

# The Ranchos Independent



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50¢

## A VISITOR TO THE RANCHOS



A Ranchos couple out home shopping are surprised when they see a pair of bald eagles in a Ranchos field.

*In This Issue*

*Editorial • Page 5 / Aunt Jean's Ranchos Recipes • Page 8  
Classifieds • Page 18 / Fun Pages • Pages 22 & 23*

## Is the Drought Over? *Maybe ...*

By Randy Bailey

Is the drought over? Are we close?

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture ... *maybe*.

The combination of snow and rain that have blanketed California in recent days have made a major impact on parts of California. According to the Jan. 19 Drought Monitor analysis, all of northern California

a north of Interstate 80 is now free of drought. This is the first time since Dec. 20, 2011. Additionally, if this storm continues, possibly through March, the Drought Monitor predicts "substantial drought relief is

possible." Of course, to completely replenish reservoirs and ground water, scientists still believe it's going to take multiple years of above-average rain and snow to completely end the state's seemingly perennial drought.

Although good news for Northern California, what about Central California? The Drought Monitor reveals many parts of Southern and Central California recovered by at least one drought category during this same period. To put in perspective the impact of this latest storm, on Jan. 3 nearly 82 percent of California was experiencing at least "abnormally dry conditions." By Jan.



10 that number had dropped to 65 percent. On the other end of the spectrum during this same time period, 18.31 percent of the state was in "exceptional drought," the highest level. By Jan. 10 that percentage had dropped to 2.13 percent. By comparison, last January 44.84 percent of California was in the highest category on the scale.

In the Sierra Nevada, there are eight stations set up specifically to measure precipitation and they are measuring at a record pace. The water year begins on Oct. 1 and in the northern Sierra through Jan. 10 the measurements are at 218 percent of average. This is the most precipitation on record for that time period. And

the rest of California is feeling it as well. During the same period, Bakersfield has measured almost 4 inches, an inch and a half above average, and Fresno is at 7.57 inches, more than double its normal average. Add to this the National Weather Service in Reno saying this was the biggest snowstorm to hit the Sierra in six years and multiple locations have snowfall totals over 200 inches.

Finally, according to California's Department of Water Resources, Hensley Lake is at 189 percent to average through Jan. 11 and Millerton Lake is at 144 percent.

Something's happening.

## Riverstone's First Neighborhood Opens with Ribbon Cutting

In front of a group of Madera County Supervisors, members of the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce, Madera Chamber of Commerce and others, representatives of McCaffrey Homes took a giant pair of scissors on



*On hand for a ribbon cutting for the grand opening of McCaffrey Homes at Riverstone at Highway 41 and Avenue 12 is a collection of Madera County Supervisors, officials from McCaffrey Homes and others.*

Friday, Jan. 20 and cut a ribbon signifying that their Santerra neighborhood is open for prospective home shoppers.

The neighborhood that will be comprised of approximately 100 homes is the first to open in a development that will eventually have over 6,500 homes when

fully built out. It has been in the works for the last year and McCaffrey personnel said that new homeowners could move in as early as this spring, weather permitting. The Santerra neighborhood features four floorplans,

starting in the low \$300,000s. The development also includes plans for schools, shopping, entertainment, businesses, parks and hiking and biking trails. Also unique to Riverstone is a community clubhouse called "The Lodge" that will be available to community members for special events.

## A VISITOR TO THE RANCHOS



By Randy Bailey

On Dec. 17 of last year, Madera Ranchos residents John and Deana Banasky were driving around the Ranchos looking at real estate. Longtime friends Paul and Susan Sobaje, owners of Continental Realty in the Ranchos, told the Banaskys about a home for sale in the 16000 block of Mark Road. The Banaskys decided to stop by and look at the home and after their visit they noticed a large flock of birds circling a vacant lot across the street from the property. Sobaje told them that the birds had been there all morning.

"As we passed it I thought I had seen a bald eagle," Banasky said. He and his wife stopped and backed up their car, and in so doing caused the birds to take wing. "They circled and landed again

and to our joy there was an adult bald eagle and an immature one."

The Banaskys pulled out their phones and snapped what they were convinced were "... once in a lifetime pictures."

According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the bald eagle's range is wholly within North America, ranging from Alaska to north-west Mexico. During the winter months,

bald eagles can be found, "... throughout most of California at lakes, reservoirs, rivers, and some rangelands and coastal wetlands," according to the Department's website, [www.wildlife.ca.gov](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov). Further, it states, "The State's breeding habitats are mainly in mountain and foothill forests and woodlands near reservoirs, lakes, and

rivers. Most breeding territories are in northern California, but the eagles also nest in scattered locations in the central and southern Sierra Nevada mountains and foothills, in several locations from the central coast range to inland southern California, and on Santa Catalina Island."

Near extinction nearly 30 years ago, the symbol of our nation has made a strong comeback and shows no signs of slowing down. The birds seen by the Banaskys were part of the hundreds of migratory bald eagles

that come down from Alaska and Canada for the winter months. Experts say these wintering birds may remain until February or March, or even into April. Some of the adults that winter here have been tracked to their nesting territories in north-central Canada 2,000 miles away.

Bald eagles prey on a variety of small animals, usually fish or waterfowl, and they eat carrion, including salmon, deer, and cattle.



*This pair of bald eagles spotted by the Banaskys in December sit in a field on Mark Road and are part of a larger migratory group that descend on California every winter.*

# “Road to Recovery” Helps Patients

An estimated 600 Madera County residents will learn they have cancer this year and getting to their scheduled treatment will be their greatest concern. To help patients get to the critical care they need without additional stress, the American Cancer Society “Road to Recovery” program can help provide free transportation to and from treatment for people who have cancer and who do not have a ride or are

unable to drive themselves.

“One cancer patient requiring radiation therapy could need between 20 to 30 trips to treatment over the course of six weeks,” said Donna Gavello, Program Manager, Mission Delivery for the American Cancer Society. “A patient receiving chemotherapy may need weekly treatment for up to a year.”

Many cancer patients may be elderly

and unable to drive, too ill to drive, or have no family members or friends who are able to provide regular assistance with transportation. The Road to Recovery program provides transportation options for patients in dire situations and currently is in need of volunteer drivers in Madera County, especially those who are willing to drive patients to treatment in Fresno. Volunteer drivers donate their time and the use of their cars so patients can receive the life-saving treatments they need. Drivers also

provide encouragement and support.

To volunteer, you must have a valid driver’s license, a safe and reliable vehicle, and proof of automobile insurance. Drivers must be 18 years of age or older and have a good driving history. They arrange their own schedules and can commit as many or as few hours as their schedule allows. The American Cancer Society provides free training to drivers and conducts criminal background and driving record checks.

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Dear Editor:

The following will serve to address Supervisor Tom Wheeler's criticism of Dale Drozen and his DOG Report:

Many feel that Supervisor Wheeler's comments regarding Dale Drozen's retirement income are inappropriate, irrelevant, suggestive of pension-envy and unbecoming of a representative of the people. However, many would agree with the Supervisor's statement that most cities and counties, throughout our country, are struggling with costs of supporting government employee pensions as retirees are living longer and the army of retirees are beginning to outnumber the taxpayers who are working to support them. All the more reason for our County Supervisors and staff to be frugal and fiscally responsible with the peoples' money. Supervisor Farinelli reminded us in his Christmas letter dated Dec. 19, 2016, that our County "faced bankruptcy" a short time ago and that should raise more concern for County Supervisors and Staff to be fiscally responsible with the peoples' money. On Dec. 21, 2016, the Sierra Star reported that Supervisor Frazier cautioned County staff to remain vigilant on fiscal conservatism in relation to the OHV [Off Highway Vehicle] Park project.

Supervisor Wheeler disputed what Mr. Drozen reported in regard to a proposed land lease by the County for an OHV Park project.

On Dec. 21, 2016, the Sierra Star quoted County CEO Eric Flemming as follows: "The County will lease the Jameson property (proposed property for the operation of the OHV Park) for \$1 - \$25,000 per month, but the County won't pay those amounts. The County will ask the owner to waive the monthly lease amount."

One can plainly see how confusing this is to constituents. Why would the owner of the property execute a lease with no teeth and one that would allow the County to easily wiggle out? Mr. Drozen's report indicates that the County must prove possession of the property in order to apply for a grant. So perhaps the purpose of the lease is to prove to the granting agency that the County has possession of the property by virtue of a lease document and nothing more. Maybe that can be clarified by the County. For taxpayers, the biggest issue regarding this project is the lack of planning and information available. As Mr. Drozen points out: "When asked where profits would go, we were told into the general fund; when asked how much, it was clear they had no idea, no business plan or any idea when they would have one."

Is this true? Or if a plan exists, why wouldn't the Supervisor make it available to the taxpayers? Don't taxpayers have the right to demand this information since they are footing the bill for this project? Another con-

stituent asked for information on the basic layout of the facility. As a businessman and Supervisor of our County, I'm sure the Supervisor will agree that these are valid concerns on the part of his constituents.

Another confusing aspect to this project is that Supervisor Rogers was quoted as saying: "We have no intention of the County running this as a business. We plan, as a County ... to allow people in the private industry, who want to run this to do so." (Sierra Star, Dec. 21, 2016)

If that is the case, the Supervisors can tell the people how many prospects have come forward, to date, who are willing to take on this project. A responsible Board and staff would require these prospects to submit background information, business history, financials, an operating plan and projections. Where are these documents?

