



Cupcakes

for every occasion

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AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

Volume 8 • Issue 2

Serving Fair Oaks, Gold River, Rancho Cordova & Sacramento County

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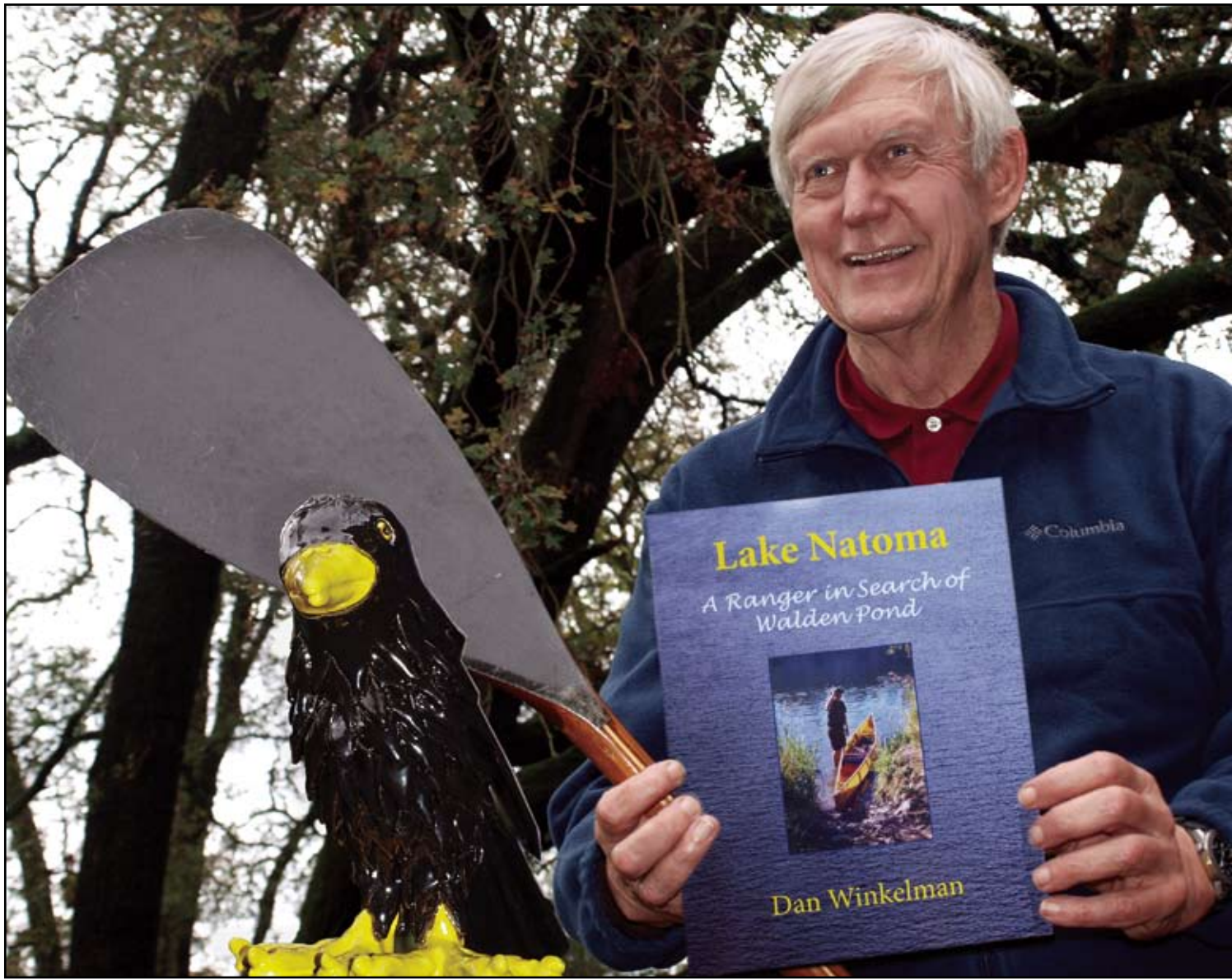
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Still Waters Run Deep



Ranger/canoeist Dan Winkelman's book observes the wonders of Lake Natoma. Mascot raven Fred is a companion both in and out of Winkelman chapters. Photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner.

By Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA – (MPG) In search of Walden Pond you'd travel further than to Folsom CA. Dan Winkelman did not visit the Massachusetts spot immortalized by Henry Thoreau. But Walden waters flow philosophically through his own book.

Retired ranger Winkelman eulogizes a personal utopia. Below Folsom, Lake Natoma was formed in 1955 as a reservoir for the Nimbus Dam. The water and its inhabitants are inspiration to the 66-year old. His publication of "Lake Natoma – A Ranger in Search of Walden Pond" comes from many happy hours at water level. Named for Charles Darwin's ship Beagle, Winkelman's canoe

takes the nature lover on a new voyage of discovery.

A protégé of Carmichael naturalists Effie Yeaw and Jo Smith, "Ranger Dan" Winkelman is himself part of American River lore. His book presents the perspective of explorer, teacher, puppeteer, bread baker and humorist. His account of "four butts facing me" explains why mallards must feed bill-down. Such a sighting, considers Winkelman, "is an event to be cherished by all."

Thirty years as a State and County ranger molded commentary on subjects great and small. "A ranger provides all the services of city in one person," he considers. "You are a policeman, a doctor, and when you're in charge of a camping ground,

you're a hotel manager. You take care of people." Pets are oft included. A dangerous canine cliff rescue earned faint thanks; the owners afterward drove off with their dog. "I muttered, 'you're welcome,'" writes the hero. Concludes the pragmatic hero: "But hey, another cliff rescue notch on my belt..."

Winkelman's ranger years included spells in Gibson Ranch, Ancil Hoffman Park, Sonoma Coast, Sutter's Fort, the American River Parkway and Angel Island. Retiring in 2001, he penned random articles from his placid lake. "These were simple canoe adventures," he explains. "I E-mailed them to my neighbors. One urged me to continue. She didn't realize what a treasure our lake was."

Continued on Page 2

BBB's Top Ten Scams of 2012

SACRAMENTO Region, CA – (MPG) Better Business Bureau serving northeast California gathered information from consumers, federal agencies and internally to cultivate a list of the top scams of 2012.

While some scams are fairly new as scammers learn to take advantage of the Internet, others have been around for years continually victimizing consumers.

"Our list highlights the scams that are the newest or most outrageous," said Gary Almond, president of BBB serving northeast California. "While consumers seem to be getting savvy, these scams only become more prevalent with the advent of new technologies."

BBB's top ten scams of 2012:
Top Overpayment/Fake Check Scam: Car Ads

A prominent company is offering \$400+ per week to consumers willing to drive around with logos plastered to their cars. They send a check to the consumer and ask the consumer to wire a portion of that "check" to a graphic designer to customize the car. One week later, the check bounces, the graphic designer is nowhere to be found, and the money wired is gone.

Top Emergency Scam: Grandparents Scam

The "Grandparents Scam" has been around a while, but deserves mentioning again: grandchild/niece /friend is traveling abroad and calls/texts/emails to say he or she has been mugged/arrested/hurt and needs money right away. Before wiring money in an emergency, check with the supposed victim or family members to make sure the relative is really traveling.

