

The Ranchos Independent



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Flatlander's Issue 2009

The Official Publication of Southeastern Madera County

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REMEMBERING A FALLEN HERO



SGT. RAUL MONCADA
NOVEMBER 25, 1979 - APRIL 13, 2009

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Ranchos Soldier Dies in Iraq Attack

Sgt. Raul Moncada of the Madera Ranchos died April 13 near Baghdad, Iraq, from wounds inflicted by an explosive device that detonated near his Humvee in an attack while he was traveling in a convoy back to his base. He was 29.

Moncada had planned this to be his final tour of duty, ending a 10-year military career that included 6 years in the Marines and the last 4 years in the Army. He had been with the 563rd Military Police Company, 91st Military Police Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) out of Fort Drum, N.Y. He looked forward to leaving the military, marrying his girlfriend and becoming a correctional officer.

Moncada was the third oldest of seven children who loved sports and making people laugh. He joined the Marine Corps right out of

high school in June of 1997 and then joined the active duty Army in June, 2005.

Raul's awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal with Combat Service, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device and the Combat Action Badge.

Raul is survived by his father Raul; his mother Obdulia; brothers, Julio, Ruben, and Matthew; sisters, Miriam, Alejandra and Danida; his six year old daughter Priscila; his girlfriend Tina and soon to be

born Baby Mia in New York; five nieces and three nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and many friends.



Sgt. Raul Moncada

November 25, 1979 - April 13, 2009

SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE ALERT

A suspicious vehicle was spotted near Sierra View Elementary recently. It was described as a hunter green Chevy van with gold trim on the bottom third of the vehicle and had cargo doors in the rear. The occupants appeared to be two hispanic males. The vehicle repeatedly followed a young mother with two children who were bike riding. If you see this vehicle, please get a license plate number and contact the Madera County Sheriff's Department at 675-7770.

District 1 Supervisor Bigelow Hosts Ranchos Town Hall Meeting

By Christ McKinney

Madera County District 1 Supervisor Frank Bigelow came to the Ranchos on Monday, March 30 to conduct a Town Hall Meeting at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Activity Center. He addressed approximately 50 residents concerning a variety of issues from water management to upcoming changes in roads and traffic flow through the Ranchos. Bigelow was accompanied by Resource Management Agency Director Ray Beach and Road Commissioner Johannes J. Hoevertsz.

Bigelow addressed the proposed County Budget of \$210 million, \$5 million over last year's budget. "There are no plans for layoffs, no changes in service levels and no anticipated salary cuts for the approximately 1700 county employees," Bigelow said. "There are approximately 200 vacancies in staff positions that are not being filled

at this time because of a selective hiring freeze currently in place with exceptions being made for law enforcement and public safety." Overall, Bigelow said the County is looking good financially and is not in the financial emergency situation that many California counties currently find themselves in.

"Madera County has applied for \$430 million in stimulus in an attempt to qualify under any available program," Ray Beach added. "However, we may get \$25-30 million if we're lucky."

Bigelow urged attendees to pay attention to upcoming changes being considered by the State Water Resource Management Board, warning that a number of changes are being considered that could drastically affect rural wells. "Water issues are of utmost importance. We must find a holistic approach to our state's water issues," he said.

The majority of the meeting focused on

upcoming changes in roads and traffic in the Ranchos. Much of the funding for traffic projects is coming from Proposition 1B which is requiring that projects must be "shovel ready" which means they have approximately 120 days to deliver the project.

"Most accidents in the Ranchos are either rear end collisions or left hand passing collisions," Bigelow said as he addressed traffic concerns. Traffic Commissioner Hoevertsz stated that the County was initially criticized for paying more attention to traffic patterns than pedestrian traffic. To address this issue, the County will be installing sidewalks on both sides of Avenue 12 between Road 36 and Road 37 and installing a left hand turn lane down the middle of Avenue 12, stating that this would greatly improve the flow of traffic through the Ranchos.

Other projects in process are:

Rebuilding a culvert on road 36 at John

Albert

Restriping roads

Enforcing parking restrictions on Avenue 12 between Road 36 and 37

Enforcement of restrictions on trash receptacles in the roads on non pick up days. The County is looking to negotiate with trash companies for off peak pick up times.

Installation of a traffic signal at Lanes Bridge and Children's Boulevard

Reinstallation of overhead lights on Children's Boulevard

Reconstruction of Ave 15 between Road 29 and Road 34, much like 36-41 is now.

Jolene Mason also made a presentation about the Citizens On Patrol (COP) program. She urged everyone with some free time on their hands to get involved in their community and encouraged people considering it to schedule a ride along. Their website is located at www.nacop.org/madera.



Area Goldmine Disaster Still Impacts Area Families

By Christi McKinney

Just one year ago the Madera Ranchos experienced a devastating loss with the deaths of three outstanding young men.

The day began on the unusually hot spring morning of May 17, 2008, when Brothers David and Matthew Alison and their cousin Brannon Scharf set off on another big adventure. Just one of many big adventures that had been shared among these best friends their entire lifetime. Little did they know this would ultimately be their final adventure. The boys (as their mothers still prefer to call them) had grown up together in the Ranchos surrounded by a huge, loving extended family.

The boys were warm, friendly, charming and outgoing. They had a natural ability to bring a smile to everyone's face and to light up any room they walked into.

David (25) and brother Matthew Alison (23) loved football. They grew up playing Babe Ruth Football together and David later played Football for Reedley College and Fresno City College. They were excited to have just moved out of their family home and into a place of their own. They were in the process of buying out their father's portion of the family business to form their own company "Alison Brother's Pumping."

Brannon Scharf (26) their cousin, played Water Polo and Tennis at Madera High School where he'd also taken 1st place in the State of California FFA program for Small Engines. He worked for JM Forklift as well as in his family's business Andersen & Andersen Construction and he'd just earned his General Contractors License.

Brannon and his new bride Jennifer had just managed to save enough money to get married two months before. They have a handsome son Brayden, age 6, who is the spitting image of his father and was always the light of his father's eye.

Their families described many fond memories of the boys, how they were fascinated with building a hover craft and how they were once totally surprised to hear the announcer

Please see **TRAGIC** on P. 4



Editorial

Healthcare and Government - Why Not?

By Randy Bailey

I offer this editorial merely as an illustration. I give you the information and then you can do with it as you will. Both of these experiences actually happened to me.

Example A: I received a package from a governmental agency (the I.R.S.) about a month ago, saying I owed something from 1999. They claimed they had trouble finding me due to my address change (it's important to mention here that I've lived at the same address for the last 13 years so there have been no address changes, including 10 years ago). To prove their point they included a copy of the letter and envelope that they had used to unsuccessfully reach me all those years ago that had since been returned to the I.R.S.

Here's the good part: The letter that had been so unsuccessful in reaching me had my present address on it.

Now here's the *best* part: They put the old letter with my present address on it inside of a larger envelope addressed to my present address and then included a change of address form that they wanted me to fill out with the change from my present address to my present address, which is where they had just sent the envelope and all of its contents.

Example B: As often happens in

business, sometimes you have customers who don't want to pay their bills. Back in March of 2008 I sent out a collection letter to a Fresno account for some money that was owed for a series of ads that appeared in the Ranchos Independent. I never heard from the account (I really didn't expect to) and so I turned the account over to a collection agency and put it out of my mind.

Last week I'm at the palatial Ranchos Independent office going through my mail, all of which had been delivered by a governmental agency (the U.S. Post Office), and I noticed one of the letters has been marked "returned to sender."

That would be me.

I didn't recognize the addressee and couldn't remember sending this letter out and then I realized it was a customer that I hadn't done business with in about a year. I looked over at the cancellation mark and it had been cancelled in April ... of 2008! They were just now getting the letter back to me, a year later. All I could think was how glad I was that I hadn't mailed my sick aunt that kidney she needed a year ago.

Now, other than for the comic value, why do I share these stories?

Because I listen daily to voices from the Left that tell me how much better we would all be if the government was just in charge of our healthcare.

Am I missing something?

The Ranchos Independent

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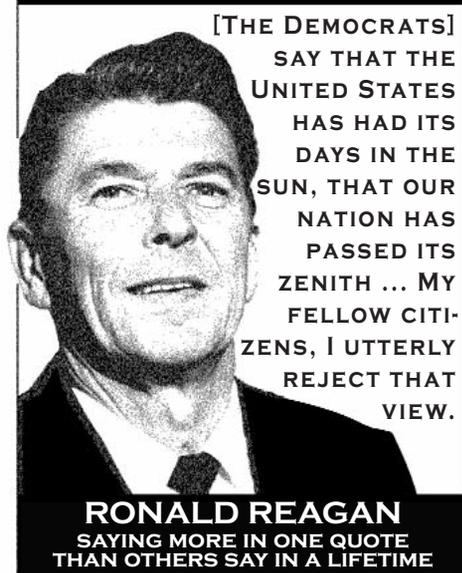
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THE RAY GUN SHOOTING STRAIGHT TO THE HEART



[THE DEMOCRATS] SAY THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS HAD ITS DAYS IN THE SUN, THAT OUR NATION HAS PASSED ITS ZENITH ... MY FELLOW CITIZENS, I UTTERLY REJECT THAT VIEW.

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

Attn: Retired CHP In Madera County

It is apparent that we have more than a couple of dozen retired CHP officers living in Madera County. Many we worked closely with on the job but now rarely see, even though we live in the same county. Therefore, we are attempting to start a periodic meeting of our local retirees where we can catch up on the latest and, perhaps, share some war stories. Some of you may have moved into the area after retirement but you're CHP and we want you to come too.

