

Placer Sentinel

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First Issue of November, 2011

Community
 Mark Steinmetz
 on his harmonica



Community
 Bark Avenue
 Westerner seeks to
 create healthy dogs



Arts & Entertainment
 Community Events



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Tree Planting Day A Success

Community, ARD Plant Trees at Railhead Park

By Kahl Muscott, ARD

AUBURN – The Auburn Area Recreation and Park District (ARD) and several volunteers successfully planted 43 trees at Railhead Park in Auburn on Friday, October 21. The tree planting day, paid for in part by a grant from Cal Fire, drew volunteers from Placer High School's Interact Club, Placer Tree Partners and the Placer County Resource Conservation District. Arborists with the Placer Tree Partners led an educational session on the proper way to plant a tree and provided volunteers with other useful information on trees in the foothill region.

Pamela Vann, Landscape Architect with ARD, was ecstatic about the results. "We are very happy with the new trees at Railhead Park. These trees will be here for generations, a fact that we heavily impressed upon the students from Placer High. I would really like to thank the volunteers and more importantly the ARD Facilities and Grounds staff who put in countless hours to get the site ready. They were great."

The trees planted at Railhead Park include seven varieties of shade trees and will make a significant difference in appearance and cooling effect for years to come. As the planting effort was completed at Railhead Park on Friday morning, all the participants were amazed at the change already apparent in the Park's appearance.



Placer High School Interact students John Remington, McKenna Eagan and Katie Tate get a tree into the ground at Railhead Park. Photo courtesy Kahl Muscott

"What an amazing difference these trees have already made in the feel of this park" said Vann. "I'm so excited for the public to come and appreciate what a difference this had made. Our staff has worked so hard on getting the park ready for planting, they were awesome and I really appreciate their efforts."

The Cal Fire grant is part of

a statewide program that provides funding for the planting of trees to enhance and preserve the urban forest. It is a matching grant, which means that ARD must contribute up to 30 percent of the costs either in direct dollars or as indirect support such as labor to install the trees.

As a result of the Cal Fire grant funding, ARD will be

planting over 400 trees throughout the District's various parks. The total grant project cost is \$40,434.00 with Cal Fire covering 71 percent. Over 165 trees have already been planted and the District anticipates completing the tree planting effort by year end. The trees include both native oaks and non-native shade trees.

BBB: Beware Medicare Scams

SACRAMENTO – Medicare open enrollment started just two weeks ago and already scammers are capitalizing on the period with a phone scam aimed at obtaining senior citizens' banking information. The Better Business Bureau serving Northeast California (BBB) is urging consumers to beware of phone calls claiming to be from Medicare offering new cards.

The BBB has received several calls over the past three weeks describing the same story: A person calls claiming to be from Medicare. They need to verify the victim's address to send out a new Medicare card. After the address is verified, the consumer is asked for his or her bank name and then, bank account numbers.

Consumers should never give out personal information over the telephone. Medicare does not make telephone calls regarding health care coverage. Should consumers have questions about coverage, they can call Medicare's toll-free line at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

The Better Business Bureau suggests the following when receiving phone calls from anyone claiming to need personal information:

- Beware of door-to-door or telephone salespeople claiming to be affiliated with Medicare.
- Be wary of anyone who attempts to give you something for "free".
- Do not give out bank account information, social security numbers or any other personal information to anyone over the phone.
- Never sign blank claim forms.

If you have questions regarding the authenticity of a call, call the BBB at 916-443-6843.

Pancake Lovers Stack Funds for 'The Soldiers Project'

TSP to Provide Confidential Mental Health Treatment to Soldiers, Families in Sacto Area

By Becci Angell

PLACER COUNTY – The humble, unassuming pancake can be a mighty catalyst for change when it becomes part of a fundraiser, as it did Oct. 8 at St. Anna Greek Orthodox Church.

A pancake breakfast spearheaded by volunteers from the Roseville church generated more than \$1,100 for The Soldiers Project-Sacramento, which provides free, confidential psychological treatment for active-duty military and veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as their family members and loved ones.

An additional \$1,000 came from ConocoPhillips as part of its volunteer grant program, made possible by Mike Dindio, a church member who recently retired from the energy corporation. Dindio acted as volunteer chair for the pancake breakfast.

"We just can't say enough about Mike and the church's efforts to help The Soldiers Project," said Carolyn Fink, clinical director and outreach coordinator for the Sacramento office of TSP. "It was the first time any community organization approached us and offered to put on a benefit event for The Soldiers Project."

Fink, who presented Dindio with a certificate of appreciation at the breakfast, said the money would go toward publicizing TSP and its need for additional volunteer therapists. "More than 30,000



A color guard from the California National Guard's 115th Regional Support Group in Roseville prepares to raise the American flag on a new pole that was dedicated prior to the pancake breakfast. The flag was first flown over the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 1. Photos courtesy Becci Angell

discharged veterans are coming home to California every year and at least one-third is estimated to be suffering from post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury.

"The need for mental health services among this population is literally exploding," she said.

In addition to St. Anna's church, other local organizations that made donations to the pancake breakfast included: Brookfields Restaurant, Carlson Insurance Agency, Costco (Roseville, Folsom and Citrus Heights), Denny's-Roseville, Home Depot-Roseville, Lowe's-Roseville, Mikuni Restaurant, Nugget Market-Roseville, Raley's-Roseville, Safeway-Roseville,

Sam's Club, Starbucks-Roseville and Walmart.

The California National Guard's 115th Regional Support Group in Roseville sent a color guard to help dedicate the church's new flagpole and Chaplain James Collins, who serves with the unit, gave the dedication. The Rev. Dr. Christopher Flesoras, who is St. Anna's pastor and also a chaplain with the California Military Reserve, also spoke during the ceremony.

For more information about The Soldiers Project-Sacramento and its programs, call 877-557-5888 or e-mail Sacramento@TheSoldiersProject.org.



Carolyn Fink, left, clinical director and outreach coordinator for The Soldiers Project-Sacramento, and Becca Bettis, program coordinator, present Mike Dindio with a certificate of appreciation at the pancake breakfast Oct. 8. Dindio chaired the event which brought in more than \$1,100 for TSP.



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Sacramento Man Sentenced to 21 Years in Prison for 2009 Killing of Loomis Resident

A 24 year old Sacramento man was sentenced last week to 21 years in prison for his part in the September 2009 killing of Loomis resident Rudy Ramos. Placer County Judge Colleen Nichols sentenced Kenneth Massey Jr. after the defendant, pursuant to a plea agreement, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter as well as three counts of influencing the testimony of a witness.

The body of Rudy Ramos was discovered in his Loomis residence on September 14, 2009, bludgeoned to death. Through cell phone records, the defendant, and co-defendant Anthony Cordero, were placed at the victim's home on September 12, 2009, at the approximate time of death.

Deputy District Attorney Jeff Wood commented that despite the nearly 11,000 pages of information gathered, and

a year and a half of investigation, the case remained largely circumstantial and hinged on the testimony of Massey's co-defendant Anthony Cordero. Wood further stated that while we were able to establish Massey had a motive to commit the crime and that both defendants were at scene near the time of the murder, it was more problematic to determine the sequence of events immediately before the murder. The plea agreement reached reflects the above difficulty while at the same time achieves a lengthy prison sentence for Massey and justice for Mr. Ramos and his family.

The co-defendant, Anthony Cordero, pled guilty to Battery Causing Serious Bodily Injury and Accessory to the killing of Ramos and was scheduled to be sentenced on October 27, 2011.

Soroptimist, Area Poets to Serve Cowboy Chow at Event

LOOMIS - Tickets are now on sale for Friday & Saturday dinners, including mealtime entertainment, with cowboy poets who will gather in Loomis on November 10 through 13 for The Cowpoke Fall Gathering. Soroptimist International of Loomis Basin will be serving up large baked potatoes stacked with hearty beef and a bazoo of tasty toppings, salad and dessert from 4 to 6 p.m. on Friday night, November 11 for just \$10. Tri-tip, baked beans, salad, cornbread and dessert are on the menu for Saturday, November 12 from 3 to 6 p.m. at \$15 per person.

A no host bar will be available both days. Meals will be served at the Loomis Veterans' Memorial Hall, located at 5945 Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis. Tickets are available by calling (916) 652-6113 or online at www.cowpokefallgathering.com. The meals are open to the public.

The 17th Annual Cowpoke

Fall Gathering performers will attend the dinners. "All Hat, No Cattle" will be performing on Friday during the meal. The band is known for a very unique cowboy-country style mixed with a little blues and distinctive originals. On Saturday, John Kintz will perform poetry and songs during dinner. Kintz resides in Loomis, raises cows and horses, and performs for trail rides and cowboy gatherings.

Funds from the dinner ticket sale will support Cowpoke Fall Gathering charities: Ride to Walk, Tough Enough to Wear Pink and the South Placer Heritage Foundation as well as Soroptimist International of Loomis Basin community projects. To learn more Soroptimist International of Loomis Basin, visit a Wednesday 8 a.m. weekly meeting at 'The Train Depot' (Taylor Rd. & Horseshoe Bar Rd.) in Loomis, or contact Nancy Hogan, president, at (530) 613-1541.

Gold Country Broadband Consortium Update

Dear Gold Country Broadband Consortium members and supporters/seekers of high-speed Internet access:

I wanted to give you a brief update of the status of our project to organize the demand for broadband service and expand broadband infrastructure in the counties of Sierra, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado and eastern Alpine.

As you know, we submitted our proposal on time for consideration by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and funding from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF).

Ours was one of some fifteen proposals submitted from all over the State with most of them covering multiple counties.

We've been told that the CASF staff is now busily sorting through each of the proposals, and an announcement about funding awards is anticipated by late-November/early-December. With a formal CPUC resolution some time later in December, we could anticipate being ready to go in January 2012.

When we do so, we anticipate calling the first major meeting of the entire Consortium membership in order to confirm our direction and have the first breakout sessions by the various stakeholder groups to address the respective state-of-the-art (s.o.t.a.), the state of the locally available services, and how current local capabilities might be advanced towards the s.o.t.a.

We will also want to begin the process of prioritizing and scheduling the locations for the initial community outreach meetings. So, there are exciting times ahead.

We'll keep you posted as we learn more.

Thanks for your continued interest and support!

*Brent Smith, CEO
Sierra Economic Development Corporation (SEDCorp)*

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Publisher Paul V. Scholl



Bark Ave Western Seeks to Create Healthy, Balanced Dogs and Responsible Owners



By Linda Frederick Yaffe

Dog trainers – and rescuers – Ken and Paula (“Rusty”) Western found Buster, a sweet-faced mixed breed, living in a desperate situation. Confined for sixteen hours a day in a tiny crate – a crate so tiny he could not stand – Buster showed fearful behavior. He cowered and backed away from humans. Boredom, frustration, noise, and lack of essential daily exercise made him chew destructively and scratch himself constantly. Today, Buster is calm and confident. Fully socialized and trained by the Westerns, he enjoys his happy new life with Ken and Rusty...and the rest of their fun-loving pack of four other rescued canines.

