



**Folsom Lake College
Presents Spotlight Night
Career Fair Sept. 10th**

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**PLUS:
Volunteers Needed at
United Way's Day of Caring**

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AMERICAN RIVER

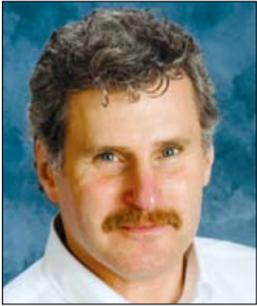
M E S S E N G E R

Volume 9 • Issue 17

Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

First Edition for September 2014

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Developing a
Can-do Attitude**



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Legends Come Alive at the Circus



"We searched the world for the best of the best and put them together in an unforgettable show," says Producer Alana Feld.

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Behold the living legends! Children of All Ages will believe in the unbelievable with the all-new circus spectacular. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Present LEGENDS, coming to the Sacramento Sleep Train Arena September 12-15 and Stockton Arena September 19-21, 2014.

This all-new edition unites iconic circus stars with living mythological creatures in a celebration of the legends that have captured imaginations for centuries. Ringmaster Johnathan Lee Iverson guides Paulo, the Legend Seeker, on his quest to discover real living legends from around

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Featuring over 100 performers spanning 25 countries, plus more than 85 animals from nearly every continent around the world, the Ringling Bros. 144th Edition features several unique acts.

Small Businesses Solicited at a Costly Price

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Businesses beware: solicited offers to renew a Fictitious Business Name (FBN) are once more making their way into the mailboxes of business owners. The offers inform a business that their FBN will soon expire and that to renew they need to return the attached paperwork and pay a fee. However, businesses have complained that the offers are misleading, giving them the impression the offer is from a local government agency. According to complaints, business owners have received similar offers from Corporate Records Service, California State Corporations, and California Business Compliance Agency.

In particular, BBB received 15 complaints about a company located in East Sacramento, Compliance Filings, Inc. Businesses complain that they are misled by the company's solicitation and end up paying a \$125 fee to file—a fee that is 2-3 times more than what some local counties charge. Although the company responded to most complaints by issuing refunds, they have typically kept a portion of the refund for a processing fee, or fees they claim to have paid to a government agency on the business's behalf. One complainant, a business owner in San Francisco, said, "It pains me to know that this fraudulent company is targeting small business owners who are at the very core of our economy."

These solicitations are legal to send, but they must include very specific disclaimers. Title 39, U.S. Code, Section 3001, requires that a disclaimer be placed on the outside cover or envelope. It also requires a disclaimer on the front

Continued on Page 3

**WE SUPPORT
OUR MILITARY**

Raley's Supermarket Settles Civil Environmental Case

Special District Attorney's Report

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - District Attorney Jan Scully joins 25 other California district attorneys in announcing that West Sacramento-based Raley's supermarket was ordered to pay \$1,599,000 in civil penalties, costs and supplemental environmental projects, as part of the settlement of a civil enforcement prosecution, which includes a final judgment and permanent injunction. Raley's cooperated with the prosecution team throughout the investigation into their unlawful practices.

The judgment is the culmination of a civil enforcement lawsuit filed in San Joaquin County to stop the supermarket chain from unlawfully transporting and disposing of retail hazardous waste. The lawsuit claimed that more than 130 Raley's supermarket stores

improperly stored, handled, and disposed of hazardous waste and pharmaceutical waste products into company trash bins. Instead of being sent to authorized disposal sites, hazardous wastes and contaminated materials were being unlawfully transported to area landfills. Additionally, the lawsuit alleges that Raley's failed to take sufficient steps to preserve the confidentiality of their pharmacy customers' information.

As a result of the prosecution,

California Raley's supermarkets modified existing policies and have

adopted new policies and procedures designed to eliminate the disposal of retail hazardous waste products and pharmaceutical waste into store trash compactors for eventual disposal into local landfills not equipped to handle such wastes. Hazardous waste produced by California Raley's supermarkets through damage, spills, and returns is now being collected by

state-registered haulers, taken to proper disposal facilities, and properly documented and accounted for.

In addition, the settlement requires Raley's to dispose of or destroy all confidential customer medical information in a manner that preserves the confidentiality of the records.

In addition to devoting resources to California environmental compliance with regard to hazardous waste identification, classification, storage,

transportation, and disposal, Raley's has agreed to purchase five mobile freshwater purification systems to provide safe drinking water to local communities in California in times of emergency or other pressing need. The mobile freshwater purification systems will be located in Placer, El Dorado, Sonoma, Sacramento and Contra Costa counties, but will be available for use by other counties within the state.

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THE SACRAMENTO BEE

500 Volunteers Needed at United Way's Day of Caring Volunteer Extravaganza

United Way's 2nd Annual Day Of Caring Kicks Off New Five-Year Strategic Plan



"We're excited to watch companies, volunteers and nonprofits come together again for an amazing day transforming our community through volunteer projects," said Stephanie McLemore Bray, United Way president and CEO.

