

AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

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

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"Stealing" the Show

By Susan Maxwell Skinner

FAIR OAKS, CA – (MPG) Theatrical fans are rallying to help a beleaguered theatrical company whose future is threatened by a devastating theft.

On the eve of its 40th year, \$33,000 worth of essential production equipment was last month stolen from the Best of Broadway's storage facility in South Sacramento. To date, police have not recovered missing microphones, power tools and musical instruments.

Veteran producer David L. McDonald's song and dance review is staged annually at the Fair Oaks Village Amphitheater. Profits benefit charity. The show has for 39 years nurtured formidable talent; many cast alumni are now theatrical professionals. Actress Molly Ringwood and Broadway headliner Teal Wicks hatched from its chorus lines. "The show has been through some good and tough times," said a supporter. "This is the most demoralizing. When you run on a small budget, a loss like this is crippling. We now have to start from the ground up."

A SOS fundraiser last week inspired supporters. "Once the theater (The Refuge in Midtown Sacramento) opened, the love that poured into the room almost stopped my heart," said



Dancers and singers on stage in the Best of Broadway review. Production equipment including tools, microphones and musical instruments were recently stolen from the non-profit's storage facility. Photo by Susan Skinner

performer/fundraising director Christ Carlson. "It continued through our 90 minute show and peaked when we were able to hand Dave McDonald a box containing almost \$6000."

Carlson says donations toward the show's recovery are still filtering in. "They have energized us not to give up," he says. "We plan another fundraiser event in February. If this level of support continues, there

will be a 40th Best of Broadway show next September."

Donations may be mailed to Best of Broadway P.O. 60832, Carmichael CA 95608. For more information, call (916) 704-0058.

Rancho Cordova Residents Beautify Local Neighborhood

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – (MPG) The recently formed neighborhood group Keep Cordova Meadows Beautiful has completed its first project – painting a community mural on the north wall of the Carousel School near West La Loma and Terra Loma. Completing the mural is a major milestone for this new community group and shows how civic engagement can bring together residents for beneficial neighborhood projects.

During the mural painting, neighborhood residents admired the work and even picked up paint brushes to help out. Katherine Weedman-Cox, a Cordova Meadows resident involved in the project, said the community reactions were positive and heartwarming.

"One woman told me that she walks to the local store everyday and now feels proud, cheerful, and encouraged when she sees the mural instead of what was otherwise an empty space," said Weedman-Cox. "The mural is a great example of what a small group of people can do to improve the world in which they live."

Community pride has inspired residents to hold a community garage sale, join social networking site Nextdoor.com, and plan a community barbecue to get to know one another. Other



Volunteers paint the new mural in the Cordova Meadows neighborhood in Rancho Cordova.

residents in the neighborhood are encouraged to join the Keep Cordova Meadows Beautiful group to help develop and undertake other projects.

"Cordova Meadows is a success story as we launch the City's civic engagement program,"

said City Planning Director Paul Junker. "We supported and advised residents, but it was the residents that chose projects, put in the hard work and made the mural a reality. This group exceeded our expectations by acting independently and

creating visions for the future of their community."

Cordova Meadows was chosen as the pilot neighborhood for the City's civic engagement program. With Cordova Meadows building momentum and moving into new projects, the City will shift its focus to additional neighborhoods. Ultimately, the City hopes to support groups like Keep Cordova Meadows Beautiful throughout the community, often building on the efforts of existing neighborhood associations.

The City's focus on civic engagement began with the award of a grant from the Davenport Institute at Pepperdine University. Through that grant, Ed Everett of the Davenport Institute guided City employees and community members through a process which prepares them to train other neighborhood leaders on how they can facilitate these types of projects in their neighborhoods.

The grant was in conjunction with the City's Growing Strong Neighborhoods Initiative launched in 2007 by Mayor David Sander to improve the health and stability of neighborhoods. Visit www.cityofranchocordova.org for more information.

Source: City of Rancho Cordova

Old-Fashioned Holiday Fun in Fair Oaks Village!



FAIR OAKS, CA – (MPG) Fair Oaks' 29th Annual "Christmas in the Village" is planned for Saturday, December 1st.

Families and early shoppers can enjoy the great merchant's specials from 10am-7pm. There will be refreshments, arts and crafts vendor booths, and Santa in the Park from 1-3pm. The event will feature live holiday music and old fashioned carolers strolling the Village. "Winnie the Pooh" will be in the amphitheater at 2pm. The Holiday Lights Parade is scheduled for 4:30pm, with the Christmas tree lighting at dusk. Refreshments and caroling will continue in the Park.

Fair Oaks Village is conveniently located on Fair Oaks Blvd. 1 block east of Sunrise Blvd. between Sunrise and Winding Way. For more information call 916-967-2903 or visit the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce website: www.fair-oakschamber.com

Happy Heart, Healthy Eating Day

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – (MPG) Eating healthy can be fun will be the take-home message at the Sacramento Children's Museum "Happy Heart, Healthy Eating Day" on Saturday, December 1st. Located at 2701 Prospect Park Drive in Rancho Cordova, the Museum will incorporate healthy eating habits with fun activities from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

How to identify healthy foods will be the theme of the cooking demonstration by chefs from the Le Cordon Bleu Culinary School. Girl Scout Troop 2153 from Arden Park will help participants plant a winter vegetable to take home.