Hal Parks, owner of the PIZZA FACTORY, located on Avenue 12 in the Madera Ranchos, has offered to house (not *host*) the meetings. Our first get-together is scheduled for May 11 at 7 p.m. (formerly 1900 hours). If you have questions, or if you need directions, call Hal at 683-5830 or Ronn at 674-1508 or John at 284-0207.

TRAGIC cont. from P. 2

at the annual Flatlanders Day Parade say, "Here's David and Brannon," as they looked up to see David riding their go cart down the road with Brannon behind him pushing it.

They'd spent many hours on their family's sprawling 700 acre Alison Cattle Ranch in O'Neals, just East of Coarsegold. It had been their childhood playground where they'd shared many boyhood adventures there, playing ball, building water slides, hunting and even rebuilding a cabin together as they got older. The boys had explored virtually every inch of the sprawling ranch except one area they referred to as "the last frontier on the ranch," an abandoned gold mine from the 1850's called the "Hildreth" mine. This abandoned gold mine, one of several built during the California Gold Rush back in the mid 1800's, was once a very active gold mine approximately 8 feet in diameter and very steep, measuring 15-20 feet deep inside.

"They'd been on this ranch since they were babies," but had only recently realized that the small tunnels they explored as kids could be hiding undiscovered gold said Terry Alison, David and Matthew's father. Although the boys had been fascinated by the mine, they had never explored it before because it had always been full of water with a natural spring in it. Brannon's mother Susan Andersen recalls that he had always been leery of going into the mine.

On Mother's Day, 2008, unbeknownst to their mothers, they devised a plan that took place a week later when they used a gas powered pump to drain the underground water from the mine. They also used a fan to blow out air and a generator on the outside of the mine. They pumped water out of the mine for approximately 6-7 hours. When Matthew's girlfriend, Candace Kliever spoke to him at approximately 2 p.m. that afternoon of May 17 they were very excited

because they'd finally been able to get enough water out and they were getting ready to go inside the abandoned mine and look around. However when Candace tried to reach them again at about 4 p.m. she was unable to do so and panic set in. She alerted the family and went to the ranch to look for them. Tragically Terry Alison, who was scheduled to get married the following day, found the bodies of his sons David and Matthew and his nephew Brannon at approximately 11 p.m. at the top of a steep hill just outside the mine. Autopsies confirmed that all three men died of carbon monoxide poisoning. Chances are that the carbon monoxide came from the gasoline pump they used to drain water from the mine.

Relatives believe David went in first and that the other two followed and did their very best to carry him out to safety. Matthew and Brannon were able to drag David, the largest of the three, to the top of the steep incline before they all collapsed. Terry Alison described the horror of finding his two sons and nephew near the mouth of the mine. "They were just all entwined. I hugged them and they were just covered with mud from head to toe from struggling to get out of there."

"They had a deep bond and love for each other. There's no way one would have left the other down there," Brannon's mother said. Matt and David's uncle, Michael Miranda, says the three grew up going on adventures together, they lived their lives looking out for one another and that's how they died in the mine. "They weren't going to leave that shaft leaving someone behind."

Working through the various stages of grief is much different for everyone. It's only been a year and everyone is working through the stages of grief in their own way and in their own time, all the while missing their loved ones every moment of every day. The

Please see **TRAGIC** on P. 23

THE D.O.G. HOUSE

DEMAND OPEN GOVERNMENT BY DALE DROZEN



I will begin with a couple of words about the "TEA Parties."

I don't know who was "behind" the organizing of the TEA Parties; what I do know is that myself and a lot of other folks attending didn't care. We were just glad to hear our unified voices expressing our frustration with the government spending we feel has gotten out of hand as we have lost control. My wife and I have been lifelong members of a major party but this past election convinced us to change our registration to "Declined to State."

To get elected these days politicians need to sign onto the PARTY LINE. The party lines are controlled by the fringe elements of the parties, leaving most of us in the middle of the road waiting to be run over.

Legislation has become an auction selling each vote for a bit of pork on the side. Pork began to convince someone on the fence to support a bill but unfortunately the practice has expanded to include anybody that will vote. All you have to do is hold off a bit and play hard to get a bit. Like magic, pork appears on your plate. It isn't hard to see how logic and common sense end up becoming just "road kill" on the political highway.

World News had a story last night about a multi-million dollar airport serving about 30 people a day. The rest of the story never gets told. Just imagine all of the wasteful pork filled legislation this politician added to his vote in order to earn his plate of pork (this ridiculous airport in the middle of nowhere).

TEA means "Taxed Enough Already."

With that said I move on to the next Madera County Board of Supervisors meeting.

Item 5: Consideration of approval of Status Report on the High-Speed Rail Project.

This one is a bit confusing. Is it, as the agenda states, approval of a status report or, as the Board letter seems to imply, approval of the "staff's" recommendations?

There is a big difference.

What is on the agenda would merely be staff keeping the Board informed. What is implied in the letter would be the Board expressing support for the staff recommendations. High Speed Rail is a big deal and deserves much public discussion.

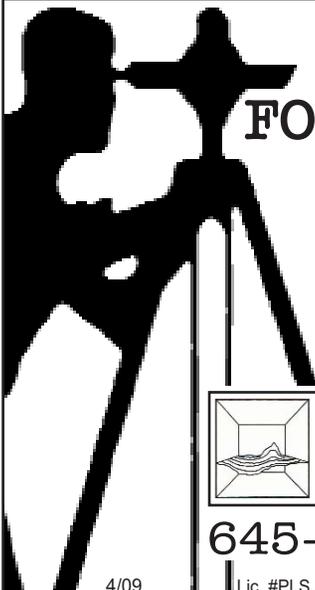
Tipping Fees. (09214): Hearing to consider approval of a) A resolution approving increased fees for collection and disposal of garbage and recyclable materials by self-haulers, commercial front load trucks, roll-off bin customers and County franchised haulers, within the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the County of Madera; b) Increasing Collection Disposal Fees proposed by Madera Disposal Systems, Inc., (MDSI) and EMADCO Disposal; and c) A resolution approving increased fees for collection and disposal of garbage and recyclable materials by franchised haulers operating under contract with the City of Madera and the City of Chowchilla.

Do you remember all of the uproar last year about the massive increase in tipping fees for unincorporated Madera County while an equally massive reduction in fees was implemented for the cities of Madera and Chowchilla? There was lots of talk about how it would all balance out and we were assured the numbers were good and that there was a reasonable division of expenses to keep the landfill operating for several years. What we are now looking at is over a 10 percent increase on top of, if my memory serves, over a 20 increase last year.

CLOSED SESSION: We don't get to know what is talked about in these meetings, we just have to trust that the rules are being followed. There are seldom reports give other than, "No reportable actions."

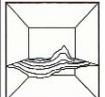
Sometimes items eventually do come to light. On this agenda it was found in the quiet and not so brightly lit areas of the CONSET CALENDAR: "Report by County Counsel on Closed Session Items. (09023). HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT: Consideration of approval of Resolution adopt-

Please see **D.O.G.** on P. 10



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The Stock Report

Ranchos Now *More Distinguished*

By Audrey Stock

Hi neighbors,
 We are so lucky to be living in this community. The more involved I am the more I love living here. This community, the students, the principal and teachers should be overjoyed that our Golden Valley Unified School District is a California Distinguished School District and all of this in just 10 years. In 2004 Webster Elementary School was our first California Distinguished School. Sierra View Elementary joined Golden Valley when it transferred from the Chawanakee Unified School District to join Golden Valley in 2004. It took Principal Scott Tefft four years to come up to speed and for Sierra View Elementary to become the next California Distinguished School in 2008. Now it is the Ranchos Middle School and Liberty High School who will both receive California Distinguished School Awards in 2009. What do you think about that? With all

With all of the ups and downs Golden Valley has been through we should be so proud of our schools and school district that made it all happen.

of the ups and downs Golden Valley has been through we should be so proud of our schools and school district that made it all happen.

I was asked by President Ron Osborn to become a member of the Bond Oversight Committee. This committee makes sure that the Golden Valley Unified District Office is following expenditures of the bond money in the way that the bond was presented to the public at the time of the vote. As part of this committee, on April 7 we walked through the new Ranchos Middle School, which is under construction with bond money. The buildings are coming along nicely. The science rooms have all of the latest safety equipment which is good to see. Some of the classrooms are equipped with Smart Boards which is a new technology piece of equipment. The cafeteria has a beautiful stage for plays and musical programs. I can't wait to see the middle school students when they walk into their new gym and play on the new playing fields. They will have their own library and not have to share with Liberty High School. This will be their school and a place of which to be proud. The Ranchos Middle School, Home of the Mustangs.

Did you know that you are a Flatlander? On May 9, when you come to

watch the 19th Annual Flatlanders Day Parade, you can tell your friends, "Hey, I am a Flatlander too!" The first time I was called a Flatlander I asked, "What is that?" I had never heard that word before. I had lived in Fresno for 50 years before moving to the Ranchos and I had never been called a "Flatlander." I had been called a desert rat a few times for living in Fresno, so when I was called a Flatlander I was told to look to the North, and I would see that the Ranchos were nestled at what is called the foot of the mountains that go up to Coarsegold, Oakhurst and Yosemite, hence the name "Flatlander." Our parade is unique and truly a hometown event. Don't forget that beside the parade there is also the Craft Fair with food and vendors at the Maywood Center. Go to the Ranchos Li-

brary for a space at the Craft Fair and to the Chamber Office to fill out an application to be in the parade. New this year will be a children's midway with games of chance put on by the Golden Valley Chamber of Com-

merce. If you would like to sponsor one of the parade's many trophies, call the Chamber at 645-4001. Oh! Did I mention that the Chamber has named me the Grand Marshal of this year's parade? The parade theme this year is "The Ranchos: Growing with Pride." Come out and take part. You can't spend a better Saturday on May 9 than at the Flatlanders Parade and Craft Fair. Give me a wave as I go by. I would love to see you there.