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Five hundred local residents are needed to spend one day caring for the community on Sept. 12 by signing up for one of 31 volunteer projects happening across the region on United Way's 2nd Annual Day of Caring, sponsored by Nationwide. The event, which kicks off the fall fundraising campaign, will start at 8 a.m. with a breakfast and rally at Cal Expo and keynote presentation by Sacramento Kings president Chris Granger. Volunteer projects will begin at 10 a.m. in Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties. Sign up at: <http://www.yourlocalunitedway.org/dayofcaring> by Sept. 5. Last year, 362 volunteers completed 25 volunteer activities across five counties.

"We're excited to watch companies, volunteers and nonprofits come together again for an amazing day transforming our community through volunteer projects," said Stephanie McLemore Bray, United Way president and CEO. "This is

what United Way and the community do best - joining hands with people across the region to make a tangible difference."

The event also kicks off United Way's new five-year strategic plan designed to have local residents think of United Way as its first course of action when there is need in the community.

"We're creating even more pathways to success for individuals and families in our region so they can achieve their potential through education, financial stability and healthy living," Bray said. "We're going to do this by joining and building coalitions, having donors and volunteers speak out about their work, advocating at a higher level, mobilizing volunteers and continuing to fine-tune our money management so we can do as much as possible."

The organization is rolling out a new brand with a fire extinguisher box to show how United Way is the number one tool for meeting the community's most urgent needs.

"We all have a natural inclination to protect, help and give to those in need," Bray said. "If there were a fire, we would simply look for the fire extinguisher, break the glass and put out the fire. That's what United Way is here for: putting out the biggest fires in our community right now, which include low graduation rates, low financial stability and high obesity."

For more than 90 years, United Way California Capital Region has brought together nonprofits, businesses, donors, volunteers, community leaders and more to meet the community's greatest needs, give immediate aid and find lasting solutions for future generations. United Way mobilizes members of the community to be first responders in repairing the education level, financial stability and health of everyone in Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties through donation and volunteer opportunities. To donate or volunteer, visit www.yourlocalunitedway.org. ★

Folsom Lake College Spotlight Night Career Fair Sept. 10th



Spotlight Night will feature information on Folsom Lake College's career and technical education degree and certificate programs, industry partners showcasing employment opportunities, and interactive demonstrations.

FOLSOM, CA (MPG) - Folsom Lake College presents Spotlight Night, a workforce training and career exploration fair on Wednesday, Sept. 10th from 6-8 p.m. at the Folsom campus (10 College Parkway, off E. Bidwell St.).

Spotlight Night will feature information on Folsom Lake

College's career and technical education degree and certificate programs, industry partners showcasing employment opportunities, and interactive demonstrations.

Admission is free (a daily parking pass can be purchased for \$2). A map to the campus can be found at www.flc.losrios.edu, just click on "Maps" at the top of the page and then "Main Folsom Campus."

For questions regarding Spotlight Night, please contact Jeanne at 916-608-6687 or plewsj@flc.losrios.edu.

★ Source: Folsom Lake College

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Community Shred Event

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Time: 9:00am - 1:00pm

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Legends Come Alive at the Circus

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the world and presents Paulo's fantastic discoveries to circus fans everywhere.

"Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey is where legends live, and we constantly ask our audiences to believe in the unbelievable. For this edition we've combined a number of mythical themes and stories into a lavish production of sight and sound unlike any show we have ever created," says Producer Nicole Feld.

Mythology meets reality as Paulo encounters the wondrous Pegasus and the amazing Unicorn. Circus legends such as big cat presenter Alexander Lacey; the Riders of the Wind Cossack horsemen; and motorcycle daredevils, the Torres Family, all come together along with a cast spanning 25 countries in a spectacular production. Experience magnificent Asian elephants, a twenty-acrobat troupe perched atop only a pair of bicycles, and a never-before-seen double-wide, high-flying trapeze act.

"A legend is something so magical and larger than life that once



"We searched the world for the best of the best and put them together in an unforgettable show," says Producer Alana Feld.

you see it, you never forget it. The talent in this show is unprecedented and embodies the name Legends," says Producer Alana Feld. "We searched the world

"PT Barnum put his show on rails in 1872. Ringling Bros. first traveled by train in 1890. The tradition continues, and today Ringling Bros. owns two of the largest privately owned trains in the U.S., each over 50 cars long."

for the best of the best and put them together in an unforgettable show."

The extraordinary talent that

can only be seen at Ringling Bros. Presents LEGENDS includes: Alexander Lacey's legendary mixed cat display; The Riders of the Wind, speeding daredevil Cossack riders; Thehe fearless Torres Family on speeding motorcycles inside the Globe of Steel; An elite super-group of high-flying trapeze artists from the U.S., Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico, The Solar Hawks; The Chinese National Acrobatic Troupe from Beijing; and The elegant choreography of the Jade Statues.