There is a consensus that there is no OHV park in existence in California that is NOT subsidized by the taxpayers. Can the Supervisors confirm or deny this with documented proof? Supervisor Wheeler states: "... and we did do a study a few years ago asking you citizens what Madera needed and wanted. Recreating was at the top!" Constituents report that they have asked repeatedly to see this "study," but no "study" has been provided to the taxpayers. Perhaps this "study" exists, but it does seem a little disjointed to constituents since Madera County is surrounded by one of the greatest recreational sites in the world, in addition to many parks, lakes, hiking trails and other recreational facilities within the County.

The Supervisor states: "Since my 10 years of being a Supervisor, I've been asked more times for an OHV park than any other thing ..." This may be true, however constituents may not see this as a need to sacrifice and risk so much to satisfy a special interest group. Many of us would love to have a world class shopping facility, a few big box stores, cultural center and opera house a half mile away, so we won't have to travel long distances to get to these facilities, but that is not realistic. This can't be done without giving up the peace, tranquility, small town ambiance, low crime rate and other benefits. So, we must make compromises.

Perhaps those who have a genuine, burning desire to drive fast on dirt, create excruciating noise, pollute the air with the stench of gasoline and hot engines, kick up huge amounts of dust and dirt, and scare the wildlife out of existence will consider living in an area where all this is compatible with the community. Hopefully their new community won't have an issue with the cost of li-

Please see **LETTERS** on P. 13

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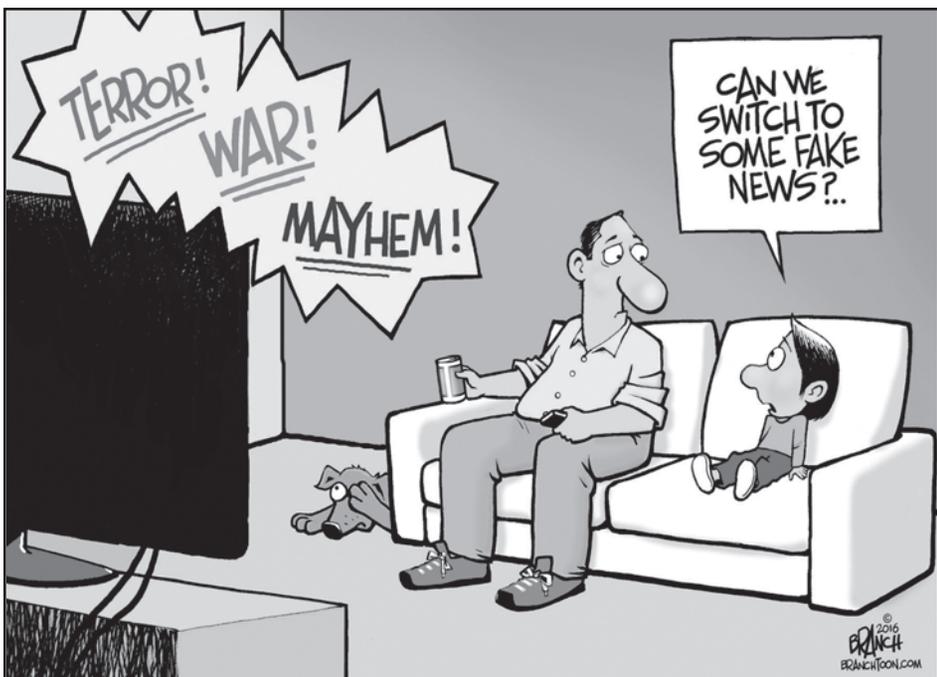
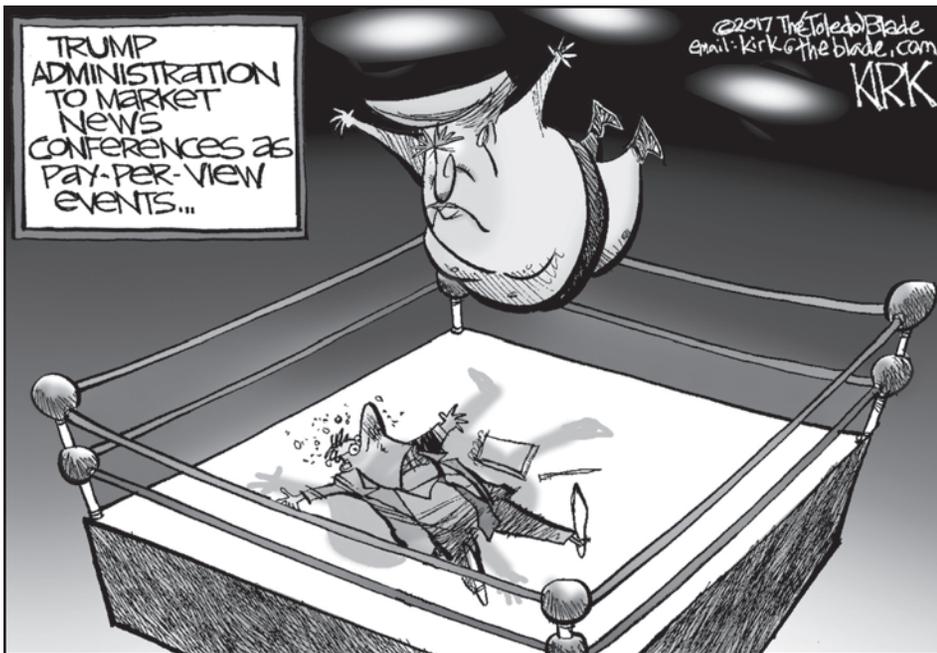
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Editorial

Goodbye Mr. Nice Guy

By Randy Bailey

I'm tired. This election has taken it out of me. But it's not what you might think that has fatigued me so. It wasn't month after month of campaigning or the candidate debates or the incessant talking heads on the radio and TV. It wasn't the negative political commercials. It wasn't the positive political commercials.

It was "them." The folks who had (and still have) a political belief contrary to mine.

Now, before you jump to any conclusions, I'm not saying I have a problem with people who have different beliefs. From the time I have been old enough to formulate a political thought there have people who have had opposing views. All I've ever asked -- and what I expect of myself -- is that you can back up what you're saying. Believing your belief because you believe it may work for you but I believe I'm going to need a bit more.

Something happened this election. In the past there have always been opposing views -- I remember holding many of them -- but we could always discuss them. We could talk to each other, usually didn't agree, but then walked away still friends.

Not this time.

This time lines were drawn. Sides

were taken. There was no gray area. There was no meeting in the middle. It was "my way or the highway."

It was "them."

"They" wouldn't let me put a Trump sticker on my own car out of fear that my car would be vandalized. I couldn't put a similar sign in front of my house for the same reason. I went to Hometown Buffet in Clovis (before it closed down) with my wife and was wearing a "Reagan/Bush '84" T-shirt my daughter gave me. A black gentleman eating at the restaurant became agitated and said loudly to his friend, "Look at this ni\*\*er here wearing a Reagan shirt. What the f\*ck?" I'd never been called that before. I felt like a rap artist.

I also have never worn the shirt again.

What's different now is this misplaced idea that you're not only entitled to your opinion but that you somehow have the right to demand your opinion be carried out -- forced upon others if necessary -- regardless of laws, decorum, consideration, empathy ... the list goes on and on.

When Donald Trump won the election -- and with 304 electoral college votes to Hillary's 227, he *did* win the election -- I thought (mistakenly), "Alright. It's over. Closure at last!"

Wrong.

Winning an election by the system we have had in place for over 240 years wasn't going to work for "them." They pleaded with electors to change their votes. When that didn't work they set about formulating ways to disrupt the inauguration, including chastising anyone who elected *to* perform for the new president.

See? It was their way or no way.

I didn't vote for Barack Obama, but I also didn't protest his election. I didn't march in the streets. I didn't cajole electors to change their minds. I didn't berate Beyonce and Jay-Z for choosing to perform at the new president's inaugural balls. Like a nice guy I just thought, "Four years from now. We'll get 'em next time."

Well, goodbye Mr. Niceguy. I'm not going to go out of my way to engage people with opposing viewpoints, but I sure as heck am not going to politely suffer in silence. Like Barack Obama said to John McCain back in 2009: "I won."

The Ranchos Independent

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# Hollywood Bullies in the Pulpit

## GENERATION WHY by eryn b. nyre



There's a reason I don't watch award shows anymore and it's largely because I get an eye twitch every time one of those arrogant and insufferable little liberal darlings of Hollywood decides to use their acceptance speech as a bully pulpit. They talk to us like they alone have the answers to the world's problems. If we just do what they say we can eliminate poverty and hunger (they have played an economics professor in a movie, after all), save the environment (we're just one more celebrity filled documentary away from a real solution) and everyone gets a new puppy.

I may not have watched the Golden Globes, but having always admired Meryl Streep's talent I did watch her accept the Cecil B. DeMille award. It had the distinguished honor of making both of my eyes twitch.

*They want to be the voice for the voiceless, which would be admirable except they really only want to be the voice of those who also happen to agree with them.*

She actually had the nerve to say she (and everyone else present) are vilified. She used that word. Evidently Hollywood, foreigners and the press are among the most vilified in society. I'm not sure which society she is referring to, but I'd kind of like to visit.

Where to start ... where to start. Okay, I'll just go in order:

You think Hollywood is vilified? You are standing on a stage in front of your many peers while millions of your admirers watch from home, hanging on your every word, and you think that meets the definition of vilified? Hollywood is not vilified. A group of people who are unwilling to accept any point of view other than their own is not vilified.