Now back to school business. May is the month at school to wrap up a very busy school year. This is a month of test taking and getting students ready for promotion to the next grade which is a challenge for all teachers. At Liberty High School seniors have all of the last minute grades and projects to complete before graduation. The counselors are working with students to make sure that they are on track to graduate on June 4.

The May school board meetings are scheduled for May 9 and 23 at Liberty High School library at 6 p.m. As the school year winds down come hear what is going on at the school board meetings. Plans are already coming together for the next school year.

Don't forget your mother on May 10 which is Mother's Day.

Leaning into the Wind with Christ

By Bob Crabb

Do you remember after John the Baptist was killed and Jesus (Matthew 14:13ff NIV) had heard what had happened? The bible says he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Apparently the crowds from the towns who had been following Jesus had continued to follow Him on foot. The report says that when Jesus saw all the people around Him, He had compassion for them and He healed the sick and fed the hungry.

My proposal of faith today is that for those of us who follow Christ, one of the ways we witness to the presence of Christ is to have the compassion of Christ.

Having the compassion of Christ is not always easy, especially in time of difficulty and trouble. Sometimes it can feel like leaning into a very strong wind.

After this compassionate moment with the people, Jesus sent the disciples in a boat to the other side of the Sea of

Storms don't seem to bother Jesus like they do many of us. He sleeps through them, He walks over them and eventually He subdues them. Life is full of all kinds of storms. Many of us can mark our lives not only by the days of peace and sunshine, but also by the storms of life.

Galilee. You probably already know the story (Matthew 14:22ff), while the disciples were in the boat, a storm comes up when the boat was far from land and it was "tortured" by the waves. The bible says the wind was "against it." I can see that picture in my imagination: The boat far from shore and the wind blowing strong against it. In my mind's eye, I can see the bow rebounding on the whitecaps against the spray and howling wind and the occupants in the boat struggling to keep the boat on the right direction.

Storms don't seem to bother Jesus like they do many of us. He sleeps through them, He walks over them and eventually He subdues them. Life is full of all kinds of storms. Many of us can mark our lives not only by the days of peace and sunshine, but also by the storms of life. Isn't it true that for many of us aging, illness, death, sorrow, pain, grief and despair are like strong winds blowing against us,

just like the wind blew against the disciples?

It seems like storms, especially fierce storms, are part of life and they happen all too often. I am not just talking about the wind in nature. I am talking about the storms of human experience. It can be a harsh wind, set up by situations of politics, economics, culture and human error. Other times it is the strong wind of temptation, fear and resentment and don't forget that juggernaut called self-will run riot. These kinds of storms sometimes feel like a strong wind against our progress.

In Matthew, we see that first church of the followers of Christ at sea and in a storm and leaning against the wind (Matthew 14:24ff). All of sudden, Jesus comes out walking on the water! At first they don't recognize him because they were terrified. They were shouting, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear.

In a storm, sometimes it is tempting not to trust that God is still in charge. In this report of the disciples' experience in the storm, Peter does something and may the good Lord bless him for it. In the middle of the storm Peter sees Jesus and in faith and at the command of Jesus, he jumps out of the boat! Peter jumps out in faith, but he still can't really believe that the compassion of Christ is stronger than the storm. In Peter's attempt at faith, all of a sudden he becomes subject to the law; the law of gravity. Peter starts sinking down below the waves. He is in the storm of his life and it looks like he is going to die. Peter, the rock of the church, begins to sink like a rock.

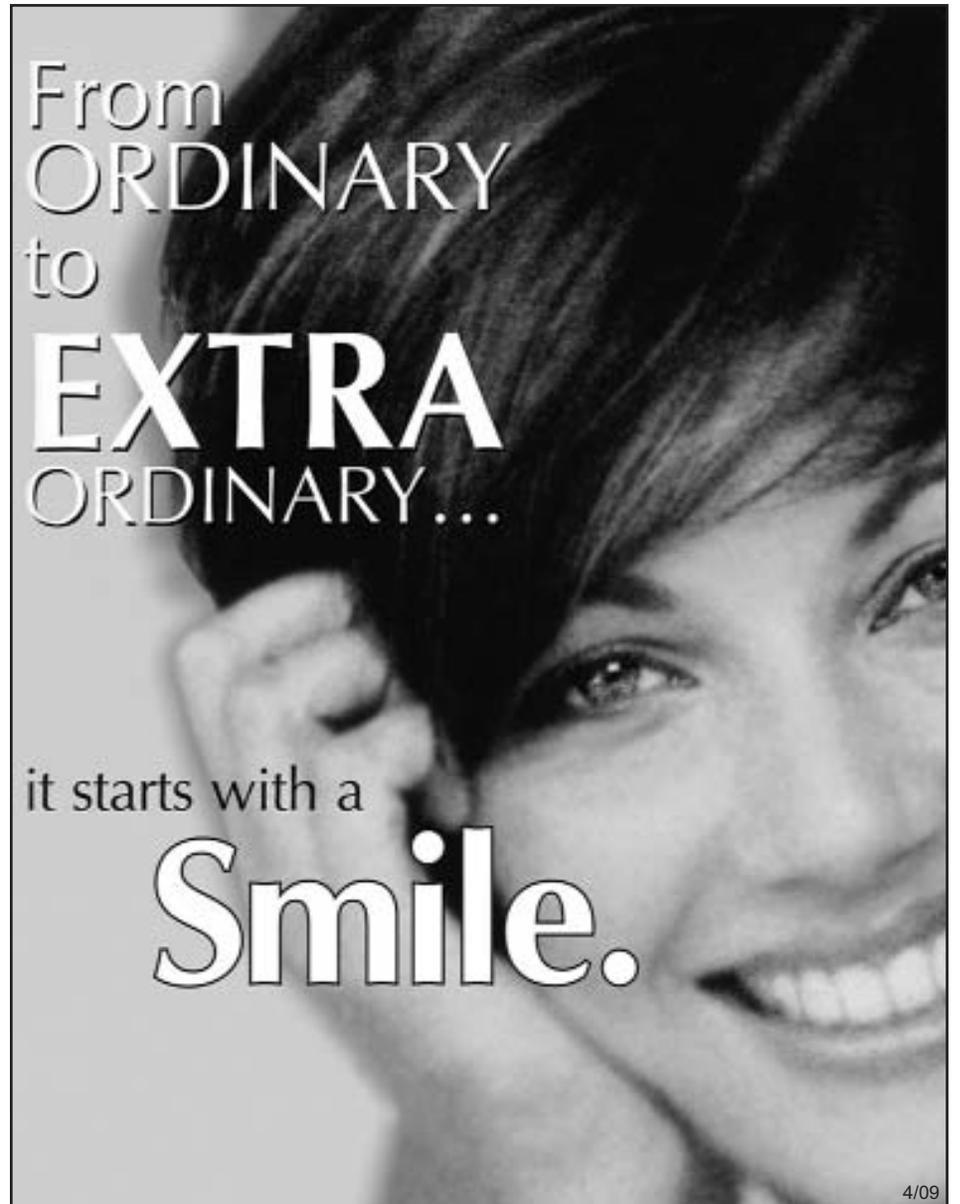
Have you ever been in a storm of life and the wind was against you? Maybe it was a disease or the loss of a loved one, or maybe it was a radical change in life circumstances and it seemed like the wind was too strong.

Please see PASTOR on P. 7

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PASTOR cont. from P. 6

Sometimes in life, in our faith journeys, in our churches, in our families and relationships, in our jobs and our schools and even in our health, difficulties and problems hit us like a strong wind, with hurricane force. It may seem like we are walking through a sea of troubles against a strong wind and sinking down. Sometimes we not only have to walk on the waters of faith, but we have to lean into a strong wind.

But not only that, as followers of Christ we know the resistance that blows against our call to practice the presence of Jesus Christ. Like Peter, sometimes the wind can stop us. Peter jumped out of the boat and found out that on his own he was not as strong as he thought he was. In the middle of fierce wind and frightening circumstances Peter says the words that some of us know all too well: "Lord, save me!"

When Jesus reached out his hand and saved Peter from sinking and when he stopped the wind from blowing, I am proposing to you that Jesus was displaying the compassion of His Father.

For those of us who follow Jesus Christ, we are called to be like the hand of Christ reaching out to those who are sinking below the waves in a desperate storm. We are part of an action of compassion that God has done in Jesus. In good times and especially in hard times, God calls us to show the world what the compassion of Christ looks like. Sometimes, I need the compassion of Christ from the people of Christ. Sometimes somebody else needs it and maybe sometimes every one of us has need of that compassion. When you are not sure which way to turn and you have got to lean into the wind, don't give up. We have a savior that is stronger than the wind.

For those of us who follow the Risen Christ, it just may be no matter what our circumstances are that God has called us to be the hands of Christ and to reach out with compassion to those who are leaning into the wind and sinking below the waves.

So go ahead, lean into the wind.

Rev. Bob Crabb is the Pastor of the Christian Mission Center meeting at 36875 Avenue 12 (Loren Way and Ave. 12). They worship Sundays at 10:30 a.m. and all are welcome.