There is also a heartwarming presentation of showmanship with an animal menagerie ranging from ten to 10,000 pounds: the treasured Ringling Bros. Asian Elephants, North American rescue dogs, donkeys from

from Europe, pigs from Asia, llamas from South America, kangaroos from Australia, and a special surprise...Woolly the Mammoth.

An hour before show time, families can come to the arena floor and participate in interactive, up-close circus experiences, the All-Access Pre-Show and the brand new Ringmaster Zone. Free to all ticketholders, the All Access Pre-show allows circus fans to learn juggling and balancing skills, meet the performers of The Greatest Show on Earth, get autographs, take photos, and enter to win a one-of-a-kind Pachyderm Painting.

For the national tour schedule and to find out more about Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Presents Legends, visit www.Ringling.com and follow us on Twitter @RinglingBros and @NicoleFeld.

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Small Businesses Solicited at a Costly Price

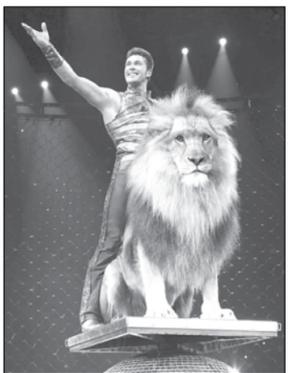
Continued From Page 1

and back of every page of the solicitation with conditions prescribed by the U.S. Postal Service. According to the USPIS website, the solicitation must be conspicuously placed in boldface capital letters and in 30 point-font. Upon review of the most recent documented solicitation BBB received, sent by Compliance Filings, Inc., the disclaimer was not conspicuously placed and the font was not up to size. When BBB contacted the company about their unresolved complaints and advised that they might be in violation of guidelines prescribed by the USPIS, Compliance Filings, Inc. did not respond. Due to their volume complaints, one BBB considered to be of a serious nature, and failure to answer all, the company currently has an F rating.

Similar offers have caused controversy in the past, resulting in legal action by local governments. In 2011, the Riverside County District Attorney's office charged a County resident with two felonies after sending similar solicited offers with a counterfeit government seal. Similarly, the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) warns against being misled by similar solicitations, and on their website states, "Don't be victimized by con artists who try to get your company to order goods or services by mailing you solicitations designed to look like invoices."

For victim and company information, please contact Danielle Spang, dspang@necal.bbb.org. For reports on businesses and for information about BBB services, please visit our website at www.bbb.org or call (916) 443-6843.

For more than 100 years, Better Business Bureau has been helping consumers find businesses, brands and charities they can trust. In 2012, consumers turned to BBB 124 million times for Business Reviews on more than 4.5 million companies and Charity Reports on 11,000 charities, all available for free at bbb.org. ★



An hour before show time, families can come to the arena floor and participate in interactive, up-close circus experiences, the All-Access Pre-Show and the brand new Ringmaster Zone. Free to all ticketholders, the All Access Pre-show allows circus fans to learn juggling and balancing skills, meet the performers of The Greatest Show on Earth, get autographs, take photos, and enter to win a one-of-a-kind Pachyderm Painting.

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** The initial fee of \$2.50 for a Business Debit Card will be waived.

The Bundle Business Banking offer is good through 9/30/14



By Pastor Ray Dare

Hold on to Your Hope

believing when you feel like doubting? When you feel like giving up? The Bible says, **"He was absolutely convinced that God was able to do anything he promised."** Romans 4:21 (NLT) Abraham believed God's promise. Nothing is more reliable. He relied on the word of God and that's what kept him going when hope wanted to give up. You have to rely on God's promises.

If you're going to keep going even when everything seems impossible **you have to get God's promises in your life** and rely on what God has promised. You need to read the Bible, study the Bible and **memorize Bible verses**. When you get the promises of God in your life you will be able to have hope and faith rather than despair. You'll be able to replace fear with faith, your worries with God's Word, your problems with God's promises. The Bible says faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)

Why does God make so many promises? Because God cares about YOU. God is faithful and He has promised over and over and over again to care for you. Have you ever really realized and felt the kindness of God and the care of God in your life? We talk about this all the time, "God loves you, You matter to

God." But have you really felt the tenderness of God? When you do, it's going to change your life and you'll have no reason to worry.

