

The Ranchos Independent



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50¢

Is There Hope for a Long-Term Water Solution for the Ranchos?

Why Things
Might Be Changing
(and How You Can Help)

by Karen Petryna

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SEMCU Seeks Ranchos Grants

By Garret Mandel

The drought conditions in the Ranchos seemed to never end. Water conservation notices for MD-10A only makes conditions worse. Wondering “How do I make a difference?” The answer is: collectively.

South East Madera County United, (SEMCU) represents residents, property owners and businesses of South East Madera County. They are the ones standing up during the Board of Supervisor meetings to ensure that concerns are being addressed.

Grants for Water-Related Projects

SEMCU has been an active member of the Madera Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) since 2010 and recently submitted five projects for grant funding through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Program managed by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The projects submitted are designed to create immediate impacts for the community in terms of water-savings, and consist of the creation of a groundwater recharge basin; installation of low flow water fixtures for residences; installation of water meters for MD-10A water users; and the construction of a 1 million gallon water storage tank.

Additional Grants for the Community

SEMCU’s latest pursuit of grant funding is just the tip of the iceberg. By finalizing a grant writing agreement with California Consulting LLC, SEMCU hopes to achieve the capability of funding additional water-related projects; while also pursuing projects for creating a community center/park, making athletic field improvements and assisting with the cost of rehabilitating roadways. SEMCU’s kickoff meeting resulted in submitting an application for a grant from the US Soccer Foundation that would award up to \$50,000 for community youth soccer programs. Members of the SEMCU Grant Writing Committee have also been encouraged to participate in the Fresno State Grant Writing and Management Certificate Program to take place in spring 2015 as a way to promote additional involvement from within the local community. SEMCU will reimburse the tuition costs of any member that successfully completes the course, as the program allows for students to evaluate their grant proposals with the course instructors prior to obtaining the certificate of completion.

Members of the community are encouraged to participate and can get more information on SEMCU at SEMCU.org. SEMCU meetings are the third Monday of the month at the Ranchos Pizza Factory at 6:30pm.

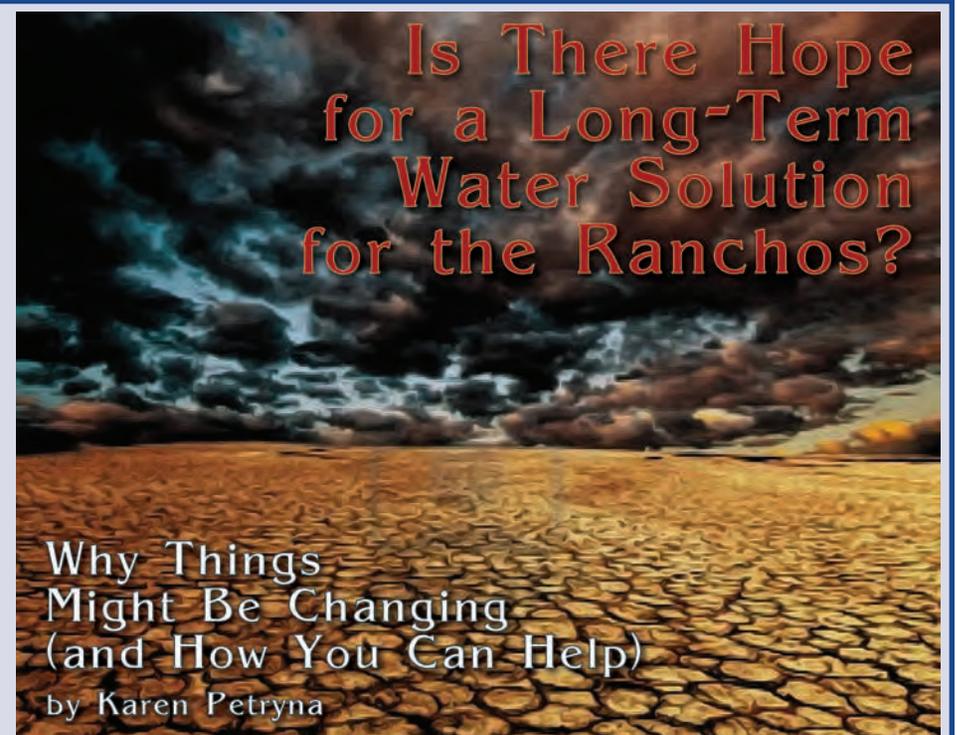
Some changes are coming which have the potential to significantly affect the ratepayers of the Madera Ranchos Water System as well property owners outside the MD-10A assessment boundary, though it has yet to be seen whether residents of the Ranchos have the collective will to capitalize on them. With the election of a new Supervisor for District 1 (southeast Madera County), passage of the Proposition 1 Water Bond, and the upcoming appointment of a new Water Committee, long overdue changes may be getting closer to fruition.

History of MD-10A and Oversight Committee Activity

Madera County Maintenance District 10, Zone A (MD-10A) is the designation for that part of Madera Ranchos that was subject to a self-imposed assessment in order to purchase and upgrade the Madera Ranchos Water Company, Inc., a privately owned mutual water company, begun in 1959 and that in 1996 served 788 land parcels with three production wells: Fender, Sparta and Fernwood. If you pay a monthly water bill for either water service or standby service, your property is within the MD-10A boundary.

In a letter from then District 1 Supervisor Patty Logoluso, dated Mar. 12, 1996, to Madera Ranchos Lot Owners, at that time the County was in the process of purchasing the water system from Frank Ferraro for \$350,000 by June 30 of that year. Logoluso went on in the same letter to report she would be “asking the Board of Supervisors to approve the appointment of an official citizen Advisory Committee to work with the Board of Supervisors and the County Staff concerning the operations and maintenance of the water system.” Subsequently, Clerk of the Board documentation dated June 4, 1996 records five individuals were appointed by the Board of Supervisors, based on a recommendation made to the Board by Supervisor Logoluso on the same date.

Three years later, in an internal memorandum dated May 13, 1999, from County Engineer Michael Kirn to District 1 Supervisor Frank Bigelow, Kirn reported nearly \$3.5 million had been collected of which almost \$2.8 million had been spent on “Plan A,” which initially proposed installation of five production wells and two backup generators, pipeline improvements and potential system improvements and repairs among other things. Referring to a cash balance on April 30, 1999 of \$704,000, the focus of the memo was that while two of the five promised wells had been installed, namely Charleton (inaccurately referred to as Marciel) and New Fender, Kirn projected that installation of



only one and possibly two additional wells would be necessary to fulfill the County’s commitment to achieve an additional water flow of 2,762 gallons to serve 968 parcels and meet maximum daily demands plus fire flow as recommended in a report by Boyle Engineering and which was part of the approved Plan A. If all were in agreement, Kirn explained, the remainder of funds collected could then be applied to repairing lines and other system enhancements.

Kirn’s memo went on to describe working with the Water Committee and Ken Schmidt, a local hydrogeology consultant, in order to design the wells that had been installed and other matters including the accumulated capital outlay (ACO) fund, which “was established to fund repairs and replacement of ‘leaky’ existing pipes when needed.” Subsequent memorandums indicate that the Committee did ultimately agree that only one additional well (Kensington) was necessary and the Committee disbanded shortly thereafter.

Fast forward a decade, sometime after the Technical Evaluation and Rate Study report by AECOM dated September 2009 (an excellent resource, still available on the County website) for Madera County was produced, a new group of ratepayers formed and began meeting every month or two with different County employees, including recent County Engineer Ken Vang and soon-to-be-retiring Special Districts’ Manager, Steve Norman. According to comments by Vang in several public meetings held from December 2013 until he left the County’s employ in July 2014, he had, “... worked with the Oversight Committee ...” who had directed him to install the Dublin production well rather than use col-

lected ratepayer funds to repair leaky lines in the system. But regarding the Dublin well, as expressed in meetings organized by ratepayers Chuck La Rue and Pete and Maria’s Italian Bistro owner Pete Cercone, as well as according to Oversight Committee members Michele Roberts and Seth Thomas, Vang did not consult with the Committee on the Dublin well and did not inform them that he had selected a location outside and northeast of the MD-10A assessment boundary. No minutes of committee meetings were ever taken.