Other special activities will include making placemats and going on a scavenger hunt. Exercising activities will include a Happy Yogis session and a music and movement class. Plus all the Museum exhibits and activities will be available, including Waterways, Leo's Market, Airways and Raceways, My Neighborhood, Studio of Arts, and Baby Bloomers, a special area for babies and toddlers.

Admission will be free because of a grant from the Newman's Own Foundation. "The Happy Heart, Healthy Eating Days are held quarterly," said Sharon Stone Smith, the Museum's Executive Director.

"The goal is to make it fun to identify healthy foods, habits, and practices."

For more information, please call (916) 638-7225 or visit the Museum's website at sacramentochildrensmuseum.org.

Source: City of Rancho Cordova

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Red Monday Is Coming!

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – (MPG) State Farm agent Doug Brewer has announced his partnership with Santa Claus on Monday, December 3, the first Monday in December, now to be known as “Red Monday”, when free professional portraits will be taken with the jolly old fellow.

Local area residents are encouraged to take advantage of the free professional Santa portrait sessions, which will be held from 9 to 11 AM and from 4 to 6 PM at State Farm Insurance at 3358 Mather Field Road in



Rancho Cordova. Portraits will be taken by local professional photographer Michelle L Miller of Reflections by Michelle Photography of Wilton, CA. Children of all ages and families

can be photographed without an appointment, although appointments are recommended. Members of the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce and Cordova Community Council will also be in attendance and supporting the event. The Mather Field/ Rancho Cordova office of State Farm is located south of Highway 50, in the Rockingham Plaza.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (916) 366-5555.

Small Business Referral Organization Opens Chapter in Fair Oaks



BNI – Business Network Int’l., a networking organization specializing in business referrals among members, is developing its newest chapter,

BNI Xtraordinaires, in Fair Oaks! “BNI is a great way for businesses to experience growth by duplicating their marketing

efforts through word-of-mouth. We only accept one person per profession, therefore once someone has been accepted as a member, none of their competitors can participate!” says John Lisle, Exec Director of BNI for the Central Valley Region. The BNI Fair Oaks Xtraordinaires chapter is looking for professional business people to whom they can refer business. Anyone who is interested in generating a steady source of referral business is welcome! Call John Lisle for further information at (916) 489-9302. Check out our web site: www.bnivc.com.

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Jonathan Peschke

You may know my face but not my name. As a long time resident and business owner in Carmichael you may have seen me play baseball, coach basketball or been a friend from the swim team, but most will know me as the Black Belt Master Instructor at Robinson’s Taekwondo Carmichael. As a fifth degree Black Belt I have been sharing the secrets of martial arts and personal fitness for many years. Often people ask, what’s the best way to get fit?

Obviously I have a strong belief that the Korean-based martial art Taekwondo is the best choice for my family and I would recommend it to yours, but individuals are all unique and one size definitely

doesn’t fit all! As a life-long athlete with experience in a wide range of personal and team sports, you may wonder what’s right for you. You may have questions about a combination of physical activities, appropriate training levels, how individual health factors into finding the right fitness activity to keep you alive longer.

It’s why you will find I am introducing myself to people who may already know me, as we join forces to provide health information, answer fitness questions and share the real need to get physical for better health, greater confidence, longer life and lower healthcare costs.

You may think you can’t do martial arts, become an Iron athlete or build muscles like our former Governor, but I’m here to help you learn that you can! Anyone can become healthier, build endurance and

find a better quality of life thru movement, exertion and willpower. While Taekwondo also provides the lifesaving skills of self-defense, any exercise is beneficial. Knowing what may work best for you is often trial and error. Together we can help short circuit much of that ‘try it on for size’ effort in finding a fitness routine, save you money, make you healthier and give Carmichael the fits!

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



Retired Teachers Receive National Award

From Kathleen Wilkinson

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA – (MPG) Calif. Retired Teachers’ Association, Division #75, received a National Award for their outstanding service to youth. The National Retired Teachers’ Association (a division of AARP) gave this award to the outstanding volunteers in the Mini-Grant Program.

These volunteers have dedicated their efforts to making a difference in the lives of our youth. The Mini-Grant Program was selected for this award for providing funding to innovative teachers to use for enrichment programs for students. Committee members spend over 230 hours per year in a variety of activities including communications, reviewing applications and fund raising.

During the six years the MIni-Grant Program has been



Mini-Grant Committee members (left to right, standing) are Pat Underwood, Alice Ainsworth, Jeanie Campbell, Pat Boyd, Pat Carper (Chairperson), Diane Hansen, Georgene Cooper and seated is Nancy Orr. Photo by Lloyd Bousliman, CalRTA, Division 75

in existence an impressive total of sixty mini-grants have been presented impacting over 2,000 students.

The National Award was

presented by CalRTA State Executive Director, Angelique Hill to Pat Carper (Chairperson) at the Division #75 General Meeting in October.