When it comes to foreigners I think you're confusing real life with those big-budget action films where every bad guy is a foreigner (Hypocrisy, party of one! Hypocrisy, party of one!).

If you really think that the average American just naturally hates foreigners, then you aren't listening. Their problem is with illegal immigrants. Illegal. That's a pretty big distinction that you're ignoring. I bet it makes you feel smug to act like you accept all people, regardless of their current state of lawfulness. I wonder, though, would you be as accepting if a group of criminals broke into your house and wouldn't leave? Would you see the distinction then?

I find it hilarious that you talk about the press being vilified. That's some pretty bad press. Doesn't it take the press to give you bad press? I smell irony. Perhaps journalists and news outlets who are tasked with reporting the news should make an effort to avoid sneaking bias and opinion into their stories and hoping no one would notice. There's a difference between being vilified and being called out for not doing your job – or do you not recognize that distinction either?

I'm tired of these "A-Listers" pretending to be noble. They claim that they understand what the unseen and unheard masses are going through. What do they know about being unseen and unheard? They are celebrities! Their entire success is dependent on others being able to see and hear them.

They want to be the voice for

Please see **GEN WHY** on P. 13

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The Bookshelf

# 27th Annual Flatlanders Day Craft Fair Booth Applications Now Available

By Amanda Judd

The Ranchos Library is off to an excellent start in 2017. We have already started preparation for the 27th Annual Flatlanders Craft Fair. We have vendor booth applications available at the library. We can also send applications to you via email. If you have questions or need an application, stop by the library or give us a call and we can get one to you. We are very excited to get moving forward with the Craft Fair this year and hope that you all will take the time to come out and join the community and stop in the library for a visit. Friends of the Ranchos Library will also be hosting their annual book sale and will be set up in front of the library. The Flatlanders Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, May 13 in the Maywood Shopping Center.

The Ranchos Library has also been doing some research about hosting a Paint Night. Paint Night would help raise funds for Friends of the Ranchos Library and at the end of the session each person that attended would go home with a painting of their very own creation. If this sounds like something you would be interested in participating in,

please contact the library and we can provide you with additional information and details.

We have received our theme for the 2017 Summer Reading Program. This year we are going to be "Reading by Design." The theme is inspired by individuals that make our world a more interesting and beautiful place. We hope that children will explore authors, architects, engineers and inventors and be inspired to create and design within our ever-changing world.

With that being said, we are always

looking for contributors to help us fund our Summer Reading Program. You may contribute gift cards that can be awarded at weekly drawings, funds to help us with our

weekly performances/activities and our grand prize. If you would like to donate, please contact the library for further information. Sponsors will be recognized on program

materials that are distributed to participants. We also like to have volunteers to help us during our programs as well. If you would like to be a helping member in the

community, please contact the library for further instructions. We can always use help to set up and clean up and for those who are in high school looking for their community service hours; this is the perfect opportunity to do so.

Tax season is creeping upon us and in the coming weeks IRS forms will be available. Ranchos Library will provide an update as soon as those forms and booklets are available.

As always, Ranchos Library thanks you all for your continued patronage and support. We are looking forward to a very exciting and successful 2017.



The Flatlanders Day Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, May 13 in the Maywood Shopping Center. You can get an application for a booth or just have your questions answered by contacting the Ranchos Library at 645-1214.

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## Dip in for Super Bowl

Can you believe it is Super Bowl time already? It seems like it was just Thanksgiving and Christmas. Were we so caught up in the election and the aftermath that time got away from us? Or are we just getting older and time is flying away? I remember growing up, we kids would be wishing for special days to come – birthdays, Christmas or even Halloween (yes, we had Halloween, even trick or treat back in “the old days”). My dad would tell us that we shouldn’t wish for time to pass because as we got older, it would pass faster every year. I sure wish he was here so I could apologize to him for thinking he had lost his mind.

Did your team make it to the Super Bowl? This year it will be Super Bowl LI (51), played on Sunday, Feb. 5 in the NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas. NRG Stadium has a seating capacity of 71,995 with a retractable fabric roof that can open or close in seven minutes. Ticket prices range from End Zone upper level (nose bleed) for \$3,738; Upper level 50-yard line \$5,031 to 50-yard line Field level from \$10,280 to \$11,437. That’s *each* ticket, ladies and gentlemen! Then on top of that you have to purchase a parking pass and food. Since you can’t bring food or drink in with you, you either purchase it there or wait until the game is over. If you are going to mortgage the house to buy a couple of tickets, might as well add a few bucks for food. At the stadium, the cost of a small beer is around \$7. A grilled chicken sandwich will run around \$18 and chicken tenders about \$13. They do allow tail-gating, but with real strict rules. You can’t even sneak a candy bar in: No backpacks, handbags, briefcases, etc. If you need to take anything in, it has to be in a clear Ziploc bag.

If you aren’t going to the Super Bowl game this year, what are you going to be doing? Going to a party, having one of your own, or just staying home and yell at the TV by yourself? Whatever you do, keep it simple. If you are serving food, remember: paper



## Aunt Jean's Ranchos Recipes

by Jean Briner

plates, plastic cutlery and paper napkins. If you are serving drinks that need cups, remember to write the person’s name on the cup (use a black Sharpie) so they won’t be using too many. As the food goes, keep it simple also. Anything you or your guest can pick up with your fingers, a chip or a toothpick.

A couple of my favorite dips:  
**Ro\*Tel Queso Dip**

1 can Ro\*Tel Original Diced Tomato & Green Chilies  
1 pkg. (16 oz.) Velveeta – Cut into ½ in cubes.

In a microwave-safe bowl combine the Ro\*Tel (do not drain!) and the cheese. Cover (using plastic wrap or I used a salad plate) and microwave on high for three minutes. Stir mixture and continue cooking another two minutes. Remember when handling this bowl to be sure to use pot holders as the bowl will be extremely hot. I wouldn’t let a child handle this dish. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips.

**Seven Layer (or more) Dip** – extremely simple.

On a flat platter or cookie sheet, layer the ingredients.

Refried beans  
Canned chopped green chilies  
Guacamole – homemade or purchased in a container.

Sour cream  
Salsa  
Shredded lettuce  
Chopped tomatoes  
Sliced green onions  
Sliced olives

Shredded cheese – Any kind you prefer – Monterey jack, pepper jack, cheddar, or I use a Mexican blend of four different cheeses – your choice.

I didn’t put any amounts because it depends on how big the container is you will be using. Just you or a couple of friends you’ll only use a small amount of each. When I take it to a party, I usually use a large baking sheet

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 9

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**RECIPE cont. from P. 8**

and start with two cans of beans.

If you just don't have time to make anything, any of the Ranchos' restaurants will make a party tray. Or if all else fails, go to the frozen foods section in the grocery store or just get cheeses, crackers and cold cuts. But above all else, keep it simple and have a good time!

Some friends in the Ranchos, Igal Treibatch and his wife Kathleen, sent us a recipe that really sounds delicious and I am going to pass it on to you.

***Caramelized Apple Tarte Tatin or The "Finger Likkin' Gooood" Apple Pie***

- 4 Gala apples (or your favorite apple will do)
- ½ C Sugar
- ½ stick butter
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. vanilla
- One pkg. puff pastry (in the freezer section of your market)
- 8-inch cast iron skillet (or any skillet that is oven safe)
- 10-inch serving plate
- Preheat oven to 375
- Core and peel the apples, cut

them into quarters and immerse them in cold water to keep them from turning brown.

On your stove top, warm skillet on medium/high heat. While warming, put the sugar, salt, vanilla and butter in the skillet and with a wooden spoon continuously stir the mixture so it won't burn. After a few minutes you will see the sugar and the butter incorporating and slowly begin to caramelize, or turn brown. Keep stirring the mixture as it is turning brown, usually to a toffee color. Remove from heat and set aside. It is ok when the caramel bubbles and froths up while cooking.

Take the apples out of the water and dab dry with a kitchen towel (inserting wet ingredients into hot caramel is not a good idea). Place all the apple wedges into the skillet and replace the skillet on the stove top at medium/high heat. Allow to cook for 15 minutes after which you turn the apples over and cook another 15 minutes.

While the apples are caramelizing in the skillet, take the puff pastry out and set it on a flat surface. Usually the package will have two folded sheets. The pastry will have to completely cover the skillet when it is ready to go into the oven. You may need to cut and connect (using a dab of water) parts of the second sheet to the first sheet so it can fit over the skillet. Do not try to rework the pastry.

When ready, remove the skillet from the stove top. Carefully place the pastry sheet over the skillet and with a knife, cut the pastry around the outside edge and place the left-overs aside. With the wooden spoon, tuck the edges of the dough into the sides of the skillet (when baked you will be turning the skillet over to place the pie on top of the crust, so having a little edge will keep the juices from spilling). With your knife, puncture six to 10 holes to allow the steam out while baking. Bake for 20 minutes or until the dough is golden brown.

Take out of oven and set aside for 15 minutes to cool. Place the serving plate over the skillet and using plenty of hand protection, with care flip the skillet over so the pie ends up on the serving plate.

They say serving it warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream goes a long way because it looks and smells so good decorations are not necessary.

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## Repeal, but please don't replace!