God is speaking. Listen to the tenderness of God, how compassionate He is about you. **"I have upheld since you were conceived, and have carried since your birth. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you. To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?"** Isaiah 46:3-5 (NIV)

From the moment of your conception in your mother's womb, God's been caring for you. Even when you didn't know God, He was watching over you, sustaining you, He rescued you. And He says, "Even when you're old, I will be there. Even when your hair turns gray, I will take care of you." That's how you keep hope alive, you believe His promise. ★

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"Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, 'So shall your offspring be'." Romans 4:18 (NIV)

Have you ever felt that way? That hope was dying inside of you? That what you are believing God for, seems hopeless? How do you know when hope is dying within you? You start thinking things with the word "never". "I'm never going to be the person I want to be... I'm never going to change... I'll never be happy again... I'll never trust again... I'll never get out of this financial mess... I'll never have a baby..." Hope begins to die within you. What do you do when it all seems hopeless?

Notice what you do. "Abraham in hope believed..." This isn't just wishful thinking, this isn't just positive thinking. This is believing God for the impossible! You keep faith in God. You keep on believing.

How do you keep on

Kids K9 Fun Run

Rain or Shine

Kids - come and run for our K9 Officers. The Kids K9 Fun Run for kids 15 and under is \$18. The fee includes a run tee shirt, kids lunch and medal for each participant. (Fee increases to \$25 after 9/1/14.)

K9 Officers from the Sacramento PD K9 Unit and other law enforcement agencies will be on site passing out trading cards, giving demonstrations and you can also have your photo taken with a K9 Officer.

All proceeds from this event will benefit three area Police K9 Associations which provide retirement benefits for K9 Officers. More info on our website.

Start The run begins at 10:00 a.m. at the Garden of Honor at Sierra Hills Pet Cemetery where 48 retired K9 Officers are memorialized.

Date: Saturday, September 13, 2014 (in honor of Pet Memorial Day)
Where: Sierra Hills Memorial Park & Sierra Hills Pet Cemetery, 5757 Greenback Way, Sacramento, CA (off I-80 @ Greenback)
Time: Gates open at 9:00 a.m. (arrive early for best parking)
How: Register on-line at www.KidsK9FunRun.org
What: 10:00 a.m. Kids K9 Fun Run Starts
 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Vendor, Food and Community booths
 11:30 a.m. Participants lunch served
 1:00 p.m. Police K9 demonstration

Kids Bounce House

Special Note: If you would like to have a booth at this event or have any questions, please call Lisa West @ (916) 732-2020 or email lisaw@eastlawn.com

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Local Company Conducts Clinical Drug Trials

By Linda Harper

SACRAMENTO REGION CA (MPG) - For many of us, ingesting one, two, or more prescription drugs is part of our daily routine.

These chemical compounds are essential to enhancing our quality of life, easing unpleasant symptoms of disease, and for some, they are necessary to sustain life. According to the US Health and Human Services Department, the journey to create and approve a successful drug or treatment in the United States is a long, complex, and costly process, usually taking years to complete.

Once a disease or condition is identified, biopharmaceutical researchers begin analyzing elements and creating biological and chemical compounds to uncover ways to treat, prevent, diagnose, understand and ultimately cure illness. This is just the beginning. Most prescription drugs receive a final approval for medical use by the FDA through a seven step process. A drug's Clinical trial is a crucial part of the approval course because it measures the effectiveness and safety of drugs on humans.

Historically, Clinical trials utilizing the participation of volunteers, both healthy and those diagnosed with an illness, have presented groundbreaking scientific advances through new drug discoveries.

Med Investigations, Inc. is a Fair Oaks based company specializing

they want to try something different for relief, while others are looking for something to prevent a target illness. Then, there are those admirable people who are healthy and simply want to contribute to discovering a cure for disease. Since most clinical research is funded by gov-

“Med Investigations, Inc. is a Fair Oaks based company specializing in conducting Clinical trials for a number of investigational medications. The Med Investigations, Inc. team consists of board certified physicians working with experienced certified research coordinators.”

in conducting Clinical trials for a number of investigational medications. The Med Investigations, Inc. team consists of board certified physicians working with experienced certified research coordinators. They provide high quality care in a professional atmosphere to those patients wishing to participate in research of new drugs.

Individuals have diverse reasons for entering a prescription drug clinical trial. Some are suffering from symptoms of illness and

enrollment and private grants as well as pharmaceutical companies, there is no charge to enter a clinical trial. Participants receive free medical care and often are compensated for their time and travel.

For more information regarding local clinical prescription drug trials being conducted or to participate, go to: www.medinvestigations.com or call (916) 966-7452. ★

Source: US Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health

FAIR OAKS COMMUNITY UPDATE



By County Supervisor Susan Peters

- Through the generosity of *The American River Messenger* this column serves to provide an update about matters affecting the unincorporated community of Fair Oaks.

Honor the Chickens

When the Village of Fair Oaks was colonized around 1895, the area was home to orange and citrus groves as well as olive orchards and assorted farm animals including chickens. Today the local chickens are a very real part of everyday life in Fair Oaks which honors these noble birds every year.

This year's Chicken Festival will be held on Saturday, September 20, between the hours of 10 am to 6 pm. Plaza Park

will be the center of activity. For more information visit the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District online at fairoakspark.org.