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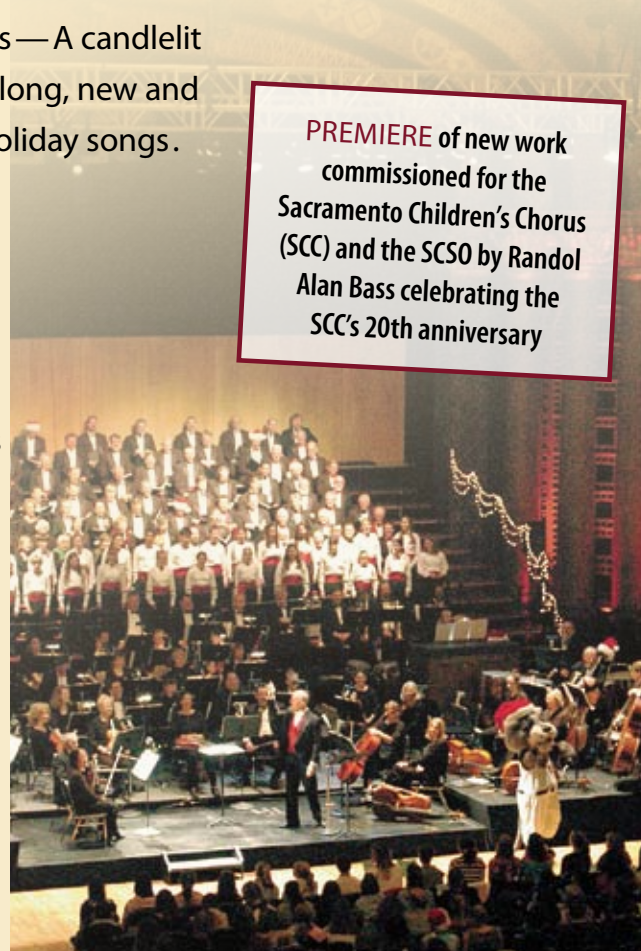
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Rancho Cordova Has Great Success With Shopping Cart Retrieval Service

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – (MPG) More than 600 shopping carts have been picked up and returned to stores since the City of Rancho Cordova contracted with California Shopping Cart Retrieval Corporation (CSCRC) in November 2011.

The carts are picked up during regular weekly sweeps along major City thoroughfares. In addition, the public can report abandoned carts by calling (800) 252-4613 or by reporting them at www.cartretrieval.net.

Plus, iPhone users can use www.cartsnap.com, that allows users to instantly snap a photo of an abandoned shopping cart and report its location to CSCRC.

The cart retrieval service is administered by the City’s Neighborhood Services Division as part of the Growing Strong Neighborhoods initiative.

“This service is a proactive way to keep our City streets and sidewalks clean,” said Jessica Crone, who coordinates the program for the City. She added that taking a cart from the store location is theft and should be reported to the Rancho Cordova Police Department.

For more information, please contact Jessica Crone at (916) 851-8775.

Source: City of Rancho Cordova

Holiday Shopping Event Will Provide Helping Hand

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA – (MPG) Christmas in Cordova, a community based program which provides a way for needy parents to holiday “shop” for their children, will take place on Saturday, December 15th, at Mills Middle School in Rancho Cordova from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

“We even provide day care for young children as well as fun and games for older children while their parents select and wrap gifts,” said Rancho Cordova Police Officer Heidi Herrera, who is coordinating the event. “Santa and Mrs. Claus are scheduled to be on hand for photo opportunities and a meal will be provided for participating families.”

Herrera is asking area businesses to set up a collection box for new, unwrapped toys. She said that people can also make monetary donations that will be used to purchase toys, food for the meal, and other event supplies. “Plus we will need volunteers to help with shopping, wrapping, entertaining children, and doing other tasks at the event,” she commented.

Last year, more than 600 families participated for 1,600 children.

Sponsors of Christmas in Cordova, now in its second year, are the Rancho Cordova Police Department, Sacramento Sheriff’s Department, PAL (Police Activities League), Folsom Cordova Community Partnership, Sun River Church, Mercy General Hospital, Folsom Cordova Unified School District, and the City of Rancho Cordova Growing Strong Neighborhoods Initiative.

Source: City of Rancho Cordova

Tom’s Reprieve

By Penny Howard

I grew up in Auburn during the 1920s and ‘30s. Memories of the Great Depression are still vivid in my mind. It meant consisting on a diet of mostly potatoes, beans and rice. Sometimes we had a hint of meat in our beans. Mama was a genius with soups and casseroles that required little or no meat.

In spite of the frugal meals throughout the year, we could always look forward to a sumptuous Thanksgiving dinner with a huge turkey, stuffing, gravy and all the trimmings. That’s because Aunt Noreene and Uncle Udney always invited us to their home in Carmichael for the holiday feast.

I knew it depressed Mama that we couldn’t reciprocate, but times were too hard. However, she always baked pumpkin pies for the dinner. It made her feel she was contributing.

Knowing how she felt, Daddy came home one day and announced that we were going to invite my aunt and uncle for Thanksgiving dinner.

“Oh Martin,” Mama said. “I’d love to, but how can we afford it?”

“Don’t worry,” he said with a grin. “I have it all planned. The American Legion is having a turkey shoot. They have five turkeys, and I’m going to get one for us.”

