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Don't Let Storm Repairs Turn Into An Uglier Mess



The cheapest price may not be the best solution when it comes to repairing flood damage, removing a fallen tree, fixing a downed fence, or patching a leaky roof. Consumers can use CSLB's online resources, available at www.cslb.ca.gov or CheckTheLicenseFirst.com, to review the license status of contractors they plan to hire and to get tips about the best approach for making home repairs.

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Contractors State License Board (CSLB) reminds California home owners to use only licensed contractors when it comes to storm damage repairs. The cheapest price may not be the best solution when it comes to repairing flood damage, removing a fallen tree, fixing a downed fence, or patching a leaky roof.

"Anyone who needs to make repairs from storm damage should be looking for a legitimate, qualified tradesperson, especially in an urgent situation," said CSLB Registrar Steve Sands. "Licensed contractors are skilled in their specific trade, insured and bonded, and not likely to leave you in the lurch when it comes to properly completing the job at a fair price."

Consumers can use CSLB's online resources, available at www.cslb.ca.gov or CheckTheLicenseFirst.com, to review the license status of contractors they plan to hire

and to get tips about the best approach for making home repairs. Any construction job valued at \$500 or more in combined labor and material costs must be performed by a state-licensed contractor. California Business and Professions (B&P) Code requires licensees to carry workers' compensation insurance coverage for their employees and to be bonded.

For tree trimming and removal jobs where the tree is 15 feet or higher and the job is more than \$500, the contractor must be state-licensed. B&P Code allows a gardener who does not have a state license to work on incidental tree pruning if the tree is less than 15 feet tall and the job costs less than \$500.

State law requires all C-39 Roofing contractors to carry workers' compensation insurance, even if they do not have employees, to ensure that consumers are protected in the event of an accident or injury on the homeowner's property.

Consumers should follow these tips when

soliciting bids from home improvement contractors: Only hire licensed contractors, and ask to see their license and photo identification; Don't rush into repairs, no matter how badly they're needed; Be careful when using online bulletin boards such as craigslist.org, because unlicensed operators may try to mislead you into thinking they are licensed; Only make a down payment of 10 percent or \$1,000, whichever is less; Don't pay in cash, and don't let payments get ahead of the work; Get at least three bids, check references, and get a written contract; and Contact CSLB if you have a complaint against a contractor.

CSLB encourages consumers to always "Check the License First" by visiting www.cslb.ca.gov or calling its toll-free automated line at 1-800-321-CSLB (2757). Also, visit CSLB's website for tips about how to hire a contractor and to sign up for CSLB email alerts.

Source: Contractors State License Board ★

Placer Community Foundation Celebrates Community Philanthropy at the White House

PLACER COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Placer Community Foundation CEO Veronica Blake was one of 75 community foundation leaders to convene at the White House in celebration of 100 years of community philanthropy in the United States.

Foundation leaders met with staff from the President's Domestic Policy Council as well as Jonathan Greenblatt, Special Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation. They discussed issues such as equity, social justice, climate change, education, disaster relief, and health care.

"Deep expertise and local knowledge give community foundations a critical role to play in this [philanthropic] process," Greenblatt wrote in a White House blog post about the event. "The core values that they bring — like creativity, compassion, perseverance and grit — make them essential to achieving long-term success."

Placer Food Bank's Mobile Food Pantry is one of PCF's long-term success stories. The foundation brought together partners from nonprofits, faith organizations, local government, and the private sector to study the food system in the community. The Placer County Food Systems Report came out of this collaboration, and with this information the partners learned how to best make improvements to help local citizens in need. With a \$43,000 gift from PCF's Community Needs Fund the Mobile Food Pantry was created. It aims to distribute 900,000 pounds of healthy, refrigerated, food to local pantries annually.

"Placer Community Foundation has a long history of partnering with local government," Blake said. "It was an honor to have the opportunity to share our local successes with our colleagues."

Source: Placer Community Foundation ★

Book Lovers: Visit Downtown Auburn's New Little Free Library

AUBURN, CA (MPG) - "Take a book, leave a book" is the philosophy of the Little Free Library movement. That philosophy comes to the Boys and Girls Club of Placer County via the Mullin & McAdams Clubhouse, 679 Lincoln Way, Auburn, where boys and girls, as well as book lovers of all ages are welcome to visit, borrow, and donate books.

This elegant, three-tiered weatherproof structure was lovingly planned and constructed by Marty Allgeier of Meadow Vista as part of his Eagle Scout project. Materials for the Little Free Library were generously funded by Auburn Host Lions Club. The project was encouraged and guided by the Literacy Support Council of Placer County, supporting Placer Adult Literacy Service (PALS) since 1991.

Little Free Libraries, a worldwide movement, promote literacy and the love of reading while fostering a sense of community and connection.

Source: Literacy Support Council of Placer County ★



Installing Auburn's newest Little Free Library (left to right) are Jennifer Cross, Boys & Girls Club Director of Programs; Joan Ashworth, Boys & Girls Club Youth Development Specialist; Boy Scout Marty Allgeier; Linda Frederick Yaffe, President, Literacy Support Council of Placer County; and Steve Murphy, President, Auburn Host Lions Club.

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Auburn Ski Club Offers Cross Country Skiing This Season



Auburn Ski Club Jr skiers enjoying the XC trails at the club's Donner Summit Training Center.
Photo courtesy of Auburn Ski Club Training Center.

AUBURN, CA (MPG) - Auburn Ski Club has announced 2014-15 season cross country trail pass rates at the club's Training Center on Donner Summit. The ASC 20 KM cross-country trails are open Wednesday through Sunday 8:30am to 4:30pm, closed Monday and Tuesday non holidays. Limited XC trails are currently open with more being groomed as snow conditions allow.

ASC Training Center XC trails are legendary for the longest cross-country ski season and the highest quality grooming in the west. New for this season ASC has added a new Pisten Bully groomer. XC trails are groomed daily and often again mid-day to ensure a perfect snow surface. ASC trails provide scenic views of Castle Peak and sweeping

views of Donner Summit.

A season long cross country trail pass is \$100 for adults (age 18-69) and \$70 for youth (age 13-17). Cross country skiers age 12 and under and 70+ are free with an annual \$40 ASC membership. Daily trail passes are \$18 for adult all day, \$12 after 1 p.m. Youth rates are just \$12 all day and \$8 after 1 p.m. Kids under age 5 are free if accompanied by an adult with a day pass.

The ASC Training Center also offers alpine, cross country, snowboard and biathlon winter sports programs and junior teams stressing athletic achievement, family participation, and a lifetime of winter sports. Generations of Northern California skiers and snowboarders developed their life-time of winter sports with Auburn Ski

Club beginning in 1928. It's not too late to enjoy the coming season; program enrollment is underway now for all abilities and ages. For more information, visit www.auburnskiclub.org, email info@assoc.auburnski-club.org, or call (530) 426-3313. The Training Center is located at the west end of the Boreal Mt. Resort parking lot.

ASC Training Center is the top XC race venue in the west having hosted many National events. March 7-14th, ASC will host the 2015 USSA Cross-Country Junior National Championships followed by the US Biathlon Association National Championships March 19-20th. Both events will bring the best skiers in the country to the Training Center. ★

Jim Nielsen Takes Oath, Sworn-In as State Senator

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Senator Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber) was officially sworn in on December 1st as the State Senator for District Four. Joined by his wife Marilyn and sons, Senator Nielsen along with nineteen other new Senators were administered the oath of office during a ceremony on the floor of the State Senate.

"It is an honor and privilege to represent the residents of District Four," said Senator Nielsen. "I will continue to serve, to listen and to make common-sense decisions."

Nielsen added, "My goal is to do my part in making California a friendlier environment for businesses so they can hire more Californians, bring back safer neighborhoods and set a path for responsible state budgets."

Nielsen represents the residents of the Fourth Senate District, which includes all or portions of Butte, Colusa, Glenn,



State Senator Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber)

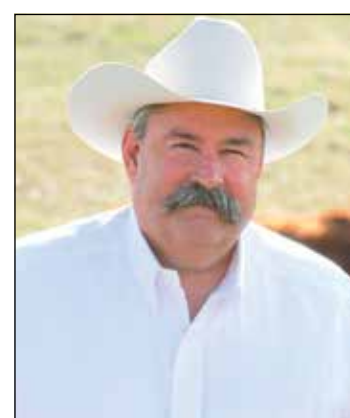
Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Tehama and Yuba Counties. Senator Nielsen in his Capitol Office at (916) 651-4004. ★
Constituents may contact

Assembly Member Frank Bigelow Sworn-In for Second Assembly Term

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Assembly Member Frank Bigelow (R) of O'Neals, CA, took the oath of office on December 1st in Sacramento for his second term representing the 5th Assembly District.

"I'm honored to continue to serve our district and champion our rural way of life," said Bigelow. "While the past two years have brought some incredible progress—such as the passage of a water bond and the creation of a rainy day fund—there's many problems left to solve. I look forward to working with my new colleagues to get good things done for our region."

