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of Books
They All Fall Down**
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AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

Volume 9 • Issue 24

Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

Second Edition for December 2014

Annual RT Bus Painting Party



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Don't Let Storm Repairs Turn Into An Uglier Mess

CSLB Tips Help Prevent Storm Repairs From Becoming Costly Headaches



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

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

"Anyone who needs to make repairs from storm damage should be looking for a legitimate, qualified tradesperson, especially in an urgent situation," said CSLB Registrar Steve Sands. "Licensed contractors are skilled in their specific trade, insured and bonded, and

not likely to leave you in the lurch when it comes to properly completing the job at a fair price."

Consumers can use CSLB's online resources, available at www.cslb.ca.gov or CheckTheLicenseFirst.com, to review the license status of contractors they plan to hire and to get tips about the best approach for making home repairs. Any construction job valued at \$500 or more in combined labor and material costs must be performed by a state-licensed contractor. California Business and Professions (B&P) Code requires licensees to carry workers' compensation insurance coverage for their employees and to be bonded.

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

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

Consumers should follow these tips when

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Take Care When Heating Homes

SACRAMENTO REGION (MPG) - As winter storms hit California, Cal Fire is reminding residents to take steps to heat their homes safely. While the cooler weather and rain are welcomed during a time of severe drought in California, it means that many will turn on home heating sources to keep warm indoors.

Cal Fire is encouraging everyone to heat their homes safely, as fire departments nationwide see an increase in home fires at this time of year due to dangerous heating equipment or unsafe practices. Improper use or poorly maintained heating equipment contribute to home fires and home fire deaths across the country. Half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February.

"Home fires caused by negligent use of heating equipment are easily preventable," says State Fire Marshal Tonya Hoover, Cal Fire-Office of the State Fire Marshal. "Taking the time to check your heating equipment and maintaining it correctly could make the difference in protecting your home, but most importantly your life."

"If the heat is provided using fossil fuels, there should be a working carbon monoxide alarm to help alert residents if a malfunction in their heating equipment occurs. And as always, make sure you have working smoke alarms throughout the home."

With just these few simple safety steps, you can prevent most heating-related fires from happening. Every home should have a working carbon monoxide (CO) alarm to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space

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Save Mart C.A.R.E.S. Donates \$25,000 to Women's Empowerment Grant Will Help Sacramento Women Break the Cycle of Homelessness

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Save Mart C.A.R.E.S. has donated \$25,000 to help homeless women in Sacramento find homes and jobs to support their families through Women's Empowerment's comprehensive job-readiness program. The mission of Women's Empowerment aligns closely with the mission of Save Mart C.A.R.E.S., which supports programs that have a record of results and contribute to the advancement of community, arts, recreation, education, and/or sports. "Women who experience homelessness have greater barriers in their job search, so our program addresses all of their basic needs including nutrition, so they can get healthy and focus on job readiness skills," said Lisa Culp, executive director, Women's Empowerment. "We are grateful to Save Mart C.A.R.E.S. for its steadfast support that ensures more women leave our program healthy, employed, and living in their own homes."

Women's Empowerment's initial eight-week program for women who are homeless addresses their basic needs such as health, mental health, and housing while preparing

them to become work-ready. The job-readiness component is mostly taught by volunteers from the community and includes computer literacy training, resume writing, communication skills, mock interviews, dressing for success, and more. The women also meet with an onsite employment specialist to search for jobs. Once women graduate from Women's Empowerment, they can join the advanced job-readiness program, which includes paid job training programs, certifications, financial literacy, and other resources.

Women's Empowerment offers the most comprehensive

Continued on Page 10



Nicole Pesco of Save Mart gives Lisa Culp of Women's Empowerment a check for \$25,000 to empower women who are homeless to find homes and jobs.



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Bella Vista Teacher Named National Language Teacher of the Year



FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - Nicole Naditz, a French language teacher at Bella Vista High School, has been named National Teacher of the Year. Naditz was selected by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and was presented with her award during an annual convention in San Antonio, Texas. “I congratulate Nicole for receiving this high honor,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. “As an outstanding language teacher, she is giving her students a skill that will increase their understanding of other cultures and help them succeed in our increasingly global economy.” *Source: San Juan Unified School District* ★

Bella Vista French language teacher Nicole Naditz was named National Language Teacher of the Year.

Area Residents Raise \$300k for Free Medical Services

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - More than 650 local residents raised \$300,000 for the Sacramento Life Center’s free medical care, counseling, and education services for pregnant women and teens at the organization’s annual fundraising dinner on November 8th. The Salute to Life Dinner and Auction included a gourmet dinner, auction, raffle, and stories of people who have received help from the Sacramento Life Center. The keynote speaker was Abby Johnson, author and former Planned Parenthood director. “We rely on this event for the funding to continue the work we are doing, and last year we saw nearly double the number of women and teens that we expected,” said Marie Leatherby,

executive director. “Thanks to this community’s generosity, we can continue to reach even more women and teens who feel scared and alone and instead provide them with a support system and the care they need.” The Sacramento Life Center’s mission is to offer compassion, support, resources, and free medical care to women and couples facing an unplanned or unsupported pregnancy. The center’s licensed Sac Valley Pregnancy Clinic includes a primary clinic and two mobile clinics, all providing free services including well woman exams, pregnancy tests, STD tests, ultrasounds, counseling for men and women, education, and resource referrals. The Sacramento Life Center



Author and former Planned Parenthood director Abby Johnson (center) speaks with guests at the Sacramento Life Center dinner that raised funds for the nonprofit’s free medical care, counseling, and education for low-income pregnant women and teens.

also offers a school-based teen education program, a 24-hour hotline, and a program for women seeking support after having an abortion. For more information about the Sacramento Life Center’s Sac Valley Pregnancy Clinic, visit www.svp-clinic.com. For more information about the Sacramento Life Center, visit www.saclife.org. *Source: Kristin Thébaud Communications* ★