I knew Daddy was pretty good with a gun. He’d been in the Army during World War I, and later in the National Guard in Auburn. He’d also done some duck hunting, so I knew something as big as a turkey would pose no problem for him at all. Imagine my surprise when he came home from the shoot with a huge turkey — alive!

“What happened, Daddy?” I asked. “How could you miss hitting something that big? And how come they let you bring him home if you didn’t shoot him?”

“You don’t actually shoot the turkey,” he said. “You shoot at targets. They turkeys are the prizes for best marksmen.”

With Thanksgiving still a week away, my sisters and I delighted in feeding Tom. Daddy also came out each day to admire him, and we all laughed at the way the big bird strutted around cocking his head. Daddy even carried on a one-way conversation with him. We all became quite fond of old Tom.

Finally, Thanksgiving was just one day away. The pies were all baked so the oven would be free for Tom the next morning. We eagerly looked forward to the two families getting together at our house for the holiday.

As Mama started our evening meal, she turned to Daddy and said, “You’d better do your duty. Tom has to be ready to go into the oven first thing in the morning.”

My throat tightened, and my sisters and I each stared at each other in horror. In all of our joy and anticipation for the big day we had somehow forgotten that Tom would have to make the supreme sacrifice for our enjoyment.

“Oh, yeah,” Daddy mumbled. “I guess I forgot.”

He went slowly out the back door and picked up the ax. My sisters and I pressed our faces to the kitchen window as we watched him walking toward Tom’s cage, ax in hand. That was too much for us. We couldn’t watch. With aching hearts and teary eyes, we retreated to the living room.

About 10 minutes later, we heard Daddy come back into the house.

We went into the kitchen to glare at him with accusing eyes. His shoulders sagged, and he looked at Mama with tears in his eyes and his chin quivering.

“I couldn’t do it,” he said. “Tom just looked at me so trusting with his big eyes. And I swear he smiled, like he was expecting me to feed him.”

“Oh Martin, you have to,” Mama cried. “Noreene and Udney will be here for dinner. We can’t let them down.”

“I know,” Daddy answered. “But can’t we get some hamburger? You could make a nice big meat loaf.”

“No. It’s past five. The butcher shop is closed, and it won’t be open tomorrow, either. You have to kill Tom.”

After some deep pondering, Daddy said, “Wait a minute. I’ll be right back. I have an idea.”

We couldn’t imagine where he was going, or what he had in mind, but my sisters and I were sure glad that Tom had a reprieve. I don’t think any of us could have eaten him.

Soon Daddy was back with a package under his arm. “There,” he said, with a big grin, as he put it on the table. “It’s a pork roast. It’ll go great with the stuffing and other things you were going to fix tomorrow.”

“Where did you get it?” Mama asked in surprise.

“I went over to the Shaeffers’ and told them of our dilemma. They were going to have a pork roast. So, I offered to trade Tom for their roast and they jumped at the chance. George is on his way over now to pick up Tom.”

I guess we all knew Tom would not see another sunrise, but at least Daddy didn’t have to kill him, and we didn’t have to eat him.



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WINTER QUARTER CLASSES BEGIN NOVEMBER 2012

I, Twinkie

**Commentary by
Jeffrey Tucker
Laissez Faire Today
Reprinted by permission**

Oh how everyone (of a certain class and income) makes fun of the Twinkie, the ultimate symbol of modern food decadence and phoniness. I don't get it. Have the critics ever tried one? They are so appealing and delicious: light, spongy, sweet, and creamy, all in a tiny package.

The news that the parent company Hostess was going out of business caused a huge run on Twinkies in my own community. Every store had an empty space where they should have been. The preppers were right: we should have stocked up for emergencies like this.

Unavailable for 12 Months, Now Open for the Next 36 Hours Only

For the first time in one year, this top-secret project — which has been locked shut from the public — is open again.

It may not only change the way you look at the world, it could revolutionize the way you view investing, building new wealth, and funding your retirement... to allow you to independently — and confidently — build lasting wealth.

However, it's available only for an extremely short time. The deadline is tomorrow, Nov. 20, at midnight.

Get all the details behind this secret project and your once-a-year-chance to join, here.

Meanwhile, the haters have been generating a legion of lies about Twinkies ever since food puritanism took over elite culture. Therefore, the urban myths are legion. You know them all. It can stand up to a nuclear holocaust. It is made entirely of artificial ingredients, the ultimate Frankenfood. It is responsible for the obesity epidemic. And so on.

So don't you just know that plenty of cultural snobs and anti-market ideologues were experiencing serious Schadenfreude at the news that the labor unions have strangled Hostess? They are probably thrilled to kick this snake out of the American garden of Eden they are trying to create and cast the whole line of products to the Mexican outer darkness.

It pains me. It really does. More than half a billion Twinkies are sold every year. They bring incredible joy to multitudes who don't happen to live next to an old-world French pastry shop. The market has been bringing this treat to the masses for 70 glorious years, and all that the cultural elite can do is sneer.

Let's take just a moment to give the Twinkie a bit of respect, as a symbol of the complex economic structures of our time that cannot be replicated by you, me, or any government in the world. It takes a giant market, an extended order of trade, and an unfathomably complex division of labor to make a Twinkie and deliver it to your pallet.