As a fourth-generation Californian and lifelong rancher, Bigelow has provided a much-needed voice in Sacramento on issues affecting agriculture and the state's rural communities. He was first sworn into the Assembly in 2012 and quickly distinguished himself as a rising leader, where he was named vice chair of the powerful Assembly Appropriations Committee; vice chair of the Water, Parks, and



Lifelong rancher Frank Bigelow proudly represents the 5th Assembly District, which encompasses Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Madera, Mariposa, Mono, Placer, and Tuolumne counties and includes Lake Tahoe and Yosemite National Park.

Wildlife Committee; and chair of the California Legislative Rural Caucus.

In the past two years, Bigelow has delivered tangible results for the 5th Assembly District and the entire state. Highlights include the signing of his bill to crack down on cattle theft (AB 1722), the passage of a voter-approved measure to create a state rainy day fund (Prop. 2), and the passage

of a historic water bond that he helped negotiate (Prop. 1). Prop. 1, which was approved by more than 67% of the voters, provides a much-needed down payment for many vital water storage projects and will help create a reliable water supply for the future.

Bigelow hopes to build on those accomplishments in his second term by making further progress on issues important to his constituents, many of whom live in rural areas.

"Over the next two years, I'll continue to work with my colleagues from all parties to ensure adequate health care access for rural communities, protect school funding, keep our county fairs open for business, and repeal the fire tax," said Bigelow. "I will also monitor the implementation of California's new groundwater law and work to reverse the many serious flaws it contains, such as the jeopardizing of private property rights and the potential to create billions of dollars in new fees."

Source: The Office of Assembly Member Frank Bigelow ★

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It is the intent of the Placer Sentinel to strive for an objective point of view in the reporting of news and events. We consider our Editorial and Opinion pages to be a public forum for our readers. It is understood that the opinions expressed on these pages are those of the authors and cartoonists and are not necessarily the opinions of the publisher or our contributors.

Publisher
Paul V. Scholl

Community Gathers, Remembers, at Light Up a Life



AUBURN, CA (MPG) - More than 200 community members came together to celebrate loved ones who have passed at this year's "Light Up a Life" event at The Ridge Golf Club and Event Center on Dec. 2.

Now in its sixth year, "Light Up a Life," has become a community tradition for many.

"The holidays can be a very hard time for everyone, whether it's added stress, the recent loss of a loved one, or just a reminder of friends and family that we are no longer able to spend time with," said Anne Lyons, Sutter Auburn Faith Hospice clinical manager. "It's very important that as a community, we have the opportunity to come together and support each other."

During the event, attendees created keepsake ornaments celebrating their loved ones, participated in a candle-lighting ceremony and enjoyed refreshments and live holiday music provided by the Colfax High School Chamber Choir. Several community faith leaders, including Pastor Jody Shorkey of Clay City Church and Reverend Mark Schindler of Unity of Auburn, provided supportive words and prayers throughout the event. Personalized ornaments from the event will also be on display throughout the holidays in the lobby of Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital on the hospice Christmas tree.

"Each year it's amazing to see how people react and appreciate

"Light Up a Life," said Vicki Harris, a Sutter Auburn Faith Hospice volunteer. "It's very rewarding for all those involved, especially as it offers a chance for people to connect, make new friends, and see that other people are experiencing the same feelings they are - no matter whether it's sadness or joy in remembering loved ones who have passed recently, or many years ago."

This year, "Light Up a Life" was hosted by the Chapel of the Hills, Lassila Funeral Chapels, Sierra Foothills Funeral Services, Stein and Sons Funeral Services and Sutter Auburn Faith Hospice.

Source: Sutter Health Sacramento Sierra Region ★

Shoebox Gifts Provide Hope Worldwide

AUBURN, CA (MPG) - Auburn-area residents rallied together to pack more than 10,000 shoebox gifts last month for children worldwide struggling with war, disease, poverty and other difficult circumstances. Although the collection sites are closed for 2014, Auburn residents can still contribute to the local collection number by packing a shoebox gift online at samaritanspurse.org.

With Operation Christmas Child's virtual-packing tool, it is quick, easy and convenient to pack a Christmas gift for a child in one of the hardest-to-reach countries. The online tool allows anyone to go from a virtual shopper to a vital influence in just a few clicks.

At samaritanspurse.org, visitors select a child's age and gender, shop through an online selection of culturally relevant gifts, "build" their shoebox and finish it off by uploading a photo and writing a note of encouragement to the child who will receive it.

For many, building a shoebox online provides the perfect complement to a busy lifestyle and a perfect way to provide a tangible expression of love to children living in desperate situations. The virtual-packing tool also offers participants the option to challenge friends to participate or the opportunity to give a donation that lets others build online themselves.

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief and evangelism organization headed by Franklin Graham. Through simple shoebox gifts and a message of hope, children learn they are loved and not forgotten. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has delivered gift-filled shoeboxes to more than 113 million children in more than 150 countries. In 2014, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoebox gifts to reach another 10 million children.

To participate in Operation Christmas Child, call 1-800-353-5949 or visit samaritanspurse.org.

Source: Operation Christmas Child ★



Pearl Harbor Survivor Receives Hero's Welcome



Placer County Sheriff Ed Bonner (left) with his friend Louis Conter, one of the last few survivors of the USS Arizona.

AUBURN, CA (MPG) - On the evening of Wednesday, December 10th, the Placer County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) Honor Guard was at the Sacramento International Airport to welcome back a local hero—one of the last remaining survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Louis Conter, who lives near Auburn, is 93 years old and is one of the last few survivors of the USS Arizona where 1,177 of the 1,512 crewmen on board

were killed—nearly half of the U.S. servicemen killed in action on December 7th, 1941, at Pearl Harbor.

Conter mentioned to his friend, Placer County Sheriff Ed Bonner, that he'd never been welcomed back from any of his many trips to Pearl Harbor. Sheriff Bonner thought Conter should receive a hero's welcome, so PCSO's honor guard met Conter and his wife, Val, (who were returning from Hawaii)

at the tram exit in Terminal B, where they saluted the returning hero and thanked him for his courageous service. They then escorted him through the airport to baggage claim and then to his vehicle.

Conter is one of the sharpest, coolest men you'll ever meet. He remembers every name of every man he served with throughout his storied military career.

Source: Placer County Sheriff's Office ★

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SIERRA NEVADA energy watch

Are you interested in saving money on your Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) energy bill for your business?

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Sierra Business Council (SBC), a local non-profit, is working with PG&E to provide rebates to businesses for upgrading outdated lighting to energy efficient lighting such as LEDs. Rebates are also available for energy efficient HVAC and refrigeration systems.

Call SBC for a no-cost energy audit to assess whether you can save on your commercial energy bill. Ask for the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch program.

For El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, and Sierra County, call SBC's Truckee office: 530-582-4800

For Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, and Tuolumne County, call SBC's Sonora office: 209-532-7200

2014 rebates are limited, so call to schedule your no-cost appointment before the rebates are gone!



This program is funded by California utility customers and administered by PG&E under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.



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Water Agency Prepares for Storm Runoff, Debris



Log booms have been anchored and placed to keep logs and debris from the King Fire from washing into Placer County Water Agency's (PCWA) Ralston Afterbay.

AUBURN, CA (MPG) - With heavy rains in the forecast, the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) has placed log booms across Ralston Afterbay Reservoir to contain logs and debris that could wash down the Rubicon River from lands charred by the massive King Fire.

A briefing on the emergency project was presented by PCWA staff at a December 8th meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors. Director of Technical Services Brent Smith said heavy rains create the potential for burned timber on steep hillsides along the river canyon to enter the river and flow down to PCWA's Ralston Afterbay Reservoir. The U.S. Forest Service expects that the situation could pose problems during large storm events for several years.

Under an emergency services contract, PCWA hired Syblon Reid Contractors of Folsom to place the log booms, which were

rigged into place late last week. The three-part emergency effort also includes equipment to hoist logs from the reservoir and, if necessary, to pass logs over the reservoir's dam without damaging it. The board approved a change order that includes site work for up to eight storm events over the coming winter, bringing the emergency contract to a maximum of \$1.4 million.

At the briefing, Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Lawrence Crabtree updated the board on efforts being undertaken by the U.S. Forest Service to remediate fire damage on the watershed. The King Fire burned more than 97,000 acres of public and privately owned land in El Dorado and Placer counties in September and October. About 40,000 acres of the burn area are on the Rubicon River watershed, which supplies the PCWA Middle Fork American River Hydroelectric Project.

In other business, PCWA directors approved a 2015 agency budget of \$108 million, which includes a Water Division operating budget of \$39.8 million, Power Division operating budget of \$23.5 million, Agency Wide operating budget of \$2.2 million, and Combined Capital budget of \$42.5 million. They also heard a drought update from Deputy Director of Technical Services Tony Firenzi, who said recent wet weather is leading to improved water storage conditions and that long-range forecasts are pointing toward a wetter than average winter. He cautioned, however, that the drought is far from over.

Information on PCWA board meetings may be obtained through the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030. For drought updates and water conservation information, see www.pcwa.net.