Visiting with Neighbors

Over the summer I continued the tradition of holding "Office Hours" by being available to chat with residents prior to the free concert in the park performed in Fair Oaks Village.

I started these informal "Office Hours" sessions in 2005 and now they are an annual tradition beginning in the spring and concluding in the fall. My next one will be at the Concert in the Park in Old Foothill Farms on Saturday, October 11. No appointment is necessary and visits will be handled on a "first come basis."

Later in August I participated in a number of neighborhood gatherings during "National Night Out" on August 5. I started the evening in Arden Arcade visiting with members of the Wright Street Neighborhood Watch Group as well as dropped by the event organized by the Sierra Oaks Neighborhood Association. Later I ended the night in Fair Oaks first with the Lake Natoma Neighborhood Watch Group and later at a gathering of the West Fair Oaks Neighborhood Watch Group.

I also held my Community Coffee during the morning of August 20 at the headquarters of the Fair Oaks Water District. Regional Parks Director Jeff Leatherman was the guest speaker and provided an insightful look at the challenges of protecting and preserving natural treasures like the American River Parkway. I hold these community gatherings five times throughout the year and the next one will be in October. For a listing please visit my website at bos.saccounty.net.

Free Fall Concert in Old Foothill Farms

The Fall Concert series in Fair Oaks is over but there will be an encore "Concert in the Park" on Saturday, October 11, at Pioneer Park, 5100 Verner Avenue near Pioneer School, in nearby Old Foothill Farms. The fun begins at 1 p.m. with the concert featuring the John Skinner Band from 2 to 4 p.m.

In addition to a great selection of family friendly contemporary and easy-listening music, there will be children's activities, and information booths. ★

Susan Peters represents the Third District on the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. She can be reached at susanpeters@saccounty.net.

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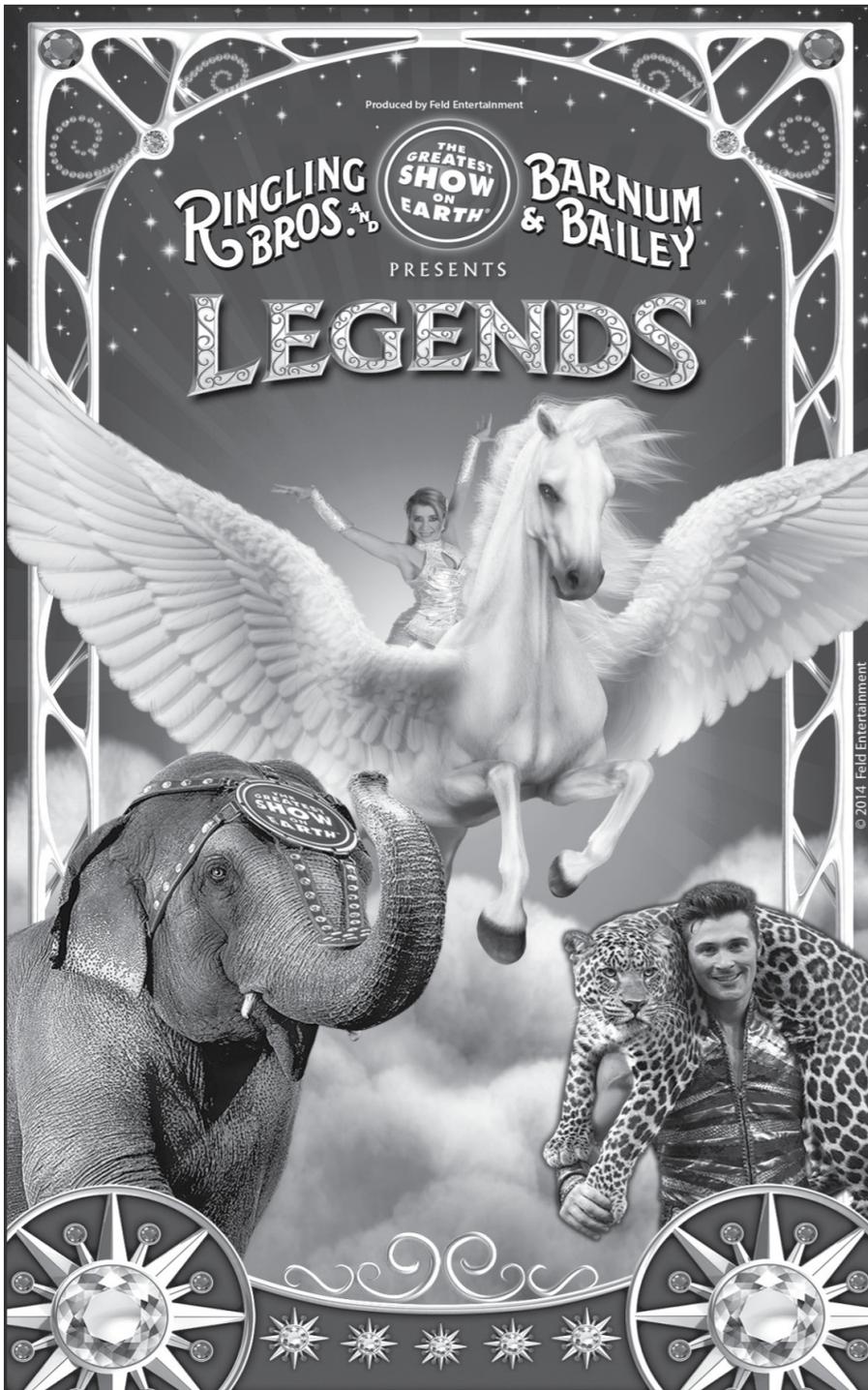
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 - *1950s car feature
 - Aroused
 - + or - atom
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 - Pecking mother
 - Do over
 - Genuflect in submission
 - Spill the beans
 - *McCarthy's foes
 - Wither from heat
 - Fairy tale beast
 - Anklebone
 - Crunchable info
 - New World parrot
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 - Grand ___
 - In need of fixing
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 - Minor damage
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 - *Type of skirt popular in 1950s
 - *First man-made satellite to orbit earth
 - Schoolmarm's whip
 - Rainy
 - *It supported the North in Korean War
 - Brandish
 - Sodium hydroxide
 - Piece of cake
 - Approximately
 - Coniferous tree
 - Indian ___
- DOWN
- *Nixon's respectable Republican cloth ___
 - ___ Karenina
 - Hindu princess
 - Garlicky mayonnaise
 - Make an attempt
 - Yemeni port
 - *Holiday ___ motel chain
 - Highway patrolman's gun
 - *Sluggo ___ Aaron debuted in 1954
 - Gaelic
 - "___ there, done that"
 - "C ___ la vie!"
 - *The Platters' sound
 - Dead to the world
 - Moo goo gai pan pan
 - Young codfish
 - *Thermonuclear weapon
 - *"Pomp and Circumstance Marches" composer
 - Narcotics lawman
 - Wanted state in old west?
 - Bankrolls
 - ___ -la
 - "Eight Is Enough" group, e.g.
 - *Frisbee and Hula Hoop maker
 - Yellow on bald eagle
 - "Absolutely!"
 - Get something ready
 - Tied the knot
 - Not a thing
 - Exterior plaster
 - Very recently
 - Set of principles
 - Lucy and Ricky, e.g.
 - Has a mortgage
 - *1952 Olympic site
 - Like soup, but thicker
 - Supreme Court count
 - Ancient Peruvian
 - *Newsweek sports editor, "Boys of Summer" author
 - Pencil type
 - *CBS unveiled this logo in 1951