Current Conditions

According to the May 14, 2014 report by the County’s Resource Management Agency, three production wells are currently in service, Charlton (operating at 300 gallons per minute [gpm]), New Fender (835 gpm) and Kensington (443 gpm). According to the system map from the AECOM report, the majority of the lines of the system were installed in 1960 and are now 55 years old. And while the actual system leak rate is unclear, District 1 Planning Commissioner and Hurst Hardware owner Tom Hurst has stated that when he attempted to connect his store to the Water System he encountered piping that was disintegrating and had to be completely replaced. Regardless, the current total flow rate of the system for all three wells is 1,578 gpm for 982 users—not even half of what is needed to achieve adequate health code standards or fire flow requirements.

Despite repeated efforts by Chuck La Rue and others during the last year to obtain records and information from Madera County, officials have yet to release critical

Please see **MD-10A** on P. 3

MD-10A cont. from P. 2

information to reconcile whether or not the County has or is properly applying MD-10A ratepayer funds to the Water System. Despite ratepayer Linda Bresee's efforts, including summarizing the California Public Records Act to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting this past Nov. 3, which stipulates that all public records must be made readily and easily available to any member of the public during regular

operating hours (as detailed in California Government Code Sections 6250 through 6276.48), the County has failed to produce adequate documentation. According to the law, documentation should be available which details where the assessment bond money as well as regular ACO and Water Service Charges have and are being used.

Changes in the Air

Although the operating Oversight Committee has suffered from a shortage of authority, documentation and communica-

tion, at the Oct. 28 Board of Supervisors' meeting the Board, in their capacity as the Board of Directors of MD-10A, under pressure from La Rue, Bresee and others, did adopt bylaws for what is now being called the Water System Committee (WSC). Provisions in the bylaws for the committee include a website (www.ranchoswater.org) and a process for selecting and electing members. But again, due to pressure from ratepayers present, the Board refrained from simply officially ap-

pointing the current Oversight Committee. Instead, they will follow the procedure made known to them by Bresee in former Supervisor Logoluso's March 12, 1996 letter to her constituents, such that those interested in joining the committee can find an application attached to some of the flyers currently circulating the Ranchos, via the Madera County website (the extensive, exact link for which is regularly posted on

Please see MD-10A on P. 7

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Letters

Dear Editor:

We enjoy your local paper immensely. As your publication pertains to our Ranchos community exclusively, we have a few comments and observations to share with your readers.

There are large estate-sized homes, average sized, custom and not so custom. It is so nice to see the yards and homes that some residents work so hard to keep up, and there are many. But unfortunately there are quite a few that are in such a sad state of disrepair it is a shame. We just don't understand how people can put out so little effort and pride in their homes. We have a simple, average-sized home, but we work very hard to keep it maintained. The following are simple things that would enhance our community very much:

1. PUT YOUR GARBAGE CAN/BIN OUT ONLY ON GARBAGE DAY OR NIGHT BEFORE, THEN PUT IT BACK AWAY FROM THE STREET AND NEAR YOUR HOME AS SOON AS PICKED UP. So many just leave their garbage receptacles on the street 24/7. Why??? It is unsightly and blocks the roadway in many cases.

2. If you have a tree OR shrubs that drop leaves or needles or debris all over the street, or in your neighbor's yard, PICK THEM UP! (AND PUT THEM IN YOUR GARBAGE THAT SITS UNMOVED ON THE STREET IN MANY CASES.) We even see dead plants that have been in yards for years! Why?

3. FIREPLACES ... Just because we are exempt out here from burning regulations, doesn't mean you should burn fires. We have a wood-

burning fireplace that we use when it is truly cold. But the years we have been living here we regularly observe people burning in October when it has been nearly 80 degrees and all the way through April. It doesn't seem to matter to some what the temperature is, whether it is even cold. Are you oblivious to our air quality here in the valley? We personally can't even open windows on sunny days due to the neighbor's constant soot and smoke. Our past winter had horrid, unhealthy air quality that rolled into summer unhealthiness and now we already have unhealthy air in the fall. It has been in the 70s and 80s consistently, yet people are burning fires during the day. Why? AS WE WILL DO, BURN ONLY WHEN WE HAVE TRULY COLD WEATHER, not when you desire the ambience. Think about our air quality, please.

There are so many positive things about our unique little community, but we all need to do our part in being good neighbors and helping our air quality. We are not young and our kids are grown and gone. We have had recent surgeries and have our health issues, yet we still manage to maintain our yard and home ourselves, and wheel our garbage in and out (on the same day no less), so that should not be an excuse. We have gladly, physically, helped neighbors with yard issues as well. We do not mean to offend anyone and we can all do what we choose, but we hope we have brought some valid points up to inspire.

The Allans
Madera Ranchos

New Valley Feed Boss from Ranchos

Valley Feed in Madera has announced the retirement of its 15-year manager, Tom Buckley, and the hiring of Ranchos resident Tony Garcia as the new manager.

Garcia has been a Ranchos resident for 31 years and has been married to his wife Patti for the same amount of time. Together they have raised their 19-year-old son, Anthony, in the Ranchos.

"I've been involved with cattle and horses most of my life," Garcia said. "I enjoy team roping, raising cattle and the western lifestyle."

Tom Buckley, who officially retired Oct. 31, has been a fixture of Madera area ag and feed stores. Not only



Retiring Valley Feed manager Tom Buckley, right, hands over the reins to new manager Tony Garcia of the Ranchos.

did he serve in the capacity of manager at Valley Feed at 121 N. Gateway Drive in Madera, prior to his 15 years there he was at Teco Feed & Hardware for 38 years, for

a combined total of 53 years serving the Madera ag community.

Garcia is looking forward to the challenge of running such a large operation and has many ideas he wants to implement at Valley Feed.

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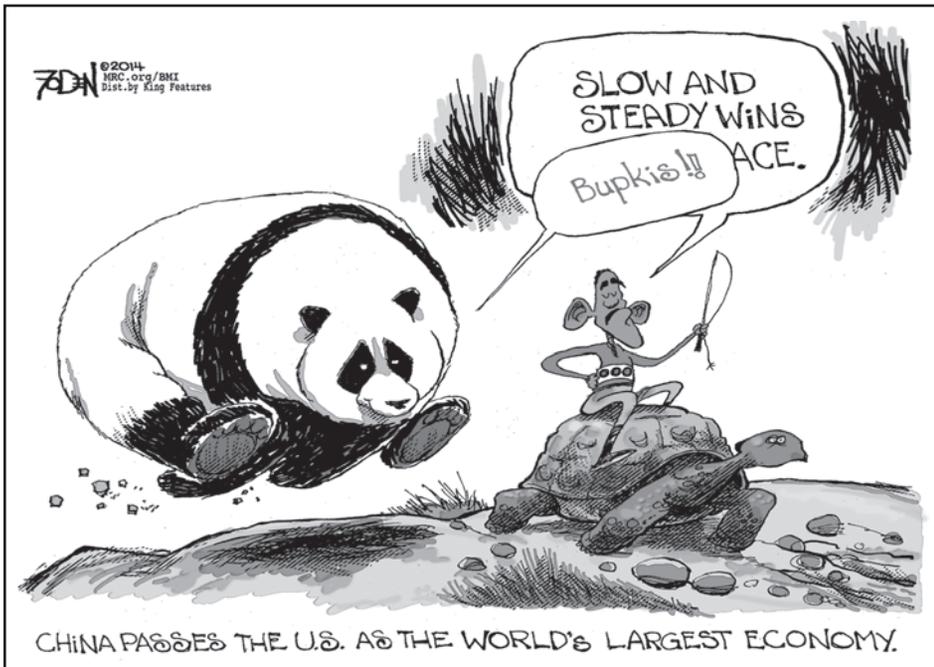
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Guest Editorial

The Poll Tax That Wasn't

By Rich Lowry

When the Supreme Court rejected a petition to stop a Texas voter-ID law from going into effect for the midterms, the left commenced its wailing and gnashing of teeth.