By Betty Van Valkenburg

The Tea Party movement burst on the scene in 2009 to protest the mounting national debt and two massive proposals that would add to that debt: (1) A federal takeover of "healthcare" and; (2) A multi-billion-dollar "stimulus package." It appeared that, at last, freedom-loving citizens had awakened to the dangers of the over-reaching, out-of-control, dictatorial federal government and that they were, finally, mad enough to do something about it.

### Obamacare

Americans across the country came together to inform fellow citizens about the dangers of the looming healthcare takeover. But it turned out that even a large grassroots movement including the Tea Party and a more-informed and motivated citizenry were no match for the power-hungry Democrats, liberals, progressives, president and entrenched congressional leadership.

It mattered not that there was a national outcry against the proposed healthcare takeover and that Republicans worked to elect Senator Scott Brown to assure the number of votes needed to defeat it. In the end, Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid used a rules "maneuver" to allow the bill to pass, in the dead of night, with a simple majority rather than a two-thirds vote and with not a single Republican voting for it. The largest and most personally intrusive program in our history was politicized and trivialized to a "gotcha" moment!

Thus was born what was totally mis-named the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Of course, we know that it is un-affordable and protects special interests rather than patients. Speaker Pelosi told us they would have to pass the bill before we would know what was in it. Well in 2017 we know what's in it, and we hate it.

We want it completely repealed and the president and congressional Republicans promise to do just that. Hooray for them! Let's help in any way possible to see that they prevail over the coming onslaught from the left.

Unfortunately, they also promise to replace it and the question becomes: Replace it with what? If it's another total healthcare



"system" then we're in trouble.

A monstrosity the size of Obamacare cannot and should not be replaced. It controls insurance providers, patients, insurance policies, doctors, employers, employees, insurance costs, hospitals, insurance purchasers, medical schools, nursing homes and more, adds taxes that drive up medical costs, pits young against old, requires us to buy insurance or pay a tax, uses the hated IRS as the enforcer and pays off unions to boot.

If the Republicans drastically cut regulations and pass legislation to return control to the states, individuals and medical professionals – where it rightly belongs – then we are on track to healthcare freedom.

Some specifics being discussed seem to be sound and within their federal authority, but once they get their hands on the

reins and start writing "replacement" legislation for real, with all 535 legislators and the special interests weighing in, the result could become Obamacare II. They are already promising to keep

some Obamacare provisions "because they are popular," including keeping adults on their parents' insurance plans, an idea which conservatives ridiculed when proposed by President Obama.

Imposing laws on all because they are "popular" with some does not sound like good public policy but like politics as usual.

As always, it is up to us to stay informed and to tell our representatives what we want. We know that politicians of both parties have a way of turning simple propositions into convoluted nightmares. Let's encourage our representatives and the president-elect to get the federal government out of the healthcare business. It has no place in healthcare decisions.

### Stimulus Package

Meanwhile, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, AKA the stimulus package, ostensibly to fund shovel-ready construction, has spent enormous sums with not much to show for the boondoggle slush fund. President Obama himself laughed while admitting that perhaps the jobs weren't so shovel-ready after all.

*Imposing laws on all because they are "popular" with some does not sound like good public policy but like politics as usual.*

Please see TEA on P. 13

# 2017

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April 16 ----- "Sonrise" Service 7 a.m. - and Pancake Breakfast	December 9 ---- Christmas Party
May 14 ----- Mother's Day Celebration	December 24 --- Candlelight Service 6:30 p.m.
June 5-9 ----- Vacation Bible School	
June 18 ----- Father's Day Celebration	
July 4 ----- Independence Day Family BBQ & Fireworks	
July 28 ----- Family Movie Night	
August 4, 11 -- Family Movie Night	
September 10 - 9/11 Memorial	
September 17 - National "Back to Church" Sunday - Friend Day	
October 28 ---- Harvest Festival 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.	

**Weekly Ministries**

Sunday School - 9 a.m.
Sunday Worship - 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday - Dorcas Sewing Circle 9 a.m.
Wednesday - Life Apps - 6:30 p.m. for all ages (No School, No Mid-Week)
Wednesday - Ladies Bible Study 6:30 p.m. (No School, No Mid-Week)
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### Actuator Action

Hello 93636,

Yesterday a 2009 Chevrolet Malibu with a 2.4-liter dual overhead camshaft with Variable Camshaft Timing (VCT) rolled into the shop. The customer's complaint was the "Check Engine" lamp was on. I retrieved trouble codes P0010 (Camshaft Position Actuator Circuit Open - Bank 1) and P0011 (Timing Over-Advanced Bank 1). Looks like we have a VCT Actuator problem.

VCT camshafts are controlled electronically by actuators that direct high pressure engine oil into camshaft phasers. The phaser then advances or retards the camshaft up to 30 degrees by rotating the camshaft from its base position. Some VCT benefits are increased engine performance, increased fuel efficiency and lower emissions. In addition, engines that use VCT technology for the exhaust camshaft do not require exhaust gas recirculation valves. Retarding the exhaust camshaft achieves the same net result.

What is the function of the VCT actuator? It's a gate. When it's open, oil passes freely into the phaser. When it's closed the flow of oil is blocked. The actuator movement is controlled by the actuator solenoid. TECH TIP. Before I continue, I would like to discuss oil viscosity. Simply put, viscosity is the oil's resistance to flow. The higher the viscosity (50 weight) the slower it flows. If the oil flows too slowly it can adversely affect the operation of the hydraulic phasers and actuators. Thicker oil, dirty oil or low oil can all cause engine performance problems and set trouble codes. WARNING! Only use the oil that is the correct viscosity for your engine.

Our code is an electrical circuit code so I'm not concerned with the oil.

One of the VCT diagnostic tests asked me to perform a resistance check of the actuator solenoid. That means disconnecting the solenoid's electrical harness so I can connect an ohmmeter to the solenoid's two electrical terminals. The specification is 5-9 ohms of resistance at ambient temperature. No way am I doing that test. Old school! I want to test the complete circuit intact. Testing of engine components and circuits should be performed at operating temperature and during operational stress. The better test is to use a Lab Scope and Low Current Amp Probe. According to Ohm's Law, if I divide 12 (system voltage) by 9 (resistance specification) the current (flow of electrons) will be 1.3 amps. The Current Amp probe will measure the circuit's current. Our solenoid has only two wires: power and ground. Since current flow is identical throughout the entire circuit it doesn't

*As I was considering this article, it occurred to me this advanced diagnostic testing is something 93636 "Do it yourselfers" can do for a relatively low investment ... It's called "Uscope." Google or YouTube "Uscope" and check it out ... A Uscope would be the best belated Christmas gift of all time. Just saying.*

matter which wire I test. I placed my Current Amp probe around one of the wires and activated the solenoid. Zero current. That's it, we found the problem. The Intake VCT actuator solenoid is defective open. Just to back up my test, I also tested the identical actuator solenoid for the exhaust camshaft. Perfect – 1.3 amps.

A few months back a Subaru Outback came into the shop. The transmission had a heavy shudder when driving away from a stop. Unknown to me, she had been to several other shops prior. All recommended the replacement of the transmission at a cost of about \$10,000. The transmission module was under the dash and easy to access. I placed my Current Amp probe around the single blue Torque Converter Clutch (TCC) Solenoid driver circuit and test drove. There it was. The Subaru TCC solenoid failure was the opposite of the Malibu VCT solenoid failure. The TCC solenoid was shorted to ground so the current was very high. Easy fix at 1/8 the cost. Just for fun I decided to test both of the Malibu VCT solenoids "Old School" with the ohmmeter. You guessed it, both PASSED at the exact same value. Ten years ago, I

Please see **HANDS** on P. 16

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The Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce would love to see you at our next meeting, always the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. 37167 Ave. 12 Suite 5C. Call us at 645-4001.

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**TEA** cont. from P. 10

Now President Trump proposes to spend a trillion dollars on infrastructure – including schools, the authority over which he promised to return to the states. That's a trillion with a "T," while our debt is already at a staggering \$20 trillion with an "OMG!" Some hope that Trump will cut other spending to "pay" for this program and that he will manage costs. If he gets

this passed by congress, doesn't add to the debt and spends only on legitimate federal projects, then more power to him.

More power to us as we stay informed and involved. All contact information for representatives and other elected officials is on their websites. They need direction and encouragement.

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**GEN WHY** cont. from P. 6

the voiceless, which would be admirable except they really only want to be the voice of those who also happen to agree with them. None of them seem particularly driven to be the voice of the conservatives who were shouted down in 2008 and 2012. The Hollywood elite don't seem too keen to stand up and talk about the millions of middle class citizens who lost their health insurance because of Obamacare and couldn't afford the supposedly affordable alternatives. What about the people who lost their jobs because their employers couldn't afford the affordable health insurance either? Where is their mention? No, no, Mr. and Ms. Famous Actor are too busy demanding higher taxes to pay for a bunch of "free" stuff that comes at the cost of the waning middle class.

I know the majority of Hollywood is firmly planted on the left side of the aisle. I don't expect them to agree with me on

most things. I don't expect them to relate to us normal people. I just expect the actors to act well, the directors to direct well, the singers to sing well, and the musicians to play well. I expect the comedies to make me laugh, the thrillers to scare the pants off me, and the dramas to make me cry and feel better about my life. That is what I pay them for, and yes, I absolutely pay them. We all do. Every movie we go see, every DVD we buy, every month we pay for cable, or Netflix, or Hulu is money in Hollywood's pocket. Period. Their job is to entertain and delight us and that is what they need to focus on. But no, they have to go and lecture the world at every opportunity instead of just saying, "Hey, thanks for this honor. I'm blessed I get to work at a job that not only pays me in millions, but makes a bunch of people believe anything that I say whether I'm informed or not. This is awesome!"

