast becoming a Madera Ranchos Kiwanis seasonal tradition. Tickets are only \$5 for six. Purchase tickets at the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce or email Sally Rowden at rowdensally2@gmail.com.



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WAMHOFF cont. from P. 2

finishes 2028 • Avenue 15 Rehabilitation — Expected Summer/Fall 2026 • Lanes Bridge circulation improvements — Late 2025 • Peck Blvd improvements — Construction in 2027 • Rio Mesa Blvd Phase 1 — Expected completion March 2026 • Avenue 12 & Road 35 turn pocket upgrades — Summer/Fall 2026 Additional SBn1 and Measure T projects continue, including Avenue 12 rehab (completion Nov. 2025) and Avenue 15 (already completed).

Water Infrastructure (MD-10A)

Major improvements include the Berkshire Treatment Plant (completion 2026), Phase 1 and Phase 2 system distribution upgrades, and the completed and operational Dublin 1 million gallon storage tank.

California Highway Patrol (CHP)

CHP reported that three to four officers patrol the valley floor at any given time. Residents with traffic concerns are encouraged to contact PIO Sergio Moreno with detailed descriptions. The Madera CHP region now has seven Drug Recognition Experts, strengthening impaired-driving enforcement. CHP was also thanked for assisting

with Liberty High football game traffic safety.

Madera County Sheriff's Office

Residents were encouraged to download the MCSO Sheriff App for real-time alerts. Deputies are now enforcing the updated Noise Ordinance 24/7, issuing a warning on the first visit and a citation on return.

Measure T Oversight Committee

Janice Gomes presented an update on Measure T compliance, explaining how the citizen committee reviews transportation spending twice per year to ensure funds are used exactly as voters approved. Their Annual Report was available for attendees to review.

Closing Thoughts

I want to thank every resident who attended. Your questions, concerns, and ideas shape the work we do at the county. If you couldn't make this town hall, I encourage you to join the next one or reach out anytime. We are building the future of the Ranchos together, and I'm grateful to serve a community that cares as deeply as you do. If you would like to contact my office, you can email me at district1@maderacounty.com or call us at 559-662-6010. I'm always here to help.

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Guest Editorial

Ozempic for All

By Rich Lowry

Yes, Ozempic for all
 Americans are going to get a little healthier. President Trump cut deals with the drugmakers Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk to increase access to obesity drugs in a major benefit to American public health.

The agreements are a win-win-win -- good for consumers, good for the companies and good for Trump.

One of the most irrational superstitions of our time is that Big Pharma, which has long been routinely delivering near-miraculous therapeutics to extend and improve our lives, is a public enemy. Its latest breakthrough is a class of so-called GLP-1 drugs that make it easier to lose weight and to avoid associated serious health problems, from Type 2 diabetes to heart disease.

The basic dynamic of the Trump deals is that the companies will, through lower prices, expand their market share, thus generating more revenue. The companies also get tariff relief and expedited review for select

drugs.

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the MAHA leader with a paranoid streak about modern medical advances, has been hostile to GLP-1 drugs, the most famous of which is Ozempic, sold by Novo Nordisk.

If everyone could do as many pushups and pullups as the hyper-fit 71-year-old Kennedy, perhaps we could turn our back on GLP-1s.

Certainly, RFK Jr. is correct that Americans should eat better and work out more. But our body mass index has been increasing for about 150 years, as we've made calories cheaper and more abundant over time. As it hap-

pens, the things that we like to eat or drink that are bad for us -- fast food, soda, chips, cookies -- are cheap, convenient and taste good.

Even if we manage to convince people that they should eat more fruit, vegetables and legumes, while taking a Peloton class every day, not everyone is going to do it as a matter of lifestyle constraints, individual preference or simple lack of willpower.

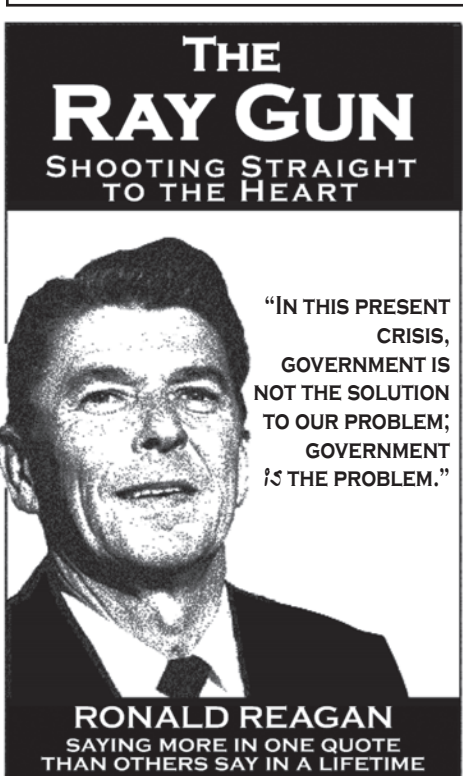
There's also the fact that once you put on weight, physiological changes make it more difficult to shed it.

About 40% of Americans are obese. Wouldn't it be great for them -- and for American society at large, which spends roughly \$170 billion a year on obesity-related medical costs -- if there were a safe, relatively convenient way for them to slim down?

Lo and behold, here it is. The GLP-1s started out as a treatment for diabetes and have exploded in popularity as weight-loss drugs.

Trump's reflex to make it easier for people to obtain Ozempic and the like -- while, not incidentally, boosting his reputation as the nation's foremost dealmaker -- is the correct one. Drug pricing is complicated, but by expanding the sale of the drugs direct to consumers, the companies can re-

Please see **EDITORIAL** on P. 12



You Really Should be Thankful

It's that time of year again. The season when we all collectively decide to take stock of our lives, count our blessings, and pretend we weren't just complaining about gas prices five minutes ago. Thanksgiving is basically the annual reminder that we really should be grateful for what we have. I try to keep that spirit with me all year, but it certainly is easier when the word is jumping out at me from the calendar. So, since we're here, I thought I'd share for what I'm grateful.

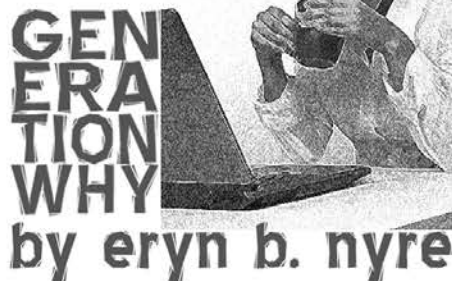
I'm thankful for God's mercy. I'm grateful for Christ's sacrifice, His forgiveness, His love, and the completely unreasonable number of times He has answered my frantic, whispered prayers. I'm grateful for the simple, steady blessings that build a life. I have a roof over my head and plenty of food in my fridge and my pantry. My closet is full of clothes and shoes – more than I need. I make it to work every morning because of a decent car and a working heater and air conditioner. There's hot water when I shower and electricity to power everything I might

So many people go their whole lives without knowing what unconditional love feels like. I did. I still do.

need to make life more comfortable. Not to mention the air in my lungs, blood in my veins, and thoughts in my head. There's nothing flashy about those gifts, but they anchor you. They remind you that God is always providing, even in the seasons when life feels heavier.