Rescued dogs, even those with problems as severe as Buster’s, can become wonderful members of your family. Ken sets dogs’ boundaries early for a feeling of stability, comfort, and routine. He works to rebuild the sense of self-esteem all dogs crave as they are praised for doing the right thing. “Dogs want boundaries, and they look to you as the leader of their pack. You need to step up and be the leader.”

Rusty explains how dogs assess situations and people differently than humans do. “First, they use their nose, then their eyes, and finally their ears to check out your energy and make a decision about you.” Hand signals and body language can

signify more to a dog than verbal commands. Ken describes a dog’s confusion (“What’s happening? What’s wrong?”) when commands are shouted over and over. Instead, say “sit” only once, calmly and quietly. Give the animal time to process the word; then gently push his rump down if he does not sit. When he obeys, stroke the dog under the chin and praise him. The Westerns have found that gentle stroking under the chin, lifting the dog’s head while he’s being praised, literally lifts the animal’s self-esteem and gives your pooch pride in a job done correctly. If you are calm, relaxed, and confident, the dog will reflect your behavior. Become more silent; your dog will become calmer.

Rusty, a lifelong Placer County resident, has always felt a special bond with animals. From hamsters to horses (and everything in between with fur), animals are her natural stress-reducers. Her training skills have been honed by reading, watching Ken, and studying all aspects of dog behavior – not just how to train them. Her natural calming influence helps even the most unbalanced dogs respond positively.

Ken’s years of experience and innate talent in training dogs, both personally and professionally, prompted him to develop “The Western Way” training program. “The Western Way” gives honor and respect to dogs for their individual and breed

talents, as well as honoring their eagerness to serve humans. It’s all about solidifying the human-animal relationship.

Passionate about rescued dogs, the Westerns want all adopted dogs to achieve success in their new families. Like Buster, many rescued dogs suffer from poor socialization, shyness, fear, anxiety, lack of training, poor manners, or excessive barking. Ken and Rusty offer a free class – Rescued Dog Meet Up – throughout Placer County. Register on line, or by phone or email. The Westerns also offer individualized training, socialization, sitting and care, daily exercise, and pet parent education through their professional service: Bark Avenue Western. Contact them at www.BarkAvenueWestern.com, 530-852-2345, 530-305-2504, BarkAvenueWestern@gmail.com, or on www.Facebook.com/BarkAveWest.

Recently voted second “Favorite Pet Trainers” in Style Magazine’s 2011 Reader’s Choice Awards, “Bark Avenue Western’s mission is to help pet parents in building a strong and harmonious bond with their dog. Through education and training we strive to empower pet parents in meeting their dog’s needs as a species, breed, and individual; thereby creating a

Greyhound Friends for Life and Chako Pit Bull Rescue. Ken has been working extensively with a young mixed breed pup rescued from a hoarding situation. With calm and patience, Ken has slowly begun fostering the pup’s trust in humans. At first the dog would not let anyone near him. Now he lets Ken put on a collar and leash to go for a walk. Rusty went with Ken to work with the pup one day; within two hours, the little guy had licked her hand, indicating his desire to trust and bond. The dog still has a way to go, but now – as a result of Ken’s interactions with him – he’s a much more likely candidate for adoption.

Want to become a pet parent? The Westerns urge you to adopt a shelter dog. Contact the Placer County SPCA at www.PlacerSPCA.org. Ken and Rusty love mixed breeds: they make wonderful pets. However, if you prefer a specific breed, contact a rescue group that deals with that breed, such as Greyhound Rescue or Labrador Rescue. The couple urges prospective pet parents to consider what kind of dog will best fit their living situation. “If you’re a couch potato, don’t adopt a border collie. Don’t be impulsive; do research before you choose your companion.”

“Each of our dogs teaches us something. Dogs are a reality check. When I am upset or in pain, my body language shows it. Dogs are so sensitive. Whatever you’re feeling goes right down the leash to the dog. They pick up on your feelings and help you keep yourself in balance.”

Ken Western

healthy, balanced dog with proper social skills and joyful, responsible parents.” Pet parents can also find helpful hints by following their Tweets, @BarkAveWest, or signing up for Barks from the Block, their free monthly email newsletter.

The Westerns also work hard to “give back” by volunteering their time and expertise with rescue organizations such as

The Westerns believe that dogs keep their owners balanced. Ken says, “Each of our dogs teaches us something. Dogs are a reality check. When I am upset or in pain, my body language shows it. Dogs are so sensitive. Whatever you’re feeling goes right down the leash to the dog. They pick up on your feelings and help you keep yourself in balance.”

Around Town with Loyce Smallwood



Swell to be back up to speed on the computer thanks to PC Guy Matt Cummins who brings his tech skills and pleasant personality to the home front. And speaking of the homey touch, indulge yourself in the pleasing/comfortable environment in the living room like setting at The Red Bike Café behind the Nevada Street train station where owner Linda Lareau has proudly decorated her work area with the vividly happy art of Daughter Allison.

Loyce’s Choice: The tangy Chipotle Three-Cheese sandwich for zest. At the time of this reading I will have hosted Blues Man Mark Steinmetz, harmonica player extraordinaire who who will have guested on ACTV broadcast from Placer High where the ACTV volunteer crew works hard to help Yours Truly contribute to the entertaining programs for which the public can volunteer and/or produce.

Friends of the Library volunteer Pat Brophy invites the public to the Auburn Library Beecher Room to experience

and enjoy the Friday Noon programs. Stop by the library and pick up a schedule and learn about the new Reading Coach Training where you can learn to be an adult literacy volunteer and wisely use that free time retirement has opened up. Special thanks to Terri Pilate, branch manager, who brought us up to speed on interesting reads and talked about how to load books from the library onto our Kindles, sweet.

Sentinel Stars to the Assistance League of Greater Placer for their many efforts in the community including the big tea-party/fashion show attended by ACTV Manager Paula Johnston and myself where I spotted many devoted volunteers including the quintessential volunteer to be found hard at work at Friends of Placer County book store at Raley’s and The Discovery Store in BelAir, Betty Dillman, who I am told has even hosted her own fund-raising tea parties at her home. You Go Betty.

The public is invited to enjoy the 4th Annual Holiday Season Event at The Assistance League Thrift Store in the Fiddler Green Center along with the other thrift shops including St. Joseph’s Catholic Church and St. Luke’s Victorian Attic where refreshments will be served on Saturday, November 5th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Questions/comments to loy@foothill.net.



Blues Man Mark Steinmetz, harmonica player extraordinaire. Photo courtesy Loyce Smallwood

Artists to Participate in Autumn Arts Studio Tour

PLACER COUNTY – Well-respected local artist, teacher, consultant Gayle Rappaport – Weiland will be sharing her newest coffee table art book, step by step instructional DVD and of course her sought after paintings and gift items with five of her favorite artist buddies at Finn Hall in Rocklin, during the 18th Annual Autumn Art Studio Tour.

Craig Johnson’s photography is award winning. He will have a range of work form greeting cards to framed original pieces.

Betsy Kritzon will be participating with her one-of-a-kind gourd purses. Her demonstration on how it is done is intriguing.

Judie Larson’s skills range from illustrator to beautiful paintings in diverse mediums. Last year her postcard portrait of Peaches the cat sold before the tour began.

Connie Oman’s jewelry is a must see. Experience and talent make Connie’s art an heirloom. She sells out quickly, so make Finn Hall your first stop on the tour.

New to Finn Hall, Jenny Stepp will showcase her one-of-a-kind exquisite glass art,

including beautifully crafted furniture and sculpture pieces.

At her Rocklin Studio Connie McLennan will be showcasing her award winning book illustrations and oil paintings. Many impressive credits follow this group of artists. They are a team and love working together. What a great local opportunity to see demonstrations, purchase high quality art and have an art filled experience.

So come join the Six Artists at Finn Hall November 11 through the 13, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and visit the studios of all the other 67 artists on the tour. You won’t be sorry you did.

Let their passion for the arts rub off on you. The Autumn Art Studios Tour is presented by the Arts Council of Placer County, and costs \$10 per person. Order forms, maps and badges are available from the Arts Council at 808 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603, call (530) 885-5670 or go to www.placerarts.org for more information. Click on the artist registry to see more of all the artists art work.

Tickets are available at Finn Hall the days of the show.

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Local Advisor Giving Circle Supports Underserved Youth and Young Adults

By Jessica Hubbard

AUBURN – Twenty-two local professional advisors including CPAs, estate planning attorneys and financial advisors recently pooled their philanthropy to make grants supporting six programs serving youth in Placer County.

The Advisor Giving Circle at the Placer Community Foundation awarded nearly \$29,000 in grants to provide economically disadvantaged youth ages 14-21 with training and support by peer and adult mentors around violence prevention, leadership and communication skills, self-esteem, and relationship building. Nonprofit organizations receiving the grants include: Boys & Girls Club of Auburn, Child Advocates of Placer County, PEACE for Families, ReDirect/ Nuevo Camino, Roseville Police Activities League and Sierra Forever Families.

Members of the Giving Circle provided funding for the grants, which was then matched by the Foundation. The members then carefully reviewed all of the applications, met with the applicants directly and presented their funding recommendations to the Foundation's Board of Directors for approval.

"Many of the nonprofit organizations that applied were worthy of a grant," states Jason Cardinet, a member of the Advisor Giving Circle from the accounting firm Gallina LLP. "These groups are doing the hands-on work that can positively change the direction of a young person's life." It felt good to be part of a process that will support these organizations in reaching kids that currently feel they have no future.

The Youth Development program at Placer Community Foundation funds organizations that support youth in acquiring the personal and social strengths needed for successful transition into adulthood. It is an approach that helps youth build strong relationships with others, learn new skills and give back to the community. PEACE for Families was funded for their My Strength program, which works with at-risk teenage boys.

"Our adult facilitator works closely with young men who



(Shown left to right): Advisor Giving Circle member Randy Wilson presents the grant check to Louise Czopek and Michelle Coleman of PEACE for Families.

live in a culture steeped in violence and who see no alternative to embracing it," states Michelle Coleman, Executive Director of PEACE for Families. "The My Strength program helps them build their understanding of their world and their own role in it. It teaches them healthy ideas about masculinity and empowers them to prevent men's violence against women. We are thankful to the Giving Circle and the Foundation for their support."