Whew, I feel better now.

**LETTERS** cont. from P. 4

ability protection required for their entertainment.

Regarding Mr. Drozen's comment: "For some reason elected officials get all stary eyed imagining their dream pet project is what we need ..." Certainly, everyone understands the need for our elected officials to fulfill some kind of legacy. But what our elected officials should understand is that the real heroes are those who will strive to take care of our most needed and necessary services – like fire protection – and rather than devoting time, taxpayer dollars and valuable county resources for a special interest project, constituents would like to see this effort toward necessary services without an increase in their taxes.

Lastly, I would respectfully ask the Supervisor not berate or chastise citizen Drozen for his active participation in our community. There are too few citizens participating in and reporting on our County issues and Mr. Drozen needs to be commended for doing so. Considering that our County Board of Supervisors and staff are diligently fulfilling their duties in service to our County, they should never be disgruntled over correcting misinformation or the fact that a citizen is participating and reporting, but they should welcome any and all opportunities to clarify issues and work in harmony with constituents who care most about our community.

Respectfully,

Terre Sparkman  
Oakhurst

# SEMCU speaks

## Two SEMCU Nonprofits? Why?

The fork in the road for SEMCU and why have two SEMCU organizations and not just one?

By Igal Treibatch

I would like to start by recounting the need for and formation of SEMCU, South East Madera County United, from the beginning.

The initial and basic reason for the creation of SEMCU (a nonprofit organization) was to deal with deteriorating water conditions, a sustainable future and newly imposed government regulations.

### A Little History

Let me take you back to the Gold Rush days, when California was giving away free land to stake holders in order to populate the state, bring in commerce and tax revenue. That act took away the government's ability to fully control our most precious resource: water. Along with the land, stake-

*The members of the two entities ... are acting in concert on the common goals while working and helping to resolve community issues and achieve a sustainable future.*

holders also got the right to the water so long as it was for the beneficial use of the land they were granted. So, a very large portion of the water ended up in private hands and corporations. Once the government gave these rights away, it would be very difficult or impossible to take them back.

The effort by the state to regain control over the water has taken several directions with a recent one being the "IRWMP" (Integrated Regional Water Management Plan – Senate Bill 1672). It really is what I describe as "the carrot and the stick" plan. In the past, when a city, a county or a public agency was in need of a grant from DWR (Department of Water and Resources) to deal with ongoing problems related to water or other resources, an individual entity would simply fill out the required forms and submit it on its own. The request would be looked at and if it met the right criteria it would be approved. Today however, if you want to apply for a grant, the "stick" is the "new rules" which

force everyone to work in an "integrated" fashion and the carrot is the approval of a request for a grant and money for needed projects. For that purpose, all political borders are now overlooked and the new boarders for the IRWMP are the natural watershed areas which may cross political borders. Their point is to force all entities within a watershed area to work together toward sustainability.

What then came to light is that South East Madera and specifically all of the inclusive Ranchos community were going to fall under the jurisdiction of Madera County for any type of government assistance to deal with any water or resource problem. Although very willing, the County had to deal with more than just the Ranchos and funding was not available.

As SB 1672's rules were initiated, I was involved with Madera County's original committee working on the set up of the county's agreement with the state. I found that aside from public entities, nonprofit organizations would qualify as well. Being in the Ranchos area since 1988 I realized that if we didn't look after ourselves it would be very difficult to get things done. The idea of setting up a nonprofit organization became the direction we needed to take in order to help and work together with the County on

much needed projects to achieve a sustainable future.

### SEMCU's Goals

With the help of dedicated community activists – of which we need more – SEMCU (a 501(c)(3) as designated by the IRS)

came to being. To function correctly as per the IRS, a nonprofit organization has to define its goals and characteristics for the IRS to approve its existence since the IRS has different designations depending on the nonprofit's goals. The initial thoughts were to apply for grants for needed projects around the Ranchos in order to help and achieve sustainability. The members then also brought up the potential need for advocating projects. That created a quandary since a 501(c)(3) designation only allows minimal advocating with wide range and ability to receive grants. That is when the second SEMCU was brought up. We found the nonprofit with a 501(c)(6) designation could advocate, but will have minimal ability to apply for the kind of grants we needed for the Ranchos, therefore the decision was made by the members to create a second SEMCU. In short, we are now operating "SEMCU Foun-

Please see SEMCU on P. 16

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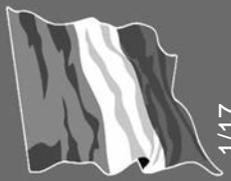
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By Brenda McElroy

### What's Stopping Us?

I've never been a huge fan of running. Doing something until I feel sick just isn't appealing to me. None-the-less, I've done my share of running. In Junior High I competed in track and in High School I was up at the crack of dawn running laps at the park next to our house. Why? In High School, I did it for love. My boyfriend lived across the street and if I timed it right we could see each other for a few minutes after my run and before he left in the morning.

My motivation was obviously more about relationships than a healthy body. At this point in life (beyond midway), working on a healthy body is ... well, work! I don't think I'm the only one who feels that way. Getting healthy, along with getting organized, are the two top New Year's resolutions ("2017 New Year's Resolutions: The Most Popular and How to Stick to Them," by Nicole Spector, NBC-News.com). Most of us must resolve to do those things because they don't just happen without great effort and will power.

But why is it that even when we resolve to do them, we often don't? What's stopping us? Part of the answer lies in our perspective. Do we view the action as an end, or a means to an end? My running was always a means to an end. I had a motivation and a goal beyond the action.

What's the "why" behind your resolution? Why do you want to get healthy? What could

you do more of with a healthy body? Play with your kids/grandkids? Go for a hike? What could you do less of? Take less medications, miss less work? If getting organized is your goal, what's the "why" behind that? What could you do more of? Have people over? Have access to the stuff you need? What could you do less of? Spend time looking for things? Pay fewer late fees?

Before you commit to a resolution, or give up on one, consider the "why" behind the goal. In fact, reframe your goal so that it's something you can get excited about. Write it out and then list the action steps that will help you get there. For example: eat smaller portions; purge the linen closet. Focus on the benefits and remind yourself that the action steps are a means to an end. An end that will bring you pleasure.

Start with a goal that excites you, list the action steps and then make them manageable. In their book, *Switch: How to Change When Change is Hard*, Chip and Dan Heath talk about increasing success by "shrinking the change." Rather than, "I'm going to start spending two hours at the gym every day," try, "I'm going to walk for 10 minutes during my lunch hour" or, "Whenever I park my car I'm going to park on the far side of the lot." It may seem miniscule in relation to the overall goal, but starting with something manageable, and doing it, is much more beneficial than giving up because of unrealistic expectations.

When working with clients who are chronically disorganized, I don't expect them to keep a spotless house overnight. I encourage them to choose one spot – a tabletop or bathroom counter – and focus on keeping that space clear of clutter. Most people are surprised, encouraged and motivated to continue when they experience even small successes.

Finally, be consistent. I love how Joanna Weaver defines consistency: "Consistency doesn't mean perfection; it simply means not giving up." You're going to mess up. Decide right now that that's not going to be the end. I, for one, am glad I didn't give up because you know that boyfriend I was running for? He became my husband.

Contact Organized by Choice (because things don't always fall into place) at P.O. Box 26152, Fresno, CA 93729, call 559-871-3314 or email [info@organizedbychoice.com](mailto:info@organizedbychoice.com). You can also visit their website at [www.organizedbychoice.com](http://www.organizedbychoice.com).

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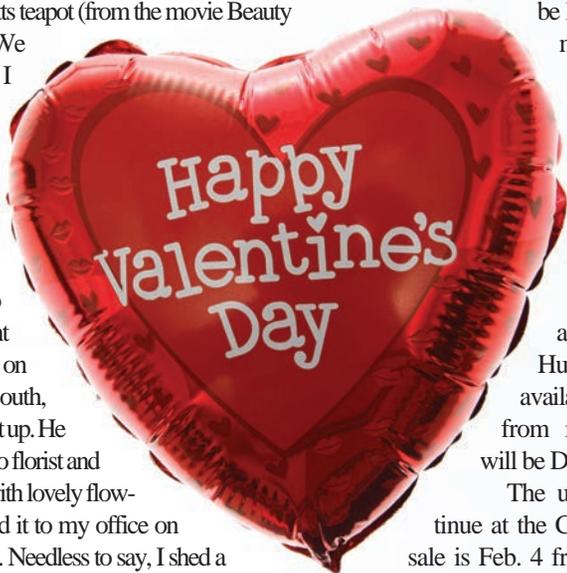
1/17

**Senior Report**

**Valentines, Bunco with Ranchos Seniors**

By Patti Groh

Happy Love Day (aka Valentine's Day) and my love to you all. Through the years, I have been shown love by receiving flowers and candy but one year really stands out. On a visit to Disneyland, I admired a Mrs. Potts teapot (from the movie Beauty and the Beast). We didn't buy it as I protested it cost too much. But, on returning home, my husband called a relative in Anaheim who went and bought the teapot. Then, on a business trip south, husband picked it up. He took it to a Fresno florist and had them fill it with lovely flowers and delivered it to my office on Valentine's Day. Needless to say, I shed a few tears.