CROSSWORD													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
13						14			15				
16						17			18				
19					20		21	22					
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	57	58	59				60				61	62	63
64						65	66		67				
68							69		70				
71							72		73				

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

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

Sudoku grid with numbers 1-9 in a 9x9 pattern.

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By Ronnie McBrayer

Stay in School

in school, or at least we should be, and those who feel they have matriculated to the point of knowing all they ever need to know have given up on a large part of living.

Review your own education. You began with phonetics and pronunciation, the beginnings of how to read. You learned about numbers and basic mathematics. You were taught elementary history. You got to finger paint or draw pictures in art class.

As you progressed, you repeated the same lessons, the same subjects, and the same material but always with increasing breadth and greater depth. What began as basic pronunciation eventually became ability to read Shakespeare and Dickinson. Simple mathematics became the building blocks for geometric calculations and a career in engineering.

You began with George Washington and Paul Revere and then moved to post-Enlightenment studies, geo-political globalization, and macroeconomics. You move from finger painting to creating magnificent portraits or composing musical scores. You learned the same lessons over and over again – but each time you went further.

So, if we reach a point in our studies – in life or faith – where we think we know it all, or at least we know enough, we haven't graduated. We have quit. We have run aground. When we refuse to learn anything more, we become fixated, immature masters of minutia, nothing more, and life grows incredibly small – looking like old men and women stuffed into preschoolers' chairs.

Mystery is murdered, discoveries dry up, and gone is the joy and excitement of new, daily revelation. How many treasures are forfeited by those who "know that they know that they know," but they have learned nothing new in decades? Their minds and hearts as closed as a freshman's Algebra book. In the words of Russian giant Leo Tolstoy, an author that every student should aspire to read, "Even the strongest current of water cannot add a drop to a cup which is already full."

Maybe the always returning school year is a reflection of how God lets life bring each of us back to the classroom. It is an act of redemption, really, for we get another chance to learn our lessons; to take the same course, again and again if necessary, so we can get it right; to pick up the material that we have not yet mastered or refused to heed, and to go deeper.