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AVE. 12

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Busy Times for Ranchos Library Coming with Flatlanders, Grizzlies

By Ellen Mester

Next month will be a very busy month for the Ranchos and the library. The Flatlanders Parade and Craft Show will be on May 9. The Craft show will start at 8 a.m. (there are still craft booths available) with the parade at 10 a.m. This is an annual event for the whole family and will be our 19th year. The craft show is sponsored by the Friends of the Ranchos Library and the parade is sponsored by the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce. There will be a Friends Book Sale in the vacant store on the west side of the library with lots of excellent buys. We hope to see everyone there.

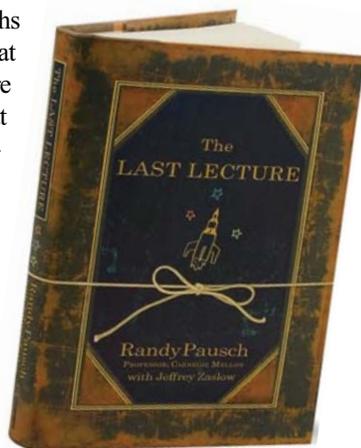
The following week the COPS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS Grizzlies Baseball Game will be held on May 16 at the Fresno Grizzlies Stadium. Tickets for the game are \$10 with half the proceeds going to the Fresno and Madera Sheriff's Foundation, the CHP, Children's Hospital, Ranchos Middle School Boosters and the Friends of the Ranchos Library. Ranchos Middle School teacher, Ted Januse, together with Scott Jones from the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, have organized this event to raise awareness and funds for kids with special needs. You may wonder how the Ranchos Library became involved. Ted and his family are strong supporters of the Ranchos Library and invited our Friends group to become a part of this really worthy event. A portion of the tickets sales will go toward building of our new library. Please participate in sponsoring this event and by attending the game on May 16. Tickets and T-shirts will be on sale at the Ranchos Library.

The Summer Reading Program is only eight weeks away. Stop by or call the library for a schedule of weekly activities. The kick-off is June 18 at noon with games, activities and snacks. It will be a summer of fun and creativity at the Ranchos Library.

Book Recommendations

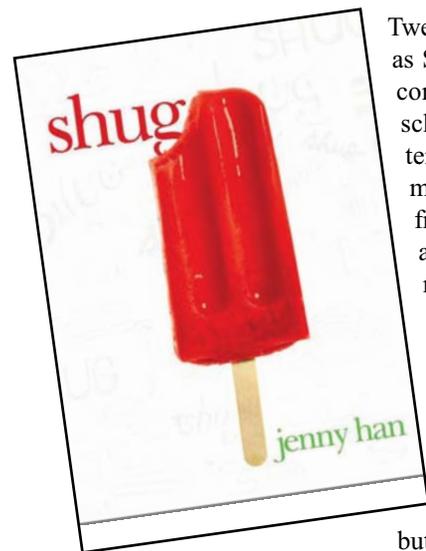
Adult non-fiction: *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch.

What would you do if you knew you had only a few months to live? Randy Pausch, a Professor of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University, decided to give one final lecture — the best lecture of his life. Thinking mainly about what his wife and three young children would find most meaningful, he designed his lecture using the theme, "Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams," which wasn't about dying but about living, overcoming obstacles, going after your dreams. Why not just make a home video, his wife asked. Randy's answer was that by giving it in front of an audience and hearing their response, it would lend a sense of credibility to his words that his children might not sense otherwise. Plus, that is what he does — lecture. So after putting together a slide presentation of his life story, Randy gave the lecture of his life, literally. It is a wonderful, heartfelt testimony of his experiences and belief in the wonders of life.



Young Adult Fiction: *Shug* by Jenny Han.

Twelve-year-old Annemarie Wilcox, otherwise known as Shug by her family, discovers that life gets more complicated when you transition from elementary school to junior high. Her friends are suddenly interested in dating and fashion and being cool. No more shooting hoops or riding bikes with her best friend Mark. He's interested in someone else now and won't give her the time of day. Plus, Shug's mom and dad are having problems. Dad is always gone and Mom is drinking too much lately. Everything is so confusing. But Shug has a better sense of herself than she realizes and in her funny, quirky way she brings out the best in everyone. It's a wonderful coming of age story for young girls who may be experiencing similar emotions as well as for those of us who have been there but may have forgotten what it's like to be 12.



Juvenile Picture Book: *Fletcher and the Springtime Blossoms* by Julia Rawlinson, and illustrated by Tiphonie Beeke.

Fletcher, a fox cub, is enjoying the beauty and magic of spring until he wanders into the orchard where it appears that snow is falling. Quickly

he rushes to tell his friends, the birds, who then join him to tell Porcupine and all the other animals that it is not spring yet. Snow is falling in the orchard. But the silly bunnies have a brilliant idea: let's go play in the snow. So Fletcher and all his friends go to play in the snow in the orchard only to discover that what looked like snowflakes are really petals falling from the trees. If you have ever walked through an orchard in spring you may have experienced that same feeling that it was snowing blossom petals and the beauty of spring itself. The illustrations have the soft, muted feel of impressionist art. It's a delightful story for small children.



Check out these books and more at the Ranchos Library and remember your library card: Don't leave home without it!

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New "Wiki" Website Offers Location for Discussions of Ranchos Topics

By Ellen Mester

Not everyone's voice is heard at our town hall meetings. Citizens who can't attend for various reasons, citizens who didn't know there was a town hall meeting and people who just don't like to go to meetings of any kind are the voices we want to hear. The Ranchos Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) has created a "wiki" that is an interactive website. Citizens can discuss local topics such as the bypass, the speed limit and water problems (just to name a few) on the dis-

ussion board. They can post events on the calendar. They can use valuable links to connect to government websites, The Ranchos.com website, GVUSD and others to obtain useful information. Other than the usual phone tree, Ranchos Independent or fliers, this will be the fastest way to give and receive information.

There are a few rules, however, that we all will need to follow. First: this is not a political site. Politics in the form of party names, slang terms, personal names, platforms or otherwise are not allowed. The

CAC is a non-political organization that retains the right to delete anything political. Second: citizens must be courteous to one another no matter how our opinions differ. Think of it as a civil debate or discourse. Third: No profanity or inappropriate language or images are allowed.

The goal of the CAC and this wiki is to allow our community to share information and to discuss important issues that pertain to all of us. We want to help people find answers from the correct source and to prevent inaccurate rumors from causing misunderstandings between the parties in-

involved. And we hope to engage people who otherwise would not participate.

Please check it out and let us know what you think. It is free to join and we hope you will. And please post community events to the calendar. We are still working out the bugs so if you have any problems please post it on the discussion board or contact me at the library. Everyone is welcome to attend the CAC meetings the last Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Ranchos Library.

The website is www.ranchoscac.wikispaces.com.

D.O.G. cont. from P.4

ing Salary and Fringe Benefit Schedules for the Elected, Classified, and Unclassified Service, including all applicable salary charts. (09030)"

In these troubled times it seems Madera County is doing quite well with almost across the board pay raises. Elected officials, Classified employees and unclassified employees nearly all got raises (I say nearly all just to cover my butt). I have not found any that didn't get a raise. This of course does not include our Board because their raises are automatic and

beyond even their control.

And finally – The pot of gold at the end of the power lines has been discovered. We were somehow not satisfied pouring millions of our road dollars into improving Road 26 and Ave 17 so Madera City can annex it, so we are now going after the underground utility conversion credits the County has been accumulating as the City used all of their credits.

A special note to Frank Bigelow and Tom Wheeler: you better get your hand into the bucket before it runs out. There are several unincorporated areas that could use these credits.



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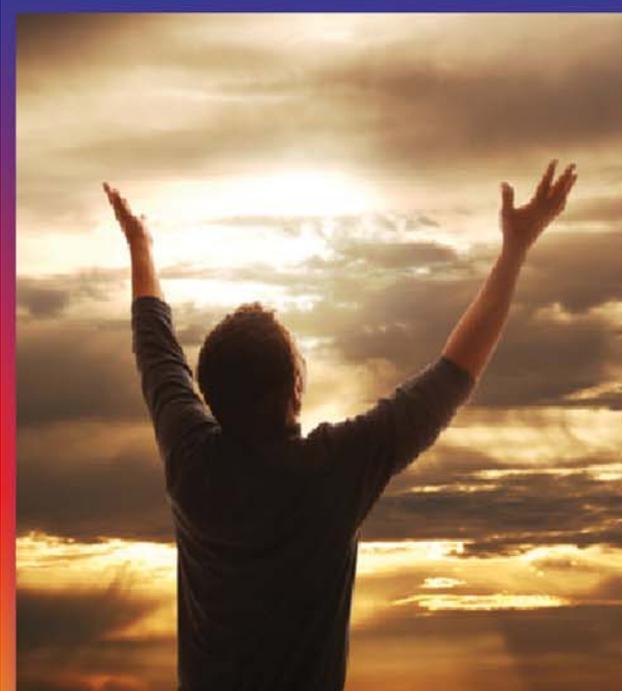
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Youth.....6 p.m.	Rainbows (Boys & Girls 3-4)

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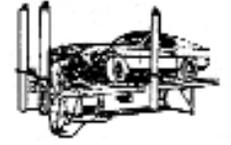
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Aunt Jean's Ranchos Recipes
 by Jean Briner

If my grandma was still alive, I can just hear her say "Land sakes – what is a Microwave?" I have a book written by one of her older sisters – (grandma was the youngest of 12 children) and she writes: "I can remember the first [wood] stove my father bought. My mother had formerly cooked over the fireplace. You can imagine our glee over a new stove." Can you imagine cooking Thanksgiving dinner in your fireplace? Today, most microwaves are just used for warming the baby's bottle, heating up last night's leftovers or popping corn for movie night.