I do really enjoy receiving candy, too, but it's got to be chocolate. Soft center, no nuts. Just sayin'. I'm obviously not the only one who likes chocolate as I read online that in 2014, \$13 BILLION dollars was spent on Valentine chocolates. That is almost unbelievable.

The Senior Center isn't having a Valentine's party this year but birthday and anniversaries in February will be celebrated Feb. 18 at the Vineyard in Madera. This is open to all members. Sign up at the Center.

**Bunco Party**

Another big, fun event in February is the third

annual Bunco party. It is on Feb. 25 at 2pm. The space is limited so reserve your spot at the table now. Prepay \$25 at the Center. Multiple prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be served and don't worry if you have not played this game before, as it is very easy and can be learned in about three minutes. Literally.

**Quilt Time**

Please go into the Senior Center and view the beautiful quilt that is being raffled. It is a double size, handmade quilt made and donated by Dot Husted. Tickets are available at the Center and from members. Drawing will be December 2017.

The usual activities continue at the Center. The monthly sale is Feb. 4 from 8 a.m. to noon; weekly potluck and cards Thursday evenings at 6:30; exercise M-W-F at 10 a.m.; lunch weekdays at 11:30 (must sign up day before). The Center will be closed on Monday, Feb. 20.

**Board Meeting**

Remember Seniors, Board meeting is first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. This month, Feb. 7, then general meeting is second Tuesday on Feb. 14. Planning meeting is fourth Tuesday of the month, Feb. 28 at 12:30 p.m. We really need you to come and offer new ideas and insights.

**HANDS cont. from P. 11**

would have been stumped at this point. I would have eventually fixed the Malibu but it would have taken longer and required an educated guess. Armed with a Lab Scope and a Low Current Amp probe, both vehicles were simple. Fixed the cars, got paid, no problem.

As I was considering this article, it occurred to me this advanced diagnostic testing is something 93636 "Do it yourselfers" can do for a relatively low investment. There is a high quality single channel Lab Scope about the size of my cell phone available for around \$170. It's called "Uscope." Google or YouTube "Uscope" and check it out. The "Low Current Amp" probe is about \$80. Both are manufactured in Fresno by AES Wave. We use ours all the time. A Uscope would be the best belated Christmas gift of all time. Just

saying.

Vehicles are loaded with all kinds of solenoids, from fuel injectors to power door lock actuators. You can also test your vehicle's many electric motors including the windshield wiper motor, the heater blower motor and electric fuel pump motor just to name a few. The testing procedures are exactly the same as used in this article. The waveforms are different but I can help you with that. That's all for now.

As always, I'm looking for topics to write about. If you have a suggestion or question concerning a vehicle, please contact me at complete\_car\_care@hotmail.com or Facebook me at Complete Car Care.

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**SEMCU cont. from P. 14**

dation Inc." which is a 501(c)(3) and has the great ability to apply for grants, and "SEMCU Inc." which is a 501(c)(6) and has the ability to advocate.

The members of the two entities have elected boards which are acting independently of each other, yet, are acting in concert on the common goals while working and helping to resolve community issues and achieve a sustainable future. Beyond water and sustainable future issues, we are funding a grant writer which is applying for and has obtained grant money for our community projects as well as the Golden Valley school district and library. Other interests of ours are the library, parks and a potential community center, fire safety, free soccer clinics associated with the LA Galaxy for Madera Kids and many other goals and projects. In particular, we just finished installing over 60 free dry wells throughout our

community and created a means to allow storm water to penetrate the ground and recharge our aquifer.

The two organizations regularly meet on the third Monday of every month at the Pizza Factory in the Ranchos. The board of the SEMCU Foundation meets at 6 p.m. and the board of SEMCU Inc. meets at 6:30 p.m.

If you so inclined please join us, make yourself heard, share your opinions and make a difference on behalf of your community and neighborhood. Make our community a better place for you and your kids.

On March 20, the organizations will be holding their annual meeting in which new board members will be elected. The public is invited. Become a member and help select board members or simply come and listen and voice your opinion as a member of the community.

Please call us at 559-363-9095 with any questions or visit our website at www.semcu.org.

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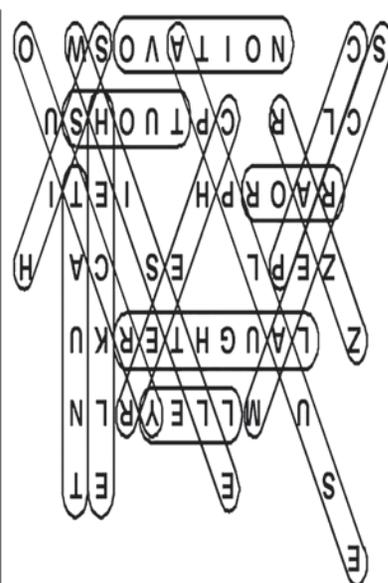
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**SUDOKU**  
 by Linda Thistle

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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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## Say you saw it in the Ranchos Independent

**Strange BUT TRUE**  
By Samantha Weaver

- It was 20th-century American theoretical physicist Richard Feynman who made the following sage observation: "It doesn't matter how beautiful your theory is, it doesn't matter how smart you are. If it doesn't agree with experiment, it's wrong."

- Historians report that Alexander the Great -- best known for his conquests throughout Asia and North Africa, which helped to create one of the ancient world's largest empires before he turned 30 -- had a hard-and-fast rule for his soldiers: no beards. Alexander didn't want to give their enemies anything to grab onto during battle.
- If you're sending a letter to Ireland, don't worry if the address you have on file is missing the postal code; in that country the only addresses that use them are in the capital, Dublin.

- In 2002, researchers conducted a study to determine how consumers' decisions are influenced by seemingly minor changes in appearance. They presented car-buyers with a variety of webpages; everything on the pages was the same -- the vehicles presented, the information provided, prices, etc. -- except for the background. One group got a green background with a pattern of pennies on it, and one group got a red background with a pattern of flames. As it turns out, the background did, indeed, influence behavior: Consumers in the green-background group

spent more time looking at information about cost, while those in the red-background group spent more time looking at details about safety features.

- In Ireland, to ensure good luck on a child's birthday, it was once the tradition to hold the child by the feet and bump his or her head on the floor once for each of the child's years.
- Thought for the Day: "God is a comedian playing to an audience too afraid to laugh." -- Voltaire

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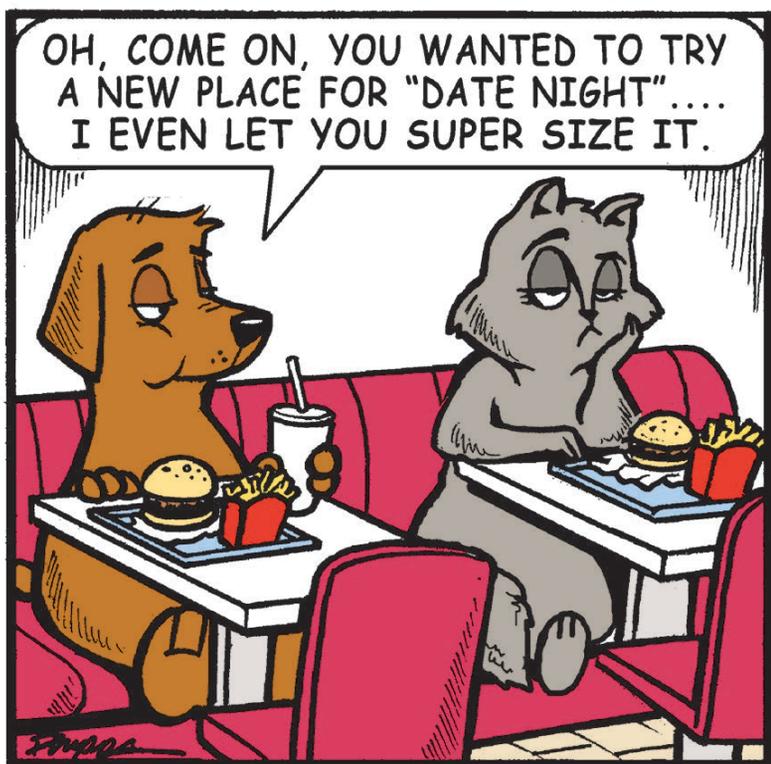
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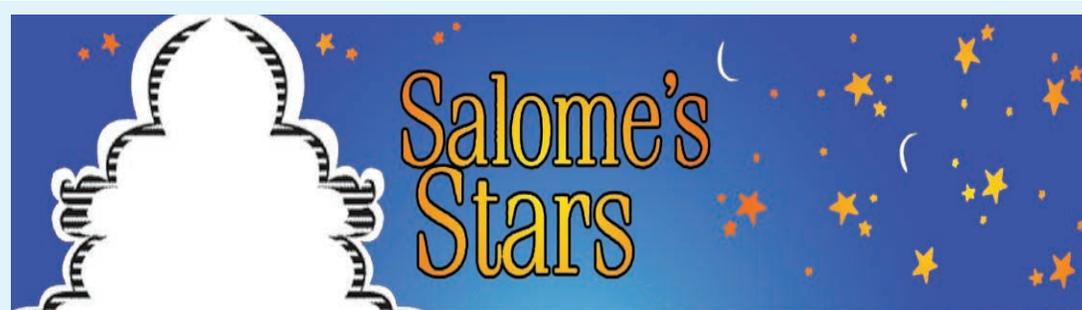
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



OH, COME ON, YOU WANTED TO TRY A NEW PLACE FOR "DATE NIGHT" .... I EVEN LET YOU SUPER SIZE IT.