No, it would never existed in

an economy planned by the government. Moving mountains and shipping ingredients all over the world just to please you and me? It would never be allowed. Plus, there is no way a government planner could make it happen. The processes are too complex and carefully calibrated by the price system to be economically feasible.

Let's quickly kill a few myths. Contrary to the claim, it is made of 100% natural ingredients. Everything in it comes from the earth — as much a product of mother nature as a carrot or bean sprout — with the only difference that it goes through a more extensive production process through time and space. And the reason for the long processes: to make a better product for you and me (which no one forces us to eat).

Twinkies have a remarkable and laudatory shelf life of 25 days, which is rather wonderful for something so puffy and moist. It stays fresh for a time long enough for you to consume it and enjoy it. Time was when hardtack was pretty much all that could last for long travels. Do the food puritans want us eating that rather than yummy sweets? (I don't want to hear the answer.)

It's a myth that it can survive a nuclear explosion but it seems to me that it would be a good thing if it could. Why should survivors of war-torn lands not have access to good food that contains essential proteins in eggs and a source of energy in its cane sugar?

And let's give a hand for the Hostess company's marketing too. Unlike the Apple and Monsanto, the Twinkie benefits from no monopoly protection from government. Anyone can make an imitation and plenty do, such as Mrs Freshley's Gold Creme Cakes and Little Debbie's Golden Cremes. Still, the Twinkie survives with a high name-brand status, or did until the unions killed it. This nicely demonstrates that "intellectual property" is not necessary for profitable production over a long period of time.

It turns out that there is an entire book that details what is in a Twinkie and how it is made. It is Twinkie, Deconstructed, by Steve Ettlinger (Hudson Street Press, 2007). He began the book to try to figure out what all the strange ingredients listed on the label actually are. There are 39 of them, and he devotes a chapter to each one, discovering one by one that every ingredient serves the essential purpose of making the product better. If he began the project with the goal of exposing this Frankenfood, he came away from the long project with profound respect for the food item.

As Ettlinger tells the story, the Twinkie was the invention of Charles Dewar, vice president of Continental Bakeries, who figured out how to idle shortbread pans for a different purpose besides make a strawberry treat, which he could not make in the off season (in the old days, there were such things as off seasons). The basic ingredients were the same as they are now (wheat, sugar, soybeans, and eggs).

The name he came up with from seeing a billboard for "Twinkle-Toe Shoes." It was a great plan, and the cakes were hugely popular, except for one thing. The shelf life (the holy grail of food retailing) was only two days. The market for the cake was huge but the company couldn't satisfy the demand. It took decades of research and experimentation but the probably was finally solved in the 1950s, and that's when the ingredient list became longer.

For most of the Twinkie bakeries around the country, the wheat for the cake flour (which is highly specialized) comes from small, family farms (including Amish farms) that have only a

few employees, thanks to technology. The enrichment blend of ferrous sulfate and B vitamins is added to white flour on government mandate, presumably to end the disease pellagra. If you don't like the extra vitamins and iron, call your congressman.

Ettlinger explodes other myths such as that Twinkies roll off an assembly line and go straight to the packet. Not so. They are baked and browned just like regular cakes, and that's because, well, they are regular cakes. But do they need to be so sweet? The sweeteners work as preservatives, adding color, and causing the ingredients to blend better. Plus, we like sugar. But not too much, which is why corn syrup is also in there because it doesn't crystallize.

(If U.S. sugar tariffs didn't drive up the price so high, the company might have been able to withstand union pressure more. Also, while I'm against corn subsidies as much as the next guy, every baker knows that corn syrup has its place. And anyone who blames it for the rise in obesity might take note that the average daily calorie intake of Americans has risen by 600 since 1980, and corn syrup only accounts for 10% of that. A more obvious factor: people eat vastly more because they can afford to and it's there to eat.)

The demonized preservative in the Twinkie is the miracle food compound called sorbic acid. How the ancients would have loved this stuff! It's sole job is to keep the mold away. Mold is the stuff that forms around moist areas such as your bathtub. If there isn't anything in food that molds — think of pita chips — you don't need it. But once you add leavenings, eggs, cream, and put a wet and spongy thing inside a plastic bag, you have got a serious mold issue. You know this if you have even baked a cake and let it sit out for a few days.

Sorbic acid — it was discovered in berries in 1859 in berries but today is made as a gentle petroleum product with less toxicity than salt — is the earth's greatest enemy of mold. It is an amazing compound that makes grocery stores possible. If you see something like that in a bag that says "no preservatives," run don't walk. It could be deadly. As it is, the Twinkie only contains tiny trace amounts, just

enough to make the product safe for you and me.

People today use the word preservative as if to insinuate that it is some poison that capitalistic corporations insert into our food to profit from poisoning us. Actually, people have struggled to preserve food since the beginning of time. The line between food that gives health and food that kills is a tiny turn of time, practically one minute to the next.

Modern preservatives were discovered at the dawn of modernity, at the height of the Renaissance when music and painting became truly beautiful, when the masses starting eating like kings, and when the common person first had a chance at social mobility. Preservatives meant that the average person had a greater chance at not dying from eating.