In her dissent, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg called the law "purposely discriminatory," and everyone piled in behind her with denunciations of the Lone Star State's blatant racism.

For the left, voter ID is tantamount to a poll tax. If so, the nation is awash in neo-segregationist election rules. According to a recent Government Accountability Office report on voter-ID laws, 33 states now have them.

A valid ID is a necessity of modern life, and requiring one to vote hardly seems an undue imposition. Especially if you are willing to give one out gratis. Of the 17 states that have strict requirements for a photo or government-issued ID, the GAO notes, 16 provide a free ID to eligible voters.

The critics complain that people may not have the relevant underlying documents to get the free ID, and there is a cost to obtaining them.

Well, yes. In Indiana, for instance, it costs \$10 to obtain a birth certificate. In Arkansas, it costs \$12. In North Dakota, \$7.

The GAO report focuses on the voter-ID states of Kansas and Tennessee, where voters whose eligibility to vote is in doubt may vote provisionally. Then they have a period after the election to establish their eligibility. How many voters are showing up to vote, only to be foiled by the ID requirement?

According to the GAO, in Kansas in 2012, 1,115,281 ballots were cast. There were 38,865 provisional ballots, and of these, 838 were cast for voter-ID reasons.

In Tennessee, 2,480,182 ballots were cast. There were 7,089 provisional ballots, and of these, 673 were cast for voter-ID reasons.

In both states, about 30 percent of these voter-ID-related provisional ballots were ultimately accepted. That means in Kansas and Tennessee, altogether about 1,000 ballots weren't counted (and perhaps many of them for good reason) out of roughly 3.5 million cast. There you have it, ladies and gentlemen, voter suppression!

Where you come down on this issue depends on whether you think it's reasonable to require the minimal effort to establish your identity when voting.

The critics say that in-person voter fraud is extremely rare, although that is not an argument for leaving the system completely open to it. Is voting so important that it shouldn't be tethered to an ID requirement? It takes an ID to buy a gun, a constitutional right. It takes an ID to get a marriage license or check into a hotel.

Voting is inevitably going to entail, even in the most latitudinarian system, some effort. You have to, at least most of the time, go to the polling place. You have to fill out the ballot correctly. You might have to deposit it in a box. Not all people will go to the trouble to do this, or to do it properly, which doesn't mean they are disenfranchised.

The irony is that unhinged complaints about voter ID are, in this supposedly troubling new era of the poll tax, a turnout tool.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Randy Bailey.....Publisher/Editor

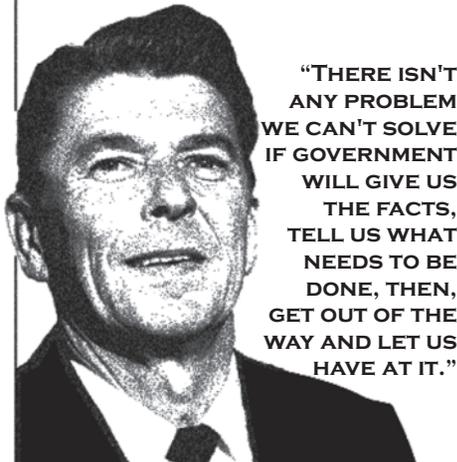
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The Bookshelf

Surprise! Monthly Column Returns

By Kalani Torres

First off I would like to offer my sincerest apologies the fine people of The Ranchos Independent and The Friends of the Ranchos Library. Why, you may wonder? I am supposed to write an article every month to keep you lovely readers informed and maybe slightly entertained about what is happening at the library. I have not written in months and for that I apologize. I have been a super busy little librarian. We have been nonstop here at our lovely little library for the past few months. This has been fantastic but is why I have been missing in action. Here's what's been going on.

We had a successful and fantastic time at the Flatlander's Craft Fair and Parade in May. Thanks to all the volunteers, vendors and community members that came out to make it a great day. We also had an amazing time at the summer reading program. We enjoyed such great performers. We once again had a great turn out of little readers and their parents each week. Thanks to our financial supporters this year: The Ranchos/Hills Seniors Center, DMIG and the Friends of the Ranchos Library. We SO appreciate the support. Thanks to our volunteers for their hard work all summer. Side note: the library would not survive without the support and help of the volunteers throughout the year. So thank you, thank you, and thank you! We had an amazing summer and we can't wait till next year.

Naturally, because I work at a library, people think I have read everything in the library and always ask for recommendations. Well, I don't read half as much as I'd like to and have not been a faithful reader since I was in junior high. I am trying to reform the reading habit I had back in the day. My reading list is ever growing and the time to read seems to disappear faster than food at a party. I love, love, love reading. I love getting in-

side a book and it taking me somewhere else. I love reading and realizing that I'm not alone. I love the look of words on a page. I love the smell of a book, new and old. I love the fact that at different points in your life a book can mean something different or, even better, mean the same. Reading is brain food. Just love it.

My favorite children's book is *Holes* by Louis Sachar. I have read this book three times and I love it even more every time. A recently popular book that I love is *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green. Green is such an amazing writer. I feel like he writes from a real place; his writings are so relatable. Fair warning: it's a sad, but good, story. If you want a super light, fun read, *Austenland* by Shannon Hale is adorable and sweet.

Bucks for Books is happening now. Please consider making a donation. We are making plans for the holidays and the Friends of the Library is having its annual Christmas party on Dec. 4 at 6 p.m. We would like to invite you to join us while we decorate the tree and have some fun. I am also thinking about starting a book club. I have someone to help lead and organize it. We just want to know if people are interested. If you are interested let me know.

That's it for now. Don't forget to stop by and check us out. We have a year round book sale and free Wi-Fi. We can't wait to see you. As always Happy Reading!

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MD-10A cont. from P. 3

the Ranchos Independent Facebook site along with other timely and relevant information) or at the WSC website above.

On Nov. 3, at the Board of Supervisors' special meeting to modify the County's General Plan so that a new shopping center can be built across from Liberty High School, the Fire Marshall told the Board that the current pressure in the Water System requires all the businesses on Avenue 12 to be shut down. So it remains to be seen then how the Dollar General being built next to Pete and Maria's Italian Bistro will be able to obtain a Permit to Operate let alone how any stores in the new shopping center, which the Board agreed to connect to the Ranchos Water System, will obtain operating permits. But as recently appointed Public Works Director Johannes Hoevertsz reported at the same Board meeting, the Liberty Village Shopping Center developer has committed to supplying a half million gallon water storage tank to be installed at the Dublin Well site.

Looking Ahead

When asked by outgoing Supervisor Manual Nevarez whether it was a good idea to allow the shopping center to connect to the shaky Water System, Hoevertsz said that it was necessary in order to obtain stor-

age for it, since it currently has none. He also described a State grant application the County had made on behalf of Valley Teen Ranch (VTR) so that an additional production well along with an additional one million gallon storage tank could be installed. That plan also involves connecting VTR to the Ranchos Water System and would be made possible by virtue of VTR's Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Status. In addition to the grant for VTR, the County has also made a grant application to the State Revolving Fund for construction funds of \$15.5 million to replace the Water System piping and install water meters.