Check Licenses Before Making Storm Repairs

CSLB Tips Help Prevent Storm Repairs From Becoming Costly Headaches

Continued from page 1
soliciting bids from home improvement contractors: Only hire licensed contractors, and ask to see their license and photo identification; Don’t rush into repairs, no matter how badly they’re needed; Be

careful when using online bulletin boards such as craigslist.org, because unlicensed operators may try to mislead you into thinking they are licensed; Only make a down payment of 10 percent or \$1,000, whichever is less; Don’t pay in cash, and don’t let payments get ahead

of the work; Get at least three bids, check references, and get a written contract; and Contact CSLB if you have a complaint against a contractor. CSLB encourages consumers to always “Check the License First” by visiting www.cslb.ca.gov or

calling its toll-free automated line at 1-800-321-CSLB (2757). Also, visit CSLB’s website for tips about how to hire a contractor and to sign up for CSLB email alerts. *Source: Contractors State License Board* ★

Sacramento’s Old City Cemetery Listed on National Register of Historic Places

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento and the Center for Sacramento History have recently been informed that the Old City Cemetery in Sacramento has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places in America. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places is part of the a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic and archeological resources. The Old City Cemetery was accepted at the national level of significance and as an historic district. Already listed on the State’s and City of Sacramento’s historic registers, the Old City Cemetery is a very unique property located in the City of Sacramento and overseen by the City of Sacramento and the Center for Sacramento History. “The Old City Cemetery is one of the most historically significant properties in Sacramento and, in fact, is the oldest public cemetery west of the Mississippi River,” said Sacramento City Historian Marcia Eymann. “The cemetery contains the graves of a number of persons of outstanding importance, whose activities determined the course of events in local, state, and national history, and has important historic association from Sacramento and California’s early period of settlement.” The Cemetery derives its primary significance from its association with the historic transformation of Sacramento from a Gold Rush-era boomtown to a well-established political and economic hub for the region. It is also an excellent representation of a cultural cemetery landscape developed during its period of significance with a high degree of integrity. Being listed on the National Register of Historic Places is both prestigious and important for the historic site as it provides additional protection for its continued preservation and recognition for its important place in the nation’s history. For more information about the Old City Cemetery, please visit www.oldcitycemetery.com or the Center for Sacramento History at www.cityofsacramento.org/ccs/history. *Source: T-Rock Communications* ★

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Annual Holiday Bus Painting Party

Regional Transit Charity Tradition Continues

By Michael Young, RT Marketing Representative

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Each year as the holidays approach, the Regional Transit Bus Maintenance body shop bays are transformed from a gritty work space to a festive locale for the annual Holiday Bus Painting Party. Colored lights and holiday decorations adorn the workshop and surround a 40-foot bus wrapped in white vinyl and marked with outlines of lights, candy canes, and other fanciful creations of the season in preparation for the annual gathering.

On November 15th, RT employees and their families became Santa's helpers; more than 100 people used a paint-by-numbers technique to bring the decorative bus to life. "It's all about tradition, and this one has brought RT employees and their families together to kick off the Holiday Season for the past 21 years," said Rick Sloan, Retired RT Graphic Designer and artist who has designed every Holiday bus. "I love watching people of all ages as they paint the bus with such pride and enthusiasm."

The Holiday Bus serves as a festive means to thank passengers who use the RT


system and to give back to the community as a whole. Free to passengers, the Holiday Bus operates on different routes in the Sacramento region from December 1, 2014 through January 4, 2015. The schedule can be found at sacrt.com/holidaybus14.stm.

In lieu of fare, monetary donations and non-perishable food items will be collected on the bus to benefit River City Food Bank, a non-profit organization that provides emergency food and housing assistance in Sacramento County. For more information about the food bank, visit rivercity-foodbank.org. ★



Each year as the holidays approach, the Regional Transit Bus Maintenance body shop bays are transformed from a gritty work space to a festive locale for the annual Holiday Bus Painting Party. Clockwise from top: More than 100 people used a paint-by-numbers technique to bring the decorative bus to life; Rick Sloan with son, Zach, now a senior at Cordova High, painting the bus in 1999 and 2014; This year's Holiday Bus; Sam Sloan paints the bus that serves as a festive means to thank passengers who use the RT system. Photos by Rick Sloan and Michael Young






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Important Reminders for a Safe and Fun Holiday Season

How Can We Make California CA-Boom! Again?

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - The end of the year is rapidly approaching, meaning that many people are well underway with planning their holiday and New Year celebrations. Though most are focused on enjoying the festivities with friends and loved ones, it is equally important to recognize the driving dangers associated with the holiday season.

With alcohol being a common staple at holiday parties and gatherings, it is no surprise that the month of December equates to an increased number of DUI offenses and drunk driving crashes. In fact, in December 2012, a staggering 830 people lost their lives across the nation in crashes involving a drunk driver, including 92 killed and over 1,800 injured in California alone.

To avoid risking these serious consequences, and to ensure that your holiday celebrations are both fun and safe, the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) offers the following reminders:

Plan ahead, designate a sober driver: If you plan to consume alcohol during your holiday festivities, make it a point to designate a sober driver ahead of time. Waiting until you've been drinking to make this decision increases your chances of poor judgment, resulting in a greater risk of severe and potentially deadly consequences.

Find a safe ride home: If you have been drinking, call a sober friend or family member, or utilize your local taxi or driving service to ensure that you get home safely. Remember, there is always an option for a safe ride home.

Law enforcement will be out in full force: The annual DUI crackdown period will be in effect through January 1st, with law enforcement actively on the lookout for those who are driving

while impaired. With the average first time DUI costing \$10,000, spending a small amount on a safe ride home is by far the most logical and economical choice.

Additionally, remember to visit the OTS Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CaliforniaOTS for non-alcoholic drink recipes created specifically for Designated Drivers. Developed by popular food and drink establishments throughout California, these "DDrinks" (Designated Driver Drinks) are perfect for any holiday gathering. Party hosts are encouraged to check out these simple recipes, giving sober drivers a fun way to take part in the festivities too.