Top Employment Scam: Mystery Shopping

Working as a secret shopper may sound like an ideal way to supplement income, but scammers have figured that out, too. Many job offers are nothing more than a variation on the Overpayment/Fake Check Scam (above). Sometimes they claim that evaluating the wire service company is part of the job, which is why the consumer needs to send back part of the money. The Mystery Shopping Providers Association says it is not the practice of their members to pre-pay shoppers. Those looking for legitimate opportunities can find a gig through www.mysteryshop.org.

Top Advance Fee/Prepayment Scam: Nonexistent Loans

Loan scams continued to fester in 2012. Most of the scams advertise online and promise things like no credit check or easy repayment terms. The hook: you have to make the first payment upfront, you have to buy an "insurance policy," or there is some other kind of fee that you have to pay first to "secure" the loan. In the end, the consumer ends up with nothing but an empty wallet.

Continued on Page 2

Happy Tears as Man Claims MEGA Millions

ORANGEVALE, CA – (MPG) – Sacramento County had two big wins in California Lottery draws this weekend, and both tickets were sold in the same town – Orangevale. One ticket was for the MEGA Millions draw on Friday and is worth \$427,749!

A man stepped forward to claim that ticket and he couldn't be happier. Steven Conley said he couldn't believe it when he checked the newspaper this weekend and saw his numbers line up. "It's just so amazing that something like this happened," said Conley, especially since the most he's won on this game was about \$10. Conley immediately grabbed the paper and began showing it to everyone in the house. "I'm pretty sure they heard across the street, because we were pretty loud." That was nothing compared to the moment Conley realized how much he had won.

Along with this ticket, Conley said he had purchased only one other ticket for the draw, both of them Quick Picks®. Ask him how he feels about his good fortune and he gets a little emotional. "I didn't think it would happen for me, but it did," said Conley while fighting back the tears. "These are happy tears, but yea, it feels great." Conley said he wants to be careful with his money and use it to accomplish a few things he has always wanted to do. He may get a few toys, which his family presumes will include a new truck. Conley also hopes to invest his money and put some away for his grandkids. The thought of being able to do that makes him happy.

Conley bought his ticket at the 7-Eleven located at 6840 Woodmore Oaks Drive in Orangevale (Sacramento County). It hit the numbers 29, 56, 24, 34, and 30, missing only

the Mega number of 1. The other Orangevale winning ticket was for the SuperLotto Plus® draw on Saturday. No one has claimed that ticket yet, but it's worth \$27,044. The prize would have been more, but there was another winner who matched five of six numbers in Southern California.

The Northern California winner was sold at OV Goods, which is located at 9281 Madison Avenue in Orangevale. It successfully matched the numbers 10, 11, 27, 34, and 39, missing only the Mega number of 27. Since no one hit the jackpot, the top prize for tonight's MEGA Millions draw is \$62 million. Wednesday's SuperLotto Plus® jackpot is an estimated \$13 million.

The California Lottery reminds winners to sign the back of their ticket, keep tickets in a safe place and contact Lottery officials or visit their local Lottery District

Office as soon as possible. Winners have 180 days from the date of the draw to claim prizes.

MEGA Millions is a multistate game, played in California and 43 other jurisdictions (41 states plus the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

The mission of the California Lottery is to provide supplemental funding to California schools while simultaneously supporting local communities. More than 94 cents of every dollar spent by our players goes back to local communities in the form of contributions to public schools and colleges, prizes and retail compensation.

The California Lottery urges its customers to play responsibly and within their budgets. If you feel you have a gambling problem, or know someone who does, you can get help at 1-800-GAMBLER, www.calottery.com.

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Still Waters Run Deep

BBB Names Top Ten Scams Of 2012



Ranger/canoist Dan Winkelman’s book observes the wonders of Lake Natoma. Mascot raven Fred is a companion both in and out of Winkelman chapters. Photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner.

Continued from Page 1

Landscape and wildlife pictures illuminate many chapters. In innocent contrast to the world-weariness of a Vietnam and three-decade public service veteran are drawings from Maddie Walker. Ranger Dan recruited his seven-year-old artist after speaking at her Folsom School. “A child’s truth is uncompromised,” he approves. “Maddie’s art portrays an innocence that left me long ago.”

A life more simple is the

author’s constant theme. “In the 1840s, Henry Thoreau moved to Walden Pond and built a cabin,” he says. “In the 21st century, I bought a tract house above a man-made lake. “We both tried to discover our place in a natural world. In a canoe, I got in touch with the human I was meant to be.” His final chapter -- a tribute to Effie Yeaw and volunteers who continue her work – advises: “We don’t have a long time on this earth... take some time to know a place you can call home.”

Beyond otter, beaver, and

upended ducks, inspiration comes from a motley human crew. Winkelman is an explorer with Muir; a river dreamer with Twain; a marine biologist with Steinbeck. “In writing the book, I reviewed literature that influenced my life,” explains the author.

“Who’d know what runs through the mind of that guy in a truck. Yeah, me. Ranger Dan.”

“Lake Natoma – A Ranger in Search of Walden Pond” is produced by Publishing Syndicate, Orangevale. Contact the author at winkdan267@yahoo.com

Continued from Page 1

Top Phishing Scam: President Obama Will Pay Your Utility Bills

At the peak of summer with utility costs soaring, consumers received emails, letters and even door-to-door solicitations about a “new government program” to pay utility bills. Victims “registered” with a website and provided everything scammers needed for ID theft, including bank account information.

Top Sweepstakes/Lottery Scam: Jamaican Phone Lottery

The calls come from area code 876 but the person claims to represent BBB, FBI, or other trusted group. Great news: you won a terrific prize, but must pay a fee to collect the winnings. After wiring money to “collect” the prize, consumers never hear from the scammers again.

Top Identity Theft Scam: Fake Facebook Tweets

“ROFL they was taping you” or “What RU doing in this FB vid?” are typical tweets. In a panic,

you click on the link and get an error message that says you need to update your video player. It’s a virus or malware that can steal confidential information from your computer or smart phone. Twitter recommends reporting spam, resetting your password and revoking connections to third-party applications.

Top Home Improvement Scam: Sandy “Storm Chasers”

BBB spends a lot of time investigating and reporting on home improvement scams, but this year we saw an unusual amount of “storm chaser” activity following Super Storm Sandy. It’s tempting to skip reference checking in an emergency, but that’s never a good idea. Always check a company’s licensing before hiring and search for them at necal.bbb.org.

Top Sales Scam: Fake Goods

From the Super Bowl to the World Series, counterfeiters managed to have their hands in consumers’ pockets all year long. Some scammers sold cheap knock-offs in front of stadiums.

Others set up websites that never had any goods for sale to begin with. Counterfeit goods are not only a rip-off for fans, but also rip-off the teams, athletes, designers and artists who create, license and sell the real merchandise. Buy directly from teams or from legitimate retailers. If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Scam of the Year: Newtown Charity Scams

Within hours of the horrific shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, social media pages dedicated to the child victims began cropping up. Some of them were scams asking for money. The FBI has already arrested one woman for posing as the aunt of one of the children killed, and state and federal agencies are investigating other possible fraudulent and misleading solicitations. Although the number of people defrauded and the total dollars stolen is most likely low, the cynicism and sheer audacity of these scams merits our selecting it as the “Top Scam of 2012.”