About 35 years ago I bought my first microwave. I bought it at Gottschalk's. It was a Sharp with a turntable and a meat probe. As well as I can remember, I think I paid around \$300 for it. In purchasing the microwave at Gottschalk's I took a microwave cooking class. I even joined a Microwave Cookbook club, and I have 10 or 12 cookbooks ranging from appetizers to dessert and anything in between. Last year the microwave I had stopped working and I replaced it with a Sharp, with a turntable, that I bought at Target ... for about \$65. They have definitely come a long way.

Last month when I called my niece for that lemon cake recipe (by the way, did any of you try it?) we were talking about different recipes and she told me she had a recipe for the best peanut brittle she had ever eaten, "... and Aunt Jean, it's cooked in the microwave!" I asked her for the recipe and I jotted it down. After I hung up, I remembered making peanut brittle in the class I took at Gottschalk's. I found the box with all those recipes we accumulated from the class (who throws recipes away?) and there it was – the exact recipe my niece gave me that was her favorite. Thanks Brenda for jogging my memory!

PEANUT BRITTLE

- 1 C sugar
- 1 tsp butter
- ½ C white corn syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 C roasted peanuts
- 1 tsp baking soda

Have a lightly buttered cookie sheet ready. In a 1 1/2 qt. casserole, stir together the sugar and syrup, and microwave (MW) on high for 4 minutes. Stir in the peanuts and MW on high 3-5 minutes till light brown. Stir in the butter and vanilla, blending well, and MW on high for 1-2 minutes. Add soda and stir until light and foamy. Pour mixture onto cookie sheet and let cool for ½ hour to one hour then break into small pieces and store in airtight container.

TACO SALAD

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 6 oz. red taco sauce
- 1 lb. can chili beans
- 1 pkg. dry taco seasoning

Cook meat until done, about 6 minutes on high. Stir occasionally to break up meat then add sauces, beans and MW 5 minutes on high. Mix salad of lettuce, tomatoes, green onions (or any other vegetable as desired). Add 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese to salad mixture then add 1 bag of taco chips that have been broken up. When ready to serve, add hot mixture to salad, toss well, and serve at once.

CRUSTLESS QUICHE LORRAINE

- 1 C sour cream

Please see **RECIPES** on P. 13

Senior Report

Annual Festival Scores Huge Success

By Eleanore Burchell

Our 17th Annual Home and Garden Festival held on April 4 was extremely well attended by the Madera Ranchos residents as well as buyers from Clovis, Fresno, Madera and Chowchilla. Two couples from Reedley and Dinuba told us how much they enjoyed our sale and they will return each and every year. A biscuit and gravy breakfast along with orange juice, cinnamon rolls and coffee was served and later a hamburger/hot dog BBQ was available for lunch.

The garden section did extremely well as they had many (and I mean MANY) fruit trees, Japanese Maples, flats of flowering plants and more. The bake sale also did well. Many jars of jellies were available and sold well. Did you see the iced cookies in the shapes of flowers and presented in pots? Extremely cute idea. The Treasure House had some very nice furniture and other items to sell. We had our boutique and produce sale in the main building with the vendors who sold purses and aprons.

Many thanks must be extended to those who volunteered to help us, namely Boy Scout Troop 118 and their leader, Rosemarie Coulthard. Then there was Lee Fannuchi who shared his knowledge of growing citrus trees in the Valley along with his excellent display of fruit. Additionally there were the Master Gardeners, our local library and all the others who gave of themselves for our sale. The next monthly sale will be held on May 2 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Our next activity of interest will be a fundraiser Bike-Ride to be held on Saturday, May 16 from 8 a.m. to noon. Interested riders must be 18 years old or older. Water and snacks will be provided along the course as well as lunch at the end. Interested bikers, please call Joann at 645-4864.

The FMAAA (Fresno/Madera Area Agency on Aging) van will be at the Ranchos/Hills Senior Center on May 27 at 11 a.m. We are located at 37330 Berkshire and you are invited to come see what programs would help you.

Let's remember to support the Flatlanders Parade and activities on May 9 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. We will have a float and a booth which will sell our book books and raffle tickets.

Remember the plant, produce and boutique sections are available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Thursdays evenings between 6 and 9 p.m.

By the time this issue is delivered, our travelers will be returning from Ireland. I'm so anxious to see their photos and hear their tales.

Did you know two nurses from the Madera County Health Department Periodically come to the center to give FREE check-ups? The screenings include personal health history reviews, blood pressure checks and blood sugar checks. Low-cost blood tests are available, nutrition and health education is available and referrals to medical providers

Please see SENIORS on P. 22

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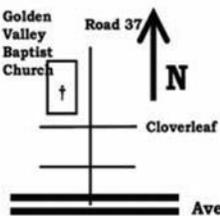
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RECIPES cont. from P. 11

- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 3 eggs – beaten
- 8 slices crisp bacon, crumbled
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1 can french fried onion
- 1 C shredded cheese (your choice)
- 3 or 4 green onions, chopped fine

Combine all ingredients and pour into quiche dish (or large pie plate) with 1 T butter. MW on high for 6 minutes, checking at this point. Should not jiggle at this point, but don't overcook. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting.

MICROWAVE BACON

To cook two or three slices, place bacon on one or two layers of paper towels on a paper plate or on a heat resistant microwaveable dish. Cover with a paper towel to prevent spattering. For more than three slices of bacon, place bacon on several layers of paper towels in an oblong heat resistant dish. There is too much grease to use a paper plate for large amount of bacon. Cook bacon on full power for about 1 minute per slice. Crispness depends on the thickness of the bacon, the microwave and degree of doneness you want.

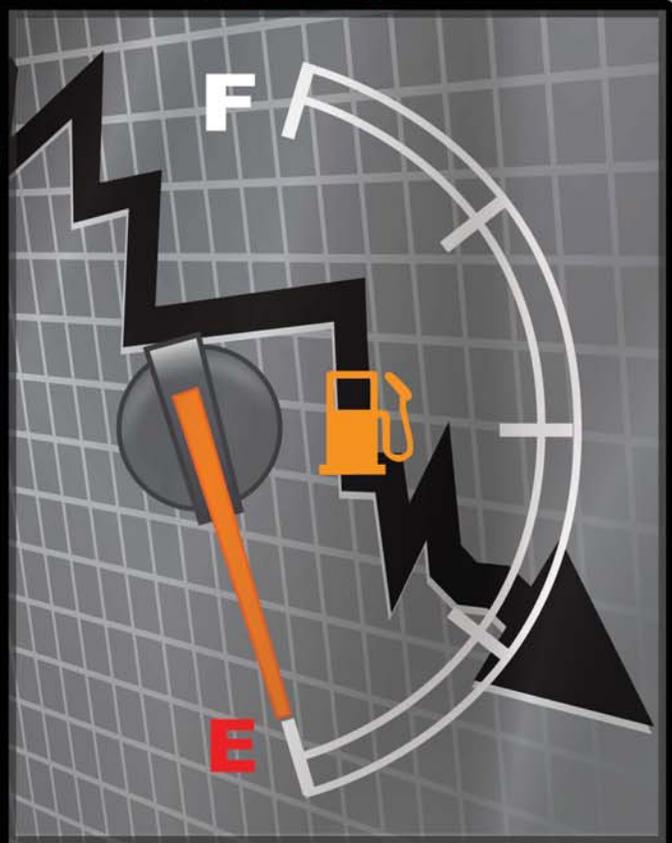
BEEF STEW

- 1 lb beef stew meat
- Celery
- Potatoes
- Salt, pepper, and garlic powder
- Carrots
- 2 cans tomato sauce
- Onions
- 2 cups water

Chop vegetable to bite-size pieces. Place all ingredients in casserole. Make

Since the weather is beginning to warm up a bit, I think now is a good time to consider salads. The May article will feature salads of all kind. If you or your family have a favorite salad or salad dressing, I would love to hear from you. I didn't intend for this article to turn into an autobiography of what our family eats so I really need to hear from you.

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Schools Renovating Playgrounds

Golden Valley Unified School District provides sports fields for a variety of athletic organizations within the Ranchos community. For years the district has struggled with heavy use and difficult ground conditions while attempting to maintain proper turf on the playfields at Webster Elementary, Sierra View Elementary, and Liberty High School. These facilities host countless recreational level sports for our community with Baseball, Football, and Soccer being the primary sports utilizing the fields. As involvement increases in the participation of athletic organizations in the Ranchos area, it becomes more difficult to adequately maintain the site playfields.

During the summer months, while use from outside athletic organizations is at a minimum, several of the playfields will be closed for rehabilitation. GVUSD is in the process of creating a facility use schedule that will take into consideration the necessary down time for turf rejuvenation of the playfields in order to keep the surfaces safe and suitable for use.

2009 Playfield Renovation Schedule Liberty High School

- June 5, 2009: Close all soccer fields at Liberty High School
- *July 15, 2009: Tentative date for access to Ponding Basin Playfields
 - * Depends on renovation start date; It will take approximately 2-1/2 months to grow a satisfactory turf.
- August 13, 2009: Reopen all soccer fields at Liberty High School
- January 2010: New Ranchos Middle School playfields available for use

During the period of time Liberty High soccer fields are closed, LHS Football will be using the upper ponding basin for practice and Ranchos Youth Football will either work around LHS football practice schedule or use Webster or Sierra View fields for practice.

All activities will be assigned through the districts facilities use agreement. Facility Use request forms are available at each school site.