The California Office of Traffic Safety and the Orangevale Chamber of Commerce wishes you a safe and happy holiday season!

Source: Orangevale Chamber of Commerce ★



By Senator Ted Gaines

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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END of the BENCH

by **Gerry Scholl**

Who Needs the New York Times?

It was promising to be quite a grim day of ugly football Sunday for fans of the New York teams. The 3-9 Giants were at the 2-10 Tennessee Titans and the 2-10 Jets were in Minnesota to face the 5-7 Vikings. There was not one iota of playoff implications involved in those two dreadful matchups.

The Sunday New York Times posed the question, “Who Needs Football?” to a number of staff reporters, seeking reasonable alternatives to curling up on a couch to watch either or both games. Among the options were: engaging in some form of self-improvement; taking a nature-walk; going to the opera; exploring the city; watching Christmas movies; work on your karaoke talents, or go ice skating; play street hockey; eat out; and others.

Several good ideas were formulated there, but wouldn’t you know, the two contests in question turned out to be pretty entertaining ball games for New York fans. The Giants pounded the Titans, 36-7, while the Jets rallied from a 21-12 deficit and sent that game to overtime by kicking a long field goal with just 23 seconds remaining in regulation, only to lose, 30-24, on an 87-yard catch and run by Jarius Wright. Hopefully, those fans that ventured forth out into The Big Apple enjoyed their day and remembered to record the games for late-night viewing with a few slices of pizza.

But who out west needs The New York Times? San Francisco Forty Niners and Oakland Raiders football fans have problems of their own. After the Raiders (2-11) all but destroyed the very slim playoff hopes of the compliant-in-defeat 49ers (7-6) with an unexpected 24-13 victory in Oakland, 49ers fans can now join in the fun Raiders fans have been having all season of seeking out other avenues around the Bay Area for their amusement, such as: take an unguided tour of San Quentin; go for a solitary, late-night stroll in West Oakland or East Palo Alto; take a dip at Ocean Beach when the tide is rolling in; swim to Alcatraz; go jogging across the Golden Gate Bridge (don’t jump!); or take a long walk down

a short pier.

Of course, those are not all the choices that are fit to print. But forlorn fans of the two Northern California teams might be willing to consider almost anything other than watching three more weeks of relatively meaningless football.

It is as if the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse --- Conquest, War, Famine, Death --- have sent advance scouts to pay a visit to the Bay Area football world. The teams can’t conquer the finer parts of the game and are losing the battles. Despite having a varied menu of stadium food from which to choose, fans of the teams are starved for success on the field (combined, just 5-8 in home games). The Raiders, seemingly, have had one foot in the grave for over a decade, while the 49ers just recently have slipped into a coma and have the Devil of Dysfunction whispering constantly in their ears.

Forty Niners head coach Jim Harbaugh said the team is going through “a rough patch...it’s sometimes darkest before the dawn.”

Sports journalist Ray Ratto referred to the 49ers’ plight as a “crisis of confidence” and their performance of late as “the essence of mediocrity.” That’s pretty dark.

Football fans may want to divert their attention to the (Emerald; Kraft Fight Hunger) Foster Farms Bowl, Dec. 30, at Levi’s Stadium, Stanford, which had a somewhat disappointing regular season going 7-5, 5-4 in the Pac-12, did close it out with a pair of blowout victories over Cal and UCLA. The Cardinal will be hoping to make turtle soup or chicken salad out of the Maryland Terrapins (7-5, 4-4 in The Big Ten; no longer in the ACC? --- who can keep track anymore?).

As for Cal, the Bears improved greatly on last season’s 1-11 record, finishing 5-7 after a surprising 4-1 start this year. The Bears suffered narrow defeats to Pac-12 powers Arizona (by 4 points), UCLA (2) and USC (8), before ending with a late 42-35 loss to BYU to come up just short of being bowl-eligible. Next season could show more improvement under coach Sonny Dykes, whose passing

offense ranked fifth nationally and total offense ranked 15th. Most of the big producers on offense will return, but the porous defense, ranked 121st, still needs a lot of work.

For the time being, Cal fans can revel in an exciting basketball team, off to a 7-1 start through Tuesday, with consecutive close wins over Fresno State, Montana (2 OT) and Nevada, even without star Jabari Bird (11.7 ppg) for the last two. Tyrone Wallace has been the breakout star, averaging 19.3 ppg, 8.9 rpg, and leading the team in assists.

But for the ultimate cure for whatever might be ailing area sports fans, look to the revitalized Golden State Warriors. After just two winning seasons over an 18-year span, the Warriors won 47 and 51 games, respectively, and reached the playoffs the last two years under coach Mark Jackson, but exited in the early rounds.

Jackson was replaced by the well-sought-after Steve Kerr, who has the Warriors leading the NBA at 17-2 going into Monday’s game at Minnesota, and on a current, team-record twelve-game winning streak.

The dynamic backcourt tandem of Steph Curry and Klay Thompson has been all the rage around the league, along with the multidimensional Draymond Green, who has more than adequately filled the void in the starting lineup left by missing, injured all-star forward David Lee. Early-season chants of “MVP” are already ringing around Oracle Arena for Curry, sixth in the league in scoring (23.2 avg.), sixth in assists (7.7), first in 3-pt. field goals made (58, six ahead of Thompson), while adding over five rebounds and nearly two steals per game, and shooting over 92 percent from the foul line.

Up the freeway, even the Sacramento Kings are providing some excitement, at 10-10 and on the edge of playoff contention, for a change. Off to a good start, the Kings are trying to stay in the mix until sick (meningitis) superstar center, DeMarcus Cousins returns. The Kings have gone only 1-15 over the last two seasons without Cousins in the lineup. ★



By Pastor Ray Dare

When Jesus Christ was born, He didn’t come to a select few. He didn’t come to the privileged class. He didn’t even come for religious people. He came for people who couldn’t care less about religion. He came to lowly shepherds. He came for all of us.