Source: BBB

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New Year Planning for Small Businesses

SACRAMENTO, CA — (MPG) By now, most people have already broken at least a few of their New Year’s resolutions, but the NFIB Small Business Legal Center has come up with a list of five resolutions every small-business owner should keep.

In the next few weeks, California small-business owners should:

Perform an Insurance Check-Up

It’s a good idea to schedule an insurance physical each year. If it has been a few years since you’ve reviewed your coverage check in with your agent this year. Your business and industry probably has unique needs and risks. So to get the best available coverage and rates, work with an insurance broker who knows your business and has experience in your industry.

Review Your Employee Policies

Although employee handbooks can be really helpful to employers, having a bad employee handbook can hurt you. Your employee handbook shouldn’t describe policies and procedures that you don’t follow. It is not a place to describe your dreams for how your business ought to work. It is a place to describe the reality of how your business actually operates.

This year pull out your handbook or policies, sit down, and read them. Then update, edit, and delete as recommended by your attorney. Finally, distribute the revised handbook to your employees and have them sign a form acknowledging receipt. Keep the form in your personnel files.

Check Your Corporate Records

Remember that a corporation is good, but only if you use



it properly. Many people pay an attorney up to \$1,000 to setup a corporation, then take the corporation’s minute book and stick it on a shelf. A corporation will not shield you from personal liability if you do not follow corporate procedures. This year make an appointment with your attorney or accountant to review

your corporate binder’s contents. Does it contain what you need to prove your business’s corporate status?

Institute a Good Document Retention Policy

Have you ever wondered how long you should keep a contract, banking statements and employee

records? Or are you keeping every single bill, tax return, insurance invoice, and even the parking ticket that you received ten years ago? If you answered “yes”, you are not alone. Many business owners are unsure as to how long they should retain business documents and records. A document retention policy that is followed by your employees will benefit your business by promoting efficiency, saving your company valuable computer and physical storage space, and protecting your company in the event of litigation. Given our culture’s penchant for lawsuits, you want to protect yourself and having documents provides good coverage. But you needn’t keep every piece of paper forever. This year commit to weeding out what you don’t need and organizing what you do need. Check with your attorney or tax professional for guidelines on keeping and tossing.

Audit Your Form I-9s

The Form I-9 is the form the federal government uses to hold employers accountable for hiring workers legally eligible to work in the United States. The form should be completed on the first day of employment by ALL employees hired since 1986. Yes, the law applies to your sister-in-law and the kid you grew up with if they are employed by your business. This year ensure that you have completed I-9s for all of your employees and that the forms are correctly filled out. Conducting an audit might take some time and effort depending on the number of employees you have, but will save you headaches and possibly penalties should a federal agent knock at your door.

To learn more, visit the NFIB Small Business Legal Center’s website at www.NFIB.com/legal. Source: NFIB

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By Pastor Ray Dare

There’s a story about an American Indian brave that found an eagle’s egg and put it into the nest a prairie chicken. The egg hatched with the rest of the chicks and began to grow up with them. All his life the eagle, thinking he was a prairie chicken, did what prairie chickens did. He scratched in the dirt for insects and seeds, he clucked and cackled. He flew in brief thrashings of wings just a few feet off the ground. After all, that’s the way prairie chickens were supposed to fly. Years past and the eagle grew very old. One day, he saw a magnificent bird far above him in the sky. Gliding gracefully on the powerful wind currents, it soared effortlessly with hardly a beat of its strong golden wings. “What a beautiful bird!” said the eagle to his neighbor. “What is it?” “That’s an eagle.” Clucked the neighbor, “But don’t give it a second thought – you could never be like him – you’re just a prairie chicken!” And the eagle never did. He died thinking he was a prairie chicken. What a tragedy! Created to soar into the heavens, he was conditioned to stay earthbound. He lived beneath his potential.

Right now, you may find yourself in a situation much like the

You Don’t Have To Stay the Same

eagle. You know you are created for more than you’ve experienced to date. You have the ability to move well beyond your self-imposed limitations or the limitations that others have placed on you. You feel like an eight cylinder automobile straining on four. The Bible teaches that every person is designed for excellence. Nobody wants to be mediocre; to live beneath their potential. God never meant for you to live that way. He wants you to live above your limitations and realize His powerful ability that’s available for your life.

The Bible tells a story about a man named Jabez, who learned to live beyond his limitations. The Bible says that Jabez prayed a short and simple prayer, asking God to bless his life. God answered his prayer and Jabez he began to live above his own limitations and those that others labeled him with. One of the most interesting things about Jabez is his name. The name Jabez in Hebrew literally means, “Painful”. Apparently he caused his mother so much pain at childbirth that she named him, “Painful”. How would you like to have that name? To go all through life, “What’s your name, son?” -- “Painful”. What a big handicap! To be called “a pain” all your life. He was labeled, “That kid’s a pain!” Everyone in the world would know it, he was rejected, labeled. His name was a constant reminder that even his mother regretted his birth. Yet Jabez would rise above his

handicap. He wouldn’t let his conditioning or the label of others interfere with God’s plan for his life.

Let me ask you a question – Who has labeled you? Who has conditioned you? Who has said to you -- “You’ll never change!” “You could never be like that!” “You’ll never amount to anything!” “You’ll always be ... this way”, “You’re this...you’re that...” The problem is you believed it and it’s held you back from becoming all that God created you for. God doesn’t want you to live beneath your potential. He wants to set you free in 2013. Free from self-imposed limitations. Free from the limitations others have placed on you. But like Jabez, it starts with turning to God. It starts with prayer. It starts with getting God’s view of you, rather than the view of others or even yourself. You don’t have to stay the same. You don’t have to live beneath your potential. God wants to do great things in your life. How do I know? Because He’s a great God! “Call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJ)

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Assemblyman Cooley Introduces Legislation Strengthening Role of Independent Monitors in State Agencies

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – (MPG) Assemblyman Ken Cooley introduced AB 117 on January 14th to strengthen and formalize the role of independent monitors within state agencies. It is his second bill dealing with government accountability and transparency and continues his leadership on these issues from his work in local government with the Rancho Cordova City Council.

Current law, effective January 1, 2012, requires state agencies to appoint independent monitors to ensure efficiency and fiscal accountability. The law is silent, however, on the framework for how these monitors are to function or report their findings. AB 117 directs the Department of Finance in consultation with the State Auditor and the State Controller to create guidelines for the independent monitors to follow when fulfilling their duties.

“If we want the independent monitors to succeed in helping us

improve state agency management and fiscal accountability, efficiency, and administration we need to give the monitors the tools to do their job,” said Cooley. “Recent reports of fiscal mismanagement by state agencies highlight how important independent monitoring is to ensure California’s tax dollars are being spent wisely and in full public view.”