"Support of the Youth Development program through the Advisor Giving Circle is a perfect example of how philanthropy can be leveraged to maximize good work in our community," states Jeff Birkholz, Chairman of the Board for Placer Community Foundation. "Our board and staff feel fortunate to facilitate the bridging together of community-minded advisors with local, committed nonprofits."

The Placer Community Foundation gratefully acknowledges the following advisors for participating in this year's Advisor Giving Circle:

- Paul S. Aronowitz, Law Offices of Aronowitz & Skidmore
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- The Placer Community Foundation grows local giving to strengthen our community. We do this by connecting donors who care with causes that matter. Known for sound financial management and knowledge of the nonprofit sector, the Community Foundation and its donors have invested nearly \$3 million in Placer County, supporting a broad range of issues.
- To learn more about grant programs offered by the Placer Community Foundation, including how you can help support them with a gift today or through bequest, visit www.placercf.org or phone 530-885-4920.

Foothills Farmer's Market Receives Funds to Assist Low-Income Families in Accessing Locally Grown Produce

Auburn - Through a \$25,000 grant made by the California Foundation for Stronger Communities, the Foothills Farmer's Market Association will launch a pilot program providing assistance to low-income families at their DeWitt Farmer's Market in North Auburn.

The program, developed and supported by the State of California, will allow for financial subsidies and incentives to low-income families purchasing fresh produce. Qualified families will have access to scrip or tokens in lieu of currency to purchase food from various market vendors. The program also provides for a centralized wireless card swipe machine. The Foothills Farmer's Market Association will be responsible for accounting and redeeming the scrip or tokens, and then passing the funds back to the local farmers.

"This program is a win-win because it contributes to the success of our local food economy while fostering healthier communities," states Carol Arnold, General Manager for the Foothills Farmer's Market Association. "We are grateful

to the California Foundation for Stronger Communities for the grant and to our local partners for helping making it happen."

The grant opportunity was facilitated between the Placer County Office of Economic Development and the Placer Community Foundation.

"We are pleased to be funding this program in Placer County," states Mona Dmitrenko, from California Foundation for Stronger Communities. "It was a pleasure to work with a collaborative team of public and nonprofit partners who

value nutrition programs such as this one."

"We are fortunate to have a great variety of fresh local produce year-round in Placer County," states Veronica Blake, CEO for the Placer Community Foundation. "This grant is a start in making it available to all families in our community."

For more information about the Foothills Farmer's Market Association visit www.foothillfarmersmarket.com, and for more information about the Placer Community Foundation visit www.placercf.org.



Shown left to right: Veronica Blake, CEO for the Placer Community Foundation, Mona Dmitrenko from California Foundation for Stronger Communities, Carol Arnold, General Manager for the Foothills Farmer's Market Association, and Dave Snyder, Director of the Office of Economic Development for Placer County.

Senator Gaines Recieves Perfect Score on 2011 California Taxpayers Association Report

SACRAMENTO – Senator Ted Gaines (R-Roseville) recently announced that he has scored 100 percent on the California Taxpayers Association's (CalTax) 2011 Voting Record.

Gaines was one of only 30 state legislators out of the 120 Assembly and Senate members to receive the top score. "I am honored to stand with taxpayers in the fight against the over-spending crisis that plagues Sacramento," said Gaines. "As a small business owner, I am familiar with the hurdles and burdens hardworking taxpayers

face every day. California should be creating opportunities for individuals and businesses to thrive, not stifling their growth with excessive taxes and onerous regulations." CalTax's legislative report card is designed to hold lawmakers accountable for their actions and to inform taxpayers how their lawmakers represent them on key issues.

Founded in 1926, CalTax is a non-partisan, non-profit organization whose mission is to protect taxpayers from unnecessary taxes and to promote government efficiency. The 2011 Voting Record is based

on a compilation of the highest priority bills on which CalTax took a position. Most bills used to evaluate and grade voting records dealt with tax increases or those that threatened taxpayer protections. "I remain committed to defending taxpayers and opposing tax increases," said Gaines. "California's taxpayers deserve to keep their hard-earned money in their pockets, not to support Sacramento's irresponsible spending addiction."

The 2011 CalTax Voting Record, with descriptions of the bills used in the report, is available at CalTax's website at www.caltax.org. Senator Ted Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento and Sierra counties.

"...Taxpayers deserve to keep their hard-earned money in their pockets, not to support Sacramento's irresponsible spending addiction." *Senator Ted Gaines*

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Auburn Union School District Goes Solar, Improves Lighting and Lowers Expected Costs of Electricity

Projects Are Slated to Reduce Expenses for District by \$43,000 During the First Year

AUBURN — The Auburn Elementary School District (AUSD) recently approved a solar energy and lighting efficiency project that will help the school district save \$43,000 in the first year and more in future years without any upfront costs.

This exciting project will provide AUSD with much needed energy savings as well as improved lighting at each campus by installing solar photovoltaic power and new, more energy efficient lighting systems for Auburn Elementary School, E.V. Cain Charter Middle School, Rock Creek Elementary School, and Skyridge Elementary School.

"The solar panels not only help make our schools more environmentally friendly," said Daniel Berlant, board president,

Auburn Union School District, "but more important, the project will save our District tens of thousands of dollars each year which will go directly back into the classrooms."

AUSD is not providing any general fund dollars nor taking out any loans for the installations. The projects are funded through a "Power Purchase Agreement" with iecRenewables, LLC, through which the school district pays the commercial owner of the systems for the solar power generated and receives the lighting projects for free. AUSD will save an estimated \$43,000 the first year and up to \$3.5 million over 25 years without any up-front costs. The commercial owner will receive Federal tax incentives that are not available directly to the

school district to help pay for the costs of the project.

As a result of the incentives and to provide further energy savings, Indoor Environmental Services (IES) will be installing all new, highly efficient lighting systems designed to enhance the learning environment of the school classrooms and other areas, also without any district capital.

The solar power systems will create 540 kilowatts of power and are designed to generate 80 percent of the schools' annual electrical energy needs. The project will install 1932 solar panels on unused embankments and field space at the schools and also include some new parking shade structures at E.V. Cain and Skyridge. Construction is planned to start in the spring

and be completed and operational by next summer.

Auburn Union School District serves the foothill community of Auburn, located 40 miles northeast of Sacramento on the western slope of the California High Sierra. AUSD educates 2100 students in grades Kindergarten through eighth at three elementary schools (Auburn Elementary, Rock Creek and Skyridge), one middle school (E.V. Cain STEM Charter) and the Alta Vista Education Center (Preschool). iecRenewables, LLC, develops, owns, and operates renewable energy projects. iecRenewables partners with leading financing, manufacturing, and environmental companies to plan, develop, install, and operate both small- and large-scale solar and wind projects.

The company assists

municipalities, school districts, and commercial clients in meeting energy goals, achieving cost reductions, and generating increased revenue. For more information on iecRenewables, LLC visit www.iecrenewables.com.

Indoor Environmental Services is a full service Mechanical and Energy Services Contractor involved in the Design and Construction of HVAC systems, Service and Maintenance, as well as Facility Solutions Projects for various educational, commercial, institutional, industrial, agricultural and health care facilities. For more information on IEC visit www.ies-hvac.com

Additional information on the project is available at www.auburn.k12.ca.us/solar.

Briefs

• AUBURN — Come and enjoy a noon potluck hosted by AARP, bring a side dish to serve six to eight people and the chapter will provide the main dish (this month is turkey), also bring your table service. We provide coffee, tea and water. This month our program will be all about our veterans. Don Goard from the Placer County Navy League will be our speaker. Join us and bring a veteran, it is their time to be honored. You don't need to be a member of our local chapter. Hope to see you on November 3, 2011 at noon, at 11577 E Avenue in Auburn.

• AUBURN — **Academy Snowboard Co.** is holding the second annual FUNdraiser on November 17 at Old Town Pizza in Auburn. The event includes snowboard video premieres, performances by Auburn Hip Hop Congress, snowboard raffles, giveaways, and all around good times for a great cause. Proceeds go to the Colfax High School Snowboard Team and the Auburn Hip Hop Congress youth chapter! Visit www.academyboards.com for more information.

Sierra College and the California Conservation Corps Join Forces to Train and Employ Veterans

PLACER COUNTY — The Sierra College Center for Applied Technologies (CACT) and the California Conservation Corps (CCC) are teaming up to provide energy efficiency and construction training and employment opportunities for recently discharged veterans.

The CCC Placer Energy Center in Auburn and Sacramento asks interested veterans, who must be recently discharged and under the age of 25, to apply for employment by contacting Renee Podris at the CCC at 916-341-3107 or renee.podris@ccc.com. Successful applicants will begin working December 5, 2011.

The newly-hired veterans will receive Technical Education in Energy Efficiency and Construction (TE²C) training

from the CACT and earn a lighting and electrical technology completion certificate.

As CCC employees, they will gain hands-on experience in construction, lighting and electricity through energy efficiency projects at state agencies such as the DMV. State-wide projects in residential and commercial construction, landscaping and tree maintenance may provide additional experience.

The CACT will also provide employment skills training in resume development, interview skills and job search techniques with a focus on future employment in the energy efficiency construction industry.

More than 50 CCC employees have already taken at least one of the five classes and 128 hours of TE²C courses offered by

the CACT. The courses, featuring lectures and hands-on training, include weatherization, worker safety and alternative energy fundamentals.

The Sierra College CACT is funded through the Economic and Workforce Development program of the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

In operation since 1992, the Sierra College CACT has provided training for organizations, manufacturers and technology companies throughout Northern California.