Source: Placer County Water Agency ★

Auburn's Festival of Lights an Electrifying Success

By Linda Harper

AUBURN, CA (MPG) - Perfect weather, 100 parade entries, and thousands of spectators energized Auburn's 2014 holiday season on December 6th with the Festival of Lights Parade. Vehicles and floats, decorated with multitudes of twinkling lights, traveled through town on Lincoln Way while the Placer High School and the Antelope High School marching bands entertained onlookers with Christmas music and a Color Guard performance. Placer County Sheriff's Department Honor Guard marched through the route, instilling pride and reminding everyone of their service to the community.

This year marks more than 15 years of the Festival of Lights, a popular family event sponsored by Auburn's Chamber of Commerce and organized by countless volunteers and the City of Auburn. The festival, annual lighting of the town's Christmas tree in November, and Auburn's Old Fashioned Christmas held in Old Town on December 13th and 20th provide a comfortable venue for area residents to come together as a community. Auburn's friendly and festive atmosphere during the holidays is a remembrance of tradition; something that's alive and well in the Sierra foothills.

PG&E was awarded the "Best



Use of Lights" recognition while the Antelope High School Marching Band and Color Guard was honored for "Best Music." The "Best Walking Group" was Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, and Party Princess was acknowledged as the "Best Float Presentation." Polar Express displayed the "Best Theme," while Auburn Mermaid Synchronization was noticed in the "Sweepstakes" category.

With a few holiday shopping days remaining, note that local merchants want your business. They have worked to provide the best products and customer service for affordable prices. Remember, shopping local puts money back into the community so that traditional events like Auburn's holiday celebrations will continue for future generations to enjoy. ★

CHP's 911 Call Centers Receive National Accreditation

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - On Tuesday, November 25th, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) announced that its communications centers, which answer approximately seven million 911 calls per year, were formally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) under the Public Safety Communications Agencies Accreditation Program.

"The CHP received this prestigious award after ensuring our policies and procedures meet or exceed standards set by law enforcement professionals from across the nation," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. "This accreditation demonstrates our commitment to public safety and means that CHP's 911 call centers meet national standards of excellence."

To meet accreditation standards, the CHP implemented a statewide quality assurance program for its 25 communication centers. Supervisors review audio tapes of 911 calls and analyze performance according to several performance measurements, including the dispatcher's speech, prioritizing of information, and accuracy in documenting calls. Dispatchers receive constructive feedback and are given an opportunity for self-assessment.

By receiving accreditation for its communications centers, the CHP became one of the first two agencies in California to receive the CALEA TRI-ARC Award, which recognizes concurrent accreditation for law enforcement, public safety communications, and public safety training activities. The CHP was

awarded initial accreditation in 2010 and was reaccredited in 2013, the same year the CHP Academy in West Sacramento was also accredited.

CALEA was established in 1979 as a law enforcement credentialing authority through the joint efforts of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, National Sheriffs' Association, and the Police Executive Research Forum. To maintain accreditation, CHP must undergo a comprehensive assessment every three years.

For more information on the accreditation process and the CALEA TRI-ARC Award, visit www.calea.org.

Source: California Highway Patrol ★

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Dare to Live Without Limits Improving Your Luck



by Bryan Golden

You can improve your luck. You are not just a passive spectator that has to wait for or hope for luck. Improving your luck is a matter of action and attitude. Good luck happens when preparation meets opportunity.

There are three steps you can take to improve your luck. Notice, or create, and then act upon chance opportunities. Listen to your intuition when making decisions. Expect that all situations will work out for the best.

Notice, or create, and then act upon chance opportunities. Opportunities constantly present themselves. You have to keep your eyes and mind open. You never know how or when opportunities will present themselves. It could be a chance encounter, an unexpected situation that arises, a bright idea that pops into your mind, or something someone says that inspires you.

Lucky people tend to be extroverted. They will strike up conversations with strangers. You learn about others by asking them about themselves and what they do. Listening is always more educational than talking. The more people you know or speak to, the greater the likelihood of a positive chance encounter or conversation. A larger network helps improve your luck.

Always be polite, courteous, and friendly. Generously use "please" and "thank you." Say hello to everyone. Strike up conversations. A big component of luck is meeting, encountering, and knowing people. As your

network expands, so does your luck.

Cultivate an attitude of gratitude. Be thankful for all of the good things in your life, no matter how small. This approach helps keep your attitude positive which in turn attracts positive people and circumstances. It also reduces the amount of stress you experience. When your mind is relaxed, it is more receptive to detecting opportunities.

Seek out and enjoy new experiences. Travel outside your comfort zone. Break out of routines. Try different things. The more variety in your life, the higher the probability of encountering new opportunities.

Listen to your intuition. Don't ignore that little voice in your head telling you to do something or to avoid a particular situation. How many times have you felt you should have known better after making a mistake or missing an opportunity?

The ideal situation is when your logical assessment and intuition are in agreement. When this is not the case, further thought, analysis, and research is warranted before making a decision. Give yourself some quiet time to assess the right action. Once you make a decision, consider how you feel about it before taking action. It's at this point your intuition will grow stronger causing you to feel either comfortable or uncomfortable.

Lucky people always have high expectations for the future. They understand that with a strong positive attitude, things happen for a reason and usually

work out for the best. Positive expectation is a powerful force. Your mind attracts whatever you visualize. That's why it's so important to imagine only desirable outcomes.

Conversely, when you dwell on outcomes you don't want, that is exactly what you attract. As this negative cycle repeats itself, you become convinced you have only bad luck which in turn becomes a self fulfilling prophecy.

Use positive visualization in your interactions with others. Especially when dealing with difficult people, anticipate that you will accomplish your objectives. Mentally rehearse the interchange and picture the outcome you want.

Work toward the goals you want. Don't select objectives based on the chances for success. Doing so greatly limits how much you will accomplish and causes you to miss many opportunities.

Utilizing the techniques mentioned above will help improve your luck. Be patient. Changing your habits takes time. There are no negative side effects. You can only gain while improving your life.

NOW AVAILABLE: "Dare to Live Without Limits," the book. Visit www.BryanGolden.com or your bookstore. Bryan is a management consultant, motivational speaker, author, and adjunct professor. E-mail Bryan at bryan@columbian.com or write him c/o this paper. © 2009 Bryan Golden. ★

How Can We Make California CA-Boom! Again?



By Senator Ted Gaines

Ebola, landslide elections, immigration and Ferguson have dominated the holiday season news, and those massive stories have obscured a host of other events that augur poorly for the future of California unless we act to change the way we govern this state. It's the problems related in these stories that inspired me to write CA-Boom! California's Amazing Past, Troubled Present and Unlimited Future.

These stories lost among the mega-events are not new – they are continuations of troubling California trends – and I tackle them all in my book and address how they can make or break our state moving forward. Here's a sampling:

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) will become insolvent in 2016 unless the federal government slashes benefits, raises taxes, changes eligibility, or takes all three of those steps. In my book I discuss the staggering growth of disability payments and how expanding entitlements affect the workforce. But most importantly to our long-term future, I

ask the question: If jobs are getting physically less demanding, and medical care is getting better, then why are fewer and fewer people able to work? What does that mean for California in the decades to come? If you've ever had a sense of unease about SSDI, check out CA-Boom! to see some numbers that will validate every fear you've ever had. Here's a hint – it's worse than you think.

The free-market Cato Institute recently issued a "fiscal report card" of all 50 governors. Governor Brown was dead last and it wasn't close. Despite his claims of austerity and a beneficial action here and there, Brown's spending increases over the past three years are more than double the national average. That's unsustainable. And because spending equals future taxes, Brown's expansion will put pressure on government to wring more out of every taxpayer. CA-Boom! looks at our tax burden and shows why increasing taxes, at least in this state, could be a disaster.

Proposition 47, recently passed by the California voters, will dump thousands of criminals onto the streets, supposedly non-violent and low-risk offenders who shouldn't be in prison at all. In CA-Boom! I take a look at some data and conclude one thing: It's hard to end up in prison. In 2011 there were nearly 400,000 felony arrests in California. How many of those people saw the inside of a prison cell? CA-Boom! tells you, and I bet the number is much, much smaller than you think.

I also examine innovation and its role in the California economy; our crumbling infrastructure; and why our schools cost so much and return so little. There are charts in the book about education spending and educational achievement that will make you rethink every call for more money in our schools. I look at how our energy policy could supercharge our economy but instead drags it down and other issues critical to the health of the Golden State.

It's obvious that California has enough problems for ten states, but what defines us is hope, hope that we can recapture our glorious economic past. Everything in the book is discussed in the context of our state's rich Gold Rush history. In it I ask: "What would happen if John Marshall dipped his hand into the American River today and pulled out that same brilliant sparkle? Nothing. No Gold Rush. No mass migration. No inventions. No progress. Nothing. California's current government would kill off a new Gold Rush before it started."

We've fallen a long way from the freewheeling, risk-taking spirit that fueled the most amazing economic spectacle the world has ever seen. But that is the government's fault, not the people's. However, with the right policies, we can unlock the potential in today's California and turn the state back into the Gold Rush dream that pulled people from around the world to our shores.