The Financial Integrity and State Manager’s Accountability Act of 1983 created the initial infrastructure to promote state agency fiscal monitoring. After the Enron scandal, the federal government imposed strict auditing standards on corporations, including independent internal monitors. SB 617 (Calderon, Pavley, Alquist 2011) responded by implementing auditing standards into the Financial Integrity and State Manager’s Accountability Act that required mandatory independent monitoring of state agencies as an

additional check on internal auditing procedures. SB 617, however, did not provide guidelines for the independent monitors on such practical matters as training, reporting relationships, or best practices for professional development.

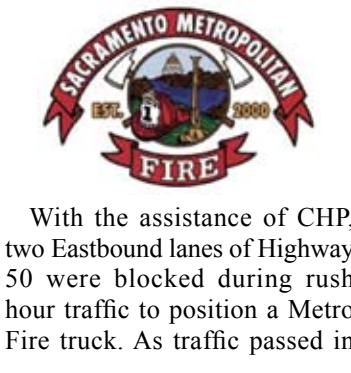
AB 117 instructs the Department of Finance, in consultation with the State Controller and State Auditor, to create these guidelines so that the independent monitors have a formalized framework to effectively do their jobs.

Assemblyman Ken Cooley represents the 8th Assembly District which includes the communities of Arden-Arcade, Carmichael, Citrus Heights, Rancho Cordova, Rancho Murieta, Rosemont, Wilton and other portions of unincorporated Sacramento County. For more information, please visit www.asmdc.org/members/a08/

Source: Office of Ken Cooley

Threatening Jumper Rescued Off HWY 50 Overpass

SACRAMENTO, CA – Just after 5pm on January 3rd, Metro Fire crews responded to the Mayhew and Highway 50 overpass to rescue a teenage female who was threatening to jump. She had climbed over the safety fencing and was tip toeing on a small ledge when she decided she needed help. Becoming increasingly fatigued, she clung to the fence waiting for rescue.



the open lanes, the ladder was raised to her hanging on for dear life. She was then safely guided to a hole that had been cut in the fencing by another Metro Fire unit.

Fortunately we were able to promptly rescue the threatening jumper without injury.

Source: Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District



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State Seeks End To Court Orders Capping the State’s Prison Population

California prison health care now exceeds constitutional standards; Prison emergency declared over.

SACRAMENTO, CA – (MPG) Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. announced January 8th that the State of California has taken legal action to end a federal court order that caps the state’s prison population and another that requires “intrusive supervision” of prison mental health care.

“After decades of judicial intervention in our correctional system and the expenditure of billions of taxpayer dollars, the time has come to restore California’s rightful control of its prison system,” said Governor Brown.

The state also complied with the court’s order to identify options to achieve additional reductions in the number of inmates held in state prison. This filing, made under protest, asserts that further reductions “threaten public safety and interfere with California’s independent right to determine its own criminal justice laws.”

“California’s prison health care system is now a model for the nation,” said CDCR Secretary Jeff Beard. “Independent expert reviews have found that

California’s prison medical and mental health care systems meet constitutional standards. It would be both unnecessary and unsafe for the courts to order further inmate reductions.”

In 1991, California prison inmates filed a class action lawsuit, *Coleman v. Brown*, alleging that California’s prison mental health care system was unconstitutional. Subsequently, prior administrations entered into various consent decrees that set in motion vast judicial oversight of our prison system. In the intervening years, California has rebuilt its prison mental health care system into one of the best in the nation, investing billions in additional treatment capacity and hiring hundreds of mental health care professionals. The state seeks to end this judicial oversight because the mental health care provided to prisoners now exceeds constitutional requirements.

In 2007, the *Coleman* case along with *Plata v. Brown*, a case concerning medical care, was assigned to a three-judge court. That court found that overcrowding was the primary cause

of the failure to deliver constitutional medical and mental health care in California prisons, and in 2009 ordered the state to reduce crowding to 137.5 percent of “design capacity.” The U.S Supreme Court affirmed that order in 2011.

Since 2006, the inmate population in the state’s 33 prisons has been reduced by over 43,000 and crowding is down from more than 200 percent to just below 150 percent. More than half of the population decline has happened since October 1, 2011, as a result of Public Safety Realignment.

Lowering the prison population beyond this point—as ordered by the court—would require rewriting or disregarding the California Constitution and numerous state laws that limit the early release of prisoners. The result would be shorter sentences for inmates incarcerated for serious and violent offenses, increased burdens on counties, and expanded use of contract facilities at considerable cost to the taxpayers.

Governor Brown also announced that he has signed a proclamation ending the prison overcrowding emergency that has been in place since 2006. This will allow the state to phase out the use of private out-of-state prison beds for California inmates starting in July of 2013. At this time, there are approximately 8,900 California inmates in out-of-state prisons.

“The extreme circumstances of overcrowding in California’s prisons no longer exist,” said Secretary Beard. “With improved health care systems and additional state capacity, it is no longer necessary to send prisoners and California taxpayer dollars to other states.”

To read the court filings, go to the State Reports section of CDCR’s Three-judge Court web page: www.cdcr.ca.gov/News/3_judge_panel_decision.html

Source: Governor’s Press Office

Hoping for a New Energy Approach

Obama Needs To Focus Energy Policy On Change, Not Hope

Commentary by Robert L. Bradley Jr.

Just prior to the election, battery-maker A123 Systems filed for bankruptcy. As the recipient of \$249 million in federal money, the Massachusetts-based company represents just the latest in a long line of troubled taxpayer-enabled green ventures - some 34 companies and \$7.5 billion to date. How little different this is from Houston-based Enron’s forays into wind and solar in the 1990s, which even with federal subsidies were never profitable.

Failed bets on politically correct, market-incorrect energies are part of the trillion-dollar federal deficits that shake America’s living rooms. Yet President Obama seems determined to continue throwing good money after bad, setting up companies and their workers for failure. Meanwhile, resources are taken from the private sector where consumer-supported jobs originate.

Such is just part of the president’s grander, misdirected energy policy, one that is at odds with the Big Three Energies of oil, gas and coal.

Consider, for example, the president’s take on the cause and cure for high gasoline prices. A CNN poll earlier this year found a three-fold increase in the number of Americans viewing high motor fuel prices as the nation’s most significant economic issue. The national average has abated to \$3.42 per gallon, and gasoline prices in California have recently dropped below \$4 per gallon. Still, stagnant oil production on federal lands compared to state and private lands is a missed opportunity for producers and consumers alike.

So what does the president say? That renewable energy is “the only way we’ll break this cycle of high gas prices.”

The truth is that the big forces pushing up gas prices can’t be solved with wind, solar and ethanol. Global demand for crude oil is high, and the supply is hampered by political instability in oil-rich places such as the Middle East and North Africa. And U.S. policymakers have weakened the dollar.

Then there’s the president’s take on taxes. Obama constantly hammers “big oil” for supposedly not paying its fair share. And he claims these companies are benefiting from billions of dollars in taxpayer giveaways. But the fact is that the three biggest oil companies — Chevron, ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips - all pay tax

rates above 40 percent. Compare that to other major American corporations. Apple only pays 9 percent. GE, thanks in part to its windpower unit, pays just 7 percent.

Then there’s the claim from the White House that oil companies are leasing thousands of acres of land but leaving them idle.