Additional information is available at sierracollegelearning.com or contact Carol Pepper-Kittredge at 916-660-7517 or cpepper-kittredge@sierracollege.edu. Contact the CCC at www.ccc.ca.gov.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • THEME: WILD WEST

CROSSWORD

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CLUES

ACROSS

- Widest key on keyboard
- Sold at the pump
- Roman public space, pl.
- A Hawkeye
- Female reproductive cells
- Los _____, CA
- Fork tooth
- In king and queen sizes
- "It kept the corral closed?"
- "Gateway to the West"
- "Calamity Jane's partner"
- Old age, archaic
- EU money
- French lake
- Show off, as in muscles
- Moral principals
- "_____stevan"
- "Chuckwagon 101: 'No one _____ until Cookie calls'"
- Symbol of a clan, especially American Indians
- _____ receiver
- What dryer does
- East of Java
- Offered by Abraham
- as sacrifice to God in Old Testament
- _____ pea
- Incision
- Kinda
- She starred in last "Pirates of the Caribbean"
- Affirmative response in some northern states
- W on a light bulb
- "Bola, e.g.
- African quarter in which the citadel is located
- "Oklahoma was famous for this"
- Alfred Hitchcock in his own movie, e.g
- Judge at Simpson trial
- Sheep's clothing to wolf
- Oneness
- _____ de toilette
- Ceremonial elegance and splendor
- Warren Beatty's Oscar-winner
- "Type of trader"
- They can be dangerous for boats
- DOWN
- Small drinks
- Rotterdam or Singapore, e.g.
- Absent soldier
- "Water carrier"
- Completely cover
- Loads
- "_____Maria"
- Hindu holy man
- "Don't give me any _____"
- Bismarck or Hahn, e.g.
- "Big _____ Candy Mountain"
- Left after fire
- Novelist Louisa May
- Moved lazily
- Wrath
- Gone the way of the dodo
- "Meriwether"
- An advice or dispatch boat
- Mothball substitute
- Van Gogh started with two of these
- Gremlins
- Mediterranean boot
- Similar to Cecilia
- "Trailblazer Jedediah"
- "How cowboys preferred whiskey?"
- Singe, as in ahi tuna
- Phlegms
- "One is harder to find to these days"
- Flight boss
- Caustic remark
- Rick Riordan's "The Lightning _____"
- Derive
- Walking helper
- Among
- Several of these in a tennis match
- Frown
- Irritate
- Defender of skies
- New Jersey's NBA team
- Mutt
- Greek "I"

For Solution See Page 7

SUDOKU

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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.
Come back every week for Sudoku! For Solution See Page 7.

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"Keeping the Faith"

By Ronnie McBrayer

Years ago I accepted a friend's mysterious invitation to attend what he said would be the "greatest Halloween celebration" I would ever experience. He wouldn't share much more than that. So we met for dinner and then traveled deep into the spooky Tennessee hills to where a little community church was hosting, much to my chagrin, a "Hell House."

For the uninitiated (oh, lucky you!), a Hell House, also known as a "Judgment House," is an evangelical-revivalistic adaptation of a Haunted House. At each Hell House the script is pretty much the same. A small group of attendees is led through the designated area and witnesses scenes of violence or tragedy, scenes typically acted out by high school or college students from the local church.

These scenes may involve a group of drunken teenagers killed in a car accident, a frat house drug overdose, or a horrid suicide. In that Hell House I was snookered into years ago, the main script revolved around a school shooting complete with copious amounts of fake blood, cracking firearms, and a horde of the dead and dying. The manifestations are many, but the outcome is always the same: Somebody is going to die and go straight to hell.

The attendees watch as the dearly

The Hell House Really Burns

departed take their ill-prepared stand before the judgment of God, only to be dragged away by the howling, soul-thirsty demons to burn in eternal fire. After all this shock and awe, and with half of the attendees usually in tears, it creates just the right moment for the Hell House organizers to present a tract or brochure from the church, to give a spontaneous altar call to repentance, or to conduct some plain old fashioned fear mongering.

My friend thought I would benefit from seeing such a thing, hoping that I would lead my own congregation in hosting a Hell House the next Halloween. He was wrong. I'm not a fan of those things, and as soon as the school shooting scenario began to play itself out, I went home.

Halloween is a strange holiday, and not because of the costumes, ghosts, and goblins. Like so many of our holidays, it is a muddled fusion of the pagan with the Christian. When the world started to turn toward Christianity many centuries ago, and the church was consecrating heathen worship sites and customs left and right, day and night, a lot of the paganism was kept for adaptive purposes.

Since then (and even before) the rites and rituals have gotten so jumbled together, that looking back, it is sometimes impossible to tell where paganism ended and Christianity began. This doesn't stop some believers from working very hard to redeem October 31st. In fact, they work so hard at it, they go backward rather than forward,

calling on the elements of fear, coercion, and dread more than hope and redemption.

Hell Houses put emphasis on a horrible, dare I say, pagan concept of God. God is portrayed not much differently than an eternally angry executioner who takes delight in sending virgins and sinners over the edge into the volcano.

God becomes a terrifying hobgoblin rising on the night of Samhain or an insatiable Zeus hurling lightning bolts from Mt. Olympus until someone can appease him. The message of the Hell House is intentionally crystal clear: "Be afraid. Be very afraid."

Halloween or not, I believe the words of the Disciple John, who was casting off so much pagan misconception in his own day. He said, "God is love, and love expels all fear. The thought of being punished is what makes us afraid, and this shows that we have not fully experienced God's perfect love."

So here is the contrast in sharp focus: Paganism imagines what we must do to keep God from hating and destroying us. But faith leads us in joyfully celebrating and living the perfect mercy and love of God. The choice is the life of fear, or the life of love. The difference between these two makes all the difference in the world.

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, speaker, and author. His books include "Leaving Religion, Following Jesus" and "The Jesus Tribe." Visit his website at www.ronniemcbrayer.net.

Cultivating the Fine Art of Casual Loafing

By Rev. James L. Snyder

Storm clouds were brewing like fresh morning coffee in the normally placid parsonage this past week. I will not say that things got out of hand, which is not to say they did not. I just will not say.

I sensed a growing controversy between my wife and myself. Its genesis came about because of some silly mix-up, I assure you. Usually, mix-ups come about because of some misunderstanding and boy, do I sure miss my understanding. I have misplaced mine for so long I honestly cannot remember when I had it last. If my memory serves me, and it has not to date, the last time I had a glimpse of my understanding, I was standing at some altar repeating the words, "I do." After that, life has been a glorious blur.

The faux pas between us simply was a matter of attitude. My better half took the high road and I, per usual, took the low road. The reason I take the low road is simply that when I fall, and falling for me is inevitable, I do not have far to plummet. Regrettably, this past week we experienced a clash of attitudes. I can sum up my attitude in life quite nicely: Never do today what can be put off until tomorrow. Who knows? I may forget the whole thing by then, something I am renowned for around the parsonage, if you know what I mean.

On the other hand, my life's companion firmly believes in doing things ahead of time. For instance, by the end of August all her Christmas shopping is finished, wrapped and stored in the garage waiting for the Christmas tree. She has a wonderful knack for planning. What I want to know is how does she know if I am going to be naughty or nice? Usually, I give in to my better half. After all, that is what a great marriage is all about; give

and take. As a dutiful husband, I take everything she gives me.

This time, however, an important principle was at stake. Some things in life are worth fighting for and this represented one of those times. For years, I have suffered from a condition known as Afternoon Siesta Syndrome. Each afternoon I stretch out for an hour of rest. In that hour, I meditate on some of the more important issues of life. I cannot tell you how many significant problems I have resolved during my daily afternoon forty winks. I say I can't tell you not because I don't want to, but when aroused from my snooze I can't remember the solution. All I know is that somewhere in the recesses of my mind are wonderful resolutions to some of the most intricate problems facing our world today.

In this regard, I do not know how often my wife has said to me, "You need to see a psychiatrist." This leads me to the subject of our difference this past week. I am a firm believer in the "Art of Casual Loafing."

Loafing gets such a bad rap because so many amateurs try their hand at it. Let me say right here that loafing is definitely not for the inexperienced. A level of skill and expertise that only comes from diligent practice. Personally, I have invested over 50 years in the Art of Casual Loafing, which qualifies me as some sort of an expert on the subject. I am a proud, card-carrying member of the ACL union. I could have been elected president but we have not got around to elections yet. Many, and when I say many, I am especially including my companion, take loafing as something that comes rather easy. Oh, quite contraire, Mon Frère. Nothing could be further from the truth. My spouse thinks loafing is a tragic waste

of time. She thinks things need doing in a timely fashion, like "right now." The garbage must be taken out "right now." The backyard needs mowing "right now." The groceries in the back of the car need brought in "right now."

A person can take this "right now" business too far, if you ask me. I like to take things a little more casual than that. This "right now" hang-up can create some serious stress in relationships; especially between hers and mine. "There's no time like the present," my wife often tells me with a look in her eye defying me not to do what she just requested. To her, "right now" is very important.

When I want to resolve a difficulty, I resort to the Bible. This was no exception. Much to my amazement, the word "now" occurs in the Bible 1,356 times, which is rather impressive. I never thought of it before. What I discovered startled me. I had to admit that in certain things my dear wife is correct. Some things must be done right now.

Two Bible verses emphasize the importance of right now. In the book of Isaiah, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18 KJV). Then, in the New Testament "... behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2 KJV). "Right now" is the best time to address your relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail jamesnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

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By Marlys Norris, Christian Author

Our very presence as a Christian is objective to people of the world. Satan's world hates one who has become a Christian and follows the precepts of the Bible. Our countenance and lives are full of light and the darkness in them hates God's light. Some people don't understand why our existence and any verbal or written communication seems to offend, no matter what it is about. Our very presence and words bring "conviction" to their inner-soul regarding the life they are living that is obviously separate from God's plan for their life. We don't even know what or

Accused???

why it does cause negative reactions. We don't have to even say anything directly to them. They automatically take it personally knowing just enough about what we believe to cause them guilt. Of course they believe we are doing or saying something to them, even if you are not, they consider everything as an attack and accuse with judging them!

From out of no-where comes this accusation one does not understand. One wonders why me and why now! Is it a misunderstanding of the words written or spoken is the first question that comes to mind? In some cases one might even have a first negative reject response of anger or total silence for why they feel accused. But what good does any reaction or silence have in resolving any accusation? Absolutely none!

So what does a Christian do when faced with this kind of dilemma? First one must surrender themselves and the incident into the loving hand of God because

He is the only One that can heal and mend the problem. Anything one would say might just complicate the problem more, so one must just "Let it Go and Let God." When they do, it now becomes God's concern and battle to teach and reach the other person who has accused unjustly. If they honor God with church worship, God's messenger will teach them.

Most probably incidents like this will occur in every Christian's life. It indicates they are truly "walking the walk" God has intended for their life and others are observing their life that it is one of their personal conviction desiring to please God, first and above all, with everything they do and say. So Rejoice and Praise God because He is using you (even if it hurts) to reach someone touching your life.

Marlys Johnson Norris, Author Marlys5934@sbccglobal.net "Intimacy Begins Going God's Way" "God Moves Mountains, It was a Miracle"

Placer Bulldogs of the Marine Corps League in Auburn invites Marines, FMF Corpsmen, Military Service Personnel and the Public to celebrate the

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The deadline for purchasing luncheon tickets is November 2, 2011. You may purchase drawing tickets at the luncheon.

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Central Banks Aren't Banks

**Commentary by
 Michael S. Rozeff,**
Whiskey & Gunpowder
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I am going to make a number of obvious statements that we all can agree are true, but what they add up to is a startling conclusion. What we call "central banks" are not banks at all.