South-Eastern Madera County United (SEMCU) is also looking for help to apply for a State Department of Water Resources Water and Energy Grant, which identifies the Ranchos itself as a DAC, primarily due to existing levels of pollution. Projects may include low-flow toilets, other low-flow water fixtures, instant water heaters and water meters for all facilities (residences, businesses and schools) in southeast Madera County. The Water Energy Grant application must be submitted by Dec. 12 and everyone who lives or operates in southeast Madera County is encouraged to participate with SEMCU in this and any

Please see MD-10A on P. 16

THANK YOU

...from Jay and Amy



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The Mouths of Babes

As most of you know that have been reading this column for any length of time, you know how so very much I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. In fact, when my sisters and I would "play school" I was always the teacher – being the oldest didn't hurt either. But being a teacher just wasn't in the cards. That certainly didn't stop me from loving the little guys. I always requested the first and second grades when I taught Sunday School.

Somewhere in the 1960s Art Linletter had a program called House Party and on that show he had a segment called "Kids Say the Darndest Things." I would watch it every chance I got because I loved to hear how the kids would answer his questions.

Invariably, Art would ask the question – Did your Mommy or Daddy tell you something that you shouldn't say? And of course, as all kids would do, was blab the answers. "Now don't tell them that Grandpa walks around in his underwear – or your Aunt Mabel is the biggest gossip on the block".

Not long ago, I was thinking about the Thanksgiving article and thought I'd like to see what kids would say about cooking the Thanksgiving dinner. After talking it over with Randy and telling him what I wanted to do, he said I should start at the top. So I put in a call to Golden Valley Unified Superintendent Andy Alvarado, and what a help he was. He contacted the principals at Webster and Sierra View and they contacted the first grade teachers and away we went. And did we get a reaction!

There is no way we can print them all, I wish we could. Randy and I went through them and picked out some of the funniest, sincere and thoughtful of them all.

The first question we asked was "Do you know how to cook a turkey?"

We got lots of answers to cook it in a pot for anywhere from 5 minutes to 200 minutes, and lots of dads who cook the turkey on the BBQ.

Kristina from Mrs. Canar's class at Webster said, "First you kill the turkey, next you bbq it. Last you are done."



Payton, also from Webster, said simply, "My Mom never cooks turkey."

Jonnie Lynn from Ms. Fulton's class at Webster said, "First you peel it then you put it in the pot."

In Mrs. Kent's class at Webster Mikayla told us, "You cook it in the oven at 20 (degrees) and 13 minutes."

The next question was "What is stuffing?" which most of the kids said was the soft stuff inside their teddy bears.

Logan, from Mrs. Canar's class, said, "Stuffing is yellow stuff with vegetables," while Meghan from Mrs. Green's Webster class said, "You put donuts with cake, peppers, slomia (salami?), ice cream and put it in the oven."

Nixon, from Sierra View, said, "Stuffing goes in the turkey. Stuffing is made with a box," while Bonilla, also from Sierra View, said, "Stuffing is yummy. It has bread crumbs and nuts. It has jam. It has protein." And Sierra View's Nathan said, "Stuffing is good. It has ice cream."

Our next question was "Where do cranberries come from?"

Most of the answers were they come from trees or bushes. One student said they came from Costco and April from Sierra View says they come from pomegranates.

Mikayla from Mrs. Kent's class said, "Cranberries come from trees. I know that because I have seen it." And Helio from Sierra View gave them a ringing endorsement: "My Mom eats a lot of cranberries. My Mom thinks they are very, very, VERY good."

Our last question was, "What are your family's Thanksgiving traditions?"

Most of the answers were either about going to Grandma's house or Grandma coming to their house. And a lot of them play with their cousins.

Gianni from Mrs. Canar's class said, "I eat all the pumpkin pie." All of it?

Isabel, also from Mrs. Canar's

Please see **RECIPE** on P. 15

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The Other Magic Word

Three of my favorite things start in November: Flannel sheet season, fires in the fireplace and Christmas music. Yes, we start early

at our house. The season is too short and the music is just too good. The other night as the music played, the fire crackled and I was smoothing fresh flannel across the bed, the thought of simpler times popped into my head. As an organizer I have my own ideas of what that means, but I decided to Google “simpler times” to see how the Internet might define it. Antique gifts, a brand of beer and some “get away from it all” cabins in New York were the top hits.

I don’t know about the beer, but I do tend to link antiquated times and getting away to experiencing more simplicity. But those don’t satisfy the desire for simpler times in the here and now. What does?

I believe there’s a powerful word that at least in part, answers that question. The word is

“some.” Choosing some can simplify and enhance life in a number of ways. Letting go of the “all or nothing” mentality is often a healthy choice. Let’s look at some examples.

Keeping it all. Unless you have unlimited storage, keeping it all complicates life. Keeping some simplifies. Keep some of your kids’ stuff. Keep some of the clothes you hope to fit into again. Keep some of the birthday, anniversary and Christmas cards you receive. Keep some of the books you read. Keep some of the plastic containers for left-overs. You get the idea.

Keeping some allows you to have what you love or need most, without having cluttered cabinets, closets, garages and rooms. Keeping some means you have the space to see, use and enjoy what you keep. Keeping some means you have more time for those spe-

cial things because you don’t have to manage it all. **Doing it all.** Unless you don’t plan on sleeping, doing it all complicates life. Doing some simplifies. Do some exercise. Spend some time watching TV or looking at Facebook. Do some work (OK, enough to pay the bills). Do some fun things with family and friends. Do some chores. Do some planning. Do some volunteering. Do some things now, and some things later.

None of us can do it all. Making intentional choices and monitoring the amount of time we choose to spend on specific things gives us freedom to be OK with some instead of none. It also protects us from imbalances

Please see **ORGANIZED** on P. 16



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The Not-So-Green Grass of Summer

By Michele Roberts

The question I have been asked a thousand times by Ranchos residents is: "When can we start watering our lawns again?" My answer to you all is that if you are waiting on the County to come to your rescue, you will be waiting for a long time. This is OUR water system, we paid for it and County staff expects us to participate in solving what is, at the end of the day, OUR dilemma.

We, the citizens of the Ranchos, need to quit having meetings, talking the subject to death and never coming up with a plan of action, much less following through with it. There are solutions, many of them in fact that have been mentioned during those meetings. "Dumping the County" and going back to being a private system is a common refrain, but you have to have a plan in place first. How you will keep the water flowing, pay our bills and manage the system any better than the County has, much less cheaper?

Some want to sue the County for wasting some of the millions of dollars that have been raised over the years for the system's management. It is an idea, but we don't have the eight to 10 years to get through a lawsuit and pay the lawyers, do we? Then there is the idea to vote and pass another bond measure, for about \$15 million dollars, to replace those leaky pipes, drill new wells and install storage tanks. Please remember, a bond measure of \$3,351,000 cost each household on the water system \$3,500 in 1996. Multiply that by five and the bill could be more than \$15,000 apiece.

This is not a ratepayer versus private well user problem either; there are two things private well owners and water system property owners do have in common. Most areas of the Ranchos community draw their water from the very same aquifer, including the farmers. Second, almost all of us are using individual septic tanks and dry wells, which means we are putting raw, barely filtered sewage into the top 300 feet of our aquifer and have been doing so for over 50 years. This translates to a single, unavoidable fact – all of us are in this together.

May I have the audacity to suggest we try a combination of the ideas mentioned above? We need to improve our system right now; we are running out of time. There are currently three separate new requests to annex new land into our water system. This would bring additional resources (new wells, three 1 million gallon storage tanks, new pipeline and money from hook-up fees and billing) to strengthen and expand our system. The situation could begin to improve with the Dublin well coming on line

in six months and make our system stable within a year. We would have enough capacity to finally hook up stand-by ratepayers who have been waiting for 18 years, as well as expanding the offer to connect to the system to surrounding parcels currently on a private well.