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## Salome's Stars

**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Lots of mixed signals can create an unreliable situation in which to make decisions. Best advice: Hold off on making any commitments until you're sure you know what's going on.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) An apparently friendly offer comes with some strings attached. Be careful not to get tied into something you don't really want. Thoroughly examine all your options before making a choice.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) If you're not careful, distractions can interrupt your best efforts. Continue to focus on what you need to do. You'll soon have lots of time to enjoy the rewards of your dedication.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) Knowledge replaces suspicion as you begin to learn more about that "act of betrayal." On a lighter note, someone close to you might be planning a pleasant surprise.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) Control your sometimes-overactive jealousy gene before you find yourself saying or doing something that you could later regret. Best advice: Stop obsessing and move on.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) It's a good time to loosen up and do something wonderful and exciting before your more reserved nature resurfaces. A message brings news of imminent change.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) Cheer up. Things begin to improve significantly by mid-February. However, you might still need help to get through the rest of this sometimes-difficult period.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Something you learned last week takes on new meaning as you begin to relate it to another situation in your life. It's best to keep this matter to yourself for now.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Your energy level is climbing, and so is your self-confidence. Good for you, because you'll need a good dollop of both to tackle an exciting challenge on the way.

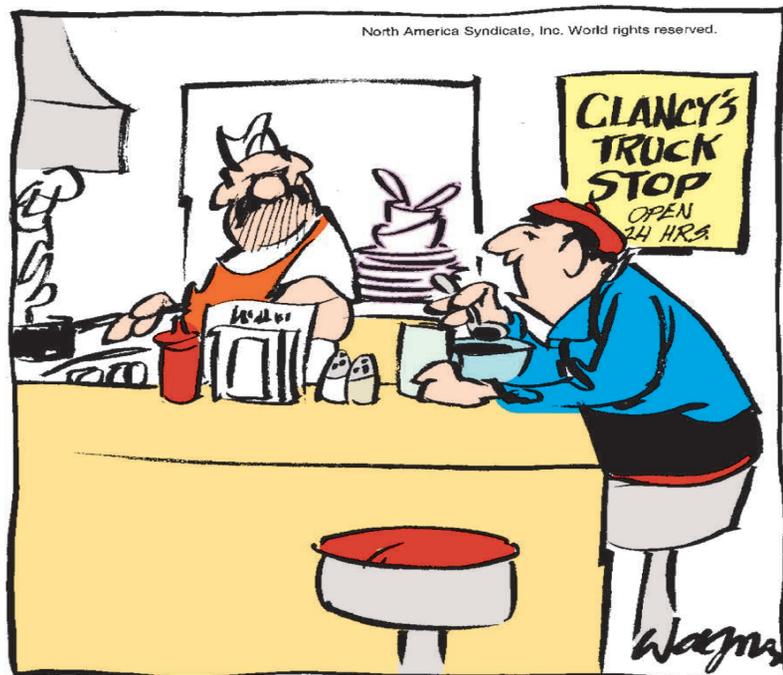
**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) A family issue might interrupt a career-linked project. Try to give the matter the attention it needs, but be careful not to jeopardize your workplace situation.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) Some self-doubt shows up this week, causing you to question your ability to handle a new challenge. But you know you can do it, and this is your chance to prove it.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) A personal matter requires you to be as clear and forthcoming as possible in order to avoid misunderstandings. A career move is eased with the emergence of new facts.

**Plumbing problem?  
Plumbing solution!  
Call Vern!**  
**DAVIS PLUMBING • 559-977-6289**  
Lic. #842676

## GRIN and BEAR IT



"This is just like my mother used to make. She was a diesel mechanic, too."

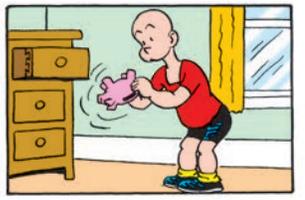
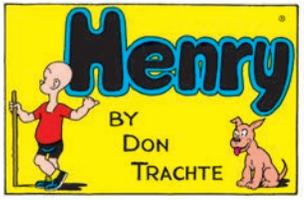
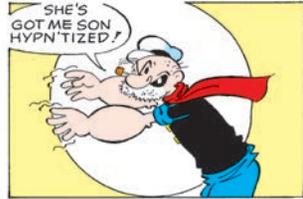
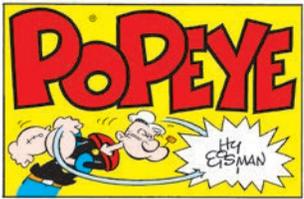
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## Born this Week

You have a way of reaching people that makes them feel good about themselves. You would be an excellent motivational speaker.

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# FUN PAGES



## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

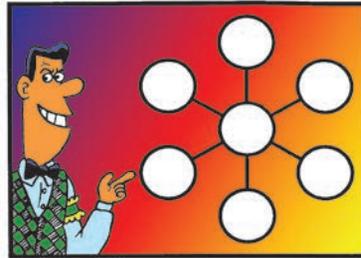
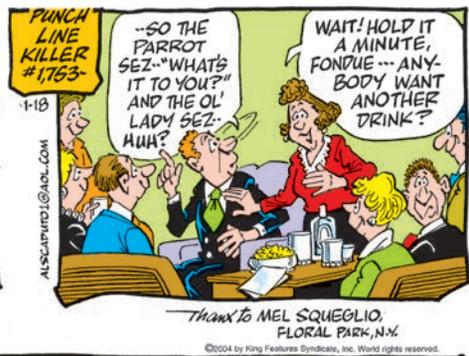
EVER HAPPEN TO YOU?  
TOO, TOO LATE  
DEPT.



AUNT HEPATICA ALWAYS HIDES HER AGE, BUT DAUGHTER LULULA THROWS A SURPRISE BIRTHDAY PARTY WITH SIGNS THAT NOTIFY THE IMMEDIATE WORLD OF HER ADVANCED YEARS...



## BY AL SCADUTO



**WHEELER DEALER!** Can you deal the numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 into the seven circles above so that the totals of the numbers along any of the three lines will be 42.

Answer: Starting with the top circle, going around clockwise: 11, 12, 13, 17, 16 and 15. Number 14 goes in the center.

**THE WISE SHOPPER!** Mr. Johnson went to the hardware store and bought something for his house. Now, one cost 20 cents and 12 cost 40 cents. He asked for 110 and paid the man 60 cents. What did Mr. Johnson buy?

Answer: He bought house numbers.

**FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE!** In the word square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "GLIDER." Can you replace these letters in the squares so that you will have four 3-letter words across and three 4-letter words down? Time limit: 60 seconds.

Answers: (Across): Car, arg, lie, led. (Down): Gall, ara, read.

## Wishing Well®

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

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

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## MAGIC MAZE ● HEARD FROM THE CROWD

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

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

Applause	Hiss	Razz	Taunt
Cheer	Laughter	Roar	Whistle
Clap	Ovary	Scream	Yell
Heckle	Ovation	Shout	

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## Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



**WINTER FUN IN THE NORTH!** Are you ready for some fun in the snow? In our puzzle grid there is room to list nine wintertime words. The following hints should thaw out the answers.

1. A winter breakfast treat.
2. Found in many front yards.
3. Loves a strong wind.
4. This activity has checks and balances.
5. Off to a fast downhill start.
6. Great fun in the evening.
7. Easily holds three or four.
8. You can't stay out long without them.
9. A warm place at the end of the day.

There's a dark frame around one of the columns. If you correctly find all the words, the letters in this frame, top to bottom, will spell out the name of a winter visitor.

Answers: 1. Flapjacks, 2. Snowman, 3. Iceboat, 4. Hockey, 5. Baily flap, 6. Sleigh ride, 7. Toboggan, 8. Mittens, 9. Hearth. The name of our winter visitor is Jack Frost.

## TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. MOVIES: What was the last movie that Nancy Davis Reagan appeared in?
2. GEOGRAPHY: What desert exists in parts of California, Arizona and Mexico?
3. PROVERBS: Where should you "never look a gift horse"?
4. U.S. STATES: Which state is an anagram of the word "anime"?
5. LITERATURE: What was author Thomas Mann's native country?
6. ANATOMY: How much of blood's volume is made up of plasma?
7. RELIGION: Which religion's places of worship are called "Kingdom Halls"?
8. MEASUREMENTS: What is the base unit of mass in the metric system?
9. PSYCHOLOGY: What fear is represented in the condition called "neophobia"?
10. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president began appearing on the half dollar coin in 1964?