Still, I suppose that every student, from the Kindergartener learning to read to the old man once again attempting to kick his addiction, feels like he is being crushed by the repetition of the classroom. But God's classroom isn't a form of punishment. The lessons must be learned for our own maturation and well-being, and the Teacher knows this. Therefore, he is infinitely patient with his instruction, giving us every opportunity to succeed – if only we will. ★

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.

What Did The Bugs Do Before I Came?

Dr. James L. Snyder

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and Yours Truly finally exercised our right to a vacation and planned for a whole week to spend with our son and his family. Preparing for a week vacation takes about six weeks prior to the vacation and then six weeks after the vacation to get caught up. I do not know how people take vacations all the time.

It was to be a great week of relaxing and spending time with our son and his family in the state of Ohio. Ohio is remarkable for a lot of things but when my wife and I think of Ohio we think of one thing: our grandchildren.

Someone once remarked that grandchildren was God's way of apologizing for our children. Maybe that is so, I do not know. If so, I gladly accept His apology. All I know is it is wonderful to spend time with grandchildren. The important thing about being a grandparent is discovering the skills necessary to adequately spoil your grandchildren within a week's time frame. Secretly, my plan is to get back at my children for their childhood in my home by spoiling my grandchildren in their home.

Revenge is sweet and wonderful.

It was about the middle of the week and my wife and I were sitting outside enjoying the cool weather. All of the grandchildren had been snuggled down into their beds for the night. It certainly is tiring to spend the day with grandchildren who have no shortage of energy and whose tongue is a well oiled machine and does not know how to be quiet.

Our ears were still tingling from the day's childish verbiage extravaganza.

We were sitting in the backyard sipping some hot coffee, enjoying the quiet evening when I heard this buzzing sound on the left side of my head.

Automatically my hand swatted in that area and I went on drinking my coffee as though nothing had happened. I thought perhaps the kids were still up or maybe it was a flashback from the afternoon.

My wife looked at me as though something weird happened, but we continued enjoying the evening atmosphere with only the soothing sounds of sipping coffee.

Then I heard the buzzing sound again. This time it was on the other side of my head and as I swatted I began to realize what was happening. All of the bugs in the state of Ohio had received a memo that I was vacationing in the state. In well organized shifts they began the welcoming process. Within a short time I was swatting bugs with both hands which did not seem to change the situation at hand.

I know I am a sweet person, but this was becoming ridiculous. I would like to retain my sweetness for something other than bugs.

I am not quite sure how many bug bites I received that night, I stopped counting at 2,973,442 bites. I am not quite certain, but it was feeling more like it had exceeded 3 million bites. If I had a penny for every bug bite I would buy some very expensive bug repellent.

It seemed like they were working in shifts and it got to the point where my mind shifted into a murder scenario. Is it a crime to murder a bug who has bitten me so many times? Of course the real question is, is it really murder? Could it be considered a mercy killing?

And if it is murder, what is the penalty for murdering a bug? I was at the point that I would gladly have paid handsomely for the privilege of putting some bugs to rest.

As a spiritually minded person, I wondered if bugs go to heaven when they die? If they

go to heaven, do they continue to bite? And, would it be proper for an angel to swat a bug in heaven?

The mood I was in, after being bitten so many times by these lousy bugs, I had an opposite destination in mind. Since they like fire so much and are attracted to it, I would be glad to accommodate them. I know a place that would fit the situation quite well.

After two hours of fighting these stinking bugs, my sanity, as fragile as it is, was on the brink of collapsing. Once my sanity collapses I am not responsible for what I will do or say. It was hard to find a place on my body one finger wide where a bug had not tasted the delicacy of my sweet skin.

One question I reflected on was simply, what did the bugs do before I arrived? Did they save up all their energy for when I would come and visit? This is not the kind of celebrity status I am seeking. My preference is to be anonymous to all the bugs in Ohio.

All of these insects, whatever they were, were simply bugging me to death.

When I regained some composure, I thought about what it must have been like for Jesus to come into this world. The writer of Hebrews puts it this way, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28).

So many things in this world bug me, but I have something greater to look forward to, a place called heaven. ★

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

The Buddha said, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear." Well, ready or not kids, your teachers are showing up in classrooms everywhere. It's time to crack open the books, slip the surly bonds of summer, and head back to school.

In the coming days, and in some regions the academic year is well under way already, this country's 130,000 public and private schools will be firing on all cylinders, spending \$600 billion on the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic; employing some four million teachers, and educating more than 60 million children. Of course many who have completed their secondary education will now proceed to college, technical school, or university.

My counsel is to go back to school every autumn as long as the administration will allow it – not to avoid the employment line or devour your parents' purse mind you – but to learn all you can. And more so, to learn to become a learner: For when you stop learning, the proverb goes, you've stopped living.