To make its case against expanded drilling, the administration misleadingly defines “idle” to include such things as seismic testing on the land and preparing rigs to drill.

True, at this stage companies aren’t physically pulling resources from the ground. But the land certainly isn’t idle. Oil and natural gas developers are just taking necessary first steps before actual drilling and, hopefully, production occurs.

Compare this to genuine idleness when federal policies have unnecessarily delayed drilling permits. And don’t forget the Keystone XL pipeline, which remains one White House decision away from overcoming idleness.

Obama’s effort to paint green-tech as the future of American

energy is predictably backfiring. While heavily subsidized wind and solar companies continue to flail, the traditional energy sector is flourishing, while developing more environmentally friendly ways of doing business.

Indeed, the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects that by 2035, oil and natural gas alone will supply about 55 percent of America’s energy needs, compared to less than 11 percent from government-dependent wind, solar and ethanol.

And if federal budget reforms eliminate energy subsidies, expect this market-share differential to become much more pronounced.

With his second term just around the corner, President Obama should rethink his failing energy policy for one premised on free markets, consumer sovereignty and deficit-reduction.

One can hope for change, right?

Robert L. Bradley is CEO and founder of the Institute for Energy Research and author of seven books on energy. He blogs at www.masterresource.org.

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YOUR WORLD, YOUR VOICE



By Ronnie McBrayer

In these days when it seems everything has become angry polarization, it’s not uncommon to hear someone in the heat of an argument invoke the familiar words of Jesus: “Judge not, so that you are not judged.” These words are probably misapplied as much as anything Jesus ever said.

Jesus’ prohibition against judging has less to do with our academic arguments than it does with how we treat people. The better translation of his words is, “Do not condemn others.” This changes the whole equation, as Jesus doesn’t ban “judgment” in the sense of discernment, making honorable choices, or being an informed person. Rather, Jesus is precluding the use of condemnation against others.

Yet, if you turn to the media, read much of what is printed by Christian publishers, listen to what is repeated in church pulpits, or spend time perusing the Christian blogosphere, it seems the only voice we Christians have is that of a crotchety old man, angry that the neighborhood kids won’t stay off our lawn.

Yes, some of what we say is healthy, principled dissent; but too much of it is an exhaustive collection of condemnation and angry finger-pointing, incensed as we are, at what everyone else is doing wrong. But by Jesus’ own word, the

Keeping the Faith

church is not permitted to become this type of condemnation-meting society. We are not called to operate a business of inflicting punishment on others. In fact, we aren’t called to mind others’ business at all.

In my vocation I often come across those who are hostile toward the Christian faith. I try to engage such individuals and learn something from them. What I have learned from people such as these, more often than not, is their exasperation over how we Christians frequently come across as a kind of moral SWAT team.

We intrude into the lives of others filling the air with the ammunition of “ought, should, and must” when we would be better served by turning our energies and attention to our own hearts and examine our own lives, not the lives of others. Dietrich Bonehoeffer said it like this, “Jesus is the only standard by which disciples should live, but he is not a standard we can apply to others. He is a standard we can only apply to ourselves.”

So, when we as Christians get blisteringly angry with those who sin differently than we do, we should remember to mind our business. That business is to love, not to condemn. That business is to begin with the self, for beginning there will keep us busy for a lifetime.

To that end, there is a wonderful story from famed Rabbi Mendel Futerfas, who survived years in the Soviet Gulags of Siberia. In the Gulag, one of the many activities that was prohibited and dealt with harshly was playing cards. Still, some of the inmates managed to

smuggle in a deck of cards, and they would play for hours without the guards knowing.

Finally, however, an informant sold the card-playing prisoners out. The guards would storm in with surprise inspections looking for the cards, but could never find them. They checked every inch of the barracks including strip searches of the inmates, but the result was always the same: Nothing. Yet, as soon as the guards left, the cards would reappear and the games continued.

Rabbi Mendel couldn’t understand how this happened, but eventually the card players let him in on their secret. “You see,” they said, “we are professional pickpockets. As soon as the guards enter the barracks, we slip the cards into their pockets. Right before they leave, we slip them back out again. It never occurs to the guards to check their own pockets.”

“Judging” does not prevent us from having and sharing opinions. It doesn’t mean we can’t give a verbal witness to our faith. But it does mean we refuse – absolutely refuse – to condemn others. We leave “room in our hearts for God’s grace,” and that room is made possible by looking in and emptying our own pockets first.

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, speaker, and author of multiple books. You can read more and receive regular e-columns in your inbox at www.ronniemcbrayer.net.



By Karen Anderson

Once again, you look around at your life and you realize you haven’t moved even an inch. You are STUCK, and life can become so frustrating that you don’t know what to do. My question to you is... how did that happen? I know for me, what gets me stuck is that long “To-Do List” and life’s distractions that get in the way of my good intentions. I get so mad at myself, because at the end of the day I look back and realize the day was a waste. The next day I wake up with the same intention but I remember what happened the day before, and many times the day is a waste once again.

I have talked about this before; ask God for His help. Did you know that He will come and help if asked? All you have to do is say, “Help me God!” The enemy

Out of the Quicksand

(Satan) does not want you to accomplish anything that is God’s purpose for your life, so he uses your life against you. NOW YOU’RE STUCK. He is the king of deception. His royal decrees continue to trap us. Don’t take his power over you so lightly. You might think this is just your human nature creating these distractions for you, but it is not. Remember, Satan lives on earth with us and he is roaming around like a lion ready to ruin your life and your good intentions.

I’m serious about praying openly to God for help in these areas. Something I was never good at was praising and thanking God for His help. Get in the habit of telling God how much you love and appreciate Him. That’s what I am making a point to do. He doesn’t always answer prayers right away, but praise Him for the answers that are on their way. God’s Word says, “Be strong. Take courage. Don’t be intimidated. Don’t give them a second thought because God, your God, is striding ahead of you. He’s right there with you. He won’t let you down; He won’t leave you.”

Take this to the point of believing when Satan is attacking you with whatever stops your life, CLAIM THIS VERSE!

I promise, as you claim God’s scripture, the enemy will flee from you. Ask God’s protection to surround you; then move through your day. One very important thing... at the beginning of your day, spend time with God, but remember that at the end of your day, thank God for everything He did for you. I, personally, am still working on this, but it is a blessing for me to see that God really did show up and helped me get UNSTUCK! If I can do, you can do it. Blessings to you all for staying UNSTUCK...make it a regular routine, every day.

PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 31:6 (The Message)

Karen Anderson is an accomplished speaker, author, and chaplain. Leave a message or questions for Karen through her website www.doablesteps.com/contact.

As My Luck Would Have It

By Rev. James L. Snyder, D. Litt

I am not superstitious [knock on wood] but some things happen to me that leave me a little bit suspicious. I am not sure if there is a connection between superstitious and suspicious, but if there were, that would explain a lot in my life.

I start every year with high hopes of making certain changes in my life. If I had a quarter for every change I wanted to make in my life but didn’t, I would have all the change I need.

This past week was one of those weeks. I was minding my own business, which for me is a full-time job without benefits, and no matter what I did; I was either a day late or a dollar short.