Middle School Successes Grow



Ranchos Middle School continues to surge ahead in pursuit of excellence! On Saturday, March 28, Ranchos competed against all of the Madera County middle schools in the annual Academic Pentathlon sponsored by Madera County Office of Education. Winners swept both grade levels this year and plaques were received for both grades. Congratulations to our students and coaches for continued improvement. On April 3, Ranchos Middle School hosted its ninth annual Civil War Ball. Attendance was outstanding and the décor continues to aspire to new levels. Embellishments this year included back drops

created by the High School art class and Ms. Jessica Ketchum. To go beyond our local successes, Mr. Pinkard received a personal phone call from State Superintendent Jack O'Connell on Wednesday, April 3 congratulating him by naming Ranchos Middle School a California Distinguished School. This means that RMS stands in the top 10 percent of schools in California. Mr. Pinkard congratulates his students, staff, board, superintendent, and the community for their hard work and dedication to excellence. The multiple wins and successes are a byproduct of a community that works together.

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Golden Valley Chamber

2009 Flatlander's Day

Parade Day: May 9, 2009 • \$10 Entry Fee

Group Individual Business

Group or Business Name _____

Individual entry or responsible person's name _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Theme of Entry: _____

Will youngsters walk with the entry? Yes No

Approx. number of participants _____ Approx. length _____ ft.

Entry Category (select ONE most closely suiting your entry):

Horses (Single) Horses (Group) Explain: _____

Band/Music Name: _____

Floats (Non-profit) Name: _____

Floats (Business) Name: _____

Floats (Other) Name: _____

Children's Groups Name: _____

Dance Groups Name: _____

Single Entry (Children) Name: _____

Single Entry (Adult) Name: _____

Novelty Name: _____

Additional information: _____

Parade begins at 10 a.m. Sharp!
Registration of entries begins at 8:30 a.m.
Parade route: Topper along Ave. 12 to Kensington

The undersigned entrant and all participants agree to abide by all parade rules, follow the directions of parade officials and agree to release parade officials from any and all responsibility from loss, damage, and/or injury to any person or property as a result of participation in the parade.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Bring or mail this form by **May 6** to: **Golden Valley Chamber 37167 Ave. 12 Ste. 5C • Madera, CA 93636** or call **645-4001**

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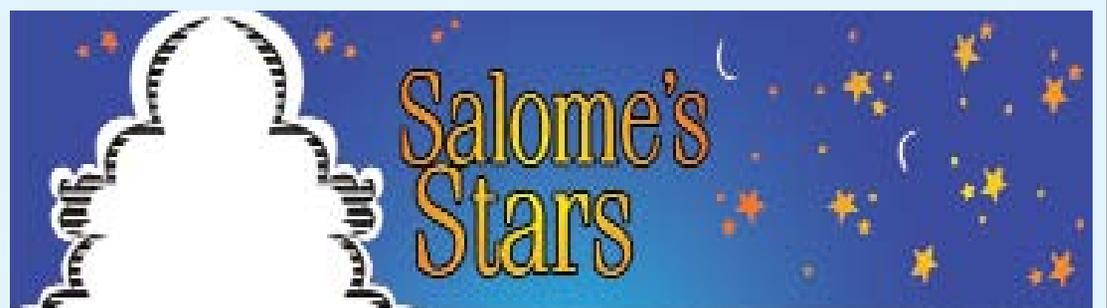


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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're doing better on the flexibility issue, but you still need to loosen up a bit to show you can be less judgmental and more understanding about certain sensitive matters.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your personal aspect continues to dominate this week. But try to make time to deal with important career-linked matters as well. A change of plans might occur by the weekend.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Excuses are not really needed for much of the confusion occurring this week. However, explanations from all parties could help in working things out to everyone's satisfaction.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) That surprising (but pleasant) recent turn of events continues to develop positive aspects. But be prepared for a bit of a jolt on another issue that needs attention.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Creating a fuss might bring you that attention you want. But are you prepared for all the explaining you'd have to do? Better to use more subtle ways to make your bid.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) With education continuing to be a strong factor this week, this could be the time to start learning some new skills that can later be applied to a bid for a potential career move.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You might do well to reconsider some of your current time priorities before you get so deeply involved in one project that you neglect meeting a deadline on another.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) With an important decision looming, you need to be careful about the information you're getting. Half-truths are essentially useless. Get the full story before you act.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Find out what everyone's role is expected to be before accepting that workplace proposal. Getting all the facts now could prevent serious problems later on.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) A flexible position on a workplace matter could be the best course to follow during the next several days. A personal issue also benefits from an open-minded approach.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Involving too many people in your workplace problem can backfire. Remember: Allegiances can shift. Ask trusted colleagues for advice, but don't ask them to take sides.

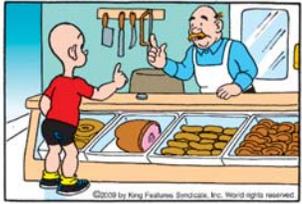
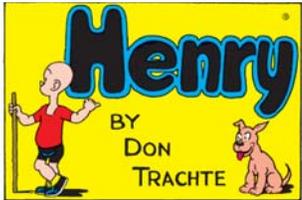
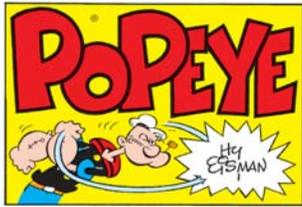
PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Before submitting your suggestions, take more time to sharpen the points you want to make. The clearer the presentation, the more chance it has to get through when submitted.

Born this Week

Your clear sense of who you are gives you confidence
when you need to tackle difficult situations.

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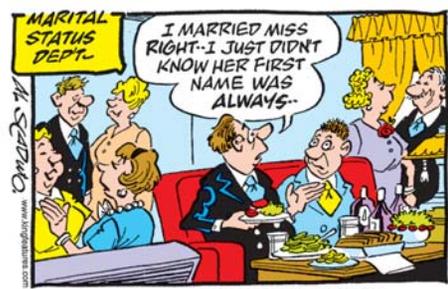
FUN PAGES



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



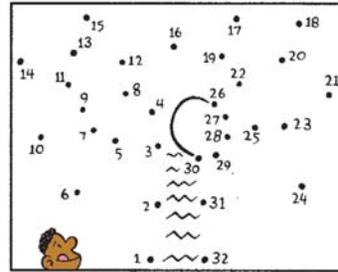
BY AL SCADUTO



ASK FOR DIRECTIONS-- AND WHA? HUH? HOW'S THAT AGAIN?



Thank to E. SQUEGLIO, FLORAL PARK, N.Y.



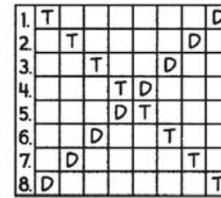
DO YOU KNOW what nut is a pleasant winter's drink? Connect the dots and find out!

Answer: COCONUT.



by Charles Barry Townsend

FIND THE BIG WORDS



Using the definitions and anagrams below, find the eight eight-letter words that fit into the framework on the left. For each definition, the letters in the two anagram words must be unscrambled and used to form the word asked for.

DEFINITIONS:

1. What you get for speeding.
2. A military base jail.
3. No longer in fashion.
4. A nuclear plant accident.
5. A tough biscuit.
6. Seaward pull of waves.
7. To argue in favor of.
8. Type of door lock.

ANAGRAM:

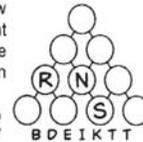
- teed + tick
- odes + tack
- duet + mood
- town + meld
- dart + hack
- rude + town
- toad + cave
- load + debt

A LUCKY PROBLEM! Professor Flunkum challenges you to write a math expression, using seven 7's, that will equal 100. You have seven minutes to pass this test.



One Answer: $(7 \times 7) + (7 \times 7) = 100$

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



Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Dirk, dirt, dint, dins, dent, dens, debs, debt.

Wishing Well

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

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

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DO WORDS AND PHRASES

MAGIC MAZE

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

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

- Ado
- Doer
- Doodad
- Doom
- Doozy
- Howdy-do
- Make do
- No can do
- Outdo
- Overdo
- Redo
- Undo
- Well-to-do
- What to do
- Whoop-de-do

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TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. MOVIES: What was the name of the college that was the setting for "Animal House"?
2. AD SLOGANS: What product had the slogan, "They plump when you cook 'em."?
3. AUTOS: What inspired Cadillac's iconic tail fins in the 1950s?
4. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What does the Ishihara test determine?
5. MUSIC: Who was the last musician to perform at the 1969 Woodstock music festival?
6. TELEVISION: What was Phoebe's twin sister's name on the sitcom "Friends"?
7. ANATOMY: How long does it take for a toenail or fingernail to grow from base to tip?
8. WEATHER: Most tornadoes in the U.S. form during what period of the year?
9. FAMOUS QUOTATIONS: Which 20th century comedian said, "Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city"?
10. GEOGRAPHY: What is the only Canadian province that borders the Great Lakes?