Available on Amazon.com ★

Holiday Waste Creates Tons of Trash

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - During the holidays, Americans create more paper and throw-away material than at any other time of the year. Sacramento County urges residents to take steps to reduce the amount of materials that get thrown away and make the holiday a season of recycling. Gift boxes, Christmas trees, wrapping paper, cards, junk mail, magazines, catalogs, plastic, glass, and aluminum beverage containers can all be recycled.

Here are some little-known but surprising facts: Americans throw away 25% more trash during the Thanksgiving to New Year's holiday season than any other time of year. This extra garbage amounts to 25 million

tons of trash. If every family in the United States reused just two feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet. The 2.65 billion Christmas cards sold each year in the country could fill a football field 10 stories high. If we each sent one card less, we'd save 50,000 cubic yards of paper.

We can all have a greener season if we do the following: Use reusable shopping bags; send holiday greetings in electronic form; if using traditional gift wrapping, avoid wrapping gifts in materials that are not recyclable or reusable, such as foil or metallic papers; always buy recycled-content wrapping paper; if sending holiday cards,

buy recycled-content cards and envelopes or make cards or gift tags out of last year's cards and the wrapping paper saved; remove our names from the mailing list of catalogs we no longer wish to receive; eliminate unwanted credit offers by calling 1-888-5OptOut (1-888-567-8688) or visiting www.optoutprescreen.com; reuse foam peanuts or use un buttered popcorn for packing; return unwanted Styrofoam packing peanuts to local UPS Stores (call before delivering); reduce the consumption of batteries by using rechargeable batteries; and recycle your tree and wreath.

Learn more at www.holidayrecycling.com.
Source: Sacramento County ★

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Foster Youth Receive Holiday Gifts and Stockings



Lorrie Wilson, co-chair of United Way's Women in Philanthropy, works with volunteers to organize and wrap holiday gifts for local foster youth.

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - More than 100 local residents donated 130 stockings and 192 gifts through United Way's Women in Philanthropy so that 194 local foster youth would have their holiday wishes fulfilled. Sixty-four foster youth in Sacramento County's Child Protective Services received the holiday gifts they requested, and the community filled stockings for 130 foster youth with United Way's financial stability initiative's SenSe-Ability project partners: Amador-Tuolumne Community Resources, Child Abuse Prevention Council of Sacramento, Koinonia Family Services, and New Morning Youth and Family Services.

Dozens of volunteers with United Way's Women in Philanthropy came together on December 3rd to wrap gifts

and stuff stockings with Target gift cards, hats, blankets, first aid kits, yearly planners, socks, snacks, and personal notes.

"This community really stepped up to ensure that kids in the foster care system don't feel forgotten during what is supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year," said Ruth Miller, co-chair of United Way's Women in Philanthropy. "Thank you to everyone who made them feel special as they spend their holidays away from home."

United Way's Women in Philanthropy brings local women together to help local foster youth across Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties. A dynamic group of businesswomen, homemakers, and community leaders, Women in Philanthropy members are first responders in

repairing the financial stability of local foster youth by raising funds for United Way to provide financial literacy courses and matched savings accounts designed specifically for foster youth. Members also hold drives and provide trainings.

Women in Philanthropy is part of United Way's team of nonprofits, businesses, donors, volunteers, and community leaders working to meet the community's greatest needs, give immediate aid, and find lasting solutions for future generations in the areas of education, financial stability, and health. To become a member, visit www.yourlocalunitedway.org/wip.

Source: Kristin Thébaud Communications ★

Groundwater Resources Depleted By Drought

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)

- Following one of the driest years on record, when groundwater resources have provided an increasing percentage of California's water supply, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released an updated report on groundwater basins that details groundwater level changes, potential water shortages, land subsidence, farmland fallowing, and gaps in groundwater monitoring.

Drought conditions typically result in an increase in groundwater well activity and pumping to compensate for surface water supply shortages. Collectively, groundwater basins are the state's largest reservoir, 10 times the size of all its surface reservoirs combined. More than 80 percent of Californians rely, in part, on groundwater for their drinking water. The new report shows groundwater basins in most areas of the state at historically low levels.

In September, Governor Brown signed a package of three bills which together create a framework for sustainable, local groundwater management for the first time in state history. The legislation, known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), allows local agencies to tailor groundwater sustainability plans to their regional economic and environmental needs. For more information about the legislation, visit www.groundwater.ca.gov.

"If we fail to manage our groundwater basins sustainably, we risk losing the water supply

savings account that can help cities, farms, and businesses survive drought with minimal disruption," said DWR Director Mark Cowin. "The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act will help us head off problems such as subsidence and overdraft, which may damage aquifers permanently, and allow local agencies to establish groundwater pumping levels that yield reliable supplies for generations to come."

State and local agencies will be working together over the next several years to craft local sustainability plans in regions where groundwater basins are vulnerable to overdraft. Groundwater accounts for approximately 40 percent of the state's total annual water supply, and in some regions of the state, as much as 60 percent of the supply during dry or drought years.

In the meantime, as documented in the DWR report, California's three-year-long drought is taking a heavy toll on many groundwater basins. Basins with notable decreases in groundwater levels are in the Sacramento River, San Joaquin River, Tulare Lake, San Francisco Bay, Central Coast, and South Coast hydrologic regions.

To review the report, visit www.water.ca.gov/water-conditions/index.cfm.

DWR is developing strategies for implementation of the various components of the legislation and will work with local agencies throughout the process. Geographic, geologic, and hydrologic differences exist across the state and the

SGMA allows for flexibility in groundwater stewardship. DWR will seek input from local agencies and the public to develop regulations that ensure groundwater management plans result in sustainable groundwater management statewide.

Groundwater management is a critical element of the governor's California Water Action Plan. Developed by the Natural Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Food and Agriculture and released in January 2014, the plan recognizes that all of California's water resources are interconnected. Besides sustainable groundwater management, the plan's five-year goals include making conservation a way of life, expanding water storage capacity, and protecting and restoring important ecosystems. The plan can be accessed at http://resources.ca.gov/california_water_action_plan/.

Additional groundwater information is available at www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/. To learn more about the state's efforts to improve groundwater management, visit Groundwater.CA.Gov.

Source: Department of Water Resources

Governor Brown has called on all Californians to reduce their water use by 20 percent. Visit SaveOurH2O.com to find out how everyone can do their part, and visit Drought.CA.Gov to learn more about how California is dealing with the effects of the drought. ★

Initial State Water Project Allocation Set at 10 Percent May be reduced to meet critical health and safety needs

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced an initial allocation of 10 percent for the customers of the State Water Project. Depending upon the volume of rain and snow that reaches California this winter, that initial allocation may be increased. Should dry conditions return, DWR may reallocate State Water Project supplies to meet critical human health and safety needs.

Improved precipitation forecasts this week allow DWR to set the initial allocation for 2015 at 10 percent, up from the five percent allocation SWP customers got this year. The level of Lake Oroville—the keystone reservoir of the SWP system and a source of water for 25 million Californians—is rising due to recent storms, after approaching its lowest level ever last month. But the state's major reservoirs, including Oroville, are too depleted to be filled by a typical winter storm. DWR experts estimate that it will take roughly 150 percent of average precipitation for California to recover from drought.

"Storms in the extended forecast give us hope that we will return this winter to normal or above-normal precipitation levels after three years of drought," said DWR Director Mark Cowin. "But we must be cautious and preserve adequate storage in reservoirs should conditions turn dry again."

The 29 public water agencies that receive SWP water (State Water Project Contractors) requested 4,172,686 acre-feet of water for 2015. Under today's initial allocation, they will receive 418,520 acre-feet. For most agencies, that amounts to 10 percent of the supplies for which they contract with DWR.

It is important to note that nearly all areas served by the SWP also have other sources of water, among them streams, groundwater and local reservoirs. Also, the State Water Project Contractors will have access to any water they have left in storage from previous allocations. DWR today approved requests for delivery in 2015 167,465 acre-feet of carry-over water from previous years.

DWR is hopeful that today's SWP allocation, made before the wettest months, will increase as storms bring rain and snow to the state. If severely dry conditions develop, the allocation may be reduced. Under extreme drought conditions, the Department may re-allocate supplies based on human health and safety requirements.

On average, half of California's precipitation occurs December through February, and three quarters from November through March.

"We will still need to conserve even when we see storms develop," said Cowin. "It will take more than a normal winter to make up for three consecutive dry years, and using less water in our homes will keep more in our critically low reservoirs."

As the drought pushed into its third year, DWR, on January 31, dropped its initial water allocation (percentage of water requested) for calendar year 2014 from five percent to its first ever zero allocation for all SWP contractors. Storms in February and March boosted the allocation back up to five percent, making a little more than 200,000 acre-feet available to the 29 contractors, who collectively had requested slightly more than four million acre-feet. An acre-foot generally is described as enough water to supply a family of four

for a year, or to cover one acre of land with one foot of water.

The only previous zero allocation in the 54-year history of the SWP was for agriculture in 1991, but cities and others that year received 30 percent of requested amounts.

This year's five percent allocation was the lowest final calendar year allocation in SWP history as a sparse mountain snowpack melted early and rainfall was near record lows in most parts of the state.