If you doubt it, put flour, milk, and egg in a bag and put it on the counter overnight. I wouldn't suggest eating it.

Don't tell me that Twinkies kill. They are made the way they are precisely so that the food will not kill — thereby solving a huge problem that has vexed us for millions of years. Preservatives preserve your life. As a result, anyone can have access to a legendary dessert treat without having to bake at home or live close by to a pastry shop.

The market works astonishingly hard for you to have a Twinkie. Its creation is the culmination of work that began in the ancient days and continues to now, and it combines technology, an unfathomably complex division of labor, trade among all nations from China to the Middle East to Oklahoma, and a level of capital sophistication that just blows the mind.

Put it down if you want to — that's your right — but don't take its existence for granted, much less celebrate when the coercive power of unions shut them down. The unions and sugar tariffs are doing to a great company what mold does to food. Sadly, we've got no ingredient to defend enterprise against parasitism. The U.S. is made that much worse off without the Twinkie. Our loss is Mexico's gain.

Jeffrey Tucker
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By Ronnie McBrayer

When my youngest son hopped on an airplane for his first foray into the friendly skies, it didn't take him long to shake off any fear he may have brought down the tarmac with him. He loved it, his favorite part being when the plane would bank steeply to one side.

"It's fun when the universe is sideways," he said as the plane tilted dangerously askew. I disagreed in more ways than one. The universe is sideways, it seems, but it is not very enjoyable. It is terrifying.

The fear, uncertainty, wars and rumors of wars, loss of homes, jobs, and economic insecurity have all but stolen the spirit of Thanksgiving from many a heart. When your mortgage payment is ninety days late; when you have to sit down with your child to say you can no longer afford the tuition that is keeping her at school; when you wonder if you will have enough gas money just to get you to work next week, it's hard to be thankful.

When you can no longer stomach the ring of your cell phone because of all the bill collectors, when your retirement plan has lost forty, fifty, sixty percent of its value – your personal universe is sideways and it is not fun.

His Love Endures Forever

So it is a daunting task for many this Thanksgiving to sit down to turkey, if there is even a turkey to eat, and be able to say "thank you." An alternative prayer of the Psalmist seems more appropriate: "How long O Lord, will you forget about me?"

Some time ago my sweet wife was having a very bad day. Anyone who knows my wife knows that she is as steady as the rising sun. Her mood and outlook on life is constantly cheerful. But on this day, it was chilly and dark.

Things at work were difficult. There were family issues – in hers and mine. There was more month than money. A co-worker was being inflexible and obnoxious. The house was a wreck. Our children were defying her, and I was ignoring her. She was reduced to tears. I went in to where she was crying, I put my arms around her, and I said, "But honey, I love you."

In my mind I was dismounting from my white steed, my shining armor polished to a dazzling sheen, there to save the day with my strong arms, calming presence, and soothing words. But I was not received as the saving Messiah. Cindy recoiled, pushed me away and said, "I know. But that doesn't fix anything." And she was right.

My love for her didn't shut up bawling children. It didn't magically put more money in our checking account. It didn't turn the dunce she worked with into

Mother Teresa. It didn't even take the fish sticks off the table.

But what we ultimately agreed upon, after I got over the shock of being so rebuffed, is that while love changes nothing about our circumstances, love changes us. It gives us the strength to face what is out there, even if what is out there is sideways. Love sustains us, encourages us; it gives us what we really need: The ability to keep going, even with tears on our cheeks.

That's what God's love does. It keeps going and keeps us going. It endures forever, and for that, we are forever grateful. We are not alone. We are not abandoned. We are not forgotten. God is with us. We are loved.

If given this choice, which would you take: To have all your problems solved, all your struggles worked out, and all your troubles flushed away; or, would you choose to be deeply, unconditionally, and madly loved?

I think I know your answer. And that answer is the reason for our gratitude, even in a world turned upside down. Love produces thanksgiving – not because we will have everything we want – but because we have the one thing we were made for, the one thing we need. His love endures forever; let us give thanks.

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.

The Great Thanksgiving Con

Rev. James L. Snyder, D.Litt

Let me make it clear right up front that Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. I admit I am not too fond of many holidays. Can a week go by without some holiday that shuts down everybody?

I celebrated Veteran's Day, for example, on Sunday and the next day I went to the bank and discovered the bank was celebrating Veteran's Day on Monday. Don't they know what day it is? I trust these people with my money?

Of all the holidays we have, Thanksgiving is high on my list. I used to have a high regard for my birthday but so many of them have come that I do not like them anymore. I am ready to cancel that holiday. My birthday only means I am one year older and not one whit wiser.

I am not thinking just about the scrumptious Thanksgiving dinner. Okay, maybe I am, a little. Down through the years, I have been great fraternity buddies with eating. We have bonded so great throughout the years that even now that bonding is beginning to show.

I like Thanksgiving, and so I am a little confused about these Sanity Challenged Buffoons who are allergic to the word "Thanksgiving." They want to use names like, "Turkey Day," and the latest one "T-Day." What the "T" stands for is anybody's guess. I know what "D-Day" stands for but all the gray matter has leaked out of my skull trying to figure out what "T-Day" stands for.