I'm thankful for my mom. She was the most selfless, encouraging mother I could have possibly been assigned. Truly exceptional. The kind of woman who believed in me even when I was making the most boneheaded of bonehead decisions; decisions so baffling I'm convinced my guardian angels put in for overtime. And still, there she was, telling me she believed in me. When I managed even the smallest win, she reacted like I'd just cured something important.

So many people go their whole lives without knowing what unconditional love feels like. I did. I still do. I miss her every single day. Her support, her voice, her "you've got this" when I most assuredly did not have whatever "this" was. I wish I had more time, but gratitude works like this: you learn to be thankful even when your heart wishes life looked a little different. I was



blessed to be her daughter, and that blessing never expires.

I'm thankful for my dad. He has never been the mushy, "let's share our feelings over herbal tea" type. My mom covered that department. But he is steady, loyal, and hilarious in his own dry way. He has always pushed me to be better. Sometimes I thought the standards he set were impossible. Turns out they weren't. He just knew what I was

capable of before I did. He has never let me down. Not once. He is one of the few people on Earth I can rely on completely, which, in this economy, should qualify as a super-

power. And it wasn't all lectures and responsibility. My dad has always known how to have fun. He hosted parties where he let a group of kids throw pies at his face. He took us on adventures. He once flew two states over just to take me to see New Kids on the Block when I was way too young to fully appreciate the gesture. And he made learning fun. It's probably why I still love it now. I wouldn't be who I am today without him, and truly, that's one of the things for which I'm most grateful.

I'm thankful for my friends. Truly, everyone deserves a few good friends, and I'm convinced God only hands out so many, which makes me feel like I won a raffle I didn't even know I entered. They support me through the hardest parts of my life, even the days when everything feels uphill and I'm convinced I'm standing still. When I'm struggling to see any progress in my journey, they somehow see it clearly and point it out before I can talk myself into quitting. My friends comfort me when I'm crying (which, unfortunately is not as rare as I pretend it is). They remind

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GEN WHY cont. from P. 6

me of my accomplishments when I'm busy nitpicking myself into oblivion. And most impressive of all, they don't give up on me when I'm emotional, needy, or teetering on the edge of dramatic. Having friends like that is a blessing I don't take lightly.

I'm thankful for my job. Working for the state isn't always fun, but it is always an exercise in patience, which, for the record, is definitely not fun. Sometimes it feels like a masterclass in bureaucracy taught by people who have never met a deadline they liked. But what it is, every single day, is steady work surrounded by a genuinely decent group of people. And in a world where so many folks who want jobs are struggling to find them, I feel exceedingly blessed to have work that fits

me, challenges me, and, miracle of miracles, manages to pay the bills on time. It may not be glamorous, but it's good, honest, stable, grown-up employment, and I'm grateful for it.

Like everyone, I have challenges and heartaches. But gratitude shifts your sightline. When you're focused on your blessings, it becomes harder to stay angry or sad about your problems. Not impossible, but harder, and that's sometimes all we need. So, here's to Thanksgiving. That beautiful pause in the year when we focus on what we have instead of what we still want. The time when family, love, and togetherness matter more than inboxes, deadlines, and to-do lists. May your Thanksgiving be full of blessings, and may you carry the gratitude with you long after the leftovers run out.



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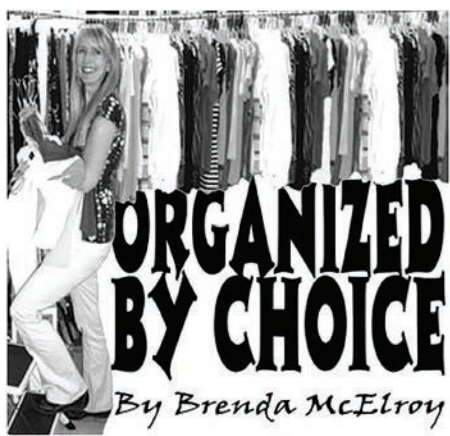
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*Tidy Spaces,
Thankful Hearts*

If you've followed my articles through the years, you know that I can't let a November pass without a shout out to gratitude. November gives us so many things to be thankful for — cooler weather, fall colors, pumpkin flavors and scents, and did I mention fall colors? My favorite. November even provides a whole day to express gratitude.

It's not much of a stretch to find parallels when it comes to gratitude and organizing.

Unearth treasures. I often hear, "Oh that's where that was!" Organizing unearths treasures that have sometimes been buried for a while. Like an overstuffed closet, our minds are easily filled with the negative things in life. It's not until we intentionally sort through them that we are able to "find" treasures for which we are truly grateful.

Counter scarcity thinking. When organizing, we create homes so we don't buy more of things we already have. Gratitude helps us recognize that what we have is enough.

Make it a practice. Reaping the benefits of organizing requires a maintenance plan. The more frequently you tidy up, the easier it is. Likewise, make gratitude a daily activity. Fred De Witt Van Amburgh said, "Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves and spend without

fear of bankruptcy." We can't be too grateful.

Enhance relationships. Organizing and treating our own and our housemates' belongings with respect reduces tensions over lost items and cluttered shared spaces. Likewise, expressing gratitude can be the first step in healing or enhancing a relationship. It communicates that you value that person. You won't always feel grateful for everything he or she does, just like you won't always have a perfectly tidy place, but they're both ways of taking steps to show you care.

Promote peace. Organizing involves removing the piles of projects and paperwork invading our living space. Then, when we enter our family room, kitchen, or bedroom, we're not bombarded with tasks screaming for our attention. We're not handling the same stuff over and over as we shuffle things from place to place causing anxiety. Organizing creates environments conducive to peace where our minds are calm and our bodies can rest.

To get technical for a moment, *The Neuroscience of Gratitude & Its Effects on the Brain* article (15 Sep 2025 by Melissa Madeson, Ph.D.) says, "At a neurobiological level, gratitude regulates the sympathetic nervous system that activates our anxiety responses, and at the psychological level, it conditions the brain to filter the negative ruminations and focus on positive thoughts (Wong et al., 2018)." In layman's terms, gratitude promotes peace in our brains. What a blessing!

While data about the positive effects of gratitude is relatively new, the wisdom of it dates back over 3,000 years. "It is good to give thanks to the Lord." Psalms 92:1

For more info, contact *Organized By Choice* at 559-871-3314 or email them at info@organizedbychoice.com.