Answers

1. Faber College
2. Ball Park Franks
3. Twin rudders on Lockheed P38 aircraft
4. Color blindness
5. Jimi Hendrix
6. Ursula
7. Six months
8. Spring or summer
9. George Burns
10. Ontario

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Click on "Local News" at

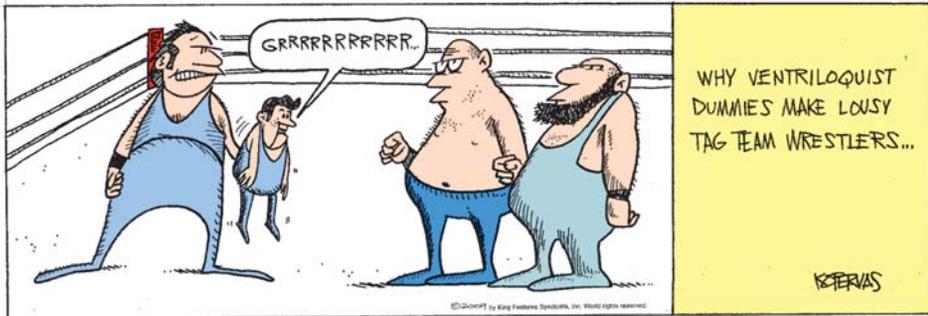
Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



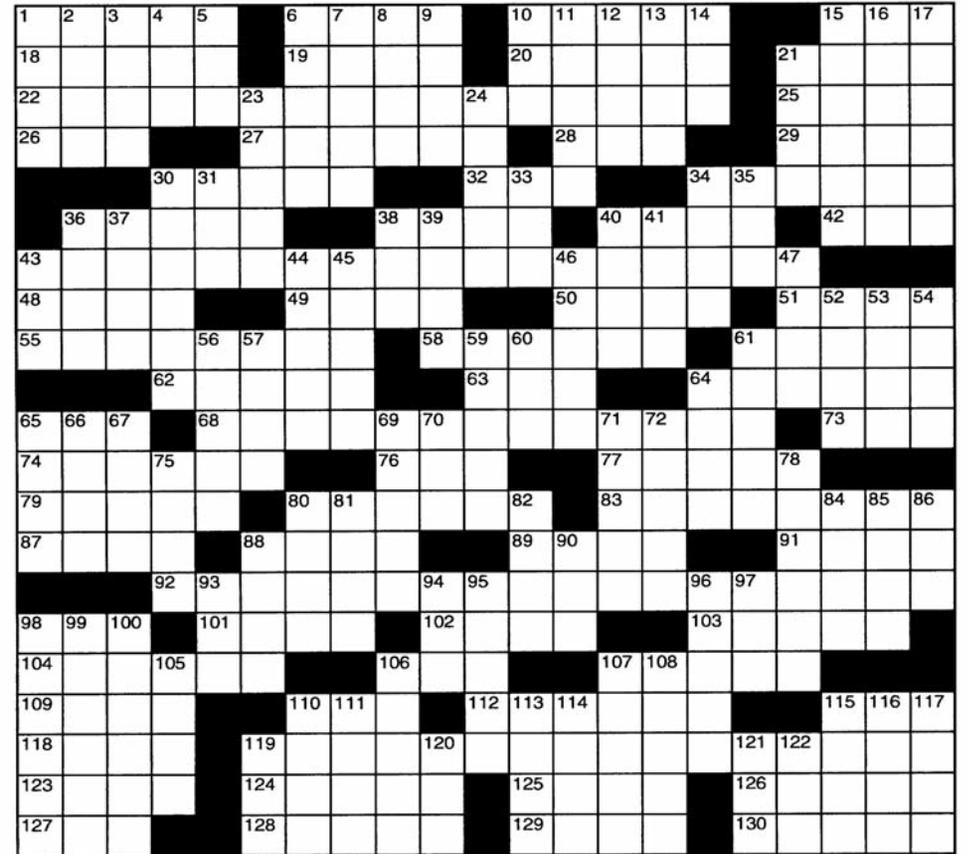
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Differences: 1. Man's hat is black. 2. Folds are missing. 3. Woman's blouse is different. 4. Bird added on the right. 5. Food is missing from basket. 6. Bird is eating a cracker.

Super Crossword



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- ACROSS**
- 1 Polish cake
 - 6 Melodious
 - 10 Tower material?
 - 15 Yak
 - 18 Caustic
 - 19 Mideastern airline
 - 20 '28 Irving Berlin song
 - 21 Antitoxins
 - 22 Dashiell Hammett book
 - 25 Evangelist Roberts
 - 26 Wield an axe
 - 27 Hood or Tell
 - 28 Have a hot dog
 - 29 Woods dweller?
 - 30 Explorer Sebastian
 - 32 Choose, with "for"
 - 34 Actor Howard
 - 36 "Mr. Television"
 - 38 Loaded
 - 40 Siouan people
 - 42 Hill or Haggerty
 - 43 Harper Lee book
 - 48 Utah city
 - 49 Dole (out)
 - 50 Algerian seaport
 - 51 "My word!"
 - 55 Won over
 - 58 Singer John McEntire
 - 61 Work like a horse
 - 62 Slip cover?
 - 63 Mauna —
 - 64 Soap ingredient
 - 65 Actor's lunch?
 - 68 Mark Bowden book
 - 73 "Ask — Girl" ('59 film)
 - 74 Main drag
 - 76 Mare's morsel
 - 77 Textbook headings
 - 79 Senator Feng
 - 80 Kathy of country
 - 83 Soldered or stapled
 - 87 Maintain
 - 88 Splinter group
 - 89 Grandma
 - 91 Emulated the Valkyries
 - 92 Agatha Christie book
 - 98 Conflict
 - 101 Rational
 - 102 Geometry calculation
 - 103 "Rawhide" prop
 - 104 Indifference
 - 106 August one?
 - 107 Religious belief
 - 109 Big vein
 - 110 1 Down, e.g.
 - 112 Adds a lane
 - 115 Bell and Barker
 - 118 Composer Siegmester
 - 119 Willa Cather book
 - 123 Word with dance or dunk
 - 124 Art supporter?
 - 125 — -Neisse Line
 - 126 Tenor Beniamino
 - 127 Internet acronym
 - 128 Put on a pedestal
 - 129 Actor Calhoun
 - 130 Burger topping
 - 6 So out it's in
 - 7 Vote in
 - 8 Hit hard
 - 9 Opposite of aweather
 - 10 "Baby — Want You" ('71 hit)
 - 11 Jeeves' profession
 - 12 Namu or Willy
 - 13 Crowd-burst?
 - 14 Itch
 - 15 McRaney or Ford
 - 16 Lawrence's locale
 - 17 Scrimshaw material
 - 21 Weeps
 - 23 Warhol subject
 - 24 Dress
 - 30 European peninsula
 - 31 Half and half?
 - 33 Sweater letter
 - 34 Meat cut
 - 35 Always, to Arnold
 - 36 — yesterday (naive)
 - 37 Got by, with "out"
 - 38 "Baloney!"
 - 39 Like some donuts
 - 40 Brute
 - 41 Stowe sight
 - 43 Sock part
 - 44 Basic organism
 - 45 Battlefield doc
 - 46 See 4 Down
 - 47 Farmer's place
 - 52 Festive
 - 53 Connecticut town
 - 54 Moist
 - 56 Photo book
 - 57 Annoy
 - 59 Bring bliss
 - 60 At once
 - 61 Present company?
 - 64 Ridicule
 - 65 "Very funny!"
 - 66 Tel —
 - 67 Insignificant
 - 69 Yaphet of "Homicide"
 - 70 Toque or topee
 - 71 Guitarist Eddy
 - 72 Available
 - 75 DEA officer
 - 78 Knee-slapper
 - 80 Nasty
 - 81 Zenith
 - 82 Pay to play
 - 84 Night noise
 - 85 Actress Purviance
 - 86 — Plaines, IL
 - 88 Corset part
 - 90 "The truth at last!"
 - 93 Hibachi residue
 - 94 Rob Roy's refusal
 - 95 Adult
 - 96 Coming from Cork
 - 97 "Saving Private Ryan" extras
 - 98 Solidarity leader
 - 99 Lunar spacecraft
 - 100 Tire type
 - 105 Swarm (with)
 - 106 Surgical tool
 - 107 Postpone
 - 108 Threshold
 - 110 Food fish
 - 111 Cuban currency
 - 113 Violinist
 - 114 Extinct bird
 - 115 Christmas visitors
 - 116 Chip off Woody's block
 - 117 Rind
 - 119 Actress Leoni
 - 120 Seville shout
 - 121 Self-esteem
 - 122 China's — Biao
- DOWN**
- 1 British city
 - 2 Pain
 - 3 Make coffee
 - 4 With 46 Down, "Vertigo" star
 - 5 Oklahoma city

SENIORS cont. from P. 12

and community services, if needed, can be made. Their health screenings of adults, age 50 and OVER, at the center result ONLY when they receive your calls. If you are interested in taking advantage of their services, call Carla or Melody at 675-7893 to make an appointment.

On Thursday, May 5 at 11:30 a.m. our members will celebrate the May Birthdays and Anniversaries at Sal's Mexican Restaurant, 7476 Alluvial Ave., Fresno (corner of Fresno & Alluvial). On June 23 at 11:30 a.m. we will be celebrating at Huckleberry Restaurant located at Champlain and Perrin in Fresno. Our members and friends go out to breakfast, lunch or dinner at a different place each month. If you want to come just for fun, you are welcome to join us. If you are new to the area, lonely or just lost a spouse, we welcome you to come to see us. We are here for you. Many of our members have surely experienced your same situation.

THE UP SIDE

Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind.

In the senior years, many need someone to laugh with so come join our Thursday evening potlucks with games played afterward. There is a lot of fun here and remember, laughter is good for your body and soul and being happy does not mean everything is perfect; it means you have decided to see beyond the imperfections.

More Facts and Fun

A nutritionally balanced lunch program Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. Suggested price for 60 years and older is \$1.75. Reservations are needed a day in advance so remember to call Joann at 645-4864. We have a growing exercise program being held on Mon-

days, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. The participants are getting more than just exercise by attending – they have fun and share laughs. There is still room for you and you can attend all three days or just one or two of them. The Line Dancing class is held on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. This is fun and also a great way to exercise. You do not need to be a member to attend these classes. We have a large group but there is always room for one more: you! Fill your car with your friends or neighbors. They will enjoy finding new friends here, too. Come in and check these classes out.