The Bible says that when Jesus was born, He wasn’t born in a palace although He was the God of the universe. He wasn’t born in a hospital. He wasn’t even born in a nice hotel or home. He was born in a barn.

Today we over sentimentalize the nativity scene. We talk and sing about how Jesus was born in a manger. But do you know what a manger is? A manger is a food box for cattle. People put cow food in them and cows put their noses in them! Have you ever seen the end of a cow’s nose up close? Do I have to tell you what’s on the end of that nose? Guess what the inside of a manger is lined with? Not exactly a nice place to lay a new born baby. Yet that’s where God was born. When God came to earth, He came to the lowliest of people in the lowliest of places.

Why be Born in A Manger?

You can’t get any lower than being born in a barn.

The first people who got to visit Jesus were not religious leaders. They were not royalty. They weren’t political figures. The very first people who were invited to see Jesus were the shepherds. Today we make shepherds to be the heroes, but in those days shepherds were zeros. They were nobodies. They were considered outcasts of society because they did a job nobody else wanted to do. It was a very stinky job. As far as social status was concerned, shepherds were the low step on the social ladder. They were outcasts, rejected, the people in those days called low-lives. That’s who Jesus invited first to come to see Him. The point is, God made Himself accessible to everyone.

You may think, “All the things I’ve done in my life, I could never have a relationship with God.”

You’re wrong. You may think, “God doesn’t care about me, I’m a little nobody. Nobody cares about me and God certainly doesn’t have time for me.” You’re wrong, dead wrong. God says, “I love you, I know you, and I want you to know Me.” He came down to our level. That’s the significance of the manger. He was born right out in the open where anybody could come and have a relationship to Him. That’s the point. God wants to have a relationship to you. We could never know God on our own, so He came down to our level. He would stoop so

low that He would be born as a baby in a manger so He would be accessible to everybody.

Have you ever wondered in the quiet moments of life or before you go to sleep, “Why am I here? Where am I going? Is there any meaning? Is there purpose to it all? What is the significance of life?” All of those questions can be answered in one simple sentence: The Bible says God is full of love and He made you just to love you. If you don’t understand that you’ve missed the whole purpose of life. You were made to know God. He gave you that capacity. You have the capacity to know God.

I’m not talking about religion. You may be Catholic. You may be Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist or Baptist. It doesn’t matter what you are. I’m not talking about religion. I’m talking about a relationship with Jesus Christ. He wants you to know Him personally. God says, “You matter to Me. I came to earth 2014 years ago, grew up, died on the cross and paid for your sins. All you have to do is accept it, trust Me and follow Me. And we’ll develop a relationship and I’ll be with you the rest of your life.” Accept the original Christmas gift today, a relationship with God.

Pastor Ray
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DMV Extends Office Hours and Adds Appointments for First-Time Driver License Applicants

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) announced that it is extending office hours and adding appointment opportunities to support the issuance of all original driver licenses, including licenses that will be issued under Assembly Bill (AB) 60 starting on January 2nd, 2015.

“DMV is committed to providing excellent customer service to all Californians,” said DMV Director Jean Shiimoto. “Customers with appointments have much shorter wait times, and now all customers seeking new driver licenses will have extra appointment opportunities.”

DMV anticipates processing approximately 1.4 million additional driver license applications during the first three years after implementation of AB 60. The DMV will be offering the following additional services:

Extended Saturday office hours by appointment for all new driver license applicants at up to 60 DMV field offices across California starting Saturday, January 3rd, 2015.

Increased number of available appointments in many field offices that will hire additional staff.

New driver license applicants will be able to schedule

appointments with the DMV up to 90 days in advance, double the current 45-day window.

Starting December 1st, 2014, all first-time driver license applicants must make an appointment to visit their local DMV office. However, four new driver license processing centers will continue to offer both walk-in and appointment services: Lompoc, Stanton, Granada Hills (all opened November 17th, 2014) and San Jose (opening December 1st, 2014). Appointments are recommended.

These additional services will be available to all customers seeking an original driver license, the applicant’s first license received in California, whether under AB 60 or otherwise. Customers applying for an original driver license will need to do the following:

Make an appointment to visit a DMV field office up to 90 days in advance (or walk-in or appointment at the temporary driver license processing centers in Lompoc, Stanton, Granada Hills, or San Jose).

Study for the driver license exam

Complete a driver license application form (DL 44) available at the DMV office

Provide DMV with either (1) social security number and

proof of identity and legal presence, or (2) proof of identity and California residency under AB 60. (Last week, DMV posted the list of documents that applicants will need to bring to DMV to obtain a new driver license under AB 60. Details regarding these documents are available on the AB 60 webpage at www.apps.dmv.ca.gov/ab60/index.html.)

Pass a vision test, TouchScreen knowledge (written) test, and if applicable, a road sign test

Give a thumb print

Have a picture taken

Schedule a future appointment for the behind-the-wheel driving test

Applicants under 18 applying for an original driver license will also need to submit proof of driver education completion. For further information about obtaining a new driver license, refer to the California Driver Handbook or visit www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/dmv/dl/driverhandbooks.

It is easy to make an appointment to go into a DMV field office; you can make an appointment online, use the DMV now app, or call 1-800-777-0133. Appointments are available up to 90 days in advance for new driver licenses and 45 days in advance for other services.

Source: California Department of Motor Vehicles ★



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Reduce and Reuse This Holiday Season

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The holidays are the time we Americans create more paper and throw-away material than at any other time of the year. This year, take steps to reduce the amount of materials that get thrown away, and make this holiday a season of recycling.

You can recycle gift boxes, Christmas trees, wrapping paper, cards, junk mail, magazines, catalogs, plastic, glass, aluminum beverage containers, and more!

Did You Know?
Americans throw away 25% more trash during the Thanksgiving to New Year’s holiday season than any other time of year. This extra garbage amounts to 25 million tons of trash (Bob Lilienfeld, “The Use Less Stuff Report”).