We cannot stop there though; we need a plan on how to manage our system effectively for the long haul. Other people have investigated the pros and cons of privatization, or forming a Community Service District, as well as continuing to seek grant funding that can make it possible to pay for needed planning and improvement. Receiving grant money could reduce the amount needed from a bond measure, making it more affordable. No one solution is either easy or best, but together they may get the job done.

So, the answer to the question "When can we water our lawns again?" is as soon as six months or as long as never again. It depends on each person in the Ranchos, at the least, getting informed and more aware of their options. So, I ask you: What are you doing to solve this mess? To start, please try to attend a meeting of the new Madera Ranchos Water System Committee and become one of the "we" working on solutions.

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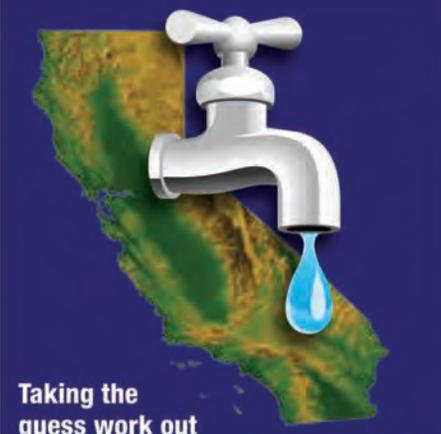
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Happy November Christmas

Here comes Santa Claus, here comes Santa Claus, right down ... Thanksgiving Lane?

Christmas time is here again, and it's early. It would seem that each year we see it start earlier and earlier and I'm not going to lie, I love it. I know, I know ... it was mid-October when we saw the first batch of Christmas decorations creep into the back of Walmart. We hadn't even donned our costumes and hit the streets for a little tricking and treating before we were inundated with elves and snowflakes. Now here we are trying to plan a Thanksgiving feast and it seems the world has gone a little Christmas crazy. Well get me a straight jacket and ship me off to the nuthouse because I am all for it. If I could move to the North Pole and get a job as one of Santa's elves, I would be on the first reindeer out of here. I'm barely over the height cap; I can slouch.

The Christmas season is a magical time for me. It's spiritual, it's time with the family, and it is absolutely gorgeous. I often find myself taking the long way home so I can drive through the neighborhoods with the best and brightest displays. And by "taking the long way" I mean driving 15 miles in the opposite direction. I love the people that go crazy. The Clark Griswolds of the world with 25,000 imported twinkle lights and a life-sized nativity in their front yard. After a long day at work it brings me peace and reminds me of the way my mom would go overboard inside our house. I used to tell her it looked like Santa Claus threw up all over the living room. I didn't appreciate it all as a kid but I do now.

Besides the department stores and radio stations, I'm pretty sure my personal desire to extend this particular time of year is a minority opinion. It's obvious when everywhere I turn people are complaining about seeing holiday displays and hearing Christmas music already. I have seen people shake their heads and with an exasperated sigh ask, "Can't we just take it one holiday at a time?" One girl in my office even said she wanted to egg the houses of the individuals who had already put up lights. A bit extreme, don't you think? The idea that the mere glimpse of some Christmas decorations up in November can incite such rage that the only recourse that you feel is suitable is vandalism? That seems like an overreaction.

Honestly, what's the big deal about combining the end of the year holidays into a giant block of adorned evergreens and lighted icicles dressing up your rain gutters? Are there that many staunch Thanks-

GENERATION WHY
by **eryn b. nyre**



giving enthusiasts that just cannot be persuaded to give up their special Turkey Day decorations? What do those even look like? Pilgrim hats with giant buckles, hollowed out gourds stuffed with fall colored leaves and pumpkins and pinecones grouped in deliberate arrangements. All that is lovely, but for me, nothing beats a trimmed tree and those Dickensian little villages that just feel like winter.

I can understand the desire to preserve Halloween. The ghosts and goblins and ghouls that people stick to their doors and hang from trees and porches. The haunted houses and the front yard cemeteries - I don't want to replace that. Even I thought it absurd to walk through the store in the middle of October and find dancing Santas and rows of ornaments. I love Christmas and all, but I'm not ridiculous. But, in my opinion, from a decorating standpoint, Thanksgiving doesn't really measure up to the holidays that flank it. Not a lot of people sticking a big ol' turkey on their front door and setting up statues of Pilgrims and Native Americans on their lawn depicting the first Thanksgiving. Not that this wouldn't be cool, I'd go out of my way to see neighborhoods dressed up like this, too. But you just don't see it much.

What's wrong with wanting colorful lights and bright trees in the background while you enjoy your turkey and stuffing? Why is it so wrong to enjoy a wreath on the front door and garland draped around the house? No one is saying skip Thanksgiving. I'm certainly not; I look forward to that feast every year. I'm just suggesting the scenery could be enhanced with a roaring fireplace with fluffy fake snow on the mantel and candles filling the room with a rich, spicy scent. I don't believe that takes away from the Thanksgiving experience but rather enhances it. The two holidays are so close together and share similar weather and sentiment. Why not embrace both at the same time. Meld them together and enjoy the spirit of the entire holiday season. I think we can all agree that the two looks are complimentary, and at the end of the day, the landscape is secondary to the company.

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Call 645-4001 for more information.



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The Best Cinnamon Rolls in the Ranchos at Dough Ray Me Bakery

By Karen Petryna

The Ranchos now has its own full-service bakery, called Dough Ray Me Bakery, on Avenue 12 at the former location of the Coffee Spot. Officially opened on Sept. 1 by co-owners and cousins, Dawn Hilterbrand and Lindsey Orcutt, Dough Ray Me Bakery still offers the same great coffee, but instead of just featuring select baked goods it now produces everything you would expect from a bakery – right on the premises. Dough Ray Me Bakery originally operated with a cottage license out of Orcutt's home and made only deliveries for about two years. Then, when the two learned that the Coffee Spot's location, where many of their products had been featured, was going to become available, they decided to turn the tables and the Dough Ray Me Bakery and Coffee Spot was born.

It all started as a way to find something to do at 3 o'clock in the morning, Hilterbrand said, talking about her third youngest of five who was a very fussy baby. She found that the child was soothed by the sound of the mixer and so began a routine of very early morning baking first

for family and friends and then upon request. She and Orcutt, who also refer to themselves as sisters since their moms are sisters and their dads are brothers, decided to form a new relationship as business partners.

Using good, old-fashioned hard work and know-how learned from cook books, YouTube videos and practice, they formed the first incarnation of Dough Ray Me Bakery which, after advertising on Facebook, landed them a front page article in the Fresno Bee.

Business Quadruples

"Our business quadrupled after the Bee article," Hilterbrand said, "and that's when we started looking for a physical lo-

cation to sell from." The team found the prospect somewhat daunting however, and after finding a potential place which was for rent on Avenue 12, decided to hold off partly because of their best customers and

good friends, Dan and Audra Damore, the previous owners of the Coffee Spot. "We knew we would have to offer coffee at our own bakery, and we didn't want to compete with Dan and Audra," Hilterbrand

front, asked if the two knew anyone who might be interested in buying the Damore's business. And it was at this point Hilterbrand and Orcutt realized they had found a new home — and only needed to get busy learning how to make great coffee. "Audra worked with us for about a month," Hilterbrand said. "She taught us how to make all the drinks the Coffee Spot served. And we still serve the same brand of coffee, from the Santa Cruz Coffee Roasting Company."

Still Offering Great Coffee

When asked what makes the coffee so special, a customer piped up to vouch for it. First she agreed with Hilterbrand that it's not at all bitter and then added, "It's the only coffee I can drink black." Now a regular at Dough Ray Me Bakery, Cherie went on to say the atmosphere of the place reminded her of the 1980's T.V. show Cheers because she has met so many nice people there.