Up and Coming Events

May 5 – 11 a.m. May Birthday and Anniversary Celebration, Sal's Mexican Restaurant, 7476 N. Fresno (Fresno @ Alluvial)

May 9 – Flatlanders Parade and Celebration 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

May 16 – 8 a.m. to noon Bike Ride Fund Raiser

May 27 – 11 a.m. FMAAA Van at center

Weekly Events

Monday through Friday Lunch Program, 11:30 a.m. (Reservations needed, call Joann at 645-4864)

Monday, Exercise Class, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Pinochle, noon until?

Wednesday, Exercise Class, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, noon to 1 p.m. Card BINGO

Wednesday, Line Dancing, 1 p.m.

Thursday, 6 to 9 p.m. Potluck then Hand & Foot, Pinochle or other games (Please bring your own plate and silverware)

Friday, Exercise Class, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Please feel free to come in and visit our Senior Center and get acquainted with our members. We welcome you to come and be one of us as our organization offers and promotes social, educational and civic activities in order to provide a better quality of life for all senior citizens. You have received an invitation. Hope to see you soon?

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Due to the weed regrowth and the continual hazard throughout the summer HAZARD ABATEMENT MUST BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE FIRE SEASON. This may require REDISCING/HAZARD ABATEMENT MORE THAN ONCE AS WEEDS AND HAZARDS MAY RETURN.

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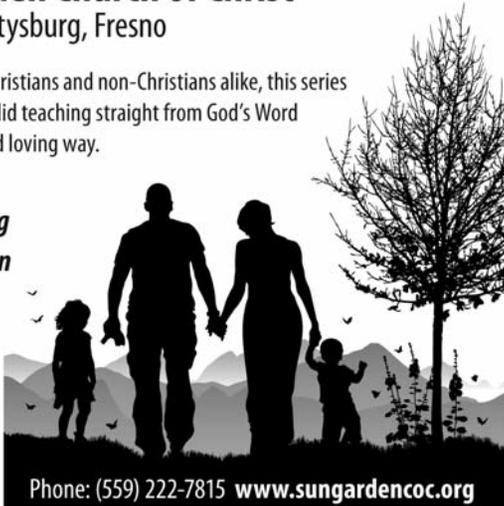
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4/09

TRAGIC cont. from P. 4

overwhelming grief is impossible to comprehend especially when someone is so young and seemed to have everything going for them and had their entire lives ahead of them. "We always knew we had something very special and we greatly appreciated it, but we never knew just how quickly it would be taken away," Susan Andersen said. "Little did we know that they were packing a lifetime of memories into such a short time," said Bill Cooper, Step Father to David and Matt.

Debbie Cooper, David and Matt's mother is greatly comforted by the fact that all three of these boys had a deep faith in God. "I'd always talked to my boys about God and they were on fire with the Holy Spirit." In hindsight she always believed she was preparing them for her death when in fact she now realizes that God was preparing her for their deaths. She wants everyone to know that they too can have the faith that they will see their loved ones again. "They would have wanted to honor God through their lives. These were the most perfect boys. Life is so short all you can do in your grief is to set your sights on where you'll see them again!" she said.

The families of David and Matthew Alison and Brannon Scharf are extremely grateful for the outpouring of support from friends, family and the community who have supported them in their time of loss. The funeral service was one of the largest services ever held at People's Church in Fresno, with approximately 3,000 people in attendance. While the family regrets that they did not have the opportunity to greet everyone per-

sonally they want to thank everyone for attending, for all the beautiful flowers, touching cards and for all the thoughts and prayers that have helped them during this difficult time.

The families are planning a joint memorial service to commemorate the anniversary and to honor and celebrate the lives of David and Matthew Alison and Brannon Scharf. They would like to extend an invitation to join them at this event scheduled for May 16 at 5pm. Please call Susan Andersen (Brannon's mother) at 559-363-2395 or Debbie Cooper (David and Matthews mother) at 559-322-7428 for more information.

The discovery of gold in 1848 put California on the map and helped inspire its glamorous nickname, "The Golden State." However Eastern Madera County now has many abandoned mines that are still open, and are very dangerous. It's estimated there are more than 47,000 abandoned mines, a treacherous legacy of the search for gold and other minerals and metals. Thousands of holes burrow into the Sierra foothills and the surrounding region. Federal and state officials say many of these 19th-century mines have tunnels and shafts that pose dangers ranging from bad air, contaminated water and rotting timbers to rats, rattlesnakes and bats. Although they're working to close off the most hazardous mines, officials estimate it could take 20 years to simply inventory and catalog California's abandoned mines. Gold mines constitute more than half the abandoned mines around the state. The state and federal governments have adopted the campaign "Stay Out, Stay Alive" to warn people of the hazards of old mines.

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4/09

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4/09

Growing a District of Excellence For Golden Valley Unified Schools

In just less than ten years that Golden Valley Unified has been a school district, they have been "Growing a District of Excellence" through their many accomplishments. This year the California Distinguished Schools Recognition Program targeted high performing middle and high schools.

Golden Valley Unified applied for the California Distinguished School Recognition Program this past December on behalf of Ranchos Middle School and Liberty High School. Both



Top people, like this year's STAR Award winners, help make Golden Valley an excellent school district.

schools received confirmation phone calls from California State Superintendent of Schools, Jack O'Connell on April 1, 2009 congratulating both schools on earning the rigorous and prestigious title of "California Distinguished School".

This year's eligibility criteria and selection process for the California Distinguished School Recognition Program required schools to provide an in-depth description of two successful "signature practice" programs that are helping to

close the achievement gap and can be replicated in other schools. For a school to be eligible to apply, they first had to meet rigorous eligibility criteria. Schools had to make their 2008 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets and Academic Progress Index (API) criteria.

Middle schools needed a school wide 2008 Growth API of at least 746. Ranchos Middle School had a 2008 Growth API of 790. High schools needed a school wide 2008 Growth API of at least 720. Liberty

High School had a 2008 Growth API of 791.

Ranchos Middle School Principal, Mr. Shane Pinkard, commented, "Earning the title of California Distinguished School is the result of a uniform effort by students, parents, teachers, and classified staff. RMS represents a committed family which endeavors to achieve excellence! Our two exemplary programs are

Please see **GROWING** on P. 25

Ara

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4/09

GROWING cont. from P. 24

outstanding and we welcome the opportunity to share our signature programs and enthusiasm with the public."

Liberty High School Principal, Ms. Darlea Livengood stated, "LHS has a dedicated, hardworking staff, a great group of kids, involved parents, and a community that supports us all the time. This recognition would not have been possible if not for the collaborative team effort from all the stakeholders within the school."

Ranchos Middle School and Liberty High School join the "California Distinguished School" ranks along with Golden Valley's two elementary schools who have also earned the prestigious title of California Distinguished School - Webster Elementary School in 2004 and Sierra View Elementary in 2008. Golden Valley Unified is just shy of their 10th year as a district in Madera County and every elementary, middle and high school in the district is now a California Distinguished School!

Adding to Golden Valley's "District of Excellence" accomplishments was Ranchos Middle School's "clean sweep" at the Madera County Academic Pentathlon Awards on March 28, 2009. Ran-

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chos Middle School 7th and 8th grade teams not only won the "Super Quiz" competitions for each grade level, but the 7th and 8th grade students won several individual medals in the Essay, Speech and Literature competitions. Their overall point totals in all categories earned them the title of 2009 Pentathlon winners for both 7th and 8th grade teams. This is also a first for Ranchos Middle School and Golden Valley Unified. Another example of a powerful and skillful team of educators, students and support staff coming together to help Ranchos Middle School students shine.

Golden Valley Unified Superintendent Sarah Koligian commented, "The accomplishments of Ranchos Middle School and Liberty High School are attributable to not only a team effort, but a focused team effort with a common vision. We thank the Governing Board of Trustees and the original founders of the Golden Valley Unified District for believing in a dream that has become a very successful reality."

Both Ranchos Middle School and Liberty High School will join several other California Distinguished Schools throughout California at the upcoming recognition ceremony in Anaheim on May 29, 2009.

New Pastor Comes to Ranchos

Rev. David F. Jones is the new Pastor at Golden Valley Baptist Church. Pastor David is a dynamic speaker who recently served as interim Pastor for Sierra Heights Baptist Church in Fresno. David comes to us with knowledge of computers, electronic devices and knowledge of video production. He has presented numerous seminars on business subjects and owns his own company. David is married to Linda and has raised three children. David and Linda

live in Fresno. David is a veteran of the Viet Nam War where he served in the Army Special Forces (the Green Berets) from 1967 to 1970. David loves music and has a great voice.

Come meet David at the Golden Valley Baptist booth at Flatlanders on May 9. Also check out the Golden Valley Baptist float in the Flatlanders Parade. Golden Valley Baptist is located on the corner of Cloverleaf Ave. and Road 37.

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For Sale - Production Horse Sale. 26th Annual at Lazy K Ranch in Chowchilla. Sat. June 6., 55 head AQHA and APHA. Price range of \$575.-\$975. Photos on line at www.lazykranch.com. Call **559-665-2908.**

For Sale - KING PILLOWTOP Mattress/Box, Never Used in Plastic, Cost \$700. Sacrifice \$295. **277-2511.**

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Help Wanted - Velvet Touch Car Wash looking for solid worker. Apply in person at **37075 Ave. 12, Madera Ranchos.**

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by Linda Thistle

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

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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.

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25		16		12	

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