If every family in the U.S. reused

just two feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet.

The 2.65 billion Christmas cards sold each year in the U.S. could fill a football field 10 stories high. If we each sent one card less, we’d save 50,000 cubic yards of paper.

How to Have a Greener Season:
Use reusable shopping bags.
Send your holiday greetings in electronic form.
If you use traditional gift wrapping, avoid wrapping gifts in materials that are not recyclable or reusable, such as foil or metallic papers. Always buy recycled-content wrapping paper.
If you send holiday cards, buy recycled-content cards and

envelopes, or make your own cards or gift tags out of last year’s cards and the wrapping paper you saved.

Remove your name from the mailing list of any catalog you no longer wish to receive. Eliminate unwanted credit offers by calling 1-888-50OptOut (1-888-567-8688) or visiting www.optoutprescreen.com.

Reuse foam peanuts or use unbuttered popcorn for packing. Return unwanted Styrofoam packing peanuts to local UPS stores (please call before delivering).

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CLUES

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1. Good for biceps
6. "___ alive!"
9. *Many Kurds did this from Syria in 2014
13. Unctuous Heep, of "David Copperfield"
14. Not pre-owned
15. It made Harry Potter's invisible
16. Common Thanksgiving Day action
17. ATM extra
18. Reduce, ____, recycle
19. "Captured drug lord
21. Zoo section
23. Go wrong
24. Hat part
25. Old age, archaic
28. Musical compositions for one
30. African equines
35. *Suspect in PA police ambush was denied this
37. Kosher establishment
39. Davy Crockett's last stand
40. Popular Creole vegetable
41. ____ Miss hot chocolate
43. Auditory
44. MC Hammer's "2 2 Quit"
46. Last two words of certain shoe company's famous slogan
47. "Rampling Wreck From Georgia ____"
48. *Beyonce and Jay Z performed in them together in '14
50. Antonym of #14 Across
52. "Big Island" flower necklace
53. Leave them behind for riches?
55. Grazing area
57. *Animated Oscar-winner
60. "Billboard Music Awards hologram guest
64. Indian restaurant condiment
65. Schiller's "___ to Joy"
67. Got up
68. Remove, as in a Pinterest post
69. A cool ____, as in money
70. Takes it easy
71. They're famous for being busy
72. Snake-like reef dweller
73. Arrogant one

DOWN

1. 27 is the ____ of 3
2. Russia's ____ Mountains
3. Reduced Instruction Set Computer
4. Wood-shaping device
5. Barn scissors
6. Facts and figures
7. Tiger's peg
8. Take an oath
9. Bloodsucking hopper
10. Displeasure on one's face
11. "Piece of cake!"
12. Obtain or create, barely
15. *Russia/Ukraine "apple of discord"
20. Cattle control, pl.
22. "That is to say"
24. Suffering from gastric distress

25. *It caused a scare globally in 2014
26. Kobe, e.g.
27. Sad song
29. Off-color
31. The Phantom ____, Mickey Mouse's nemesis
32. a.k.a. honey badger
33. White liturgical neckwear
34. *2014 Olympic site
36. Been in bed
38. *Infamous terrorist group
42. Type of monument
45. Jane's mate
49. Sigma Alpha Epsilon
51. Type of sticker, pl.
54. *Washington Nationals gave away a Jayson Werth garden ____
56. Ohio rubber hub
57. Olden-day temple
58. ____ for the picking
59. Elevator inventor
60. Come together
61. *Hope ____ set U.S. soccer record for career shutouts
62. Norse capital
63. Egg holder
64. Cause friction
66. Bond movie "Live and Let ____"

CROSSWORD

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every

row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

For Solutions See Page 7

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 6

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

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12342 Little Dome Way, Rancho Cordova, CA 95742. 3bed/2bath, 1983sf, built 2011. \$330K. Sam Munoz, DRE# 01741693. Delano Real Estate (661)-709-0921. (MPG 10-31-14)

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By Ronnie McBrayer

Some years ago I read about Charles Brown, a World War 2 pilot on his first mission, just before Christmas, 1943. His B-17 had been shot to pieces by German fighters and anti-aircraft guns. Half his crew was wounded, his tail gunner was dead, and he was flying alone over Germany, barely able to keep the plane aloft.

Then, as if things could not be more desperate, Brown looked to his left and locked eyes with Franz Stigler, an ace German fighter pilot flying no more than a few feet off the B-17’s wing. Brown’s blood went cold; this was the end.

Stigler, the German pilot, was thirsty for revenge. The Allied forces were responsible for his brother’s death, and they had been relentlessly bombing his country’s cities. Now he had a chance to retaliate. But as he came up behind the low-flying bomber, he recognized that it was shot to pieces. He could see the dead and wounded crew inside.

Stigler, with one hand on the trigger and another on his rosary, couldn’t shoot. Instead, he nodded at Brown and protectively escorted the bomber over the North Sea and to the edge of Allied airspace. He took one last look at the American pilot,

The Gift of Mercy

saluted, and peeled away.

Brown landed safely, survived the war and eventually returned home where he would marry, have children, go to work for the State Department, and retire in Florida. But the older he got, the more Brown thought about that December day above Germany. He decided that he must find that German pilot.

His search was showing little progress when he received an unexpected letter. It was from Franz Stigler! It read, “Dear Charles, all these years I wondered what happened to that B-17, did she make it or not?” Stigler was now retired in Canada and was making the same improbable search. The two pilots became best of friends, meeting as often as possible, corresponding, and talking weekly by phone.

Brown was forever grateful for Stigler’s gift of mercy—his whole life had been possible because of it. But the event changed Stigler’s life as well. He said, “In the war I lost my brother, my friends (of the 28,000 pilots who flew for the German air force, only 1,200 survived), and I lost my country. The war cost me everything. Charles Brown was the only good thing that came out of that war for me. It was the one thing I could be proud of.”