Thanksgiving Ideas

(November 2015)

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.



rice.

Spanish Beef Rice

- 2 T. fat or salad oil
- 1½ C. packaged precooked rice
- 2 T. minced onion
- 1 C minced green peppers
- 3 T. diced celery
- 1 lb. ground chuck
- 1 T. salt
- 2 8 oz. cans tomato sauce
- 1 bouillon cube
- 1 C hot water
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Snipped parsley

In hot fat in skillet, cook rice with onion, peppers, celery and beef until golden brown. Add salt and rest of ingredients except parsley; simmer, covered, about 10 minutes or until rice is tender. Sprinkle with parsley.

Need some nibblers to serve for an afternoon of TV football games?

Cocktail Hash

- 1½ C packaged bite sized shredded wheat cereal
- 1½ C packaged bite sized shredded

rice cereal

(Such as Wheat Chex or Rice Chex cereals)

- 2 C pretzel sticks
- 1 C pecan halves
- ¼ C salted peanuts
- ¼ tsp. garlic salt
- 2 T. melted butter or margarine

Start heating oven to 350. Place all ingredients on baking pan; toss together well. Bake 15 minutes. Can be served cold or warm. Even better if prepared a day or two early and stored in a tightly covered container to mellow the flavors.

Every family has their favorite recipe for turkey stuffing (or do you call it dressing?) Ours is just bread crumbs, sautéed onions and celery in lots of butter seasoned with salt, pepper and dried sage (Mama always insisted on rubbed sage) and chicken stock. There are a whole lot of things to be added to dressing that peo-

ple like: oysters, pecans, dried apricots, raisins, prunes or chopped apples, cranberries – just about anything your family would like. I found this recipe in the book and thought it a little different but someone may like it for their family.

Down South Stuffing

- ½ C Butter or margarine
- ¾ C minced onion
- ½ C minced green peppers
- ½ C minced celery
- 1 chicken bouillon cube
- 5 C day old white bread crumbs
- 5 C crumbled corn bread (made with-

- out sugar)
- ½ pound pork sausage links, cut up
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- ½ tsp. poultry seasoning
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¾ C chopped pecans
- In hot butter in skillet, sauté onions,

celery, and green peppers until tender. In large bowl combine bread crumbs. Dissolve bouillon cube in ¾ C hot water; sprinkle over bread crumbs. Add sautéed vegetables. In same skillet, sauté sausages until browned. To crumb mixture, add salt, pepper, poultry seasoning, eggs, pecans then sausages with drippings and toss. Any stuffing left over after stuffing the turkey can be put in a buttered casserole and baked after the turkey comes out of the oven. Be sure to refrigerate the stuffing to be cooked while the turkey is baking.

Here it is Thanksgiving. Whether you are having the traditional turkey and all the trimmings or ham, roast beef, tamales or barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs, I sincerely hope you are having it with family or friends that you love and love you in return.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving.

Before I start my column, I want to congratulate the Liberty High FFA on their recent fund raiser. For \$35 you got a tri-tip, barbecued perfectly, beans, rice, salad and rolls and it was delicious. My only question is: When are you going to do it again?

Secondly, I want to apologize for not doing original articles the last two months.

My computer died. After getting a new hard drive, when things were back to working order, everything on my Word was lost. As it was explained to me, it went to never-never land. That and a couple of personal things are behind me and everything is back to normal I hope and pray!

Before everything happened a couple of months ago, I was telling you about the cook book Randy bought for me to use. It is the *Good House-keeping Cook Book*, printed in 1961. I'll continue this article from that book.

Here it is Thanksgiving. Whether you are having the traditional turkey and all the trimmings or ham, roast beef, tamales or barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs, I sincerely hope you are having it with family or friends that you love and love you in return.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving.

Growing up I had heard of succotash and never knew what it was until I got older and found out what it was and realized that I had been eating it for years. My Grandma Drinnen fixed it for supper quite a lot, opening jars of vegetables that she had canned during the summer. I loved it.

Succotash

- 1½ C hot cooked or canned whole kernel corn
- 2 T. butter or margarine
- 1½ C. cooked or canned green beans or green lima beans
- ½ C. light cream
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Combine all ingredients, adjusting salt and pepper to taste. Heat.

I love rice dishes but hate to cook rice because it is so messy. You have to be so careful or it will boil over. This recipe sounded good and you don't have to pre-boil the

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11/25

Senior Report

Thanksgiving, Christmas Cheer

By Melanie Williams

The chilly winter months are almost upon us. The autumn leaves have fallen and many people are looking forward to a wonderful snow season in the nearby Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Our members are anticipating Thanksgiving Day celebrations with family and friends. December is right around the corner as we prepare to celebrate the Christmas holidays and the coming festivities at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The monthly Saturday Sale is on Saturday, Dec. 6 from 8 a.m. to noon. The

Treasure House has lots of great decorations for the holidays being donated and Christmas items will be on display this month. New winter clothing, coats, jackets and sweaters for adults and children are on sale and the Boutique has unique items just in time for holiday decorating. Thank you for all the wonderful Treasure House donations we receive from the community to support our outreach to local seniors.

The holidays are full of festive events, so remember some important dates and weekly activities during the month of December at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The Ranchos/Hills Senior is hosting a presentation by Mike Estrada, the long-term Madera County District One commissioner, appointed by District 1 supervisor, Jordan Whamhoff. They both will consider and take action on a variety of land use issues and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Community members are encouraged to attend this meeting to find out more information on new development projects in Madera County. The meeting with Mike



Estrada is on Friday, Dec. 5 at 12:30 p.m.

The Annual Christmas Dinner Potluck is on the December calendar. It is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 11 at 5 p.m. We are looking forward to another fun time of Christmas cheer and holiday celebration with the members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center. Don't miss the installation of our new Board members at the festivities. Please sign up at the Senior Center for the Annual Christmas Dinner and the December Birthday and Anniversary Luncheon at 559-645-4864.

The Senior Hot Lunch Program is happening daily at the Senior Center. Any seniors, 60 years and older, living in the community or surrounding area, are encouraged to come and enjoy a hot meal and the company of your local senior community. Our partners in this program would like to expand this outreach to seniors who may not be getting out often. Come, enjoy a hearty hot lunch and visit with other seniors from the neighborhood. We are working with the Eastern Madera Recreation and Parks Department and the Fresno-Madera Agency on Aging to host this senior outreach program at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center in Madera Ranchos. Additional information can be provided by calling the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center at 559-645-4864 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The holidays are full of festive events, so remember some important dates and weekly activities during the month of December at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Cen-

Please see **SENIORS** on P. 13

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The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce

Annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Maywood Shopping Center • Friday, Dec. 6 • 6 p.m.