Given the rationality of these purveyors of insanity, I can only guess.

Looking at what is happening to this great holiday, I have uncovered a con so convert that most people do not know it is going on. I call it the great Thanksgiving con. This is especially true for those who call it Turkey Day.

First off, everybody says nice things about the turkey. The more the turkey struts, the more the compliments flow his way. What the turkey does not know is that when these "Turkey Day" people are looking at the turkey they are also licking their lips. It is not the beautiful feathers that interest them. It is not the way the turkey proudly struts back and forth. The frame these people want to see the turkey in is a roasting pan.

They want to get rid of all those feathers that the turkey is so proud of and strip him bare so that he fits nicely in the roasting pan.

The last few weeks of the turkey's life are rather remarkable. These people will give the turkey everything it wants. More food than the turkey can gobble up. What the turkey does not know is that there is a destiny in store for him. With all the attention paid him, he has the idea that everybody appreciates him for his looks.

If this turkey would ever spend an evening watching television with his human host, he would gather the idea that the most important thing in all the world is how you look. Looking into the mirror the turkey is quite proud of what he sees. He assumes that what he sees looking in the mirror is what his human host sees when they look at him.

How wrong can a turkey be?

The con begins to unfold. Rumors are flying about that there is a great banquet being prepared in his honor. Any turkey would be proud of this kind of development and look forward to being the guest of honor.

In fact, as the turkey struts back-and-forth in front of his human hosts, he hears them saying, "Won't that turkey look good at our dinner table?" Whose head wouldn't turn hearing this kind of a compliment?

What the turkey does not know is that being a guest at a

dinner table is a one-time event for a creature like himself. Any turkey worth his feathers does not think beyond this great feast being held in his honor.

I can imagine the gobble back in the turkey pen with the other turkeys. This great big, good-looking turkey, is telling all the others how important he is on the other side of the fence. Being the kind of turkey that he is, his gobble wins over the admiration of the other turkeys.

"I'm so special," the turkey gobbles to his inferiors, "that those humans are having a special banquet and I am the special guest of honor." The rest of the turkeys are oohing in his direction for they never seen anyone quite as special as this turkey.

The fatal day arrives. People come for the turkey and the rest of the turkeys have gathered around giving him a special turkey sendoff. They cannot wait to hear his report when he gets back from the special banquet.

I say this is a con to beat all cons. Wrong messages are being sent to the turkey population. Thinking they are the guest of honor, they turn out to be the main dish on the banquet table.

This is why I am against the term "Turkey Day." It sends the wrong message. The focus around our table on this special occasion will not be the turkey but rather giving thanks to God who has been so good to us.

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Psalms 100:4 KJV).

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 jamesnsnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.



By Marlys Norris, Christian Author

Over and over again we are hearing the time for Christ's return is nearing to gather His children, called the "Rapture" of the church. (Believers and followers of Jesus Christ)

This afternoon as I sat on our front porch, sitting on the swing just listening to the wind and the music of wind chimes — new thoughts began to enter my mind. The impression or voice I heard was this, "What if when Christ comes for His church, He left you behind?" My first thought was Oh No! I questioned! I am part of "the Church.. Why would He do that? He gave

me eternal life when I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior of my soul! Then, a strange thing happened as I began to get answers and more questions. It was like the voice of God talking to me in my mind. .

He said, "Marlys haven't you written in your articles that your heart cries with Mine when someone rejects my plan of salvation?" I answered, "Yes, I did write that and I do experience hurt and I do cry with you."

"Are you not concerned about every soul coming to Me that they might surrender and commit their lives to Me?" I again answered, "Yes" and I heard this, "Well then, I just might need you to stay and help Me bring some souls into my kingdom. Would you be willing to stay?" I was taken back and humbled by these words because there are so many more people much more qualified than I. Then I thought— if God would call me, my answer would be "yes" because His Beloved Son died and shed His precious blood for me. I truly would be

willing to die what-ever way He deemed to be my will. I believe with all my heart that God's promises are true and He said He would never leave or forsake me. His Holy Spirit has been inspiring me since I began to use this gift to honor and glorify Him. He has been with me since 1968 and given me a blessed life and what-ever He asks I will be willing to do, that He might see the fruit of my love is true.

It is an awesome thing to hear and believe God is speaking, asking one a profound question. The longer I walk with God it is more and more awesome to hear His voice louder. I never know when He will make things so clear, nor do I have any preconceived idea of what it might be about. I love and trust Him with my heart and soul!

*Marlys Johnsen Norris
Seven Christian Books
"God Moves Mountains, It was a Miracle!"
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By Pastor Ray Dare

We're going to celebrate Thanksgiving this month. How do you be thankful in tough times? When the economy is not good? When you've lost your job, lost your house, when you've lost your health, when things aren't going your way? How do you be thankful in tough times?

The Bible says in Philippians 4:6, "Don't be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Then it says, "Finally whatever is true and noble and right and pure and lovely and admirable, think about such things and the God of peace will be with you."