What is a bank? According to a helpful little essay on banks for students at ThinkQuest helpfully titled "What is a Bank?", a bank is a financial organization in which people deposit their money. A bank is a business. According to the aforementioned essay, "each bank tries to make THEIR bank look better than all of the other banks by offering services that some other banks might not have." That is to say, banks compete in a market. This is true, conceptually at least, and also true to some extent in reality, although numerous banking laws seriously alter the market and the competition. But it is the pure idea we are after here, and in the pure idea, a bank is a business that competes in a market.

I won't analyze every "central bank" in the world. I don't have to because their setup is more or less the same everywhere. I'll use the Federal Reserve System (the Fed) to represent all of them.

Historically, the Fed and other "central banks" came to be called "central banks" for several reasons. First, they are financial organizations. Second, they hold deposits of other banks and governments. Third, their assets are largely financial assets. Fourth, they make advances or loans to other banks on collateral. Fifth, the government has made them to be at the heart or center of the banking industry and the monetary system. Sixth, government power is itself centralized or national. All of these statements are factual.

Now, this is an imposing array of reasons why "central

banks" are called "central banks." But the most important of these reasons is the fifth reason, which is that the government has used its power to make the "central bank" central. And because the government has used its power to create the "central bank" and make it central, we know that the "central bank" is not a free market institution.

This is the main ground upon which I challenge the notion that a "central bank" is a bank. The concept of "central bank" fails to distinguish a free market business and a bureau created by government power. The term "central bank" undermines this distinction between free market and government. Indeed, it erases it altogether.

The Fed is not a business. It has powers that no ordinary bank has. It has privileges that no ordinary banks have. It doesn't compete with other banks. The government created the Fed. The government gave it power to create fiat money. The government can alter the Fed's organization and powers at any time. The Fed's so-called independence from the government is mythological. It is that of a dog on a long leash. The only independence the Fed has is from the public.

Let's go back for a moment to the essay on banks that I just cited, because it displays this erasing of any distinction between the free market and government. After defining the term "bank," it lists the kinds of banks. Quite suddenly, it introduces the term "central bank" in the same breath as ordinary banks that have national or state charters. It says, "There are different kinds of banks. There are national banks, state banks and central banks. The Federal Reserve Bank is the United States government's central bank. The Bank of England is England's central bank."

Suddenly, what this essay told us earlier disappears. We were told that a bank was a business that competed with

other banks. But now we are told that the Fed "decides how much money is in circulation" and that it "may tell the [ordinary] banks to charge more interest or keep more money in 'reserve.'"

Obviously, if the "central bank" has such powers, it gets them from the government. Just as obviously, the "central bank" is not a business and not in competition with other banks if it exercises these and other powers over ordinary banks.

Furthermore, distinctions between monies that ordinary free market banks deal in and the fiat money that central banks produce are completely glossed over and erased.

This essay is representative of the usual thought in the field of economics. Banks are businesses. But then, all of a

countries. In contrast to a commercial bank, a central bank possesses a monopoly on printing the national currency, which usually serves as the nation's legal tender."

This too makes it very clear that a "central bank" is not a bank, but a powerful Monetary Authority and Fiat Money Administration.

However, the same Wikipedia article almost immediately contradicts itself when it states: "Central banks in most developed nations are independent in that they operate under rules designed to render them free from political interference."

How can a bureau that is established by the government and possesses extraordinary powers be independent and free from political interference? The "central

bank" that is empowered by government. They are two entirely different kinds of operations. A thoughtful or questioning reader is bound to feel a degree of discomfort when he encounters these explanations that blur important distinctions.

A "central bank" is a government department. It is a government bureau. It is the government's fiat money bureau. The "central bank" is the government's money-printing machinery or money-printing organization or money-printing bureau or money-printing agency. As contrasted with monies produced in a free market, the Fed's money is state-produced "money." In the sense of comparing the Fed's money to free-market money, it is counterfeit. It is held up by the force of government law and power. It is imposed on the public.

A more accurate term for the Fed might be the "Fiat Money Administration." Perhaps the term "Monetary Authority" would be more accurate. It would be more accurate if the latter were the official name. In the U.S. Constitution, at least, it is clear that there is no power to create a Monetary Authority, and if there were such a power, it could not possibly be delegated in such a way as to make that Monetary Authority independent.

The "central bank" is not a real bank. Everything about it is permeated with government power. At the heart of the financial and monetary system of a nation that is supposed to be an exemplar of free markets is a government money-bureau.

Regards,
 Michael S. Rozeff
Michael S. Rozeff is a retired professor of finance living in East Amherst, New York. He is the author of the free e-book Essays on American Empire: Liberty vs. Domination and the free e-book The U.S. Constitution and Money: Corruption and Decline.

How can a bureau that is established by the government and possesses extraordinary powers be independent and free from political interference?
 Michael S. Rozeff

sudden, there is another so-called "bank" that has an array of powers that business banks do not have. This "bank" is actually a government bureau. Its fiat money is made into legal tender by the government. The government states that it stands behind this money. This "bank" has powers to control and organize the ordinary banks into a cartel.

The facts I've pointed out are widely recognized. There is a Wikipedia article titled "Central Bank" that confirms this:

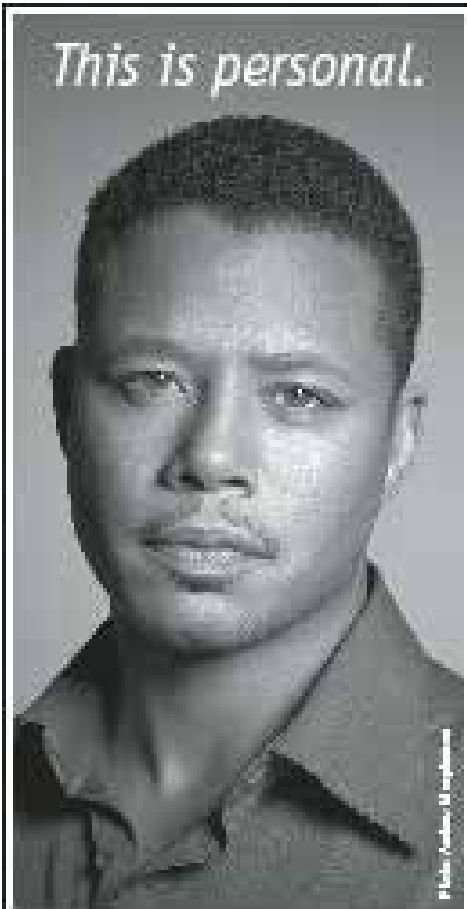
"A central bank, reserve bank or monetary authority is a public institution that usually issues the currency, regulates the money supply and controls the interest rates in a country. Central banks often also oversee the commercial banking system of their respective

bank" embodies political interference!

And to the extent that a Monetary Authority such as the Fed has been granted powers that it can exercise free of political interference, how can such an institution be held accountable? How can it operate without being responsible to the government and, indirectly, to the people?

"Central bank" independence is to a large extent a myth, that is, in the essence of the institution and in those activities in which it is not mythical, it is an unaccountable power.

It may seem as if I am splitting hairs, but what I see is that the common explanations of central banking confuse banking as might occur in free markets with so-called banking as executed by a "central



This is personal.

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Auburn to Honor Veterans in Parade

AUBURN – This year veterans will be honored in a parade put on by the Auburn Veterans Committee. Like last year, the parade will honor the area's veterans.

This year's theme is "Honoring Women Veterans." The parade is set to start at 10:45 a.m. at the Chamber of Commerce building. There will be a community luncheon at the fairgrounds, and hot dogs and cookies will be served. There will also be a short program, and the Place High School band will be playing.

At 11 a.m. at the clock tower there will be a three volley salute, followed by a release of doves.

Any veterans that wish to be walk in the parade should be at the registration desk at 10:30 a.m. Rides will be provided for veterans who are unable to walk. All veterans are welcome and encouraged to participate. Medals will be handed out to veterans walking in the parade.

For more information contact Cynthia Haynes at (530) 401-1035.



Photos courtesy Auburn Veterans Committee



A Case in Point

The Case of the Speedy DeeJay

By David Graulich, Esq.

During the 1960's and 1970's, the king of AM radio in Los Angeles was a disc jockey named Don Steele. Known as "The Real Don Steele," he dominated his time slot by combining absurd comedy with Top 40 music and surfing tunes. Except for a stint at San Francisco's KEWB, Steele's glory years were with KHJ ("Boss Radio-93") in Los Angeles.

Steele had a running joke during his show. A pre-recorded woman's voice screamed, "Tina Delgado is alive! Alive!" (Looking back from a perspective of 40 years, I don't know why the line was funny. I suppose you had to be a teenager and live in Los Angeles to get the joke).

KHJ created a promotion in 1970, "The Super Summer Spectacular." Steele drove a speedy red car around Los Angeles and would pull over at an intersection or landmark. When KHJ announced his location, the first listener to see Steele's car and reach him won a cash prize and an on-air interview. Here are examples of what KHJ broadcast during the Summer Spectacular:

"The Real Don Steele is out driving – he could be in your neighborhood at any time and he's got bread to spread, so be on the lookout for him."

"The Real Don Steele is in the Valley near the intersection of Topanga and Roscoe Boulevard, right by the Loew's Holiday Theater, and he's standing there with a little money he would like to give to the first person to arrive.... He's got twenty-five dollars to give away if you can get it..."

On July 16, 1970, two teenagers – a male aged 17, and a 19-year-old female – were driving their cars when they heard on KHJ that Steele was arriving in Canoga Park. They got there a little late and caught sight of Steele's car on the freeway. Both young drivers began racing after Steele, reaching speeds of over 80 miles an hour.

When Steele's vehicle took the Westlake exit, both pursuers also exited at high speeds. The teenagers forced another car off the road and onto a center divider, where it flipped over. The driver of the overturned car, a man named Weirum, was killed.

The decedent's wife and children sued RKO General, the corporation that owned KHJ (Don Steele was not a defendant). The key issue was this: Was it foreseeable that the radio station's Summer Spectacular would induce teenagers to drive negligently?

At trial, a jury returned a verdict in favor of the Weirum family. RKO appealed, and the case went before the California Supreme Court.

RKO argued that Mr. Weirum's death was caused by third parties, not by the radio station. Did a broadcaster have to consider everything that it aired in terms of what it MIGHT stimulate a listener to do, because it had liability for the listener's subsequent behavior? That would put a chilling effect on free speech, in violation of the First Amendment.

The jury, RKO contended, had widened the scope of third-party liability to a ludicrous extent. What if a department store

advertised a "while-they-last" sale, and shoppers racing to the store caused an accident? Would a college sports team be liable to a fan who was trampled in a crowd's rush to buy Rose Bowl tickets?

The Supreme Court's decision: The jury got it right. RKO had liability to the Weirum family.