The Community Christmas Tree Lighting is coming to the Maywood Center on Friday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. Come join in the celebration that raises badly needed supplies for our Veterans at Veterans Hospital in Fresno while you get to enjoy snacks, beverages, a Christmas boutique, Christmas carols and a visit by Santa Claus himself.

Pick a star for a Veteran at the VA Hospital.

Items needed for Veterans: Instant coffee, white hand towels, white socks, lap blankets, toothpaste, toothbrushes, L and XL white t-shirts, new books. Items need to be returned to the Chamber office by Dec. 12. Gifts will be delivered to the Veterans at the VA Hospital in Fresno on Dec. 17 at 10 a.m.

Call the Chamber at 645-4001 for complete details



11/25

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual

Chamber Christmas Mixer

**Wednesday, December 3
5:30 p.m.**

**37167 Avenue 12 Suite 5C
Madera Ranchos**

*Everyone is invited.
Great food will be served.
Our Merry Christmas present to you.
Call 645-4001 for info.*

See you at our Christmas Mixer on Wednesday, Dec. 3 at 37167 Ave. 12 #5C at 5:30 p.m. Call 645-4001 for info.



Help a Foster Child this Christmas

through the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce and CASA

Bring a little sparkle of joy to a foster child this Christmas by stopping by the Chamber office and selecting an ornament with a child's name, age and gift request. The requests range from everything from a Barbie doll or soccer ball, to simple hair ribbons. Unwrapped items must be turned in to the Chamber office by December 2.

Call 645-4001 for more information.



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duce prices. Meanwhile, Medicare will do more to cover the drugs, also bringing down their cost.

According to Gallup, about 12% of Americans report having used a GLP-1 drug at some point for weight loss, a stunning increase from about 6% in early 2024. Not coincidentally, Gallup is also now showing a slight dip in obesity. From 2008 -- when the polling organization regularly began asking about weight -- to 2022, the percentage of obese Americans increased by 14 percentage points, to nearly 40%.

Where any number of fashionable diets and continual government exhortations for more physical exertion have failed (before RFK Jr., Michelle Obama was urging, "Let's Move!"), drugs to slow digestion and reduce the urge to

eat are working.

The percentage of Americans using GLP-1s will inevitably keep growing, especially if prices continue to go down, if more oral GLP-1s come online in addition to injectables, and if other medical benefits of the drugs emerge. GLP-1s could easily match the saturation level of statins, the cholesterol-reducing drugs.

By all means, we should all eat more arugula. Until then, we have found a pharmaceutical path to alleviating an ongoing health crisis. President Trump and the drug companies are to be congratulated for their creative cooperation to make it available to more Americans.

Rich Lowry is the editor of the National Review.
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LAWSUIT cont. from P. 2

dential election decisively, yet Republicans hold only a razor-thin margin in the House. That mismatch is not by chance. When districts are drawn to guarantee that one party always wins, it shifts power away from the people and toward special interests. It lets political insiders and activist groups pick the politicians who govern us, rather than letting voters choose their representatives.

If the Court agrees with Callais, the decision could dramatically limit the use of race in redistricting nationwide. That means the gerrymandered maps Gavin Newsom is pushing with Prop 50 could be ruled unconstitutional. This is one of the most important redistricting

cases in decades. The outcome could restore fairness, compactness, and accountability to how congressional districts are drawn.

Our Constitution does not tolerate this racial gerrymander.

Should the Supreme Court find that states have gerrymandered districts based on race, thereby violating the Equal Protection Clause, an estimated 30 states may be impacted and forced to redistrict ahead of the 2026 midterm elections, in an outcome that could lead to Republicans drawing 19 more seats and Democrats losing up to a dozen local seats, primarily in the South. A decision by the Supreme Court is expected as early as next Spring.

This article originally appeared at www.Californiaglobe.com.

Say you saw it in the Independent

GO FIGURE!

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.

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11/25

SEMCU speaks

By Verlaine Elinburg

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce is reaching out to the communities of Madera Ranchos, Bonadelle Ranchos, Rolling Hills, Tesoro Viejo, Riverstone, Trigo, as well as community-based organizations to help to create a Welcoming "Main Street" adorned with poles and signs on Avenue 12 to brighten up and advertise the Community.

SEMCU, the Southeast Madera County United non-profit organization, is a long-time supporter of local enhancement projects and will participate with the Chamber of Commerce and any other participating organizations in the potential design of a Main Street along Avenue 12.

The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce needs funds to adorn welcoming Main Street banners and lights, reflecting the main seasonal themes. We are all part of the Community, and joining together, we can enjoy what we can create. The community needs assistance with the process, funding, and suggestions. Donations from the community are welcome and needed. Let's come together to make "Main Street" a place we're proud to call home. Together, we can transform "Main Street" into a festive and welcoming space for all.

Join the Chamber of Commerce and the community for the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony to honor and help our Veterans on Friday, Dec. 5 at 6 pm in the Maywood Shopping Center parking lot at 37164 Avenue 12 and join the community at a fun seasonal craft fair. Expect cozy vibes with cookies, hot cocoa and coffee for all, and a cheerful visit from Santa himself. Pick a star from the tree to help a veteran this holiday season in Fresno's V.A. Hospital.

Along with others, SEMCU is a nonprofit



An idea of what "Main Street" Avenue 12 could look like running through the Madera Ranchos.

organization that represents the interests of the residents, property owners and businesses in Southeastern Madera County. Its concerns, among other issues, are our community, safety, water, traffic, schools, future parks and energy. We invite community members to join SEMCU as board members to help shape the Southeast Madera County area and help make a difference for our families and youngsters. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant community.

SEMCU meets once per month for

about an hour. You may join us online to virtually participate. To join online, go to www.semcu.org for a link and simple instructions. Or if you prefer, you can call in on your cellphone at 669-900-6833 then enter the ID# 83632424343 followed with the access code 85422. Our next meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 6 p.m. "See you online" and make your voice heard!

*SEMCU is "By the Community,
For the Community"*

SENIORS cont. from P. 9

ter.

Many of our seniors are heading up to the Golden Chain Theater in December. The presentation The Little Town of Christmas will start every weekend from Nov. 21 through Dec. 21. It features an old-fashioned Christmas musical capturing the magic of the holiday season. It is a family-friendly production for audiences of all ages, featuring a joyful, uplifting experience that celebrates community, feelings of warmth and holiday cheer. You can even cozy up with a hot chocolate while you watch the show.

Tickets are available through the Golden Chain Theater website.

The holidays are full of festive events, so remember some important dates and weekly activities during the month of December at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The Basket Weaving Class is on Tuesday, Dec. 2 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Terry Killingsworth volunteers to teach and guide those who wish to learn pine needle basket weaving. She is a true artisan of the technique and welcomes all new interested seniors of the community to her free classes at the Senior Center.