Stigler and Brown died within months of each other in 2008. A book found in Charles Brown’s library after their deaths, a gift from Stigler, had this written on the flap: “On the 20th of December, 1943, four days before Christmas, I had the chance to save a B-17 from her destruction, a plane so badly

damaged it was a wonder that she was still flying. The pilot, Charles Brown, is for me, as precious as my brother once was. Thank you Charlie. Your Brother, Franz.”

Few stories illustrate so well how transformational mercy can be. It reconciles enemies, heals old wounds, extinguishes vengeful fires, and gives life. And it accomplishes these things, not only for the recipient of mercy, but also for the one who offers mercy.

Mercy is a shared gift, a gift for both the offender and the offended; for the one who must be pardoned, and the one who pardons; for the violator and the violated. When we replace vengeance with compassion; retaliation with grace; and punishment with forgiveness, then, like no other moment, we are giving life to the world.

So who in your life could best be served by the gift of mercy this Advent Season? That old enemy? A shyster, former business partner? A parent, child, neighbor, or sibling? There’s usually no shortage of offenders, just a shortage of forgiveness. Maybe it’s finally time to ask God for the grace to grace others, to cling to your rosary, and take your finger off the trigger. The person you save might be yourself.

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

The Great Wall of Silence after Thanksgiving

Dr. James L. Snyder

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Now my mind was racing a thousand miles an hour trying to figure out what I should get her

as a Christmas present this year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I had another semi-brilliant idea.

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

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

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

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

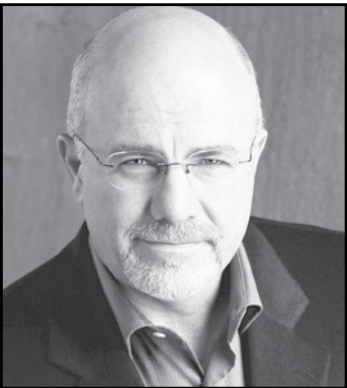
“I am not quite sure. What do you think she would like?”

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

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

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

Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, P.O. Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 866-552-2543 or e-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net. His website is www.jamessnyderministries.com. ★



Helping Him Stay on Track

Dear Dave,

My brother and I recently received an inheritance after our mom died. He’s never been very good with money, so I was proud of him when he used his portion to pay off his debts. But then he went out and financed a van that I know he still can’t afford. I’m afraid he’s falling right back into the same old money problems, but I don’t know how to talk to him about it.

- Diana

Dear Diana,

I’ve learned, after years of writing books, doing a radio show and trying to educate folks about their finances, you can’t make people listen to you. Even with what I do for a living I don’t throw my opinion around unless someone asks.

I think you’re smart for realizing there are some boundaries here. But there’s no reason you can’t create a situation where he can ask your opinion. You might begin with talking about some of the mistakes you’ve made in

Dave Says

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

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

- Dave

Reward Her Good Choices

Dear Dave,

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

- Dianne

Dear Dianne,

I like what you’ve told me about your daughter. She doesn’t

need to worry about dental insurance though. You almost never get back what you put into those policies. It’s the kind of stuff a good emergency fund will cover. If she has invested her time and money into what I teach, I’d say she’s pretty serious about getting her finances in order.

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

- Dave

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

Take Care When Heating Homes

Continued from page 1

heater. Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters. Never use your oven to heat your home. Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment,

water heaters, or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer’s instructions. Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional. Finally,

remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

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Source: Cal Fire ★

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Groundwater Resources Depleted By Drought

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

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

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

"If we fail to manage our groundwater basins sustainably, we risk losing the water supply savings account that can help

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Source: Department of Water Resources

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



Lisa West
Community Outreach Director

☪

No One Wants to Talk About Death



*Memorial Parks
Mortuaries & Crematory*

By Lisa West

Including me—and I work in the death care industry. The topic of death is not the standard dinner table conversation most families want to have, unless they have had a very recent loss. Then it is sometimes all they talk about.

Yes, talking about death is still a big taboo, so to speak. After all, if you talk about death, then that means it could actually happen. Needless to say, it is going to happen. No one escapes it.

I'm the first to tell you that three years ago I avoided the topic of death and funerals myself. Then I changed careers and began working for a funeral home, East Lawn Memorial Parks, Mortuaries, and Crematory. I can now tell you that I honestly appreciate a good conversation about death. I'm no longer afraid to talk about it because I'm surrounded by it every day.

I also find other people want to talk about it more than I ever realized. Once I tell people where I work, they immediately have a dozen questions. Typically, these are the two most frequently asked questions: "Is it sad?" "Is it scary?"

I can answer firmly with a resounding "No" to each. Some deaths can be sad, no doubt. But most funerals themselves

are very uplifting. Some choose the term "Celebration of Life" instead of funeral, and it does turn out to be a celebration.

There's always music and family members coming together who haven't seen each other in years, comforting and hugging each other. There are both happy and sad tears. Reunions and storytelling and celebrations of lives lived to their fullest. There is often a lot of laughing as memories are shared of fun times.

To the other question, no, it's not scary either—it's much the same atmosphere as I imagine working in a hospital or other medical facility might be. I actually consider it a somewhat sacred place. I look at every decedent as if they were my own grandparent or loved one. And everyone I work with feels the same. They are professional and extremely caring.

So, if you have had a question you have always wanted to ask about death or the death care industry, please contact me at lisaw@eastlawn.com.