It was entirely foreseeable, said the Court, that idle teenagers during summer vacation would race after Steele to win prize money. It was foreseeable that some of those teenagers would drive recklessly. Unlike the department store or sports team analogies, "the thrill of the chase" — a competitive scramble on public streets — was central to the radio station's contest, not incidental.

The Court also rejected the free speech argument: "The First Amendment does not sanction the infliction of physical injury merely because achieved by word, rather than act." KHJ could have entertained its listeners and increased advertising revenues by devising a contest format that didn't put the motoring public at risk, the Court said.

As for Don Steele, he continued to be successful in LA radio, converting from AM to FM stations and appearing in movies and TV shows. The Real Don Steele died on August 5, 1997 at the age of 61.

David Graulich, Esq. is a resident of Fair Oaks and an attorney with The Law Firm of Tim O'Connor. David welcomes comments on "A Case in Point" columns and can be contacted at (916) 932-2312 or by email: David@timconnorattorney.com.

Community Briefs

• **The Auburn Area Republican Women Federated** will host their November luncheon on Friday the 4th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Sizzler located at 13570 Lincoln Way in Auburn. Guest speaker Auburn City Council member Kevin Hanley will be discussing the Fire (tax) Fee recently signed into law by our Governor which affects all residents in rural areas throughout the state. Lunch is \$15 at the door. The public is invited. Check-in-time is 11:15 a.m. For reservations call Paula at 530-885-1428.

• **AUBURN – Widowed Person's Association of**

California will hold its monthly "Get Acquainted" dinner on Thursday, November 3, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. at the Sizzler Restaurant in Auburn.

Call 530-878-1728 for reservations by Tuesday, November 1, 2011. If you are new to WPAC this is an appropriate time to meet people who are also widowed.

All Widowed People are invited to attend three activities of this organization prior to joining our membership. Other activities include: card playing, luncheons, bingo, bowling, trips to Reno, Koffee klatches and special activities.

For a free newsletter call

530-878-1728.

• **AUBURN – ARD** has extended registration until November 4 for youth basketball. Boys and girls in the grades 3 through 8 are encouraged to play. All levels of ability are accepted. All children from the Colfax and Foresthill areas down through Auburn and Loomis are welcome to participate.

Signing up is easy; log on the website www.auburnrec.com and sign up electronically, come by the customer service office at 123 Recreation Dr. or stop by your local school to pick up registration forms.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact league director Jerry Fisher at (530) 885-8461, extension 112 or jfish@auburnrec.com.

Doing More With Less on the Road



ROCK DOC

By Dr. E. Kirsten Peters

Between the debt-ceiling kerfuffle and Hurricane Irene, you may have missed two bits of summertime news that will be important for what we drive in the coming years.

First, President Barack Obama announced that the administration and automakers had reached a deal to double the fuel economy of our national fleet of cars starting in model year 2017 and reaching the goal by 2025. Right now, cars and light trucks – light trucks include what I call my

"little old lady SUV" – get an average of 27 mpg. By 2025 those same vehicles are to average an impressive 54.5 mpg.

The second bit of news came a little later but was equally interesting. For the first time, companies that build "big rig" trucks, work vehicles like garbage trucks, and buses will also have to conform to efficiency standards. In model years 2014-2018, big rigs are to become 23 percent more efficient and work trucks and buses will be 9 percent more miserly.

In some ways, big rigs and buses are already quite efficient. It's true you see them belch black emissions when they accelerate, but because they haul large payloads as they tootle down the road they pack in a lot of work per gallon of fuel consumed. My 4-cylinder SUV gets pretty good gas mileage – in the upper 20s in terms of mpg – but when the only thing in it is me, it's just not efficient in terms of pounds of payload. Still, truck and bus engineers

will now be tasked with the challenge of making the behemoths of the streets and highways even more efficient than they currently are.

Most of us don't make decisions about which big rig to purchase or what model of bus our city transit system should buy. But when it comes to personal vehicles, we have more and more options that both speak to the goal of efficiency and also to diversifying the type of energy we rely on for transportation.

Here's just a sampler of what vehicle type you could purchase when next you're on the market for a new car:

Traditional hybrid cars like the standard Prius – these vehicles are powered by gasoline. You don't plug them in for a charge, you just fill them up with gasoline (like your father's Oldsmobile). The hybrids get much better mileage than many cars, but they are still 100 percent gasoline dependent.

Newer hybrids like the Chevy Volt – this car runs for short distances on electricity alone. You

plug it in while you sleep and it's charged for you in the morning. Driving across town in the Volt is like owning an all-electric car. For many commuters, this has the appeal of economy because electricity is cheap compared to gasoline. If you want to go long distances, the vehicle starts automatically using gasoline for energy – so you can drive across a state or two by filling up.

All-electric cars like the Nissan Leaf – this car is all electric, all the time. You "pour" energy into it by plugging it in for a charge, likely while you sleep. It has no tailpipe, which is pretty cool – although the power-plant that made the electricity the car runs on creates emissions if it's powered by fossil fuels.

Natural gas vehicles like one type of the Honda Civic – this ever-popular car can be purchased with a motor that runs on natural gas. Natural gas burns quite cleanly. You can recharge the vehicle with compressed natural gas at your home. If that sounds

exotic, you may have already been in a natural gas vehicle – some airport shuttle buses and urban taxis are powered in this fashion.

In short, diverse types of vehicles are now coming into their own. For those of us who love motors and engines, it's a great time to be alive. And although I hope to drive my plain-vanilla 4-cylinder SUV for another ten years, I also allow myself to dream of some new vehicle, much more efficient than what I grew up with and perhaps powered by natural gas or electricity.

I'm thinking of bright yellow, maybe with red flames painted on the sides.

Dr. E. Kirsten Peters, a native of the rural Northwest, was trained as a geologist at Princeton and Harvard. Follow her on the web at rockdoc.wsu.edu and on Twitter @RockDocWSU. This column is a service of the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University.

Dare to Live Without Limits

By Bryan Golden

Intimidation causes you to behave differently than you would normally. You don't respect people who intimidate you. You resent them. You are afraid of the consequences should you defy their wishes. Intimidation is only effective when you capitulate to it.

When intimidated, you are never happy. You become angry and frustrated. Intimidation may be either intentionally used or a function of your own perception.

Someone applies intimidation when deliberately using their power to threaten you. Threats can be either overt or implied. Someone has power over you when they are in a position to inflict negative consequences.

Sometimes you feel intimidated although there is no attempt by the other person to cause it. In this situation, it's your perception causing the intimidation rather than the other person's intention.

A situation where you are an employee can be potentially intimidating. Your employer has the power to fire you or make your job miserable. A good employer creates a comfortable work environment where you are encouraged to do your best. An intimidating employer constantly makes it clear your job is on the line. Their management style is to use the threat of job loss as "motivation."

Perhaps you are an employer or supervisor attempting to manage a misbehaving employee. In spite of repeatedly asking them to improve, there is no change. You are hesitant to take corrective action because of a concern about how they may react. Even though they haven't done anything threatening, you feel intimidated.

A coworker can be intimidating. If they don't perform their job properly, a larger burden may be placed on you. You worry that if you say something, they will make disparaging remarks behind your back.

A noisy neighbor can be intimidating. You may be afraid to ask them to quiet down because you don't know what their reaction will be, even though you have no evidence they will react poorly. Perhaps you have approached them only to be told to mind your own business.

You may be intimidated by your adolescent children. The fear is that your kids won't like you if you assert yourself by insisting on appropriate behavior. You worry that if you are strict, they won't want to spend time with you.

Some people have intimidating personalities. They are usually unaware of the effect they have on others. Their character is strong and forceful which tends to have an overpowering impact. With this type of person, your reaction is based on your perception rather than any deliberate behavior.

The basis of intimidation is fear. It holds you hostage. Your behavior is affected by what you feel others may do or think. Although intimidation is a difficult situation, living in fear won't alleviate it.

It doesn't matter whether intimidation is intentional or is your perception. When you get caught up in it, there are a number of deleterious effects. You invite more intimidation. You lose respect. You advertise what buttons can be pushed to control you. You get taken advantage of. You get upset. There are people who erroneously believe there is no choice but to live with intimidation. When you remain intimidated, the situation will become worse.

On the other hand, when you refuse to be intimidated, there is a good chance the intimidation will stop. The schoolyard bully is a good example. He preys on those who are easily intimidated. The bully passes by those who stand firm.

If you are used to feeling intimidated, changing takes time and effort. It won't happen overnight. Start with one situation. As you build up confidence, expand your "I will not be intimidated attitude." Try it – it works.

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@columlist.com.

16th Annual Fall Wine and Brew Fest On Tap

Annual Event to Spotlight Local Food and Beverages, Proceeds to Assist Senior Citizens Residing in Placer County

AUBURN - In an annual event that has become a fall tradition in Auburn, Seniors First will bring its Fall Wine and Brew Fest to The Ridge Golf Club and Events Center on Saturday, November 5, 2011. Thirty of Placer County's finest wineries, microbreweries, sake, cuisines, and chocolates will be highlighted this year.

Some of the events long-standing features are back this year, including a live band, a great silent auction, raffle, and two massage therapists. A

new feature this year is called "Bubbles & Bling." With a purchase of a \$25 champagne flute, attendees have the chance to win real diamonds stud earrings donated by Roper's Jewelers, Auburn. Those that purchase the flute are guaranteed to receive at least a pair of Silpada cubic zirconia stud earrings valued at \$20.00!

Tickets are available online at www.Fallwineandbrewfest.com for \$42.50 a piece. Tickets at the door are \$47.50 and designated driver tickets are \$25.

This year's Premier Sponsor is SureWest Foundation and the Star Sponsor is Sutter Medical. Jay Limo will have two limos at the event that (for a fee) will take attendees home safely. Security has been donated by Overton security. A sample of participating vendors:

Restaurants: Penguins Catering, Greenes Back Porch, BBQ Cabot Cheese Xpressions, Catering Max's Café and Deli, Old Town Pizzeria Strings

Wineries: Villa Fiorente, Bonitata Boutique

Wine Bronco, Wine Company, Wise Villa Winery, Duarte Family Vineyards, Breweries: Anderson Valley, Brew, Lost Coast Brewery, World Pub, Sierra Nevada, Fox Barrel Cider

Seniors First is a nonprofit corporation based in Auburn, California, specializing in keeping seniors independent. The organization is dedicated to providing community education and serve as a valuable resource for anyone seeking services for a senior loved one.



Auburn Presbyterian Church Christmas Fair

The Auburn Presbyterian Church is having its Family Christmas Fair on Saturday, November 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The fair will feature craft boutique, seasonal decorations, previously owned treasures,

fashion jewelry, bake sale and much more.

Food and entertainment will also be available.