The new Line Dance Class is kickin' up their heels with instructor Jennifer

Howe. Jennifer is very patient to clarify steps and review sequences at a pace that seniors can learn, in order to line dance. We had a great group of novice line dancers the last few months. The next scheduled classes are Dec. 3 and 17. All Line Dance Classes begin at 2 p.m. on every other Wednesday for the December calendar at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

Monthly activities at the Senior Center include Exercise Class every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 10 a.m. with Jo Chase.

Card and Table Games are on Thursdays, Dec. 4 and 18,

starting at 12:15 p.m. during the chilly winter months.

The Odd Fellows Breakfast is on Sunday, Dec. 21 from 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Odd Fellows Lodge located at Ave. 15 and Road 28 in Madera. They give the majority of their proceeds each month to different local charities in Madera County.

Brown Bag Day is on Wednesday, Dec. 17 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The Senior Center will be closed on Thursday, Dec. 25 for Christmas Day. We will also be closed on Jan. 1, 2026 for New Year's Day.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the members of the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.

The holidays are full of festive events, so remember some important dates and weekly activities during the month of December at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center.



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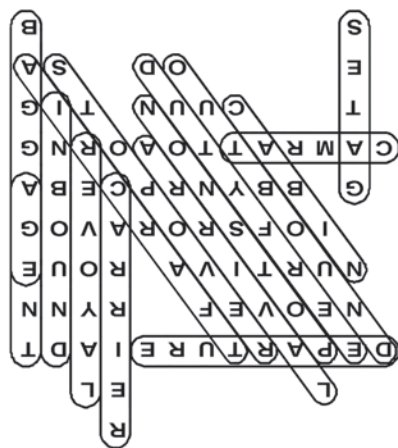
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Say you saw it in the Independent

1 Covered decoratively, as walls	what I said"	its original place)	sehen"	county	79 Sailing
8 Info to input	56 Figure skater Kulik	95 Summer, in Soissons	3 PalmPilot, e.g., in brief	40 Lawn bowling	80 Partner of Sturm
12 Bygone rival of Delta	57 Boston basketballer	96 Writer Bagnold	4 Channel for college sports	variety	81 Iraq neighbor
15 Widespread	59 Beginner, in slang	97 Set in motion	5 Split to bits	45 Soft mineral	86 Appearing gradually, as a film scene
19 More foam-filled	60 Jazz wailer	102 Kylo of "Star Wars"	6 Wiggly fishes	49 Fills totally	50 Gawk
20 "My turn now"	61 "Maintain self-control!"	103 Atmosphere	7 Soft & —	51 Fathered	87 Sixth Greek letters
21 Wrestler Flair	66 "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"	104 2008 novel by John L. Parker Jr.	8 Singers Ross and Krall	53 Linking word in Leipzig	88 Arab chief
22 English prep school	actress	107 Helsinki natives	9 Attack from hiding	54 "Hath — sister?": Shakespeare	90 Flee fast
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25 Very angry	67 Bridles	110 Head, in Nice	11 Gibbon, e.g.	58 Detailed evaluations, in brief	97 "True indeed"
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30 Chop to bits	82 Kingdom in Genesis	120 Tot's query	15 Patronize Hertz or Avis	63 Bidirectional, as a door	106 "No kidding!"
33 Far enough not to be in danger	83 "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"	121 Observe	16 TGIF's "I"	64 Tartrate, e.g.	108 Violinist Stern
38 Unlock, in verse	character	122 District	17 Enemy	65 Thom of Radiohead	111 "Whip It" rock band
39 Rocket interceptor, in brief	Nivens	123 Plane pilot	18 Terminate	69 Using logical operators	112 TV brand
41 Truncates	84 German city on der Rhein	124 Boatloads	24 Military bed	70 Using Nero's language	113 Granola tidbit
42 Corp. VIPs	85 Test the suitability of	125 Singer Rita	26 Virginia hrs.	71 Kids of boomers	114 Party card game
43 Covert org.	89 Advice that may calm someone	126 Covert "Hey!"	29 Terminate	73 Nav. officer	115 Mushy food
44 Easy victory		127 Belt holes	30 Trust (in)	74 Bus. firms	116 Ryder vehicle
46 Beer barrel		DOWN	31 20th Greek letter	75 Bygone U.K. record label	117 To the — degree
47 Heats a little		1 Tire pressure meas.	32 Splitting	76 Old Hollywood's — Code	118 Iowa college
48 Pricey plane section	91 Clingy wrap		33 Magic charm	77 Whole	119 Trauma ctrs
	92 Pro at CPR		34 Glenn of the Eagles		
			35 Quiz whizzes, perhaps		
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One month FREE! with 6-month arrangement. **40 years of experience in the Ranchos.** - **References available** - Lupe's House Cleaning, residential, one-time service, move-ins/move-outs, windows, construction clean up.

LupePrado25@yahoo .com. Call either of our **LOCAL numbers: 559-710-0692 or 650-771-2915.**

Property Clean Up

Property clean up, landscape maintenance and tree trimming - **FREE ESTIMATES.** Professional and reliable. **Call Eric at 559-903-3757.**

Recyclables Pick Up

KEEP IT LOCAL - FREE RECYCLING PICKUP - AmericanMade Direct/Kids4recycling offers free pickup of newspaper, shredded paper, all household plastic, glass, aluminum and tin cans (containers **DON'T** need to be CRV). Metal haul away and cleanups available also! 80% return back to community! **Call Dianna at 559-999-6832.**

Tractor/Trenching Services

BOBCAT WORK - DRILLING POST-HOLES - Trees - Trenching - Clean Up. **TRACTOR WORK** Discing - Rototilling - Mowing - Scraping - Stump Grinding. **Call John at 908-1066.**

Window Cleaning Services

Most windows start at \$5 and up -- inside/out - Screen, track, sills. Remove hard water stains on home windows, shower doors and car windows. Cobweb removal too. Fully insured. **Call Nick at 285-1723. Free estimates.**

• "When there are big family jobs to be done (like getting ready for the holidays), we write all the tasks down on slips of paper and put them in a hat. We take turns choosing tasks until all the paper is divvied out. Sometimes we trade, but we all get a fair chore list." -- V.O. in Oregon

• "Let one person be responsible for putting prep dishes, pots and pans in the dishwasher while another prepares the bird and side dishes for the table. You will be halfway done with dishes by the time the meal is over." -- M.A. in Washington

• Leftover bread can be repurposed as croutons or breadcrumbs. In fact, this is an excellent job for kiddos. With clean hands and a butter knife, older children can cut leftover rolls into manageable size pieces. Spray with olive oil cooking spray and bake at a low temperature (225° F) to dry out. Or crumble stale bread into crumbs and store in the freezer.