The final SWP allocation for calendar year 2013 was 35 percent of requested water amounts. In 2012, the final allocation was 65 percent. It was 80 percent in 2011, up dramatically from an initial allocation of 25 percent. The final allocation was 50 percent in 2010, 40 percent in 2009, 35 percent in 2008 and 60 percent in 2007. The last 100 percent allocation, difficult to achieve even in wet years because of Delta pumping restrictions to protect threatened and endangered fish species, was in 2006.

California's Water Year 2014, overlapping with California's driest calendar year of 2013, ended on September 30th as the third driest in 119 years of record, based on statewide precipitation.

As the Water Year (October 1-September 30) ended, the state's reservoirs tracked by DWR collectively held only 60 percent of average storage for the date, or 41 percent of capacity. Cumulative reservoir storage on the same date in the deep drought year of 1977 was five million acre-feet less, but California had 16 million fewer people in 1977.

Lake Oroville in Butte County, the SWP's principal reservoir, is at 26 percent of its 3.5

million acre-foot capacity (43 percent of its historical average for the date). Shasta Lake north of Redding, California's and the federal Central Valley Project's (CVP) largest reservoir, is at 23 percent of its 4.5 million acre-foot capacity (39 percent of its historical average for this time of year. San Luis Reservoir, a critical south-of-Delta pool for both the SWP and CVP, is at 24 percent of its 2 million acre-foot

capacity (40 percent of average for the date).

In January, normally California's wettest month, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. declared a drought state of emergency and followed up with statewide water conservation goals. Since then, the state has been swept by drought-fueled forest fires, vast tracts of farmland have been fallowed and some communities have been

left scrambling for drinking water.

Long-range weather forecasts being uncertain, there is no way to tell if this winter will alleviate or deepen the drought, leaving conservation—the wise, sparing use of water—as our most reliable drought management tool.

Source: Department of Water Resources ★

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 6
Sudoku Puzzle on Page 8

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



By Ronnie McBrayer

God's Surprises

First, she was little; that is, she was young. In the custom of her day, a woman would enter a pre-arranged marriage even before sitting for the SAT or getting a driver's permit. So she was nothing but a novice. Second, she was a woman. Women in first century Palestine were not very liberated.

In fact, they were often considered property; intended for domestic labor, sexual pleasure, and the manufacture of male heirs. Some rabbis of her time were debating whether or not women even had souls. So for a woman to be used as an instrument of God was considered a scandalous anomaly.

And Mary's third issue: She was from Nazareth. In Mary's lifetime, there were no fewer than three major nationalistic rebellions in her hometown, and each of these insurrections were cataclysmically crushed by legions of Roman soldiers. To call Nazareth your home was to lay claim to one of the most rebellious and unruly regions of the Empire. It was a Jalalabad or Aleppo of the ancient world.

So when it is said, "Mary was just a little girl from Nazareth," that is a statement loaded with surprising characteristics. She was the wrong age, the wrong gender, and from the wrong neighborhood. Yet, these liabilities became the very pathways for Mary's future. These things kept her in a place of dependence upon and submission to God.

A man named Irenaeus was one of the first Christians who did serious thinking about Advent and its meaning. He came to the conclusion that

Mary's example of holy surrender was a pattern for us all; and he used a scintillating title for her. He said, "Mary is the undoer of knots." Mary took the tangled mess she had been given and persistently worked it out, overcoming all her challenges in redemptive, surprising ways.

Pope Francis, who has loved Irenaeus' title since he first saw Schmidtner's baroque painting "Mary, Undoer of Knots," as a young student in Europe, says the same. Speaking of that little girl from Nazareth and the model she gives us, he says: "There are problems and struggles we face for which we do not see any solution... They form a tangle which gets more and more painful and difficult to undo. But even the most tangled knots are loosened by God's grace. All the knots of our heart, every knot of our conscience, can be undone."

And then Francis says how: "Mary first conceived Jesus in faith when she said 'Yes' to the message God gave her. And what took place in the Virgin Mary also takes place within us. Believing in Jesus means giving him our flesh with the humility and courage of Mary, so that he can continue to dwell in our midst. May Mary help us to say 'Yes,' to be open to God's surprises, for everything he gives us is a gift—even our weaknesses—so that he can become our strength."

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, pastor, and author. His newest book is "The Gospel According to Waffle House." You can read more at www.ronniemcbrayer.me. ★

The Great Wall of Silence after Thanksgiving

Dr. James L. Snyder

In our home the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I have a wonderful tradition.

Really, when you think about it, what is a home without traditions? Many people pretend that they do not have traditions which in and of itself has become a tradition.

Our tradition is that on what is normally called "Black Friday" we do not leave our house except to go out and get the mail. Years ago we did, but those ensuing years have created a sense of wisdom that has brought us to banning any out of the house experience on "Black Friday."

When we were younger, we had more energy and could run. Now, running is a very fond memory.

I am not that fond of shopping malls in the first place, and in the second place, I do not like to be run over by a mob trying to out buy me.

Thus, our tradition on "Black Friday" is to stay home and appreciate one another's companionship. It is always good to relish Thanksgiving dinner leftovers, sit back and just enjoy ourselves. I think we also watched a little bit of television.

As we were watching television, a terrible thought wrestled my mind to the mat. I guess my mind is not as strong as it used to be.

The thought was simply this; there is a special holiday that follows Thanksgiving. I did not give it any thought until at this point. That special holiday is Christmas. And Christmas means buying a Christmas present for my wife.

This is always a stressful time for me. After all, what do you get somebody who has everything? She has me! What more could she need. (Don't tell her I said that.)

Now my mind was racing a thousand miles an hour trying to figure out what I should get her as a Christmas present this year.

I thought maybe if I could remember what I got her last year it might give me some ideas for this year. The harder I thought, the less thoughts came. I could not for the life of me figure out what I had given her last year for Christmas.

I knew at this point I was in serious trouble. I decided I would try to get my wife to tell me what I could get her this year for Christmas.

We were chatting back and forth; she was telling me one story after another. I think there were several stories but it all sounded the same to me. Although I have two ears, they do not seem to be connected. So, in the midst of our chatting I said, "You know Christmas is only a few weeks away."

I thought that would get some conversation going and in a subtle way I could direct it to what she wanted for Christmas. Boy, was I wrong.

As soon as I said that, all silence broke loose in our living room. I cannot remember the last time it was this quiet when both of us were in the room.

I am not quite sure she has figured me out yet, she probably has. Anybody who has ever attempted to manipulate their wife into disclosing information knows that I was up against the Great Wall of Silence.

I tried to think of another strategy. Then I came up with one.

"How did you like the Christmas present I got you last year?" Thinking I could get her to talk about something that would refresh my memory and lead me in a direction of something for this year.

"Fine, how did you like yours?" she said and went behind the Great Wall of Silence.

Now I was backed into a corner. I could not remember what she gave me for Christmas last year. I tried to crank up the old think-machine, but it seemed to be out

of gas. If only I could remember what she got me it might spark me to remember what I got her.

For the next few moments silence reigned queen for the day as I tried to think of how I could get her to tell me something that I could get her for Christmas.

I had another semi-brilliant idea.

"What did we get your mother last year for Christmas?" I thought this might spur some conversation that would lead me to the information I was seeking.

She looked at me and then said, "What did we get her for Christmas last year? I can't really remember."

Now, I knew very well she knew what we got her for Christmas last year. If anybody knows how to stonewall their husband, it is the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

"What do you think we ought to get her this year?" I asked searchingly. This I thought would spur some conversation.

"I am not quite sure. What do you think she would like?"

At this point, I think my cover is blown. If I am going to get any information out of my wife about what to get her for Christmas, it will not be during my lifetime.

In the quietness, I began to reflect upon some scriptural admonitions. I especially like what David said, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalms 46:10).

It is in the quietness that the reality of God shines the brightest in my heart.

Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, P.O. Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 866-552-2543 or e-mail jamesnyder2@att.net. His website is www.jamesnyderministries.com. ★

God loves surprises. Look at David who began his career as a silly, singing cowboy of sorts, a rock throwing, shepherding whippersnapper; shockingly, he became a kingly giant slayer. There is Moses, a foreign-born, stuttering, impatient murderer of a man; wonder of wonders, he was God's chosen deliverer. Rahab is the biblical version of Calamity Jane, running a brothel in Jericho; miraculously, she saved an entire nation.

Noah was a drunk; somehow he also built the incubator for humanity. Simon Peter was a loud-mouthed, hot-headed rambler who couldn't shut up and wouldn't show up when he was needed most; astonishingly, he became a Rock. Paul was a hump-backed, bug-eyed little weasel who made a living killing Christians—then he became one—and changed the trajectory of Western Civilization.

And consider the Virgin Mary. While girls her age today are engrossed with Snapchat, Taylor Swift, and whatever else comes from Hollywood or Cupertino, she was busy birthing the Son of God. What a surprise! Who could have anticipated such a thing? She was just a little girl from Nazareth—but that's exactly what made her a wonderment.

Just a Pinch

Sharing Hometown Recipes, Cooking Tips and Coupons

By Janet Tharpe



Toast to the Holiday's with Great Grandad's Eggnog

"This is smooth and creamy!"