Community Roots and Commitment

Hilterbrand and Orcutt, though four years apart in age, were both raised in Bonadelle Ranchos, attended Sierra View

Please see **DOUGH** on P. 15



The star of the show: the world famous Dough Ray Me cinnamon roll, made fresh daily only in the Ranchos.

explained.

Timing is Everything

Then, as fate would have it, about three weeks after their decision to wait, Audra Damore, who didn't know Hilterbrand and Orcutt were looking for a store-

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11/14

Business Profile

Branching Out into the Ranchos

The Branch & Vine Fruit Barn opens its doors in the Ranchos

By Christi McKinney

The big red barn which stands on Avenue 12 just west of Highway 41 in the Madera Ranchos is now the proud new home of the Branch & Vine Fruit Barn. It took over a year and lots of help from family and friends to completely restore the barn, which has been a landmark in the Ranchos since the 1980's, to its current condition. Branch & Vine is a partnership with the Wylie family, brothers Justin and Chase, and father Craig who owns FarmCo in Madera, along with property owner and farmer Jimmy Anderson. "Anderson had always envisioned turning his old barn into a market for our crops," Justin Wylie said. "We have such a wide variety of crops here in our area



Refurbished and ready to go, the new Branch & Vine Fruit Barn is located at 38802 Avenue 12 in the Madera Ranchos, just west of Highway 41.

ing]," said Wylie. They currently have 2,000 acres in production in Madera which includes almonds, pistachios, mandarins, pomegranates and hay. They've added pumpkins, tomatoes, peppers and onions for the first time this year. "Much of what we sell is grown on our own farms however we are also looking to develop relationships with local growers interested in direct sale opportunities," said Wylie. If you have an interest please call Justin directly at 559-577-9667.

The Branch & Vine Fruit Barn has been warmly welcomed to the Ranchos by many residents already and they look forward to being part of the community. Branch & Vine is in a prime location for attracting commuters from Avenue 12, Freeway 41 or Freeway 99. They are working to establish themselves as a destination location hoping to draw in tourists heading up toward Yosemite. They currently offer hay rides,

that we thought it was the perfect time to get this up and running. Our goal is to get produce from the branch or vine to your kitchen table as quick as possible to maximize freshness." In addition to fresh organic fruits and vegetables in season, they also sell flowers, homemade preserves and local honey as well as local artwork and jewelry.

The Wylie family has farmed here for many years and they are very conscious of the water issues that currently exist in our community. "Water used for the property is tail water [runoff from our pistachios] and Ag well water [lines that have to be flushed to get rid of sand and gravel before irrigat-

a bounce house, a petting zoo and even occasional pony rides. They are now available for hosting weddings, birthdays, private parties and fund raisers. They are located at 38802 Avenue 12, Madera Ranchos and their standard hours are Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. They recently announced that they were closing down for the season and will be reopening in spring when the crops start coming in, however they will be open coinciding with holiday events. For information about upcoming activities or arranging a private event visit their Facebook page or call 559-575-1867.

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RECIPE cont. from P. 8

class said, "I give my Grandma a card."

Angelica from Mrs. Green's Webster class said, "Celebrate my dog's birthday and eat turkey, mash potatoes. That is our Thanksgiving traditions."

Kaleb from Sierra View said, "We stay home and eat turkey and fruit and pie and watch TV," and Haley, also from Sierra View, said, "We stay home and eat turkey and stuffing. We eat pie and give thanks for poor people."

I'll close with this from John in Mrs. Kent's class at

Webster: "We say our prayers," and Emma from Mrs. Green's class: "My Mom and Dad love me and my sisters."

Isn't that what it's all about?

There you have it – only a portion of the answers we got, but they were priceless. I want to sincerely thank Superintendent Andy Alvarado, Principals Ladlo Lopez of Webster and Chris Imperatrice of Sierra View and ALL of the first grade teachers at both schools for all their help. But most of all, the students in the first grade at these two schools – YOU WERE AWESOME!



A Thanksgiving turkey by Ariella from Mrs. Fulton's first grade class at Webster Elementary.

DOUGH cont. from P. 13

Elementary, Spring Valley Junior High, and Sierra High School, and are now both raising their own families here. Orcutt, whose husband works for the Forestry Service and has been busy all summer fighting fires, was taking a short break with him in the Bay Area at the time of the interview. Though normally she takes over for Hilterbrand mid-morning, since it is Hilterbrand who still gets up quite early to be at the bakery every day between 3 and 3:30 a.m. Hilterbrand says her husband's schedule is a little more flexible since he works as a Youth Pastor at Lifetree Church and also for Madera Unified.

Dough Ray Me Bakery has opened its doors, and tables, for reservations for local area clubs needing a place to meet. At present, Lifetree's "Moms of Preschoolers" (MOPs), "Moms Next", and their Men's group all meet at the bakery/coffee shop. So does Flipside Church's board. Other groups are welcome to reserve tables at the Dough Ray Me Bakery for their regular meetings or, by Cherie's example, customers are welcome to come in and just hang out. When Cherie reported her mother's passing on Facebook last January, she was surprised and pleased that Hilterbrand and Orcutt, whom she didn't know at the time, chose to bring Cherie's father, living in Fresno, some of their signature cinnamon rolls along with a batch of fresh-made bierocks. And she couldn't be more pleased to support the



Cousins, "sisters," best friends and owners of Dough Ray Me Bakery, Lindsey Orcutt (left) and Dawn Hilterbrand.

bakery or recommend its bierocks and signature cinnamon rolls, which are baked fresh every day and used in the bread pudding the next day.

Store Hours and Offerings

Dough Ray Me Bakery is open from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. every day except Sunday when it closes at 3 p.m. It also offers catering-type services for birthdays, weddings and other events as well as "at cost" baked goods for non-profits such as schools and churches.

You can "like" Dough Ray Me Bakery on Facebook to be informed about upcoming events including their grand opening celebration. You can also "like" "the Ranchos Independent" on Facebook for even more news.



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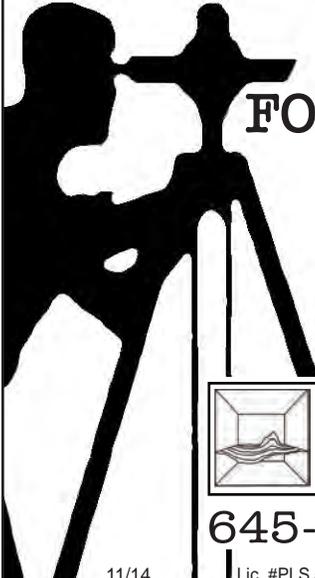
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Senior Report

The Winter of My ... and Your ... Life

By Verlaine Elinburg

Funny thing about life. We live it, but never know where it will take us. But when we reach the winter of our life, we look back and wonder where the years went. We look in the mirror, see ourselves and say, "What happened? Who is that person? It is not me." Life is like the four seasons of the calendar year. Most of us have a difficult time accepting the final season of our life (in my family it is being 70). It does not help when you receive a correspondence in the mail reminding you that you are mandated to begin withdrawing from your 401K retirement fund. Time has a way of moving quickly and you are unaware of the years that drifted by. I remember during my school days, the spring of my life, I could not wait to be grown up. Time was not moving fast enough.

Throughout my years, I saw older people and they were years away from me. I lived through the spring, the summer, the fall, charging ahead, never looking back and never paying any attention to the passing of time. Like the sayings goes, I never took the time to stop and smell the roses. The energy and adrenalin in my body kept on going and time was just the hour of the day.