Lisa West is the community outreach director for East Lawn and her column appears monthly. You can reach her at lisaw@eastlawn.com or (916)732-2020. For previous articles, please visit www.EastLawn.com. ★

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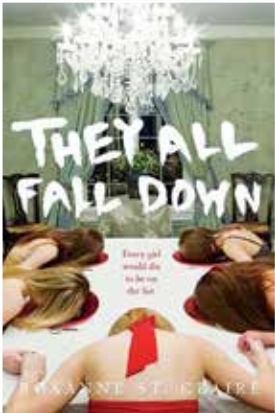
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For the Love of Books



Book Review by Amy Shane
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THEY ALL FALL DOWN by Roxanne St. Claire

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

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

Amy's Review: Life hasn't been the same for Kenzie Summerall, since the death of her brother, two years ago. With her parents separated, her brother's room left untouched and an overprotective mother constantly in fear of dangerous scenarios, Kenzie's only solace is that of her best friend Molly and the Latin club. Kenzie tries to do everything she can just to get by and forget the day she got her brother killed. However, things drastically change when Kenzie discovers that she made the Vienna High Hottie top ten list, not as number ten but as number five. A ridiculous list, according to Kenzie, which instantly propels ten girls into the Vienna High social scene, complete with parties, instant friends and a sisterhood of girls on the list. As a Latin geek, not concerned with the popularity, Kenzie wants anything but to be on the list, as she is instantly thrust into the dangerous life of popularity by her own peers. Throwing her into new situations, Kenzie must decide between the affections the popular good looking jock, Josh or new student Levi, a rumored bad boy.

With the power to change lives, the list comes with new responsibilities and nothing is as she expected it, freak accidents seem to follow Kenzie, while the other girls on the list start dying one by one. Kenzie must quickly decide who her true friends are, which boy she can really trust and if this list is truly a curse of murderous proportions. Roxanne St. Claire, thrills her reading audience with a quick, fast paced page turner filled with a cleaver use of Latin, fine arts and secret societies. Carefully highlighting the pitfalls of popularity and the cost some girls will pay to make it on the list, not only adds to the story but serves as a gentle reminder. With a *Goonies* style adventure, that meets *Pretty Little Liars*, *They All Fall Down*, takes readers on a high speed, cat and mouse chase, riveting you through murderous plots and popularity, with many twists and turns. The overall story of this book, however adventurous, is a little farfetched in its believability, especially in its ending however, it is a quick entertaining read that is bound to capture readers.

California International Marathon Cruises Through Region



Runners in the California International Marathon hit the halfway mark in Carmichael.

Story and photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Fair Oaks Boulevard was one of many routes between Folsom and Sacramento that witnessed the California International Marathon's passage on Sunday, December 7th. Cheered by thousands, runners panted the 26.2 miles from Folsom Dam through Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks, Carmichael, Arcade, and Sacramento before hitting the killer home stretch to the Capitol. Fine weather blessed the event, and spectators were blessed with the spectacle of many physiques, male and female, honed to the maximum. Carmichael's "Great Wall" was

the approximate halfway mark of the marathon. In halted traffic, a lithe bunch of African runners reached this point just after 8 a.m. Within 15 minutes, Fair Oaks Boulevard hosted a pageant of thumping feet as the bulk of the 9,000-strong assemblage passed along the main thoroughfare. The symbolism of Carmichael's wall was not lost on many runners. The "wall"—the painful point of simply not wanting to continue—occurred for many marathoners at this Carmichael landmark. "I reached my own wall before I got there," said Susan Powers (58). "Seeing my husband and friends at the end of Landis Avenue made up for the pain. I felt I

could finish for them." Though the 2014 race was won in two hours and 12 minutes by Kenyan Jacob Chemtai, many resolute athletes were still slogging the weary path, in restored traffic, some hours later. "I finished in over five hours," said Susan Powers. "Driving home later, there were still some poor stragglers half running and limping along Fair Oaks Boulevard in the traffic. They were determined to finish. People were cheering them from their cars. The support of strangers is what keeps you going. I remember a sign that said, 'Pain Now—Bragging Rights Forever.' That helped me finish." ★

Women's Empowerment Receives \$25,000 From Save Mart C.A.R.E.S.

Continued from Page 1

job-readiness program in the Sacramento area designed specifically for women who are homeless, as well as their children. The 2014 Organization of the Year has graduated 1,177 homeless women and their 2,552 children. Last year, 81 percent of graduates found homes and 90 percent found jobs or enrolled in school or training. The program combines

self-esteem courses, job training, health classes, and support services to help homeless women across diverse ages, races, and cultures. Women's Empowerment is funded solely through private donations from the community. To donate online, visit www.womens-empowerment.org. Save Mart C.A.R.E.S. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization focused on supporting

community, arts, recreation, education, and sports. It was founded by Save Mart Supermarkets and operates with a separate board of directors maintaining a separate focus on supporting the company's principle of giving back to the communities it serves. Visit <http://www.savemart.com/save-mart-cares-129> to learn more. *Source: Kristin Thébaud Communications* ★



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California Community College Districts Show Overwhelming Interest in Developing Four-Year Degree Programs

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)

- On November 19th, the California Community Colleges announced that 36 districts, half of all districts in the system, submitted letters of intent to the state Chancellor's Office indicating their desire to host a baccalaureate degree program, signaling strong support for legislation signed by the governor this fall authorizing the system to award bachelor's degrees as part of a limited pilot program.

"The districts' strong interest in building baccalaureate degree programs is heartening," said California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris. "They are pioneering a new mission for the California Community Colleges and opening up pathways for Californians who may not have had the chance to earn a four-year degree. I look forward to working with the districts to create world-class programs that graduate highly trained and marketable students."

The legislation, known as Senate Bill (SB) 850 and authored by Sen. Marty Block (D-San Diego), allows up to 15 districts to establish a pilot baccalaureate degree program at one of their colleges in a field of study not offered by the California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC). Lower-division coursework would cost \$46 and upper-division coursework would cost \$84 under the new program, with an estimated total cost of about \$10,000 to obtain a bachelor's degree.

"SB 850 is a game changer for California students," Block said. "Students now have another door that can lead to a quality, affordable four-year degree. It tells employers that California is doing all it can to ensure that our state is open for business and will

stay open to employers looking for highly trained employees."