I had to go across town for a business meeting and as my luck would have it, I hit every red light. I am not sure but it seemed that there were 1,937 traffic lights in route to my destination.

I had a gift card that I cannot remember when I got it, but I thought I would get a nice gift for myself. I selected my gift, went to the cash out counter and was informed that my gift card had expired “yesterday.” I think I have just too many yesterdays in my life. I would like a card once that would expire “tomorrow”. I have plenty of them.

The bookstore that I do my business was having a special on a book that I really wanted. I got to the store, stood in line for well over an hour and, as my luck would have it, the person in front of me got the last one. Where’s my gun when I need it?

I believe if there are 100 people playing a \$10 million lottery I would be number 101. I come so

close so many times, but you know what they say, an inch missed is like a mile missed.

When my wife and I started our marital journey, we did not take a vow of poverty. It just has turned out that way. As soon as we have a little cash ahead, my wife begins to wonder what is going to break in the house. And, as luck would have it, she is usually right.

All week long, my week went like this. All week long, I could not catch anything and then, as my luck would have it, I caught a cold. I did not set out at the beginning of the week to catch a cold. Whoever threw that cold at me I would like to find out right now. Of course, why I caught it in the first place is to be questioned. I really did not see it coming.

Why is it you cannot catch what you want but usually can catch what you do not want?

A friend of mine always reminds me along this line that, “That’s life.”

I caught a cold and now I did not know what to do with it.

I got up late in the morning, put on my bathrobe and went toward the kitchen wheezing and coughing as I shuffled down the hallway. When I got to the kitchen the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me with one of “those looks” and said rather sternly, “Don’t you dare give that cold to me.”

I was sick but I was not too sick to know a death threat when it came my way.

When it comes right down to it, I am really a generous person. I would give you the shirt off my back if you needed it. However, when I have something like “a cold,” I cannot give it to anyone. Nobody wants it! Believe me, the

cold I have to give I would give freely.

“You turn around,” my wife said very sternly, “and march yourself right back into bed.” Not only did I catch a cold, but also I am now catching the dickens.

I must confess that I am an expert at catching the dickens. I have just never figured out what to do with it when I got it. If I was good at catching luck as I am with catching the dickens I would be the luckiest man in the world. If someone knows a profitable market for “dickens” please contact me soon.

Slowly I turned, step by step, I walked down the hallway, it seemed like of thousand miles, I finally threw myself into bed. Thankfully, the bed caught me.

And so, as luck would have it, I have caught the cold, caught the dickens from my wife, and now I plan to catch up on some sleep.

I am not sure if you starve a cold and feed a fever or if you feed a cold and starve a fever. So in my confusion, I fed myself.

Resting on my bed, I thought of one of my favorite Bible verses. “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28 KJV).

Life is full of ups and downs. Just when you think you are up you find yourself on the way down. The important thing in life is to have a safety net. For me, Jesus is my safety net and has never let me down. He will always catch me.

The Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, PO Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at (352) 687-4240 or e-mail james-snyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.



By Marlys Norris, Christian Author

Everyone born on the face of the earth is significant in the eyes of God! If you were the only person on this earth His Holy Spirit would reach down and touch your life, drawing you to Himself. This very moment His messenger is telling you that “**you are important**” to Him. He loved you before you were born and God continues to love you with His everlasting grace (unmerited favor) and love today. “Seek first His righteousness and all things will be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33 “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and do not rely on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5 “Think about Him in all your ways, and He will guide you on the right paths.: Proverbs 3:6

Significant and Important to God

WHAT SCRIPTURE GUIDES YOUR LIFE?

Sometime in your childhood someone spoke the truth of a Scripture to you that has stayed with you all of your life. Then you most likely did not know that it was out of the Holy Bible but you know it today. During various incidents throughout the years that **Scripture has “come alive” within you** and has guided your life decisions. Take a few minutes to remember and reflect on those words and why they became so meaningful to you. “Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6 “So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17

Does the memory of them connect with the “legacy” you wish to leave to future generations? If they do, sit down and write about it and place it with papers you want your children and grandchildren to read someday. “The Words of Scripture are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing You might have life through His Name.” John 20:31

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*Marlys Johnsen Norris
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7	5	6	4	3	2	1	9	8
4	8	9	7	1	5	6	3	2
2	1	3	6	8	9	4	7	5
8	2	7	1	4	3	5	6	9
6	9	4	8	5	7	2	1	3
1	3	5	9	2	6	8	4	7
Sudoku Puzzle on Page 9								

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ACROSS

1. Sweeney Todd's weapon
6. "Recluse from "To Kill a Mockingbird"
9. Dumbfounded
13. "Fear of Flying" author
14. Unit of electrical resistance
15. Groom, to a bird
16. Brightest star in Cygnus
17. Anonymous John
18. Shadow
19. Covered with scabs
21. "F. Scott Fitzgerald's mysterious millionaire"
23. Nada
24. Circle overhead?
25. Douglas ____
28. Lowest brass
30. Catch in a net
35. Bad day for Caesar
37. Grey, of tea fame
39. Spanish saint
40. Church section
41. "Poe's talking bird"
43. Bucolic poem

DOWN

1. "Like Stephen Crane's Badge of Courage"
44. Chirp, as in bird
46. "Twilight" series, e.g.
47. "The farmer in the ____"
48. Bonnie and Clyde's doing
50. Mythical bird, pl.
52. Without professional help, acr.
53. Sound of impact
55. Tint
57. "T. Williams' fading Southern belle"
60. "J.D. Salinger's young cynic"
63. Piliuff or plov
64. ET carrier
66. Unbroken
68. Dadaist Max ____
69. Rip off
70. Savory taste sensation
71. Kind of moss
72. Affirmative English rock band
73. Torn down

CLUES

2. Mars, to the Greeks
3. Brass component
4. Home to largest mammal
5. "John Updike's "____, Run"
6. "Stephen King novella "The ____," adapted into "Stand by Me" film
7. Exclamation of surprise
8. The end
9. They're missing from Venus de Milo
10. He played Sergeant Joe Friday
11. Suggestive of supernatural
12. Piece of evidence
15. Capers or charades
20. Gloomier
22. Brewpub offering
24. "John Updike's alma mater"
25. "Harper Lee's Atticus ____"
26. Gem State
27. Live it up
29. Bleats

31. "Occupation featured in "The Help"
32. Terminated
33. They're found at checkout
34. "Truman Capote's party girl"
36. Garden starter
38. Toy block
42. Jack Black's "____ Libre"
45. Blow out the candle, e.g.
49. Sigma ____ Epsilon
51. S
54. Shylock's practice
56. Swelling
57. ____ Straits
58. Arm bone
59. Cat-headed Egyptian goddess
60. Gremlins
61. Timeline divisions
62. What one goes by
63. ____ rally
65. "Wicked Witch of the West to Dorothy Gale"
67. Jack-in-the-box part

For Solution See Page 7

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POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

a friend than a guest on my show. His Christmas cards the last few years have been a delight, but how he shares what he has done in his life continues to astound me. In 2012, he has made 347 appearances around the world. Yet, he still finds the time to jog one hour every night. He even offered the political mouths his service to get them together to come to a compromise on the fiscal cliff which is still teetering on the edge. He wanted to get them together in a room to finally talk and not get out until a deal was struck for the good of the people not the politicians. Did they take him up on it? Of course not. It might benefit you and me more than their next run for office. And this was not a publicity stunt. Kreskin was truly concerned and wanted to help. I guess they didn't like it when he said he is not a liberal or a conservative. He is an independent thinker. What a novel idea these days. He gets very upset when he says today's politicians just don't listen to one another.