• If you love to burn candles, then the odds are good that you have a lot of candle "ends" that can no longer be used. You can purchase new wicks at the craft store and make a new candle from your leftovers. Simply scrape out the leftover wax into a clean tin can with one end removed. Set this can into a pot on your stovetop. Add a few inches of water, and boil to melt the wax. Then, holding the wick in place, you can pour the melted wax back into a candle-safe jar to let cool. Burn away!

• If you have ever had a tough time threading a needle, try this trick. Spritz the end of the thread with a shot of hairspray. It makes the thread stiffer, and it goes right through with no fuss.

*Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip,
628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803*

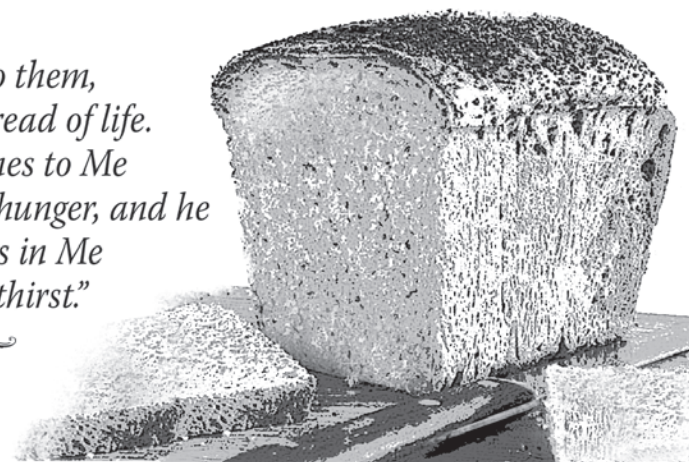
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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*Jesus said to them,
"I am the bread of life.
He who comes to Me
shall never hunger, and he
who believes in Me
shall never thirst."*

JOHN 6:35



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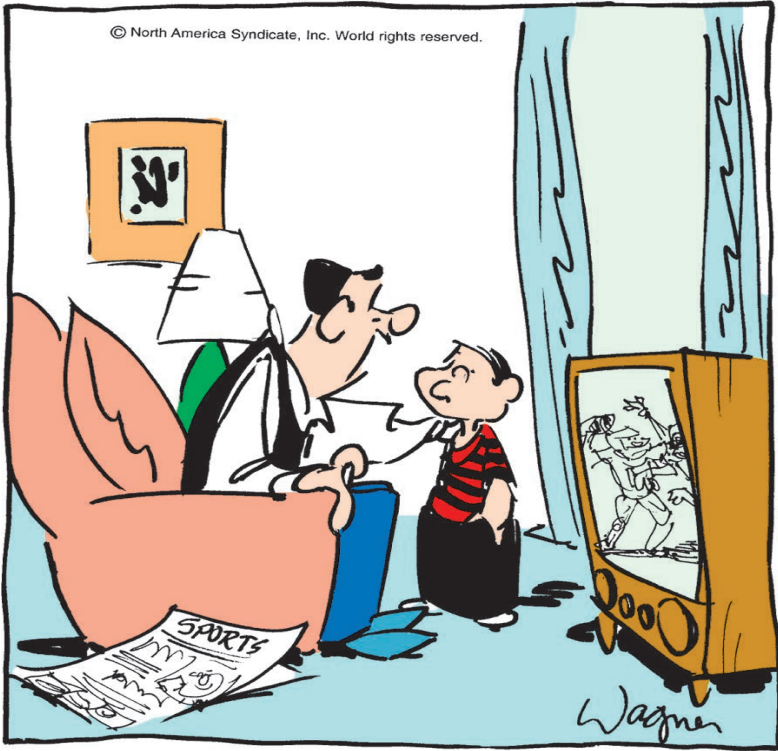


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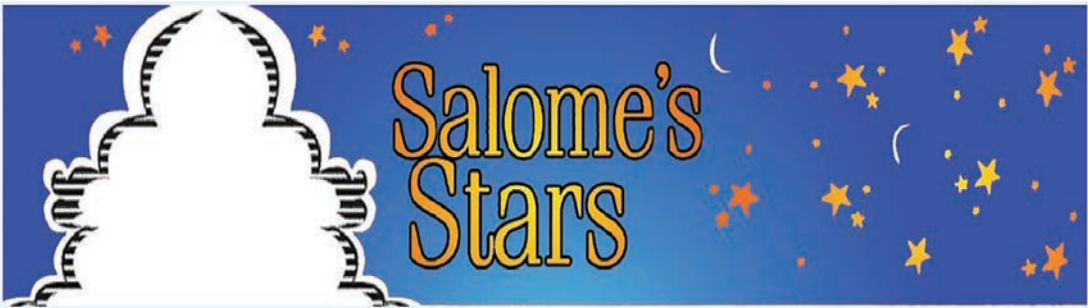
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GRIN and BEAR IT Wagner



“Halftime is quality time, son!”



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

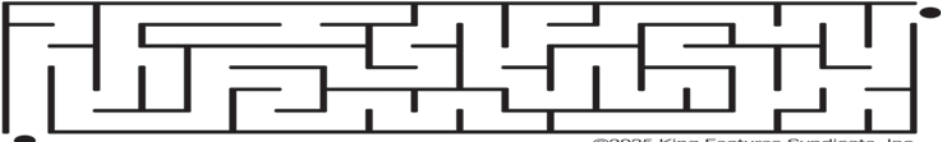
PISCES (February 19 to March 20) You've come to a place where you'll be facing important decisions that can affect your future. Rely on your strong moral compass to guide you toward making the right choices.