The church is located at 13025 Bell Air Dr. in Auburn, on the corner of Bell and New Airport Roads.

Friends of the Auburn Library NOON Program to Feature 'The Hawver Cave'

AUBURN - Sure to be an interesting NOON program at the Auburn Library Beecher Room on Friday, November 4th, is "The Hawver Cave."

Mr. Gene Lorange, an Environmental Resource Specialist with the State Parks Department, will be the presenter.

The cave, located on the El Dorado County side of the middle fork of the American River, was discovered in 1906 by a local dentist, Dr. Hawver, and contains ancient

bones of humans as well as a variety of extinct animal fossils.

The program, presented by Friends of the Library and free of charge, will begin at noon and end by 1 p.m., with time allowed for questions and answers.

Guests should plan to arrive by 11:45 a.m., in time to enjoy some refreshments and find a good seat.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Auburn Aviation Association: Pot Luck to be Held Wednesday

AUBURN - The Auburn Aviation Association will hold its monthly pot luck dinner meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, November 2 at the Auburn Airport terminal building located at the end of New Airport Road.

Our November meeting speaker will be Ed George,

the Channel 3 helicopter pilot. MSgt. Ed plans to bring the KCRA helicopter with him to the meeting, so those people attending may view it.

For additional information, contact Bob Ferber at (530) 885 1706, or Darcy Brewer at (916) 517 0717.

Home Concert with Patrice Haan and Special Guest Tony Marcus

By Sharon Carl

Patrice Haan has an ear for melody, a heart for feelings and a gift for lyrics.

Best known for her sultry and seductive vocal performances with Tony Marcus in the Oakland-based jazz ensemble Leftover Dreams, Patrice Haan is increasingly being recognized for her songwriting. Her tunes are often described as beautiful, gorgeous, poetic and evocative, healing our souls and our heartache with the palpable love and the poetry of the music.

"While the music was every bit what we had hoped for, there was just so much more to the performance," noted Roger and Donna Brinton of Redwood City. "The chemistry between Patrice and Tony made for one of the most romantic musical experiences we have ever encountered."

"Their voices are like velvet on velvet, like they were born to sing together," said Mary Flower. "It's like one big slow dance where emotions are oozing."

I so love being able to bring musicians of high caliber here for you to enjoy! Patrice plays Celtic, traditional, Medieval, original and some classical

"Their voices are like velvet on velvet, like they were born to sing together."

Mary Flower

pieces on solo harp. And with Tony here too, there may be some surprises!

Please email today for your reservation for Friday, November 4. Reservations are required, and the suggested donation is \$20. Your entire contribution goes to the artist. Doors open at 7 p.m., music starts at 7:30 p.m. Call (530) 885-4292 or email info@AuburnHouseConcerts.org for reservations and directions.

Free Tai Chi and Chi Kung Class



AUBURN - Join Mariscela Alvarez to learn series of slow movements and stretches combined with deep breathing and meditation. Chi Kung is an ancient Chinese exercise, which involves the mind, breath, and movement to restore the flow of chi (energy) to a natural, healthy balance. Tai Chi, or moving meditation, is a series of choreographed movements, which

enhances total awareness, and concentration of the energy flow inside the body. During class, you will experience physical strength, flexibility, balance, and reduction of stress; relieve arthritis pain, and more. Classes are easy, safe and fun to learn for all ages.

Take the first class for free on Saturday, November 12, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Canyon Spirit Yoga Center on 538 Auburn Ravine Rd in Auburn (located by Twin Dragon Chinese Rest). To register contact Mariscela at (530) 863-0003 or ma@fyspirit.com. Visit www.fyspirit.com. Regular classes continue every Saturday, from 9 to 10 a.m.

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 9am - Noon: The Laura Ingraham Show
 Noon - 1pm: The KAHI Noon News Plus with Mary Jane Popp and the KAHI News Team
 1 - 4pm: The Dave Ramsey Show
 4 - 6pm: The KAHI Afternoon News with Dave Rosenthal and the KAHI News Team
 7 - 10pm: Nick & Artie Sports Talk
 10pm - 12am: Poppoff with Mary Jane Popp

Thursdays

4:30 - 4:45pm: Auburn Honda Gold Country Golf Show with Jay Cooper and Mike Remy
 4:45 - 5pm: Auburn Autohaus Auto IQ Show
 6:05 - 6:30pm: Leaders Without Limits with David McCauley
 7 - 9pm: Thursdays With Bassil

Saturdays

6 - 7am: A Time for Seniors
 7 - 8am: The Swap Shop
 8 - 9am: The KAHI Corral
 9 - 10am: The Garden Guru
 10am - 7pm: Sinatra & Friends Music
 7 - 8pm: A Way With Words
 8 - 9pm: Rewind with Jimmy Jay

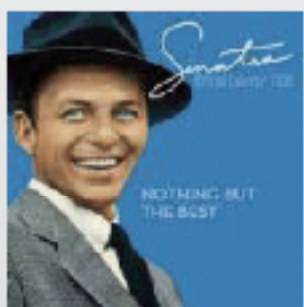
Sundays

7:30 - 9am: Cruisin' Garage & Swap Meet
 9 - 9:30am: Bayside Auburn Church Service
 9:30am - 7pm: Sinatra & Friends Music
 7 - 8pm: A Way With Words
 8 - 9pm: Hearts of Space

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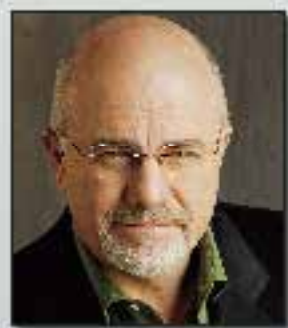
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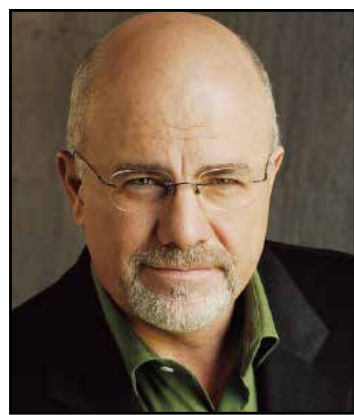
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Dave Says

kids have to adjust to a stepdad being on the scene, just like you have to adjust to a new marriage where teenagers are part of the package.

Let them know that you don't want to be the bad guy, but that you and mom have been looking at the money situation, and things just don't add up. Then, it wouldn't be a bad idea for mom to speak up at this point. Let her tell the kids that you've both decided it's time you made the money behave, and this will mean some lifestyle changes for everyone.

Listen to reasonable input from them, and let them know their thoughts and feelings matter. But they also need to know things are going to be different, and this part needs to come from mom. Otherwise, they're likely to see you as the wicked stepdad!

- Dave

Too Much Going On

Dear Dave,
I've got some rental houses, and I run a mail route six days a week. Plus, I grew up on a farm, I still farm, and I'm the minister of a small church. I'm trying to sort these things out, and decide how to free up more time to work in the ministry. I'm not sure what to do.

- Damon

Dear Damon,
I would spend some serious

time thinking about your situation and praying. Ask God directly what he's calling you to do for this season of your life. Once you're called into the ministry, then you're in the ministry. But one of the questions we're looking at here is this: should this be the season in which you continue to do this kind of church work? Lots of ministry work is done outside the church, or at least it should be.

Plus, you've got to be having fun. You'll be having fun when you're doing what you were designed to do. Let me ask you a question. If you had a clean slate, no obligations and unlimited money, what would you do? Now, I'm not talking about sitting on the beach and forgetting the family. That's not an option once you have the responsibility in place. I'm talking about a kind of work that you're going to fall in love with and completely pour yourself into. If it's being involved in rental properties and real estate, fine. If it's dumping the rental properties, mail route, and farming so you can concentrate on the ministry, that's great, too.

Think it over from that perspective, but I'd say one or two of these things needs to disappear within the next few months. If not, it's going to start eating you up inside.

- Dave

* For more financial help, please visit daveramsey.com.

Dollars and Sense

by James J. Scherer, MBA, CPA

The Reward of

Years ago, most kids worked in the summer to pay for college (as opposed to today's college kids whining to the politicians to subsidize more of their tuition). I spent my summers in McCall, Idaho as a smokejumper. What we did is fly to remote parts of the northwest and parachute from an airplane in order to extinguish forest fires. Each summer brought its own challenges, but the summer of 1970 was exceptional.

That summer started out painfully slow and without any action. It was a work of patience. Finally August arrived and it happened. The weather changed, the lightning showed up and we went to work! In five weeks all fifty smokejumpers had jumped more than twenty fires. In September we broke camp returned to college with money in our pockets to pay for another year's study.

So what did I learn in the summer of 1970? I learned that exercising patience is a key of success. We all know that exercising our muscles in not easy. It takes discipline and focus. The same holds true when we exercise patience. Patience is exercised when there is nothing positive happening and things aren't going the way we want. Its like guy praying, "God I need patience, and I need it now".

From late May through July we exercised patience. In August we were rewarded.

The same hold true with the process of investing. Since late July through most of this October the markets have tried our patience. I believe the patience we exercised during this period of time will yield increase. There is a beautiful promise in the Bible that says, "As long as the earth remains seedtime and harvest, heat and cold, summer and winter shall not cease." I want to encourage you in the exercise of your patience. Over time, I believe you will be rewarded.

James J. Scherer, is a founder of Towne Scherer Private Wealth Management, Inc., is, also, a financial advisor with securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, A Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC (CA Insurance Lic# 0C20370).

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice, recommendations or tax advice for any individual. If you have specific questions consult your financial advisor, tax advisor, or give me a call. He can be reached at 916-797-1188 or email at james.scherer@townescherer.com.

Tips for Creating An Achievable Retirement Plan

(NAPSA) Many people are finding that their fundamental ideas about retirement are changing.

On the new road to retirement, Americans can now retire only when they feel they can afford to do so. That's one of the key findings of a new study by the Bankers Life and Casualty Company Center for a Secure RetirementSM (CSR).

The study, which focused on middle-income Americans ages 47 to 65 with incomes between \$25,000 and \$75,000, found that 67 percent thought that they would be in a better financial position than they are now and more than half are not confident that they have saved enough to live comfortably on in retirement.

As a result, the retirement confidence of boomers is fading as their retirement accounts fail to rebound, their home values remain low and their savings dwindle. This is also propelling a majority to delay their retirement by an average of five years.

The CSR study outlines five steps you can take to improve your retirement:

1. Set a clear retirement goal with realistic expectations. Consider if you would be willing to work part-time or pursue a second career to supplement your income beyond age 65.

2. Save for retirement at work. Take full advantage of your 401(k) plan. Contribute at least up to the amount that your employer matches. If a 401(k) is not available, consider alternatives such as an IRA or annuities.