So what upsets Kreskin? Lobbyists for one...some 35,000 in the belt way. He used the words infection and influence in the same sentence with Lobbyists. He wondered where the statesmen are like Benjamin Franklin, a printer and George Washington, a farmer? Today they are just politicians, and he did not say that in a positive reflection. He laughingly said he listened to the debates last fall to read their thoughts and he got a blank. I think we did too. He quoted the old saying that if we forget history, we are bound to live it over again. He worries about the debt we have. Kreskin claims if we pick a day in history...say the birth day of Christ and add one million dollars every day up till today, it still would not add up to our present debt. He talks seriously about the economy continuing to be difficult and the job market a struggle. But his advice is take whatever job

you can and look to the future. On violence, he got very serious and shared an exclusive that he has not told to anyone before. Some years ago, he was reading to some kids in a grade school and got into the conversation of violence with the kids. And the quotation was used that guns don't kill people, but people kill people. And one of the kids came out with a statement that totally leveled Kreskin. In his simplicity, the child said, "If that's the case, then is it safer if no guns were in people's hands?" Out of the mouths of babes. Perhaps we need to assess what our humanity is all about too.

As for his philosophy of life that keeps him going, I guess I was not surprised by his answer. His energy is astounding no doubt. But even with some of his health challenges, he believes he is blessed with good health. His mom lived to 96 and his dad 91. Good genes passed on to Kreskin. But I loved his way of thinking. As he put it, "I believe that all people I meet in life give me energy. Everyone is interesting in some way. Even a ditch-digger is proud of his work." I love that philosophy...one that we all should consider. We all have something to offer in this life, and we should pursue it to the max. As Kreskin put it, you don't have to play the piano at Carnegie Hall as he did. Go to your living room and play to your hearts content. Don't make resolutions, he told me, go to bed and awaken with the conviction to do it. And don't wait till the New Year. Do it now. Make up your mind and get it done!

And so this is the Kreskin I got to know, and I look forward to our next time together with this man who has achieved so much, and yet cares more about sharing his talent to better us all. I am honored!

Join Mary Jane for the **KAHI Noon News Monday-Friday and then again for POPPOFF 10 PM – Midnight.**



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Come back every week for Sudoku!

For Solution See Page 7.

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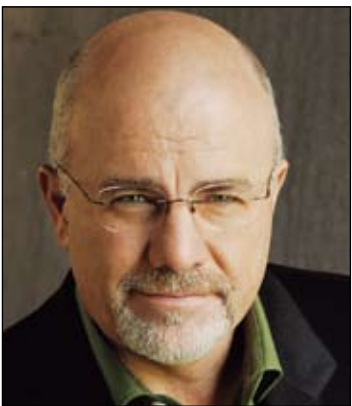
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Be Tightfisted Until The Crisis Is Over

Dear Dave,
Recently, my husband had to quit his job due to an old back injury. We have \$25,000 in debt, but I'll be receiving a \$38,000 inheritance in a couple of weeks. Should we use the money to pay off our debt, or hold on to it in case he needs surgery?

- Kristen
Dear Kristen,
Now is the time to keep the cash piled high. You're in the middle of an emergency, and that means you push the pause button on your Total Money Makeover and stop paying extra on debt. Surgery is a possibility at this point, plus you may need

Dave Says

some of that money to live on until his job situation improves.
Then, the moment he returns to work and things are stabilized, you jump back into getting control of your finances. Use whatever is left of the \$38,000 to pay off debt that very day. But right now you don't need to worry about becoming debt-free, only to turn around and be in a mess in the event he has trouble finding another job.

Let me give you a warning too. Thirty-eight thousand dollars is a great gift. If someone handed me a check for that amount, I'd cash it in a heartbeat. But it's not \$380,000 or \$3.8 million. It's easy to develop a false sense of security if you've never received a check of that size. This kind of money is enough to keep the wolf away from the door for a while, but it's nothing to retire on.

This little nest egg is a real blessing, Kristen. Just make sure you handle it wisely, and take into account all of the possibilities over the next couple of months. In a best-case scenario your husband won't need surgery, he'll find a job pretty soon, and you guys won't have to dig in to the inheritance money. Hang on to as much as possible, though. This sounds like a time of personal and professional transition for you both, and having that kind of extra cash around could be a lifesaver!

- Dave

Should We Ever Buy A House?

Dear Dave,
My husband and I are on Baby Step 2 of your plan. We move every two or three years due to our jobs, so would it ever make sense in our situation to buy a house?

- Janelle
Dear Janelle,
In most cases like this it doesn't make sense to buy a house, especially if the real estate market in your area is lethargic. Some markets have bounced back and are doing very well, while some are worse than slow. It all depends on where you're moving.
Here's the big question: Can you get the place sold quickly the next time you have to move? Another thing to consider is whether or not you can sell it for more than it cost when the time comes. If not, you'll be writing a check for home ownership, and that's not a good plan.

As a general rule, a two- to three-year window is not enough time to own a home. There are rare exceptions to this rule, places where you have a hot, escalating price market. But if you're not careful you'll end up leaving behind a rental property and playing landlord, whether you want to or not!

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



By Black Belt Master Jonathan Peschke, Robinson's TKD Carmichael

As this is our third installment I have been pleasantly surprised by how many people are sending their questions on fitness, sports or martial arts to the AskMisterFit@robinsonstk.com contact address. While some of the focus is on the fitness and self-defense skills I teach as a Taekwondo Instructor, many of them are from parents echoing a common theme. To be blunt, their kids are becoming fat, lethargic and spending way too much time playing video games or surfing social sites on their mobiles. Most expressed their difficulty in getting kids moving. Does this sound like a path to success? As an example...

Mister Fit, We can give our kids

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many of the things they want. My kids don't play like they used to, and I am concerned this has a serious affect on their long-term health. Unfortunately, by allowing the kids to focus on small video screens I think they are missing some of the best times of life. What can you suggest? A Deterding Mom

As the banner in this space says, "a better quality of life through movement, exertion and willpower" is a great idea! How to make that happen is the hard part. Not for the kids, for you as a parent. You must take the lead by example, because children will do what you do. As we have kids working hard to excel in their pursuit of higher belt levels they are learning to be successful by study, practice and testing. They are getting stronger, losing weight and gaining valuable experience in achievement that translates to success in other areas. For those not interested

in 'fitness with a purpose' take the lead and go biking, hiking or fishing together...without the phones on. As a parent myself, I know that kids watch us, and while they may listen, they do what you do. This is exactly why we offer a Family training option, so the whole family can share 'quality time' together.

Email your questions to AskMisterFit@robinsonstk.com and look for your answer on-line, or in the pages of this newspaper.