Born this Week

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

FUN PAGES

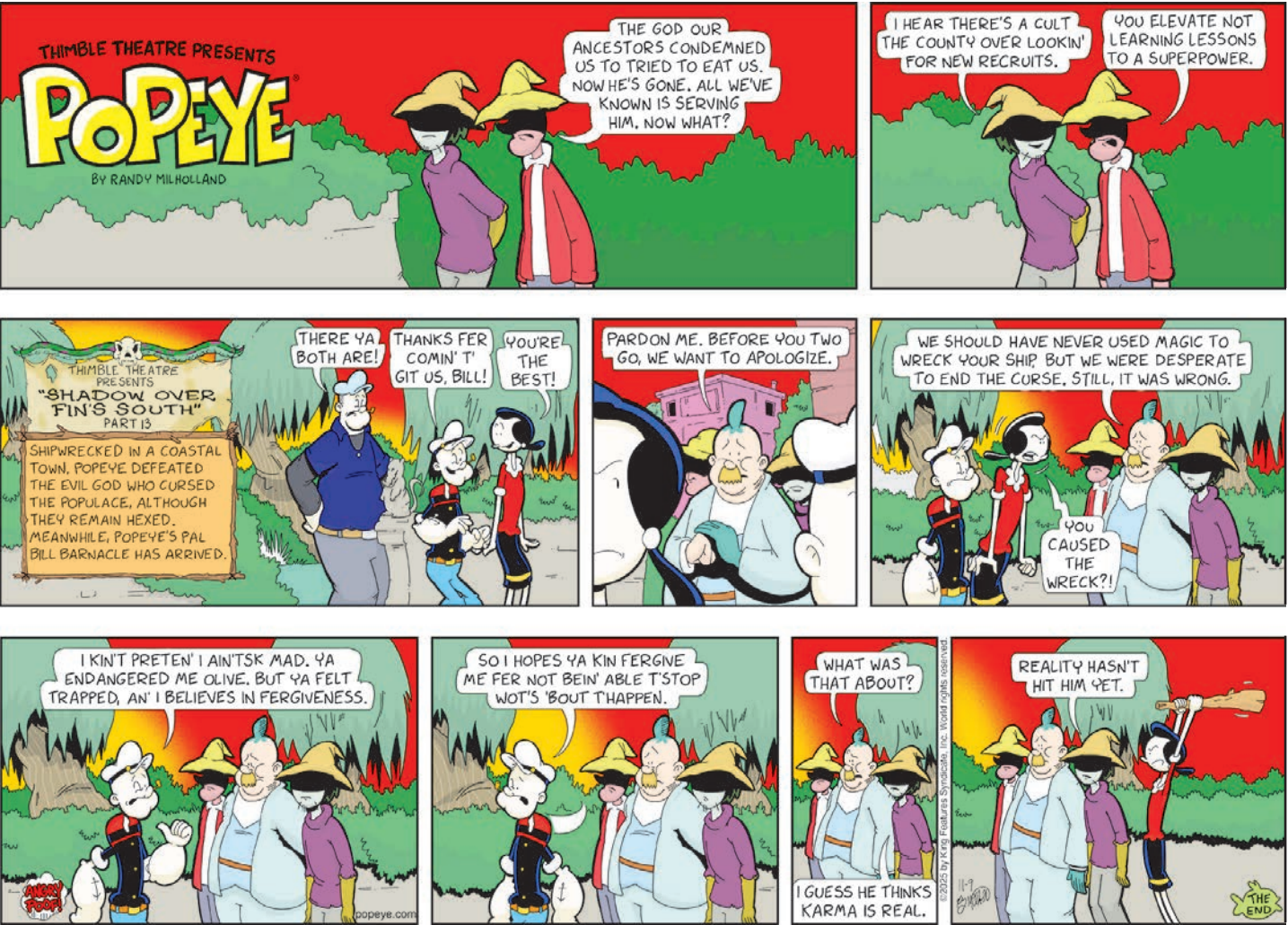
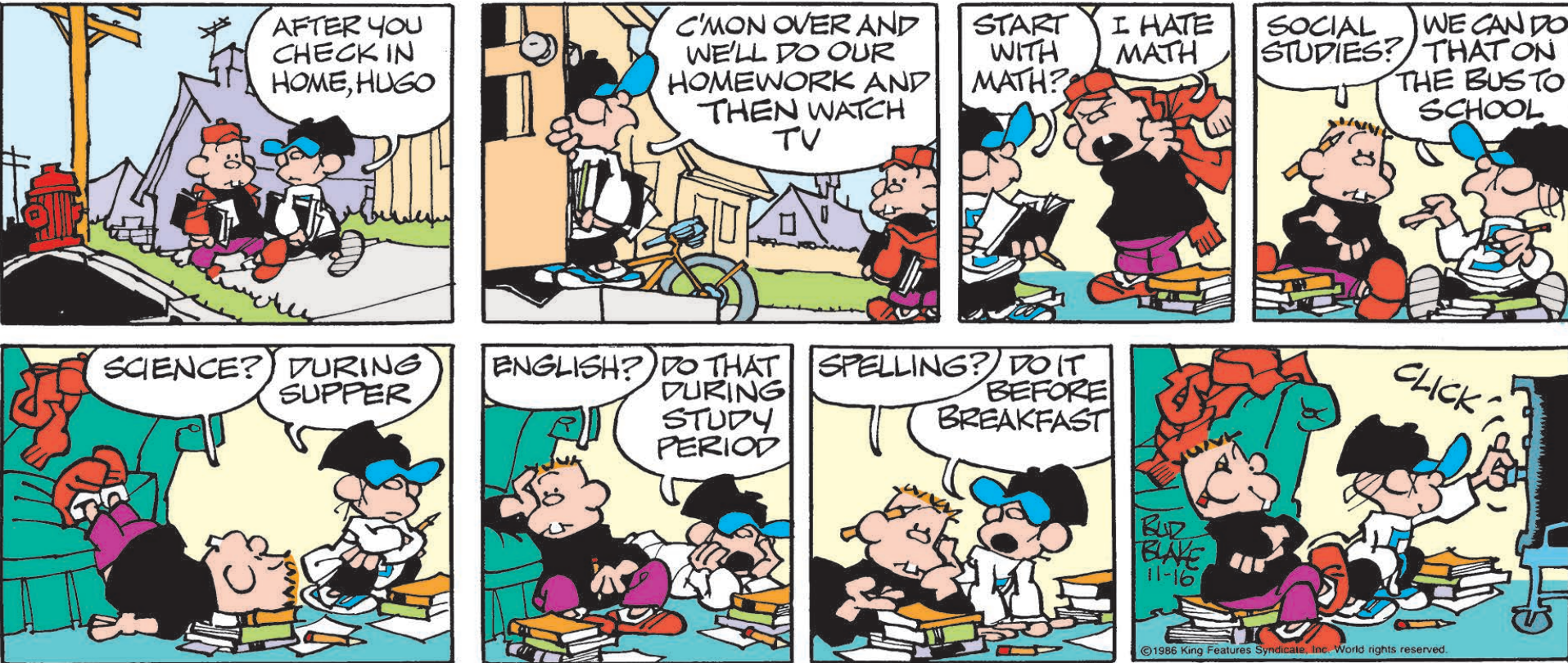
Kids' Maze



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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. **HISTORY:** Which country sold Alaska to the United States? 2. **GEOGRAPHY:** On which continent is the Sahara Desert? 3. **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:** Who created The Muppets? 4. **MUSIC:** What was singer Miley Cyrus' alter ego when she starred in a Disney sitcom? 5. **MATH:** How many sides does a heptagon (sometimes called a septagon) have? 6. **MOVIES:** Which singer is featured in the biopic "A Complete Unknown"? 7. **FOOD & DRINK:** What is carpaccio? 8. **LITERATURE:** In "The Jungle Book," who raised the boy called Mowgli? 9. **TELEVISION:** Where was Mork from in the sitcom "Mork and Mindy"? 10. **LANGUAGE:** What does the phrase "doubleplusungood" mean in Newspeak, featured in the dystopian novel "1984"?