Christmas isn't complete without a nice glass of eggnog. And, Susan Seybert's old-fashioned Great Grandad's Eggnog recipe is creamy and downright delicious! It does have a kick to it so, naturally, adjust alcohol amounts to suit your taste. But, we loved this wonderfully classic recipe as-is.

See step-by-step photos of Susan's recipe plus thousands more from home cooks nationwide at: www.justapinch.com/eggnogrecipe

You'll also find a meal planner, coupons and chances to win! Enjoy and remember, use "just a pinch"...

-Janet



Susan Seybert
Philadelphia, PA
(Pop. 1.5M)

Great Grandad's Eggnog

What You Need

- 6 eggs, separated
- 3/4 c sugar
- 1 pt cream
- 1 pt milk
- 1 pt whiskey
- 1 oz Jamaican rum
- Freshly grated nutmeg

Directions

- Separate the eggs. Put the whites in a small mixing bowl and whip until stiff peaks form.
- Add 1/4 cup sugar to the whites and gently fold to combine.
- Add the remaining 1/2 cup sugar and beat into the yolks until light.
- Mix the whites with the yolk mixture in a punch bowl.
- Stir in the cream and milk. Add the whiskey and rum.
- Stir thoroughly.
- Serve cold with grated nutmeg.

Submitted by: Susan Seybert, Philadelphia, PA (pop. 1.5M)
www.justapinch.com/eggnogrecipe

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CLUES

ACROSS

- Fictional elephant
- Comprised or embodied
- Attention grabber
- Swelling
- Possess
- Corner joint
- Moth-_____
- Mauna _____, Hawaii
- Be theatrical
- *He arrived with a puff of smoke?
- "_____ and _____," 1992 Tom Cruise movie
- *Former Haiti President, "Baby _____" Duvalier
- To clean corn
- Goon
- Redecorate, e.g.
- Vandalizing a car
- Donkey sound
- Push for something
- "_____ de Lammermoor"
- Fit of shivering
- *He annexed most of Crimea
- C in COGS
- Food-grinding tooth
- Spanish surrealist
- Joan
- MCL spot
- Sung before games
- Suggestive of supernatural
- *Kim Yo Jong to Kim Jong Un
- Praise or glorify
- Mercator projection, e.g.
- *"Wizard of Omaha"
- *Head of Her Majesty's Government
- Tear jerker
- ET's craft
- Shade of violet
- Rosie's connector
- It's collapsible in NBA
- Audience's approval
- Donald and Ivana, e.g.
- Clinton _____ Rodham
- _____ of film, pl.

DOWN

- Bone to pick
- Jewish month
- _____carotene
- Change, as in U.S. Constitution
- Resentment
- Stir fry pans
- Leave speechless
- Big mess
- Extra long stable cotton
- Stash in the hold
- _____ good example
- Deuce topper
- *German Chancellor
- Freeze over
- Query
- With bound limbs
- *Leader of the Free World?
- Ar on Periodic Table
- "The _____ in Our Stars"
- _____ set, in a band
- Exclamation for disgust
- Religious paintings
- Japanese-American
- *One of biggest philanthropists in the world
- Uh-huh
- De Valera's land
- Marilyn Monroe's original given name
- Give in to pressure
- Dojo turf
- Cry like an animal
- 180 on a road
- *Begin and Sadat signed a _____ treaty in '78
- Drill
- Type of operating system
- *James Monroe: U.S. President number _____
- *Kennedy and Khrushchev, e.g.
- Dog command
- *What monarchs do
- *_____ office
- New Jersey hoopsters
- Show disapproval

CROSSWORD

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

For Solutions See Page 7

Come back every week for Crossword and Sudoku!



By Gerry Mifsud

As the Temporary Homeless Shelter issue heats up, the Homeless people of Auburn sit out on the lawns out at DeWitt in rainy cold weather waiting and waiting for help.

Prior to the Dec. 9th Supervisor's public session, I offered both sides of the issue a chance to sit down together and talk to Auburn's community on my Never Give Up T.V. Show on ACTV20. Right Hand Auburn, Inc. and the Auburn Area Homeless Forum, who are partners in getting an immediate temporary shelter out at the County Jail barracks, were present. One by one, each secretary to the Supervisors declined to come on T.V. Supervisor Chairman Jack Duran's secretary said "Supervisor Duran didn't want to attend since the issue was so emotionally charged and he also didn't want to feel backed into a corner." In the same vein, Fr. Mike from St Teresa's and Pastor Dan from 7th day Adventist Church are working behind the scene.

Though not on the Agenda, the so called 15 minute window of opportunity for new business was wisely side stepped for a much longer public comment. Through it all, if not for the County office of Emergency Services, this issue would be halted by the

NEVER GIVE UP

Hope and SULLY

Supervisor's legal restrictions. Interestingly enough, those same restrictions exist for our homeless people who refuse to go to Roseville's Gathering Inn. More realistically, the Right Hand and its Advocates are ready to take those two useless barracks at the jail and fund the whole endeavor. To their credit, Supervisor Duran along with Fr. Mike and Pastor Dan are meeting privately, away from the public forum.

Thanks to County Emergency Services and their immediate response, our homeless will avoid the winter weather. The Right Hand Group will be on the January Agenda, and a slight possibility was expressed to make the barracks work. A permanent Shelter in the long run is needed. The community knows that the City Council put a shelter zone on a property knowing that the owner wouldn't cooperate with a Shelter being built. The City Council, by its own admittance, "kicked the can down the road" right next to the giant fox Statues. This was a total waste of valuable time, extending, with great insensitivity, time spent on the streets for our homeless.

As far as the Barracks go, County Planning Director Michael Johnson for District 3 (area of the barracks) can recommend ways around the restrictions if he wishes to be part of a Solution. Active discussions are taking place between the Supervisor's and the emergency responders of the welcoming center supported by the American Red Cross. Similar discussions are on-going with the pastors but many supporters of Right Hand are ready

today with the assistance of Volunteers of America to implement an immediate response.

Homeless Debbie Dunigan, who spoke at the public forum, said, "This is about human beings who have fallen." Community activist Richard Azeverdo said, "We have a great opportunity to help people who can't help themselves." I reflected these same sentiments after following my pastor, Fr. Mike, to the podium, by saying, "he's a hard act to follow, given I've followed him into the confessional. As we move forward with great urgency to assist desperate people affected by mother nature's natural disasters, why are we not moving forward in the same manner to help mother nature's homeless men, women, children, and pets needing an immediate emergency response?"

To my surprise, I spotted the U.S. Airways pilot, Captain "Sully" Sullenberger, who in 2009 glided his passenger aircraft on to the freezing waters of the Hudson River. With nervous anticipation, I addressed him as Mr. Sullivan, thinking "Sully" was short for Sullivan. He laughed and graciously understood I was an excitable senior. We spoke briefly with great comfort, and I thanked him for keeping his cool and avoiding a disaster. Sully's a good example of senior capabilities.

Homelessness is a disaster of great proportions. Can we keep our cool like Sully and work together towards our homeless brothers and sisters in need? I hope the Homeless Never Give Up on us to come to their aid.

Gerry Mifsud, TV Host and Senior Activist. ★



CHRISTMAS TO ME

Whether you celebrate *Christmas, Hanukka, or Kwanza*, it still means the same in so many ways. We celebrate Christmas at our house, but I know there are different celebrations all over the world in so many religions and cultures. But the bottom line is that we need to come to a realization that the word PEACE and SHARING is at the bottom of every one of these celebrations. Unfortunately, we get so caught up in the party part of it, we sometimes forget to involve ourselves in what it all means. I'm not pointing any fingers, because I'm right there with you. I'm on the shopping trail for bargains for everyone. We have taken nearly two weeks to decorate the house inside and out and we're still not sure

POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

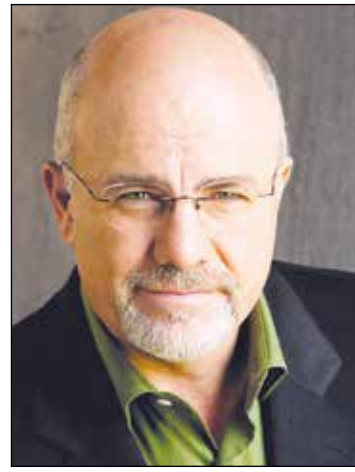
what else to add to the mix. We are planning get-togethers with family and friends and that includes lots of eats and treats that we will regret when the New Year arrives. But still, year after year, we do it again and again.

But I have to tell you that I have added a new endeavor to my mix this year, and darned, if it doesn't feel absolutely GREAT! I started a project at Am-950 KAHI on my POPPOFF Radio Show called "Sox for our Seniors."

I partnered with a group called "Seniors First" in Auburn, California to help distribute these socks. All I am asking is for folks to stop by the station and drop a new pair or two of socks for men and women and in the giant stocking I have hanging just inside the door. Simple, huh? But think about it. There are so many seniors in all our communities that get very cold in the winter days. Let's face it, our youthful circulation does not circulate as good as we age and our extremities get colder faster and longer. My goal is not vast. I will be happy if I can get 200 pair by December 18 when I have to turn them in, so they

can be put in packets and distributed to our seniors in need. Believe me, I am not asking that you do the same project. I am not asking that you do it before Christmas or New Years. I've learned an important lesson too. We should do little things like this all year long for others that are not as fortunate. I have also learned that those who do not have the most, give the most of themselves. It is very humbling. I have seen folks who cannot afford much during this time still drop by with socks, because they know there is a need.