This applies even to those who have the parchment hanging on the wall, those in well-established careers, and to those who haven't set foot onto a school yard in decades. We are always

Putting on the Dog

Bow-Wow Beauties SSPCA Fundraiser



By Kay Burton

GOLD RIVER, CA (MPG) - Kay Burton's Bow-Wow Beauties will hit the doggie runway on Saturday, September 6th at 11:00 a.m. in Gold River next to

Brodovsky, will again sponsor a Hot Dog stand at a discount. Big Valley's CEO, Linda Sweet, will also sponsor this event.

Western Feed of Gold River is in partnership with Alpha K9, service dogs for people with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). There here have been 250 dogs placed with disabled Vets so far. Western Feed will have samples of Pet Food for the public.

Admission is \$5.00 for adults; children are admitted free.

Kay Burton originated the pet show and fundraiser eighteen years ago. For more details, please call 635-5590. ★

Kay Burton is a longtime columnist and supporter of the SSPCA and other rescue groups.

To share your family pet story with our readers, Email: KayBurton1@comcast.net

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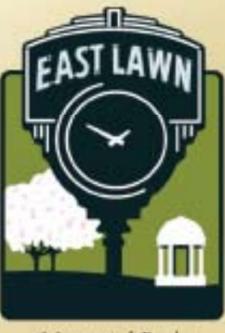
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Directed by Bob Irvin, this musical is based on a book by Bob Martin and Don McKellar, music and lyrics by Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison and score by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross. The show won the Tony Award in 2006 for Best Book of a Musical and Best Score. Fair Oaks Theatre Festival’s production is choreographed by Sunny Smith, with Vocal Direction by Tracy Martin Shearer and Music Direction by Kirt Shearer.

For Further Information:
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FairOaksTheatreFestival.com

Fair Oaks Theatre Festival
Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre,
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Dare to Live Without Limits

Developing a Can-do Attitude by Bryan Golden



A strong can-do attitude is a potent force in your quest for accomplishment. If you have any doubt, consider the alternative, a can't-do attitude? Anyone harboring a can't-do attitude is guaranteed of their results; nothing will work.

Ignore everyone who derides your can-do attitude. You will be criticized as being unrealistic. The critics have nothing to offer you except a sure fire plan for failure.

Anyone can develop a can-do attitude, even those with an entrenched can't-do attitude. If you are one of the people with a negative outlook, take an honest look at where you are. If you are not happy with your situation, the only way to make changes is by changing your attitude.

Often I hear people comment that their attitude will improve once things get better. Circumstances improve as a result of an improvement in attitude. You have to smile in order to feel happy rather than waiting to feel happy before you smile.

Developing a can-do attitude begins with positive self-talk. The words you say to yourself program your mind. By utilizing a positive vocabulary, your brain is directed to achieve a positive outcome. Constantly monitor your self-talk and immediately replace any negative words with positive ones.

Next, you have to believe you can do what you want to do. Your mind will only accomplish those things you believe are possible. When you don't think something is possible, your mind develops a

can't-do attitude which prevents accomplishments.

You need only one reason to succeed. Without vigilance, your mind will conjure up excuses as to why you can't. Additionally, other people will provide you with excuses for failure, whether you ask them or not. Your focus must be on your reason to succeed. Ignore everything else.

Expect to be criticized. Don't get discouraged by it. If you abandon your can-do attitude for the sake of mollifying your critics, you will forsake your desired accomplishment. Critics invariably say you can't do something. If you listen to them, you won't.

To cultivate your belief, act as if you are already successful. Picture yourself having attained what you want. How will you feel once you reach your goal? What level of confidence will you experience? This process stimulates a whole body experience which accelerates your mind's efforts to bring your desires to reality.

You have already experienced this process. Before going on vacation you look at photos and videos of your ideal getaway. When shopping for a car you visit dealers, look at the models you are interested in, and test drive the cars you are considering. When you really want something badly enough you can "feel" it and "taste" it before you have attained it.

A strong can-do attitude includes a focused problem solving mindset. In any quest you will encounter problems. Although problems can be discouraging,

all problems have solutions. The challenge is discovering them. Problem solving requires an open mind. Consider all options, even the ones outside your comfort zone.

Network with other positive, can-do people. They will encourage you and you will encourage them. You don't have to personally know someone positive to be encouraged by their attitude.

Simply learning about an individual's accomplishments, along with how they overcame obstacles is extremely motivating. You can do this through reading, biographical shows, and research on the internet.

Avoid discussing your goals with those who are not supportive. You don't have to, and probably won't change their minds. You will just become frustrated, discouraged, and drained without accomplishing anything positive. It's your life. Live it your way. You don't have to please anyone else.

Developing a can-do attitude will greatly accelerate your accomplishments. A can-do attitude empowers your mind to transform your dreams into reality. You can do whatever you need to do in order to reach your goals. ★

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@columnist.com or write him c/o this paper. © 2009 Bryan Golden.



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