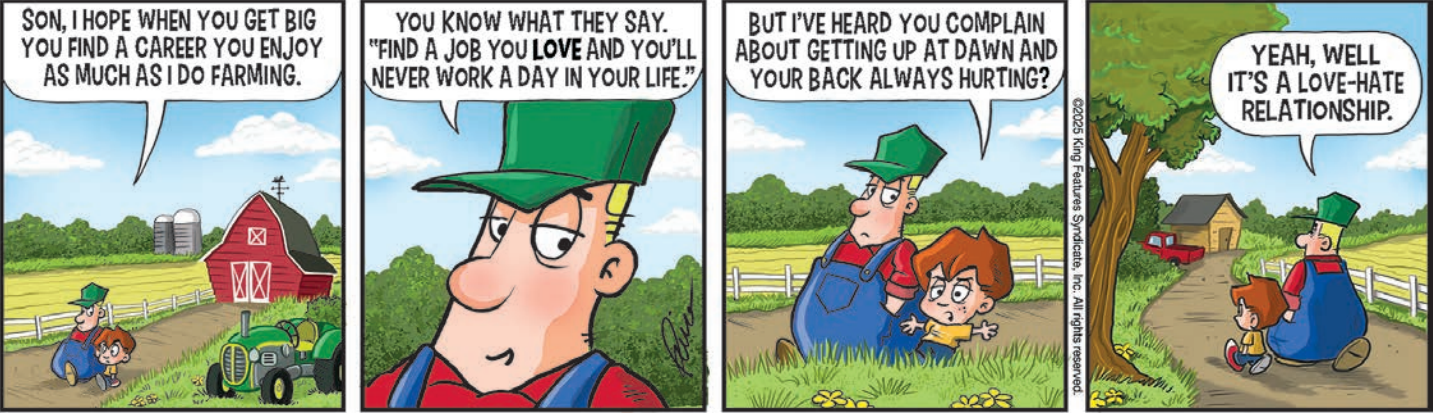
- 10. Terrible.
- 9. Planet Ork.
- 8. Wolves.
- 7. Thinly sliced raw meat or fish, usually served as an appetizer.
- 6. Bob Dylan.
- 5. Seven.
- 4. Hannah Montana.
- 3. Jim Henson.
- 2. Africa.
- 1. Russia, in 1867.

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Click on "Local News" at

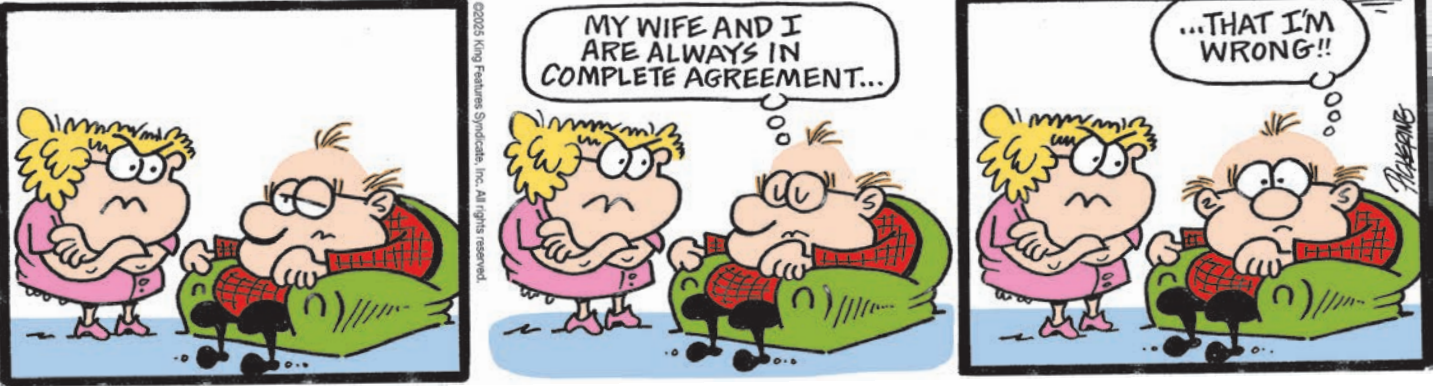
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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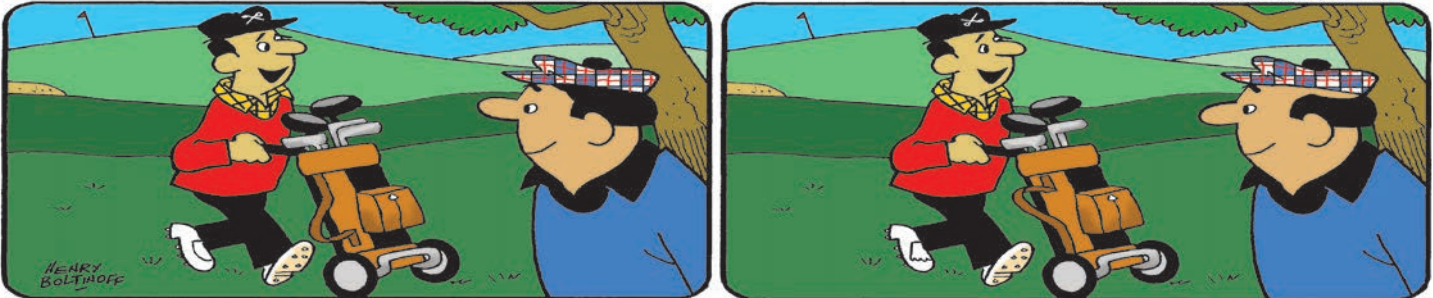
F J H E C Z X U S Q R N L J G
E C Z L X V T R P N E L L J H
E (DEPARTURE) I A D T C
A Y N E O V E F W V R Y N N T
R P N U R T I V A N R O U E L
K I G I O F S R O R A V O G E
C B G Z B B Y N R P C E B A X
W C A M R A T T O A O R N G U
S R T P O M C U U N L T I G J
I G E E D B A Y O D X S S A P
W U S T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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: Have Your Boarding — Ready

Agent	Cabin	Gates	Outbound
Aircraft	Carrier	Inbound	Stopover
Arrival	Departure	Layover	Tarmac
Baggage	Duty-free	Non-stop	

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.
Differences: 1. Club is missing. 2. Man has less hair. 3. Cap is different. 4. Nose is different. 5. Shoe is different. 6. Golf bag strap is different.

FUN PAGES

SEMCU

south east madera county united

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Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony to help Veterans

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by phone: 669-900-6833

& enter meeting ID#: 836 3242 4343, then access code 854 221

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