Now I must come to the realization that this is the final season of my life. But my mind is kicking and screaming, not wanting to leave my fall. You might figure there are 20 years to each of the four seasons of an average life. You wonder where you were in each season and what did you accomplish in each segment. Yes, I have had regrets. There were things I did and things I should not have done. My pleasure is knowing there are many things I am happy to have accomplished. Getting older is enjoyable in some way. You can go back through memories you created through your spring. Those were the young, simple and carefree days of innocent and uncomplicated life and love. The summer was a time of creating a career, financial and family life. Fall for me was the most challenging and educating during the up and down of mid-life changes and crises. Now that winter has set in, I have the freedom of not being committed to time but can relive the memories of the good old days, old songs and old movies and catch up with old friends. It is amazing with the new media technology and unoccupied time in your life how you can find lost friends scattered around the world. Life is much simpler now. The only thing I am not prepared for are the aches and pains, the loss of strength and agility, the inability to go back and do all the things that I wish I had done ... and never did. I am not

giving up on life – just realizing I must make the most of my remaining days and make it the most successful season of my life. I am stronger because I have to be; I am smarter because of my mistakes. I am the happiest and full of confidence because of the sadness and insecurities I have known. Now I am wiser because of what I know. I am just beginning my winter and it has a predetermined set of days. It could be two to three years, 12 or 20 years, but now I know how time can drift away.

Life is a gift to you; you have no promise that you will see all the four seasons of your life. The way you live it through the four seasons gives you an opportunity to make changes in the direction you wish to make. Life goes by quickly so do what you can do today as you can never be sure whether this is your winter.

Raffle tickets for the doll, bed, clothes and tea set are still available at the Senior Center, drawing Dec. 6. \$1 for one ticket or \$5 for six tickets.

The Annual Ranchos/Hills Seniors Christmas and Bake Sale Nov. 29 and Dec. 6 from 8 a.m. to noon.

Reminder: Annual Christmas gift drive for our Veterans sponsored by the Ranchos Chamber. Bring your items to the Senior Center, including lap blankets, toothbrushes, toothpaste, white t shirts (L or XL) white socks, instant coffee, white hand towels and new books. Final day is Dec. 10.

On Dec. 8 at 6 p.m. the Ranchos/Hills Seniors will have an installation of new officers for 2015 and a Christmas Dinner catered by Ranchos Café. The cost is \$18 for chicken cordon bleu, rice pilaf, vegetables and Black Forest cake. Sign-up at the Senior Center.

The Department of Health comes periodically to the Center for free checkups. For referrals to medical providers and community services, the contact number is 675-7893 to make an appointment.

A nutritionally balanced lunch program is available Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. A suggested price for 60 years and older is \$1.75. Reservations are needed 24 hours in advance prior to 11 a.m. so remember to call Joann at 645-4864.

We have a growing exercise program being held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 a.m. and on Tuesdays at 12:15 p.m. are a variety of card games to be enjoyed. Stop by the Senior Center for a copy of our activity calendar for daily events. Additional copies are available at the Ranchos Market and Hurst Hardware and several businesses along Avenue 12. You can also contact Joann at 645-4864.

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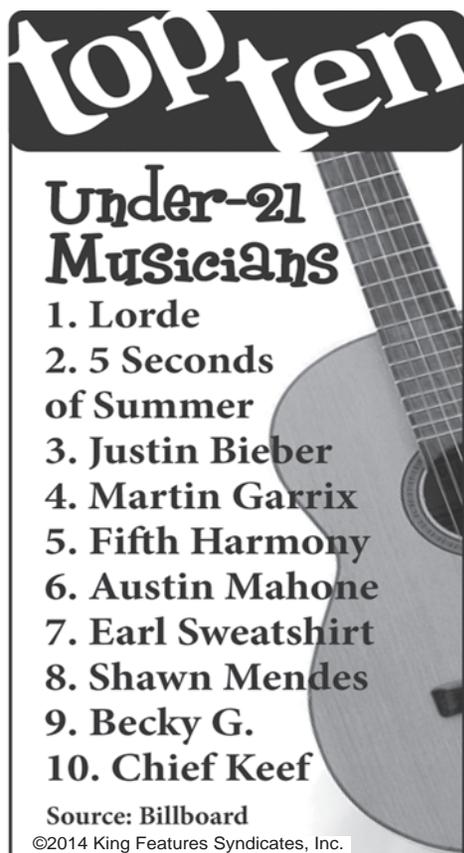
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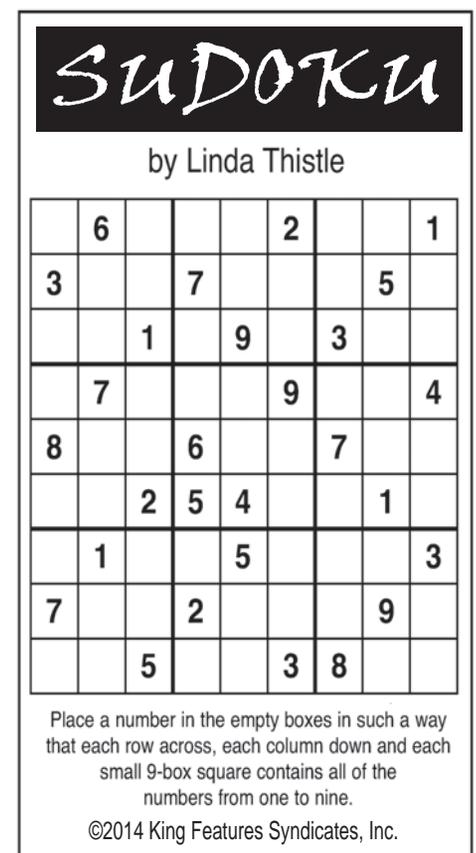
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top ten
Under-21 Musicians

1. Lorde
2. 5 Seconds of Summer
3. Justin Bieber
4. Martin Garrix
5. Fifth Harmony
6. Austin Mahone
7. Earl Sweatshirt
8. Shawn Mendes
9. Becky G.
10. Chief Keef

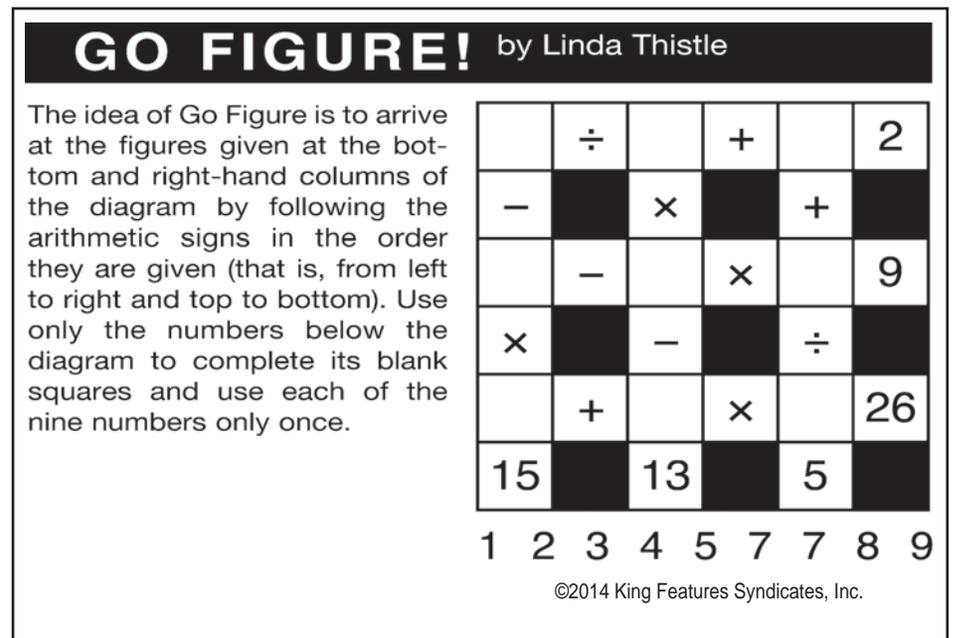
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SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

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

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.