Films and DVDs for the Whole Family



by David Dickstein

Family Films

"Around the Block"
Opens Jan. 1, rated PG-13
kickpictures.com

An inner-city Aboriginal teenager is torn between his unexpected love of acting and the disintegration of his family due to deep-rooted cultural ways and ties to his thug-like brother. The Australian independent film stars Christina Ricci as an idealistic American high school drama teacher who helps the torn 16-year-old while she struggles to balance her personal and professional lives

"Dorothy of Oz"
Opens Jan. (date TBA), rated G
dorothyofozthemovie.com

This animated sequel to "The Wizard of Oz" finds Dorothy summoned by good witch Glinda to return to the Emerald City and thwart the Jester's plans to use the wand of the freshly melted Wicked Witch of the West to turn the Ozians into puppets. As sure as Toto hates tornadoes, Dorothy (voiced by "Glee's" Lea Michele) gets a little help from her friends, Scarecrow (Dan Aykroyd), the Cowardly Lion (James Belushi) and the Tin Man (Kelsey Grammer).



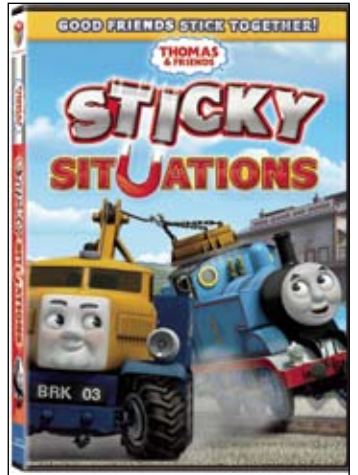
making turn of flamboyant Kurt Hummel on TV's "Glee." For one thing, his character, Carson, is dead. Well, he will be after an opening scene, thanks to a nasty bolt of lightning. For the rest of the film, Carson's life flashes before our eyes, and it's not all sunshine and roses. Blackmailed friends and a medicated mom rear their ugly heads in a story written by Colfer, whose own high school experience served as his inspiration.

Family DVDs

"Frankenweenie" (Jan. 15 on DVD and Blu-ray, rated PG): Tim Burton's third stop-motion animated film is an homage to classic movie monsters, yet driven by an original plot. The story follows young Victor, who loses his beloved dog but brings

and Catherine O'Hara. Grade: B-

"Hotel Transylvania" (Jan. 29 on DVD and Blu-ray, PG): A plot as thin as the blood of an aspirin addict hampers this animated vampire flick about a guy who wanders into Dracula's hotel and becomes smitten with the Count's daughter. Andy Samberg, Adam Sandler and Selena Gomez provide their voices, respectively, and while they do a fine job being heard and not seen, the threadbare script, including a predictable ending, has this movie lacking much bite. Grade: C



"Thomas & Friends Sticky Situations" (now available on DVD, not rated): Every segment in the series ends happily with teamwork saving the day, but before the trains of Sodor Island can smile again, they must go through some peril. In this title that means getting caught in a bind for not listening to directions, getting lost in thick fog and dealing with a muddy river. Grade: B+



"Struck by Lightning"
Opens Jan. 11, rated PG-13
struckbyleftning.tumblr.com

In his big-screen debut, Chris Colfer plays a much different high school outcast than his career-

him back to life through the power of science. Only nit is the main character is rather dull. Otherwise, fun for all ages (except for the easily frightened). Voice cast is led by Winona Ryder, Martin Landau, Martin Short



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FAMILY FEATURES

Maybe it’s the single serve proportions, perfect cake-to-icing ratio or approachability of this iconic treat, but America’s love affair with cupcakes is holding strong. These tasty treats can be adapted to any occasion, and whether it’s a favorite holiday, birthday bash, girl’s night out or just because, the color, sweetness and fun of cupcakes makes people smile.

Think of cupcakes as a blank canvas easily personalized with the right tools. For example, Wilton has products to make it easy for bakers and decorators of all skill levels to make their cupcakes amazing, no matter the occasion. Wilton’s new book, “Cupcakes!” is available at your nearest craft store and www.wilton.com, and showcases unique tips, techniques and products for swirling your way into cupcake greatness.

- **Play Dress Up.** Add personality with playful baking cups — from vibrant stripes to pretty polka dots to festive flowers. Top off your favorite cupcakes with cookie decorations; try a Shamrock for St. Patrick’s Day or an apple for an unexpected teacher’s gift on the first day of school.
- **Entice with Icing.** Play with icing color to add visual interest — think icy blue for a wintry treat or pale yellow for autumn. Sprinkles are an easy way to make icing sparkle. Sugar gems create an eye-catching crystal effect, and seasonal toppings add an extra special touch.
- **It’s Hip to be Square.** Round out your cupcake repertoire with Wilton’s Square Cupcake Pan and baking cups; the square shape is a fresh take on everyone’s favorite treat.

Swirl Like a Pro

To prepare, start with cupcakes that have been baked according to package directions, in the baking cup of your choice, and fully cooled. Place a coupler and a large round tip (like a 12 or 2A) on your Wilton decorating bag; fill with the icing of your choice.



1
Hold the decorating tip approximately 1/4 inch above the cupcake at a 90 degree angle to the cupcake. Starting at the center, pipe a large dot of icing onto cupcake top.

2
Pull the dot of icing to the outer edge of cupcake and begin piping a spiral of icing around the cupcake top, working inward and upward.

3
Once at the center, stop pressure and pull tip away. It’s as easy as that.



Colorful Cupcake Trio

Each cupcake serves 1

- You’ll Need:**
- Pink Wave, Black and White Doily Kit or Warm Stripes Square Baking Cups
 - Favorite cupcake recipe or mix
 - Ready-to-use White Decorator Icing
 - Rose Icing Color (Ombre Cupcakes)
 - Pink Sugar Gems (Sugar Striped Square Cupcakes)
 - Lemon Yellow Icing Color (Zebra Lace Cupcakes)
 - Zebra Icing Decoration (Zebra Lace Cupcakes)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place wave or solid black baking cup in standard muffin pan; place square baking cup in square cupcake pan.

Prepare cupcake batter per package or recipe instructions. Pour cupcake batter into prepared pan. Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean when inserted in center of cupcake. Remove pan to cooling grid; let stand 10 minutes. Remove cupcakes from pan; cool completely.

Rose Ombre Cupcakes

Divide icing, and tint six shades of rose from dark to very light. On top of cooled cupcake, using a tip 12 and the darkest rose icing, pipe large dot in center; add ring around dot at edge of cupcake. Switch to a slightly lighter shade of rose icing and, with tip 12, add another large dot to center top of cupcake, make a second ring around the inside edge of the first ring. Continue piping next three shades of lighter rose icings with tip 12 and create smaller rings of icing on the inside edge of the previous ring. Once at the center using the lightest shade of rose icing, pipe one last ring around top with tip 12, adding a swirl.

Sugar Striped Square Cupcakes

Using white icing and tip 12, cover top of cooled cupcake with large zigzag. Top with Pink Sugar Gems.

Zebra Lace Cupcakes

Tint icing yellow. Add tip 12 swirl to top of cooled cupcake. Add Zebra Icing Decoration.

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