3. Plan for retirement risks. The three important financial risks to consider are long-term care, inflation and longevity outliving your money. Make sure your retirement plan includes a solution to address all three.

4. Practice healthy living. Take care of yourself physically now so that you can fully enjoy your retirement years. Keeping fit will also help reduce health care costs down the road.

5. Seek advice from a retirement professional. Whether you have \$5,000 or \$500,000, retirement planning can be complex. Consider speaking with a professional adviser to create a financial plan that supports your vision of retirement.

To learn more visit www.CenterForASecureRetirement.com.

New Family, Lifestyle Changes

Dear Dave,
I just got married to a wonderful lady with two children. We've talked over our financial situation, and we're determined to get out of debt within two years. This will mean some big changes in our teenager's lifestyles. How can we break this to them gently?

- Dan

Dear Dan,
Having your wife, who is also their mother, on board with the plan makes a big difference. I think all of you need to sit down and have a frank, but loving, discussion about the changes that are going to come with this marriage for everyone. The

Research Can Help Online Buyers Save Money

(NAPSA) If you want to get a great product at a great price when shopping online, investing a little time and effort can pay big dividends.

That's the word from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency. Its experts offer these tips to help online shoppers get the best deal and avoid scam artists.

Think about your goals. Do you want the top-of-the-line product? A particular brand? Are there must-have features? What's your budget? If you decide what's important to

you up front, you're less likely to make a purchase that could lead to buyer's remorse.

Get to know the products in the category. Often, the key features of a basic product and the top-of-the-line version from the same manufacturer are the same, and it adds on account for the difference in price.

Use search engines. If you think you've found a good deal but you aren't familiar with the product or the company selling it, dig a little deeper. Type the company or product name into your favorite search engine with a term

like *ireview, i complaint* or *iscam*. If you find bad reviews, you'll have to decide if the offer is worth the risk.

Check comparison shopping sites. With many retailers selling the same product, sometimes there are significant differences in price. Compare your total purchase price, including shipping and handling and taxes, rather than just the selling price. Different sites also have different return policies. Check if you'll be charged extra fees for returns.

Consider coupons. Some companies offer discounts to online shoppers via e-mail;

other sites collect and list codes for free shipping and other discounts.

Read reviews and be skeptical. Think about the source of the information: Is it from an impartial expert organization, one consumer, many individual consumers, a columnist?

Evaluate what you see on retail sites. Some scammers set up specialty sites selling a particular type of product. Those can be full of glowing reviews from *ishills* who are compensated for their posts, and may not include any negative reviews.

Ask yourself a few questions: Does the brand have a reputation for good products and excellent customer service? What's the promised delivery time? How will you contact the seller if there's a problem? Will the company accept returns?

Learn more at www.OnGuardOnline.gov/OnlineShopping. To file a complaint or get free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call (877) FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) toll-free. Watch a video, "How to File a Complaint," at www.ftc.gov/video.

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Begging, Pleading for the Abolishment of Gross Domestic Product

Commentary
By John Tammy,
Whiskey & Gunpowder
Reprinted by permission

John Tammy is editor of RealClearMarkets and Forbes Opinions, a senior economic adviser to H.C. Wainwright Economics, and a senior economic adviser to Toreador Research and Trading (www.trtadvisors.com). Nobel Laureate Robert Mundell long ago observed that the only closed economy is the world economy. As such, U.S. production (think the globalized manufacture of Apple's iPad, or Boeing's 787 Dreamliner) is a function of it ties to economic activity occurring around the world. GDP presumes a countries economy in isolation as well as uniformity between economies.

Worse, what often drives GDP up is far from something that would be considered economically stimulative. Indeed, government measures of inflation are notoriously slow to pick up on the horrors of dollar devaluation. Yet when devaluation leads to higher prices, GDP increases.

Government spending -- which has no resources that it hasn't first extracted from the private sector -- also boosts GDP, and then if imports to the U.S. decline (a flashing negative economic signal if there ever was one), this actually registers as growth in the calculation of this most worthless of measures of our economic health.

It's time to abolish GDP because its existence as the accepted measure of economic activity means that we cannot achieve the necessary reforms that would really allow our economy to grow. With so much of our economy directed towards work of little to no economic value, but which ultimately factors into the GDP calculation, we're restrained from doing what we need to do to truly advance ourselves.

First up is regulation. As even President Obama acknowledges, regulation frequently serves as a barrier to productivity. We'll see if he's ever willing to back up his rhetoric with action (signing the REINs Act would be a big step), but for now regulations serve

as a massive hurdle to businesses seeking profits for their shareholders by virtue of giving their customers what they want, along with things they didn't live without - think Google, Facebook and just about anything Apple produces.

Of course if there occurs a massive regulatory overhaul based on the correct kind of analysis which will show regulations merely inhibit profitable activity at best, and frequently miss corrupt actions at worst (Madoff), many in the U.S. whose livelihood is dependent on either regulating what they cannot, or helping businesses deal with regulators, will find themselves out of work. Their unemployment will in the near-term show up in reduced GDP, but the end result will be undeniably positive.

Looking at the estate tax alone, it discourages the very saving that authors our economic advancement, but its existence is a windfall for the myriad estate planners and attorneys in possession of the skills necessary to help those with estates to avoid the tax. Abolishing the death tax would be a major boon for economic growth for it releasing those reliant on it into worthwhile professions, but for a time their adjustment would detract from GDP "growth."

Considering the floating dollar itself, the utter chaos caused by the latter has created whole industries meant to soften the blow of a dollar without definition. The currency market alone is a \$3 trillion per day exchange as myriad great minds are forced into facilitator roles as traders of needless uncertainty, as opposed to producers. We'd have to invent hedge funds if they didn't exist, but their growing footprint can to a high degree be laid at the door of President Nixon's fateful 1971 decision to sever the dollar's link to gold.

Banks and investment banks on their own have growing compliance staffs in place to deal with all of the rules foisted on them. Abolishment of what won't work in the form of Dodd-Frank, not to mention the stabilization of the dollar such that it becomes the proverbial foot would release countless agile minds from

facilitator roles, some who will cure cancer, some who will create the next Microsoft, and some who will render the hell that is commercial air travel to the dustbin of history through making private travel as common as cellphones.

But to achieve the above, there would have to be a "recession" that would drive down GDP early on, but boost it in staggering ways long-term. In a nation brimming with talent, too many of our best and brightest are serving as facilitators to the detriment of real economic growth.

Lastly, a powerful reduction in government spending would surely bring down GDP substantially. Governments can only create jobs and economic activity to the extent that they take from the private sector, so major spending cuts at first would bring great pain to sectors of the economy in and out of government, but wholly reliant on government largesse.

All of the above is true, but then it's also true that government spending is almost tautologically about capital destruction, as opposed to wealth creation. If this is doubted, ask yourself if any company in the private sector could ever remain in business if it had lost money for decades, with decades more of losses ahead?

But assuming serious downsizing of the government, workers and the capital destroyed to keep them employed would quickly find other, market-driven uses in the private sector. Government spending presently looms large when it comes to boosting GDP, true austerity would as a result reduce nominal GDP substantially up front such that dim economists would scream "recession", but the long-term and economy-soaring result of such a move would be profoundly good for us all.

The problem now is that so worshipful and fearful of GDP are economists and politicians that reducing regulations in a credible way, stabilizing the dollar and slashing the burden that is government is a distant object to many. It is at least partially because GDP remains the benchmark for our economic health. Let's abolish it so that we can start growing again.

Retooling Obama's Jobs Bill

Commentary
By Kmele Foster

Earlier this month, the President's jobs bill failed in the Senate. Now the White House intends to break up the bill and gin up sufficient Republican support to pass key pieces. "We will now work with Senator Reid to make sure that the individual proposals in this jobs bill get a vote as soon as possible," said President Obama in a statement released shortly after the Senate vote.

This piecemeal approach might be politically expedient, but the provisions the White House is pushing are still a whiff policy-wise. They're just too superficial. Extending unemployment benefits and cutting the payroll tax aren't going to fuel the sustained, robust job growth Americans are so desperate for.

What the President can and should do is immediately rework his bill to pursue a structural realignment of the tax and regulatory burden facing American business.

Mr. Obama should focus his attention on reducing the tax burden faced by consumers and businesses. The proposed legislation takes some steps in this direction. It cuts the payroll tax in half to 3.1 percent in 2012 and institutes a temporary tax credit for businesses that hire new workers or buy new equipment.

But these cuts have already been tried and they don't go far enough. Temporary cuts are no substitute for comprehensive tax reform, and they mean even less without commensurate spending reductions. Washington should be taking steps

to simplify the tax code, broaden the base, and lower rates on corporations and individuals.

It's time to stop tinkering around the edges of our Byzantine tax system and fundamentally reform it -- it's no longer controversial to admit that America's tax code is impeding our ability to compete in the global economy and create jobs.

The half trillion-dollar jobs bill also contains billions in new spending. The president's bill calls for public investments directed at sectors that are politically popular among Democrats. For example, it earmarks \$25 billion for investment in school infrastructure and \$35 billion to state and city governments to prevent public teacher layoffs.

But these "investments" reflect the philosophy of previously failed efforts to stimulate the economy. At best, short-term spending by government will produce short-term employment opportunities. And these temporary jobs often come at the expense of sustainable new employment in other parts of the economy.

Rather than focusing on short-term solutions, the administration should be empowering executives and entrepreneurs to create viable patterns of employment. If more government spending could turn around our desperate economic situation, then surely the first \$1.5 trillion stimulus would have solved the problem already.

Finally, a recalibrated jobs bill must eliminate regulatory impediments to industries that are proven job generators.

One sector that could generate

hundreds of thousands of new, high-paying jobs is domestic energy production. Research suggests that opening up known offshore resources would generate 144,700 new positions and expanding access to federal lands for energy exploration would create 500,000 more.

The President could immediately encourage investment and job creation in the energy industry by simplifying permitting and reducing the number of new regulations.

Private companies should be allowed to explore and develop domestic energy resources without interference or assistance. The Solyndra scandal and the lackluster jobs numbers posted by other federally backed "green jobs" initiatives illustrate the governments inability to engineer a solution to the country's employment crisis. Opening new domestic frontiers for traditional energy production would generate the jobs that other politically popular programs have manifestly failed to produce.

Obama's jobs strategy is more of the same. Even if this new piecemeal strategy works, the results will be just as underwhelming as the White House's previous efforts to stoke employment. A truly effective jobs initiative would permanently cut, taxes, and reduce spending, while curtailing unnecessary regulations, and empower industries that are proven to create jobs.

Kmele Foster is the co-founder and vice president of TelcoIQ, a telecommunications consultancy. He is also the chairman of America's Future Foundation.