The 36 districts seek to build baccalaureate degree programs in a wide variety of diverse vocational fields, ranging from airframe manufacturing technology, biomanufacturing, respiratory therapy, dental hygiene, engineering technology, and public safety administration. Many of the proposed programs are in fields where graduates with associate degrees can already expect to earn \$60,000 a few years after graduation, making them very cost-effective.

At its meeting on November 18th, Chancellor's Office staff presented a proposed process to the board. Any district wishing to host a program must submit an application to the Chancellor's Office by December 19th, 2014. Districts that did not turn in an initial interest form may still submit an application.

Applications will be reviewed by a team comprised of Chancellor's Office staff, a member of the business and workforce community, representatives from CSU and UC, and community college administrators, faculty, and staff from districts that did not apply to host a program.

Considerations for selecting a district include geographic distribution of the pilot programs, diversity of pilot programs, ability of the district to establish a rigorous program in their proposed field, and that the proposed program will meet an unaddressed local or statewide workforce need.

The team will then make its selections and forward its recommendations to the chancellor, who will decide which applications are submitted to the board of governors for ultimate

consideration and approval, in consultation with representatives of the CSU and UC. The board is scheduled to make its decision on January 21st, 2015.

Under the law, the four-year degree programs must be up and running by at least the 2017-2018 academic year; however, districts may start their programs by the fall 2015 semester. Districts must also seek approval from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges to start a program.

The legislation sunsets after the 2022-2023 school year, after which the Legislature and governor may renew it pending two Legislative Analyst's Office reviews of the pilot program, one in 2018 and another in 2022.

The law was enacted to assist the state in meeting the need for individuals in high-demand technical disciplines that are increasingly requiring baccalaureate degrees and to increase college participation rates and improve workforce training opportunities for local residents who are unable to relocate because of family or work commitments.

Further impetus for the measure comes from studies that show California needs to produce one million more baccalaureate degree earners by 2025 to remain economically competitive in the coming decades.

Community colleges are an efficient and economical way to help meet those needs due to their numerous locations throughout the state and modest tuition. Twenty-one other states also allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees.

Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office



Jim Miller
Answers
Your
Senior
Questions



Check Out This
Week's Topic!

Savvy
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Personal Tech Products Designed Specifically for Seniors

Dear Savvy Senior,

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

- Holiday Shopper

Dear Shopper,

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

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

Smartphone

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

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

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

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

Tablet Computer

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

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

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

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

Desktop Computer

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

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

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

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

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



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

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San Juan District Seeks “You Light the Way” Nominations

SACRAMENTO REGION (MPG) - The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) of the San Juan Unified School District, a Board-appointed committee of parents and community members who advise the District on special education issues, is seeking nominations for “You Light the Way” recognition awards.

The “You Light the Way” Award recognizes parents, teachers, administrators, students, classified workers, volunteers and community members who have made or are currently making an outstanding contribution to the special education program in the District.

Nomination forms are available online at www.sanjuan.edu. Completed nomination forms are due by Wednesday, January 21, 2015. They can be mailed to Kathy Olcese, Special Education, 4825 Kenneth Ave., Carmichael, CA 95608, or faxed to 916-979-8921.

The CAC will evaluate the nominations and inform the person(s) nominating the individual of those chosen to be The “You Light the Way” Award recognizes parents, teachers, administrators, students, classified workers, volunteers and community members who have made or are currently making an outstanding



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contribution to the special education program in the District. honored. A special recognition dessert is planned for Thursday, March 19, 2015, at 7 p.m., at the San Juan High School Auditorium.

Source: San Juan Unified School District ★

San Juan Open Enrollment Ends January 16th

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The open enrollment period for San Juan Unified School District families wishing to enroll students in a school other than their neighborhood school will end at 5 p.m. on Friday, January 16th.

The district’s open enrollment lottery program allows these placements provided that space is available in the appropriate program and that families are willing to provide transportation. Students are accepted for their choice school based on a computerized random selection – not on a first-come, first-served basis – and could be placed on a waiting list.

Families will be notified of their open enrollment results in February. If enrollment at a student’s choice school is granted, that school becomes the child’s “residence school” and action is not needed in future years.

Families must submit an open enrollment application for each child. Applications may be submitted



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online, by mail or in person at San Juan Central, 3700 Garfield Ave., Carmichael. For more information about the open enrollment process, call 916-SAN-JUAN.

Source: San Juan Unified School District ★

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SATURDAY	Unity of Sacramento Farmers Market 9249 Folsom Blvd, Sacramento (in front of the Unity of Sacramento Church). Every Saturday 8 am – 1 pm. Seasonal, closes 11/29.
SATURDAY	Sunrise Mall Farmers Market 6190 Sunrise Blvd, Citrus Heights (behind Sears in the SE parking lot). Every Saturday 8 am – 1 pm. Open year round.
SATURDAY	Sacramento Midtown Farmers Market 20th St. between J and K, Sacramento. Every Saturday 8 am – 1 pm. Open year round.
SATURDAY	Historic Folsom Farmers Market 915 Sutter St, Folsom (Historic Folsom Public Plaza). Every Saturday 8 am – 1 pm. Open year round.
SUNDAY	Carmichael Park Farmers Market 5750 Grant Ave, Carmichael (corner of Grant and Fair Oaks Blvd). Every Sunday 9 am – 2 pm. Open year round.
WEDNESDAY	VA Mather Farmers Market 10535 Hospital Wy, Mather (VA Hospital). Every Wednesday 9 am – 1 pm. Seasonal, closes 11/26.
WEDNESDAY	Fair Oaks Sunset Farmers Market 8101 Sunset Ave, Fair Oaks (New Life Church parking lot). Every Wednesday 3 pm – 7 pm. Seasonal, closes 11/26.
THURSDAY	UC Davis Health System Farmers Market 45th and Y St, Sacramento (UC Davis Medical Center Campus). Every Thursday 3 pm – 7:30 pm. Seasonal, closes 11/13.

Runs throughout October at all our weekend market locations.

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For more information: www.bemoneysmartusa.org

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