## Answers

1. "Crash Landing" (1958)
2. Sonoran desert
3. "In the mouth"
4. Maine
5. Germany
6. 55 percent
7. Jehovah's Witnesses
8. The gram
9. The fear of anything new
10. John F. Kennedy

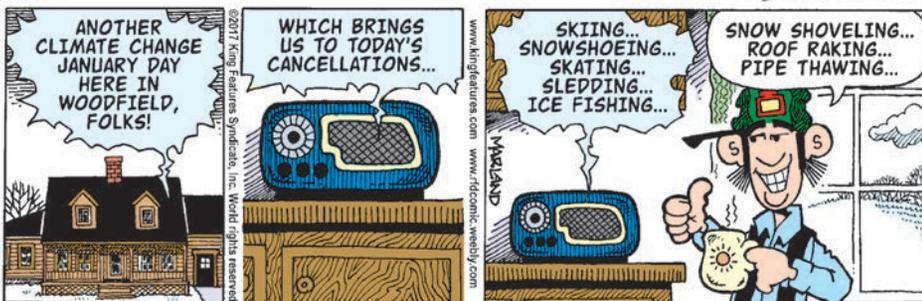
# Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



# R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



# Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



# The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



# Intelligent Life

by David Reddick



# HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

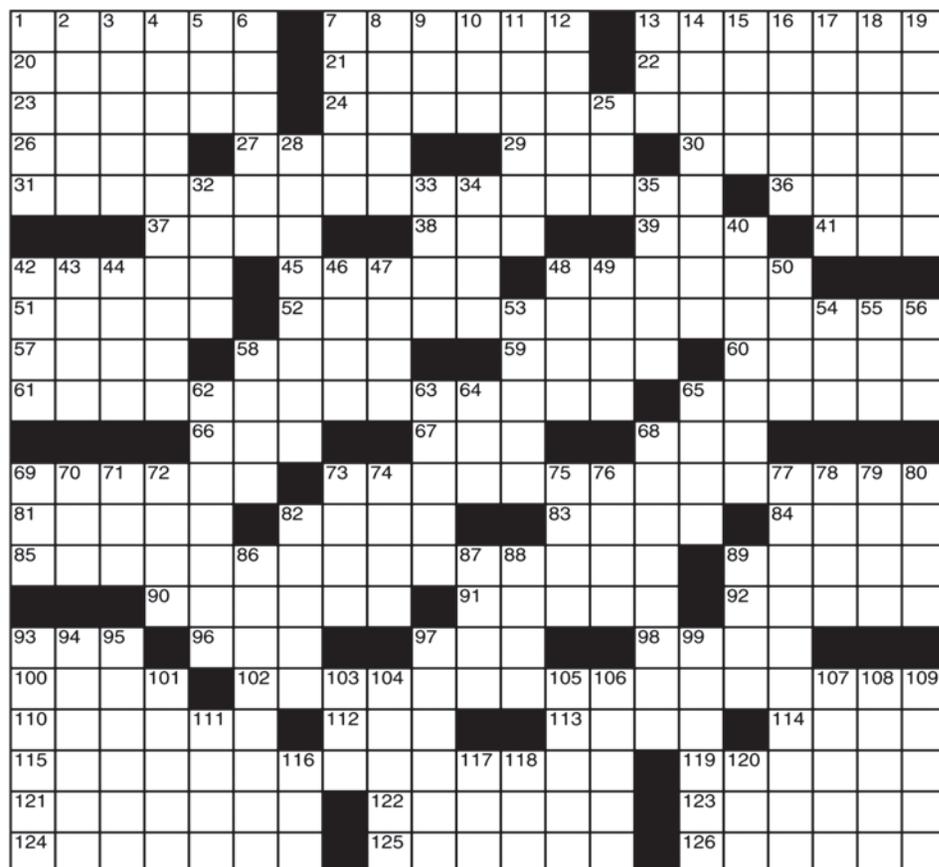
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Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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# Super Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Like galaxies and nebulae
  - 7 Cry after a long wait
  - 13 Beef or pork alternative
  - 20 Nabokov novel
  - 21 Obi-wearing companion
  - 22 Volcanic flow
  - 23 Is a hammy actor
  - 24 Start of a riddle
  - 26 Extras for iDevices
  - 27 See 8-Down
  - 29 — out a win (just prevail)
  - 30 Long Island town with a Triple Crown racetrack
  - 31 Riddle, part 2
  - 36 Corn bread
  - 37 Barracks site
  - 38 Shaker — (city in O.)
  - 39 Sweet roll
  - 41 Scuff up, e.g.
  - 42 Opposing voters
  - 45 March Madness, with "the"
  - 48 More spiteful
  - 51 Jack up, e.g.
  - 52 Riddle, part 3
  - 57 Brow shape
  - 58 Boxer's prize
  - 59 Astral bear
  - 60 "Robinson Crusoe" novelist
  - 61 Riddle, part 4
  - 65 Banquets
  - 66 "Alfie" lyricist — David
  - 67 Scrubs sites, for short
  - 68 Ending for pay
  - 69 Blockhead
  - 73 Riddle, part 5
  - 81 Front wheel convergence
  - 82 Not of the cloth
  - 83 Jedi's furry friend
  - 84 Butter lookalike
  - 85 End of the riddle
  - 89 Shrimplike crustacean
  - 90 Exploding water balloon sounds
  - 91 Triple-time dance, in Dijon
  - 92 Ira Levin's "— Before Dying"
  - 93 Angry feeling
  - 96 Used a sofa
  - 97 Danson of "Cheers"
  - 98 Trunk growth
  - 100 Seat of Grand County, Utah
  - 102 Start of the riddle's answer
  - 110 Apartment window sign
  - 112 Hoover offering, for short
  - 113 Blockhead
  - 114 Go bankrupt
  - 115 End of the riddle's answer
  - 119 Nobel winner Eugene
  - 121 Northern French port
  - 122 Prix fixe part
  - 123 Moo makers
  - 124 Arid quality
  - 125 Eternal City citizens
  - 126 Enters, as a PIN
  - DOWN**
  - 1 Shoe gripper
  - 2 Pizzazz
  - 3 Skiing locale
  - 4 Mirage carmaker
  - 5 Ending for Manhattan
  - 6 Black currant liqueur
  - 7 Like tumblers
  - 8 With 27-Across, Pavarotti number, e.g.
  - 9 Ignited, as a fire
  - 10 Fire leftover
  - 11 Bedclothes
  - 12 In bad taste
  - 13 "Evita" role Guevara
  - 14 Grand slams, e.g.
  - 15 "— cost ya"
  - 16 Put in a vise
  - 17 Blast sound
  - 18 Actress Lynch of four Harry Potter films
  - 19 Talk on and on
  - 25 Playboy founder, familiarly
  - 28 Tool for moving just-baked bread or pizza
  - 32 Publisher Condé —
  - 33 Persian king
  - 34 Tiny, for short
  - 35 2012 rival of Romney
  - 40 FDR's plan
  - 42 Hunter of Moby Dick
  - 43 Screenwriter Ephron
  - 44 Nervous twitches
  - 46 Baby cow
  - 47 Entr'—
  - 48 Ford make until '11
  - 49 Celtic language
  - 50 Emu cousin
  - 53 "Bring It On" star Kirsten
  - 54 Suppositions
  - 55 Light bed
  - 56 "— So Fine" (Chiffons hit)
  - 58 Trying tot
  - 62 Lat-building exercises
  - 63 Building pest
  - 64 Get it wrong
  - 65 Clamorous criticism
  - 68 Often-requested Italian song
  - 69 Extreme degree
  - 70 Debtor's note
  - 71 With 99-Down, brunch time, often
  - 72 Parts of clown outfits
  - 73 "It — be!"
  - 74 Bops
  - 75 Prosperity
  - 76 Pointed tools
  - 77 Minimization of job-related hazards
  - 78 Jai follower
  - 79 Hedge plants
  - 80 Father's Day callers
  - 82 Averse (to)
  - 86 Big dishes
  - 87 At any time
  - 88 Dry riverbed
  - 89 Onetime
  - 93 "Someone informed me ..."
  - 94 Housetop laborer
  - 95 A bit crude
  - 97 Electronic music genre
  - 99 See 71-Down
  - 101 Irish writer Brendan
  - 103 Biblical exile
  - 104 Origami need
  - 105 Routinely
  - 106 Pharmacy measures
  - 107 Hook worms
  - 108 Palmer or Lehmann
  - 109 "Juno" star Page
  - 111 Campbell of "Party of Five"
  - 116 The, to Luc
  - 117 It spits out \$20 bills
  - 118 Big gun gp.
  - 120 Fife refusal

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# FUN PAGES



**SEM CU**  
SOUTH EAST MADERA COUNTY UNITED

**Annual Membership Meeting**  
**MONDAY, MARCH 20 • 6 P.M.**

**Election of Board Members will be held**  
**PARTICIPATION and NOMINATIONS are WELCOMED**

Be a part of the exciting projects SEMCU is working on by bringing Grant Money to the Ranchos.  
All members of the public are encouraged to participate.  
Come and provide input on the projects you think are necessary for our community.

**Attend and make your voice heard!**  
**Help make a positive impact on our community**

**Ranchos Pizza Factory • 37184 Avenue 12 #101 • Madera Ranchos**  
*All regular meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month at the Ranchos Pizza Factory*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
**559-363-9095 • www.semcu.org • info@semcu.org**

WE SUPPORT  
MEASURE "L"



JOIN

**FIREFIGHTERS,**  
**MADERA DEPUTY SHERIFFS,**  
**AND YOUR NEIGHBORS**



**VOTE ON MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
**YES on L**



**A YES VOTE ON "L"**

- Improves FIRE and SHERIFFS response times
- Funds MORE FIREFIGHTERS and DEPUTIES in the Ranchos
- Improved FIREFIGHTING and RESCUE equipment
- Fights rural CRIME, MAIL and PACKAGE THEFT
- Improved OFFICER and FIREFIGHTER SAFETY
- Provides TRAINING & EQUIPMENT for our paid call firefighters (PCFs)

Measure L **TAX DOLLARS STAY IN THE RANCHOS** and unincorporated Madera County. Measure will not supplant or change other agreements. Annual independent audits. Managed by Citizen Oversight Committee.

Paid for by Citizens, Firefighters & Deputies for Measure L FPPC# 1393568