All it takes is for each of us to do a little. It goes a long way. All I ask is that you give it a thought from time to time and do what you can. Perhaps if we cared a little more about each other, we would have less strife and anger and come together as a loving people. I know, I know! It's a BIG wish, but we have to start somewhere. To you and yours, I wish a very Happy Holiday and a Merry Christmas, no matter how you celebrate. May it be safe and loving and so very happy! Talk with you next year! LOVE TO YOU ALL! ★



Dave Says

might begin with talking about some of the mistakes you've made in the past. This could help him *connect with you*, and feel more comfortable opening up about his own situation. Once he realizes you haven't repeated the same mistakes, and have a better life for it, he might just ask how you did it. Then, the door is open!

But you can't become preachy every time someone does something dumb. That will only hurt their feelings and cause them to tune you out completely.

Reward Her Good Choices

Dear Dave,
Our daughter wasn't very responsible with money until she read your books. Now, she has really started turning her life around. Recently, she learned she needs to have some expensive dental work done. Since she just started trying to manage her money well, she doesn't have enough saved up for the procedure or dental insurance right now. Do you think we should help by loaning her the money?
- Dianne

Dear Dianne,
I like what you've told me about your daughter. She

doesn't need to worry about dental insurance though. You almost never get back what you put into those policies. It's the kind of stuff a good emergency fund will cover. If she has invested her time and money into what I teach, I'd say she's pretty serious about getting her finances in order.

If it were me, I'd make the money for dental work a gift, not a loan, for turning her financial life around. In your description you never mentioned anything about your daughter being lazy or unwilling to work. You talked about a young lady who's just starting to build her life, and you're rewarding smart choices. I think that's a great idea and will have a major positive impact!
- Dave

* Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He has authored five New York Times best-selling books: *Financial Peace*, *More Than Enough*, *The Total Money Makeover*, *EntreLeadership* and *Smart Money Smart Kids*. The *Dave Ramsey Show* is heard by more than 8 million listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on Twitter at @DaveRamsey and on the web at daveramsey.com. ★

THE VOICE OF THE FOOTHILLS

AM 950 KAHI

Community Involved

Live at AM 950 – Live at www.KAHI.com

Weekdays	
6 - 9am:	The KAHI Morning News with Casey Freelove and the KAHI News Team
9am - Noon:	The Dave Ramsey Show
Noon - 1pm:	The KAHI Noon News with Mary Jane Popp and the KAHI News Team
1 - 4pm:	The Savage Nation
4 - 6pm:	The KAHI Afternoon News with Bob Stephenson and the KAHI News Team
6 - 7pm:	Poppoff with Mary Jane Popp
7 - 10pm:	Sports Byline USA with Ron Barr
10 - 11pm:	TMZ Sports
Saturdays	
6 - 7am:	A Time for Seniors
7 - 8am:	The Swap Shop
8 - 9am:	The KAHI Corral
9 - 10am:	The Garden Goddesses
11am - 12pm:	The 45 Guy with Mike Mackenzie
12 - 7pm:	Sinatra & Friends Music
7 - 8pm:	A Way With Words
8 - 9pm:	Rewind with Jimmy Jay
Sundays	
7:30 - 9am:	Cruisin' Garage & Swap Meet
9 - 9:30am:	The Crossroads Radio Show
10 - 11am:	The Dew Sweepers Golf Show
11am - 6pm:	Sinatra & Friends Music
7 - 8pm:	A Way With Words
8 - 9pm:	Hearts of Space

Live at AM 950 - Live at www.KAHI.com

Listen to Placer High School and Del Oro High School football games, Friday nights on KAHI.

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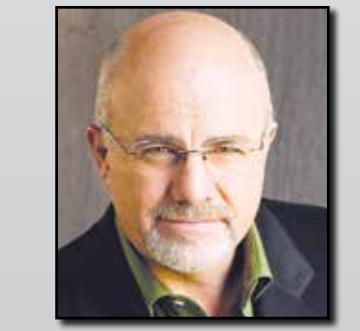
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Michael Savage



Dave Ramsey



Mary Jane Popp

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BRIGHTEN UP YOUR HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING

FAMILY FEATURES

The holiday season is upon us, so celebrate by serving unique dishes and drinks bursting with flavor.

The holiday hostess has a lot on her plate. But preparing for the big event doesn't have to be a challenge — this holiday, focus on special dishes and refreshing cocktails guests will remember for years to come. Use these tips to make your holiday events shine:

- 1. Shake It Up.** From cool drinks, like the Pineapple Upside Down Mocktail, to delicious tropical twists on classic martinis, punches and warm ciders, canned Dole Pineapple Juice has recipes to shake things up this season. Made from 100 percent juice, free of GMO's (genetically modified or engineered ingredients) and containing no added sugar, it's also a good source of vitamins A, C and E.
- 2. Captivating Courses.** To celebrate the season, serve up recipes for delicious entrees, small plates and desserts that bring a taste of the tropics to any occasion. Start guests off with a Holiday Kale Salad and then serve them juicy Jamaican Chicken & Couscous, followed by divine Pineapple Pumpkin Pie.
- 3. Party Planner Extraordinaire.** Looking for bright ideas on how to turn your next party into paradise? Visit dole.com/sunshine/holidayrecipes to find refreshing new ways to make your party the event of the season, from eye-catching invitations to delightful decor tips.

Jamaican Chicken & Couscous

- Servings: 4
- 2 tablespoons dry Jamaican seasoning
 - 1 tablespoon curry powder
 - 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
 - 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 - 1 cup canned Dole Pineapple Juice
 - 1/4 cup water
 - 1 package (5.6 ounces) toasted pine nut couscous mix
 - 1 1/2 cups Dole Frozen Mango Chunks, thawed
 - 1/3 cup green onion, sliced
 - 1 tablespoon lime juice
 - 2 teaspoons black sesame seeds

Combine Jamaican seasoning and curry powder in small bowl. Place each chicken breast between 2 sheets of plastic wrap and pound (with meat mallet) to 1/4-inch thickness. Remove wrap. Brush both sides of chicken pieces with 1 tablespoon oil and sprinkle both sides with curry mixture. Cook chicken in oil over medium-high heat, 3 to 4 minutes per side or until brown and no longer pink in center. Meanwhile, stir together juice, water and pine nut seasoning mixture from package in medium saucepan; bring to boil. Stir in couscous; remove from heat. Let stand, covered, 5 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Fluff with fork. Stir in mango chunks, green onions and lime juice. Cut chicken in 1/2-inch slices and serve over couscous mixture. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.



Pineapple Pumpkin Pie

- Servings: 6
- 1 can (8 ounces) Dole Crushed Pineapple
 - 1 1/2 cups canned Dole Pineapple Juice
 - 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons granulated Sucralose sweetener or sugar
 - 1 cup canned pumpkin pie mix
 - 1 cup thawed whipped topping
 - 1 (9-inch) low-fat graham cracker pie crust
 - Ground cinnamon, optional

Drain pineapple well; reserve juice. Combine reserved juice with pineapple juice in measuring cup. Add water to make 2 cups. Combine juice mixture and gelatin in saucepan. Let stand 1 minute. Stir over low heat until completely dissolved. Stir in sweetener. Pour into bowl. Chill just until starts to set, about 1 hour. Fold in pineapple, pumpkin and whipped topping. Pour into graham cracker crust. Chill 5 hours or overnight. Serve with whipped topping and ground cinnamon, if desired.

Pineapple Upside Down Mocktail

- Servings: 2 (3/4-cup)
- 1 cup canned Dole Pineapple Juice, chilled
 - 1 tablespoon caramel sauce
 - Ginger ale, chilled
 - 2 teaspoons grenadine syrup
 - Brown or turbinado sugar and maraschino cherries, optional garnish

Wet just the rim of a martini glass with a little water; dip rim in brown sugar or turbinado sugar for added garnish. Combine pineapple juice and caramel sauce in shaker over ice. Shake vigorously; strain into martini glasses or other favorite glasses. Top off with ginger ale. Slowly pour in grenadine. Garnish with cherry, if desired. *Note: For alcoholic variation, combine 3 ounces cake-flavored vodka or vanilla vodka, 1 ounce Frangelico or amaretto liqueur, and 6 ounces canned Dole Pineapple Juice in shaker over ice. Shake vigorously; strain into martini glasses. Slowly pour in grenadine; garnish with cherry, if desired.*



Holiday Kale Salad

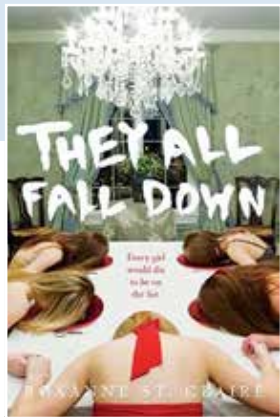
- Servings: 4
- 1 package (4.5 ounces) Dole Baby Kale and Greens
 - 2 ripe firm pears, halved, cored and sliced
 - 1/2 cup red onion, thinly sliced
 - 1/4 cup dried cranberries
 - 1/4 cup pistachios, chopped
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
 - 1/4 cup canned Dole Pineapple Juice
 - 1 teaspoon minced garlic
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
 - Salt and ground black pepper, to taste

Combine salad blend, pears, red onion, cranberries and pistachios in large bowl. Whisk together olive oil, pineapple juice, garlic and ginger in small bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour over salad mixture; toss to evenly coat.