	÷		+		2
-		×		+	
	-		×		9
×		-		÷	
	+		×		26
15		13		5	

1 2 3 4 5 7 7 8 9
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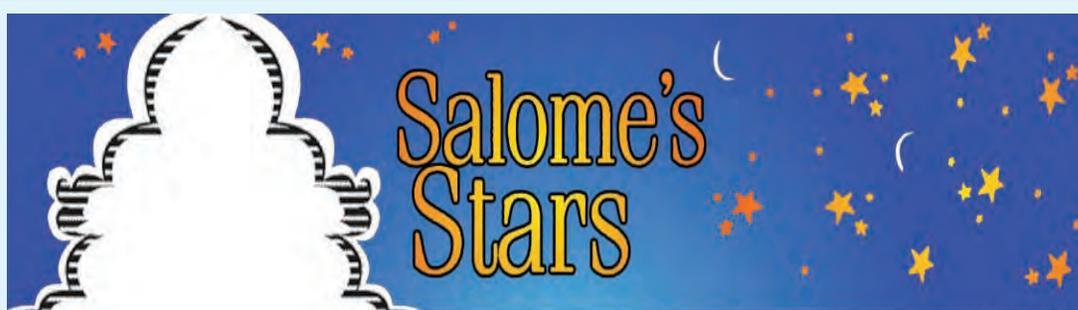
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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) A long-sought workplace change could be happening soon. Consider reworking your ideas and preparing a presentation just in case. A personal relationship takes a new turn.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your persuasiveness doesn't really start to kick in until midweek. By then, you can count on having more supporters in your camp, including some you doubted would ever join you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Your workload is still high, but -- good news! -- you should start to see daylight by the week's end. Reserve the weekend for fun and games with friends and loved ones. You deserve it.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Regardless of how frustrating things are, keep that "Crab" under control. A cutting comment you might think is apt right now will leave others hurting for a long time to come.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Be more sensitive to the emotions of loved ones who might feel left out while you're stalking that new opportunity. Be sure to make it up to them this weekend. A nice surprise could be waiting.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) The gregarious Virgo rarely has a problem making new friends. But repairing frayed relationships doesn't come easily. Still, if it's what you want to do, you'll find a way. Good luck.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) A misunderstanding with a partner or spouse needs to be worked out before it turns into something really nasty. Forget about your pride for now and make that first healing move.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Communication dominates the week. Work out any misunderstandings with co-workers. Also get back in touch with old friends and those family members you rarely see.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) As busy as your week is, make time for someone who feels shut out of your life. Your act of kindness could later prove to be more significant than you might have realized.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Congratulations. Your busy workweek leads to some very satisfying results. Sports and sporting events are high on your weekend activities aspect. Enjoy them with family and friends.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Your generosity of spirit reaches out once again to someone who needs reassurance. There might be problems, but keeping that line of communication open eventually pays off.

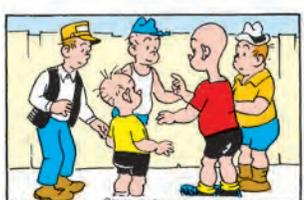
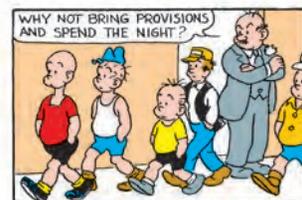
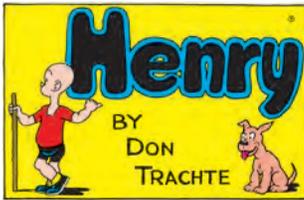
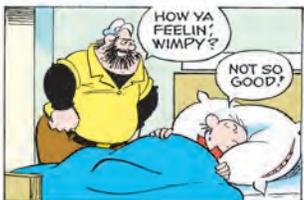
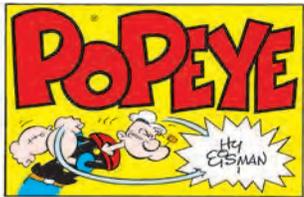
PISCES (February 19 to March 20) You are among the truth-seekers in the universe, so don't be surprised to find yourself caught up in a new pursuit of facts to counter what you believe is an insidious exercise in lying.

Born this Week

You believe in loyalty and in keeping secrets. All things considered, you would probably make a perfect secret agent.

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FUN PAGES



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

ENOUGH TO MAKE A GROWN MAN CRY-- AFTER MONTHS OF STICKING TO YOUR DIET RELIGIOUSLY AND EXERCISING REGULARLY-- YOU REALLY THINK YOU'VE SLIMMED DOWN-- AND THEN...



EVER HAPPEN TO YOU? WHEN YOU DO FIND A PARKING-METER SPACE-- THAT'S WHEN YOU'VE GOT NO CHANGE---



BY AL SCADUTO



Junior Whirl

COIN BOX! A cent, a nickel, a dime and a quarter are represented by lettered circles in the box at right. To tell which coin is which, consult the following clues:

1. Coin A's value in cents is twice that of coin C.
2. Coin B's value in cents is five times that of C.
3. Coin C's value in cents is five times that of D.
4. Coin D plus C is 3/5ths A.

Which coins are represented by the circles A, B, C and D?

SAY HAY! If an angry father is a MAD DAD, describe respectively a small insect, a large hog, a twisted penny, a clever song, a splendid tree.

VERSE SENSE TO PONDER

WHAT appears to be a flat-out contradiction is perfectly logical when you find the answer to this age-old verse riddle. See if you don't agree.

I saw a man behind a man, I saw a man before. Between the two there were in view, exactly half a score.

Yet, I can say, and this is true, though strange it seems to be. That only one, and one alone, was all that could see.

Can you puzzle it out? P.S. Think British.

BIRD DUO! Two of the assorted birds above look enough alike to be twins. See how quickly you can find them.

Wishing Well

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

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MAGIC MAZE ● - ROAST

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ROLJGDAXVCASNP
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XVSQOLJHEOIMVDU
CAXYVTRPNWLJAAH
HFBIRGNIDNATSLC
DBYXVDTRRPFEEBN
OMKIGEDUGBRUMPA
ZXWUTRQNIOLKROP
ONLJIGFDPCAYXTW

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

Beef	Dry	Pig	Standing rib
Celebrity	Lamb	Pork loin	Top blade
Chuck	Nut	Pot	Wiener
Crown	Pan	Rump	

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SIP SHAPE! Time for a sip, but no time to chat. Apply the following colors: 1-Red, 2-Lt. purple, 3-Yellow, 4-Lt. brown, 5-Flesh tones, 6-Green, 7-Dk. brown, 8-Dk. blue.

SPELLBINDER

SCORE 10 points for using all the letters in the word below to form two complete words.

RHAPSODY

THEN score 2 points each for all words of four letters or more found among the letters.

Try to score at least 50 points.

TRIVIA TEST

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Texas?
2. MOVIES: How many von Trapp children were in "The Sound of Music"?
3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: To which British queen was the famous Koh-i-noor diamond given?
4. PRESIDENTS: What U.S. president is depicted in the oldest surviving photograph of a president?
5. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of ferrets called?
6. TELEVISION: Who was the longtime host of "Soul Train"?
7. HISTORY: What was an oast house used for?
8. LITERATURE: What was Ernest Hemingway's first novel?
9. MUSIC: Which 1970s band released the hit "Smoke on the Water"?
10. GAMES: What modern card game evolved from the older game of whist?

Answers

1. Austin
2. Seven
3. Queen Victoria
4. John Quincy Adams
5. A business
6. Don Cornelius
7. Drying hops used in making beer and ale
8. "The Sun Also Rises" (1926)
9. Deep Purple
10. Contract bridge

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