For the Love of Books

Book Review by Amy Shane
amy-shane@att.net



THEY ALL FALL DOWN by Roxanne St. Claire

◆ **Publisher:** Delacorte Press
◆ **Release date:** October 14, 2014 ◆ **Hardcover, 339 pages**
◆ **Intended audience:** Young adult ◆ **Rating:** ♥♥♥♥♥

On the Book Jacket: Every year, the lives of ten girls at Vienna High are transformed. All because of the list. Kenzie Summerall can't imagine how she's been voted onto a list of the hottest girls in school, but when she lands at number five, her average life becomes dazzling. Doors open to the best parties, new friends surround her, the cutest jock in school is after her. This is the power of the list. If you're on it, your life changes. If you're on it this year? Your life ends. The girls on the list have started to die, one by one. Is it a coincidence? A curse? Or is the list in the hands of a killer? Time is running out for Kenzie, but she's determined to uncover the deadly secret of the list... before her number's up.

Amy's Review: Life hasn't been the same for Kenzie Summerall, since the death of her brother, two years ago. With her parents separated, her brother's room left untouched and an overprotective mother constantly in fear of dangerous scenarios, Kenzie's only solace is that of her best friend Molly and the Latin club. Kenzie tries to do everything she can just to get by and forget the day she got her brother killed.

However, things drastically change when Kenzie discovers that she made the Vienna High Hottie top ten list, not as number ten but as number five. A ridiculous list, according to Kenzie, which instantly propels ten girls into the Vienna High social scene, complete with parties, instant friends and a sisterhood of girls on the list.

As a Latin geek, not concerned with the popularity, Kenzie wants anything but to be on the list, as she is instantly thrust into the dangerous life of popularity by her own peers. Throwing her into new situations, Kenzie must decide between the affections the popular good looking jock, Josh or new student Levi, a rumored bad boy.

With the power to change lives, the list comes with new responsibilities and nothing is as she expected it, freak accidents seem to follow Kenzie, while the other girls on the list start dying one by one. Kenzie must quickly decide who her true friends are, which boy she can really trust and if this list is truly a curse of murderous proportions.

Roxanne St. Claire, thrills her reading audience with a quick, fast paced page turner filled with a cleaver use of Latin, fine arts and secret societies. Carefully highlighting the pitfalls of popularity and the cost some girls will pay to make it on the list, not only adds to the story but serves as a gentle reminder.

With a *Goonies* style adventure, that meets *Pretty Little Liars*, *They All Fall Down*, takes readers on a high speed, cat and mouse chase, riveting you through murderous plots and popularity, with many twists and turns. The overall story of this book, however adventurous, is a little farfetched in its believability, especially in its ending however, it is a quick entertaining read that is bound to capture readers.

Placer County Weekend Events

PLACER COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Are you looking for a fun holiday event to attend this weekend? Placer County is offering lots of holiday cheer.

28th Annual Old Town Auburn Country Christmas

Saturday, December 20th is the last date to visit Old Town Auburn for the annual Country Christmas event. This holiday event takes place from 5-9 p.m. at Sacramento Street and Washington Street in Auburn.

The event features crafts, artists, and unique holiday gifts. Stop by for the Open House in all the shops and restaurants.

For more information, please visit www.oldtownauburnca.com.

Rocklin Community Gingerbread House Contest

Show your community spirit and holiday creativity by designing a gingerbread house for the community to see. All entries will be on display at a free open house on Friday, December 19th from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Rocklin Event Center, 2650 Sunset Boulevard. There will also be entertainment and refreshments during the event, and prizes will be awarded for all who have entered the Gingerbread House Contest. Award winners will also be on display at various locations at the conclusion of the December 19th event.

For questions on how to enter the contest, call Jim Crosthwaite at (916) 625-5215 or email jim.crosthwaite@rocklin.ca.us.

For more information, please visit www.rocklin.ca.us/civica/filebank/blobload.asp?BlobID=17550.

Placer Pops Choral Presents Candlelight Concerts: A Holiday Homecoming

Pure holiday magic! The spirit of the season is captured with new and innovative arrangements of timeless and heartwarming Christmas classics such as a delightful medley from the movie *White Christmas*, along with "Silent Night," "The Twelve Days of Christmas," and much more. Experience the magic and pageantry of this acclaimed Choral and orchestra in a dazzling presentation that is sure to make this holiday season your best ever!

Performances will be held at Dietrich Theatre at the Sierra College Rocklin Campus, 5000 Rocklin Road, on Friday, December 19th at 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday, December 20th and Sunday, December 21st at 2 p.m.

For more information, visit www.placerpops.org/home.php or call (916) 434-6156.

Roseville Theatre Arts Academy's Treehouse Players Present "It's a Charlie Brown Christmas."

The classic animated television special comes to life in this faithful stage adaptation in which Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and the other Peanuts grapple with the real meaning of Christmas. Music samples for the performances are provided courtesy of Fantasy Records and Lee Mendelson Film Productions.

The last date to see this holiday performance is Saturday, December 20th. Show times are at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Roseville Theatre Arts Academy, 241 Vernon Street, Roseville, CA 95678. Tickets are \$10 at the door or \$8 through www.brownpapertickets.com.

For more information, visit www.rosevilletheatreartsacademy.com or call (916) 772-2777.

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Jim Miller
Answers
Your
Senior
Questions



Check Out This
Week's Topic!

Savvy SENIOR

Personal Tech Products Designed Specifically for Seniors

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can you recommend any tablets, smartphones or computers that are specifically designed for seniors? I would like to buy a device for my technology-challenged grandmother so she can get online and keep up with her grandkids better, but it needs to be super simplified so she can use it. - Holiday Shopper

Dear Shopper,

There are actually several new tech products on the market today that are designed specifically for older boomers and seniors that are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with technology.

These devices come equipped with simplified software, big, vivid features, less clutter and better customer support packages, which makes them more appealing and much easier to use than mainstream devices. Here are several top senior-friendly options to look into.

Smartphone

If you're thinking about a smartphone for your grandmother, check out the new GreatCall Touch3. Made by Samsung, this Android smartphone has a 4-inch touchscreen with an organized large icon menu list on the home screen that provides users simple access to often-used features like the phone, text messages, camera, pictures, email and Internet, along with your contacts and apps.

It also has a 5-megapixel camera, a full-size onscreen

keyboard, and offers a variety of health and safety features like the 5Star app that lets you immediately speak to a certified agent 24/7 who can identify your location and get you the help you need. Urgent Care, which provides access to registered nurses and doctors for advice and diagnoses. And MedCoach, which sends medication reminders.

Available at greatcall.com or 800-918-8543, the Touch3 sells for \$170 with a \$20 introductory discount, plus a one-time activation fee of \$35, and no-contract is required. Monthly service plans that include unlimited 5Star and Urgent Care service start at \$25. And their data plans start at \$2.50 per month for 20MB.

Tablet Computer

If you're considering a tablet, a top senior-friendly option is AARP's new RealPad, which costs \$189 at aarprealpad.org, walmart.com/realpad or Walmart stores.

Produced in partnership with Intel, the RealPad is an Android tablet with a 7.85-inch touchscreen. It provides a clutter-free simplified home page with large text icons to frequently used functions like email, social networks, weather, news, games, camera and pictures, Google, the Web, apps and more.

It also has a 2-megapixel front camera and 5-megapixel rear camera, and comes with 24/7 phone support, a bunch of tutorial videos, and a "Real QuickFix" tool that connects users to

technology support agents over the Internet who can access the tablet and fix problems.

Desktop Computer

If you think your grandmother would like a desktop computer, the Telikin (telikin.com, 800-717-7640), which has been around for three years now, is an excellent choice.

Ready to go right out of the box, this all-in-one touch-screen computer displays a big button menu on the screen at all times, providing simple access to most functions like the Internet, email, games, video chat, photo sharing, news and weather, and more.

Available in two sizes – the 18.6-inch "Telikin Touch" that costs \$699, and the 22-inch "Telikin Elite II" for \$1,079 – these computers come with built-in speakers, a Web camera, microphone, wired keyboard and mouse. They also offer a "tech buddy" feature so you can access your grandma's Telikin computer remotely from your computer to help her when she needs it.

Running on Linux software instead of the standard Windows or Mac OS, the Telikin is also virus-resistant, comes with a 60-day trial period, a one-year warranty and free tech support.

It's also worth noting that Telikin has a partnership with firstSTREET – a senior product direct marketing company – that is also selling the 22-inch Telikin for \$1,079, but have rebranded it as the "WOW! Computer for Seniors." ★

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit www.savvysenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

Holidays in Auburn

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