Thank God in all things. The Bible does not say be thankful for everything. It says, "In every circumstance give thanks." Not for every circumstance. What's the difference? Even out of bad God can bring good. In every circumstance, no matter how bad it is, you can give thanks to God because (a) You know He has a purpose bigger than the problem

Thanksgiving In Tough Times

and (b) He will give you the power to overcome the problem, and (c) You will grow through the experience if you allow it to help you grow. In every circumstance, even in tough times you can be thankful because you know God is greater than the problem.

You may think, "But how can I be grateful when I've lost so much? I've lost my job, I've lost my health, I've lost my house. How can I be thankful in that situation?" You can be thankful by looking not at what you've lost but you look at what you have left. And you have a lot left! You're still alive and you still have a lot of blessings if you'll look around and count them. Gratitude is a stress reliever because it gets your eyes off the problem and puts it on the positive things in your life.

Think about right things. None of us use our brain to the potential God has given us. Whatever you put in your brain is what's going to come out. It's like a computer. Garbage in, garbage out. Whatever you feed into your mind, whatever you think about, is going to come out in your life. The way you think determines the way you feel and the way you feel determines the way you act. So if you want to change your life, you need to change what you're thinking about. What's the result? Philippians 4:7, "If you do this you will experience

God's peace which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your heart quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus." The result is peace, God's peace. How do you get the kind of peace that helps you be thankful in the tough times? You don't worry about anything, you pray about everything, you give thanks in all things, you think about right things and the peace of God will be yours as you trust in Jesus.

Would you pray this prayer in your heart? "Dear Lord, help me not to worry about anything but to pray about everything, to discuss things with You rather than worry. Help me to be a more grateful person, to develop the attitude of gratitude and to thank You in every situation, realizing that there's always something to be grateful for. Help me to think about the right things, to spend some time with You in the Bible every day, reading Your Bible to fill my mind with positive things, not the negative garbage that's out in the world. I ask You to put Your peace in my heart, in Jesus' name, Amen".

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 8

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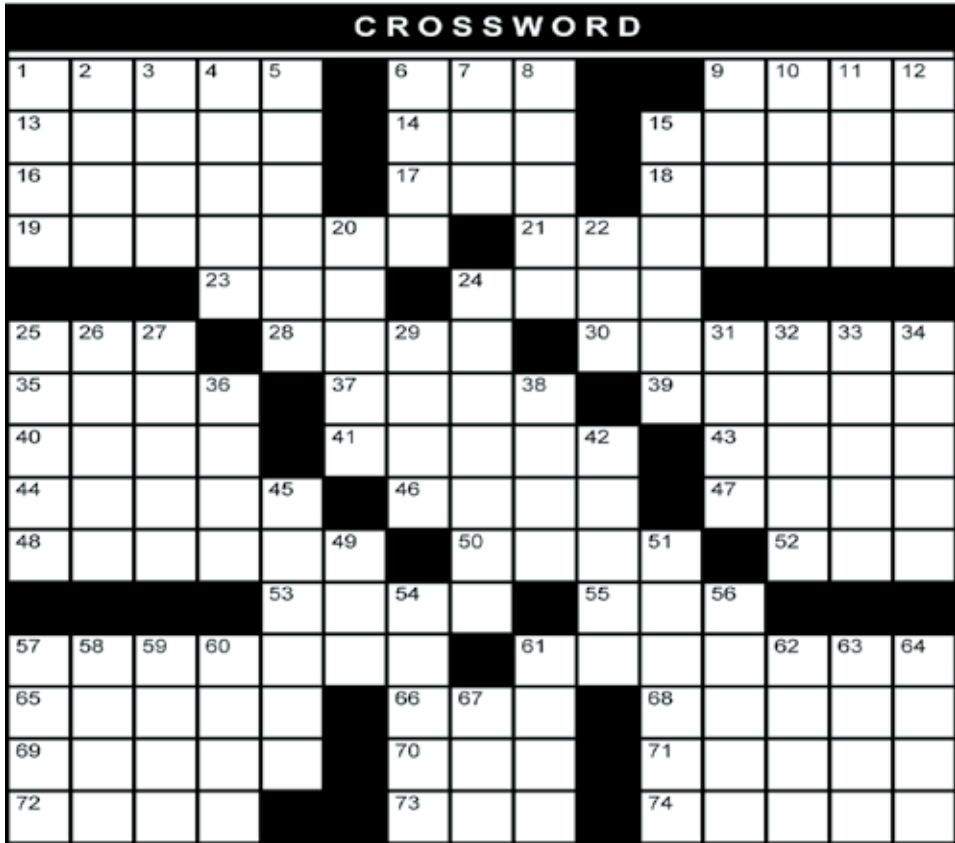
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CLUES

- ACROSS
1. "Wheel of Fortune" purchase
6. Christian minister, abbr.
9. "Jersey Shore" stars jump in and out of them
13. Popeye's gal
14. "... he drove out of sight"
15. Cuba Gooding, Jr. 2003 role
16. Calculus calculation
17. "Lend me your ____"
18. Furnish with a fund
19. "Bravo" cook
21. "TV's largest family"
23. Toni Morrison's "____ Baby"
24. It's everywhere you want to be?
25. Y, so to say
28. Places
30. Curved, as in foot
35. Argonauts' propellers
37. Shakespearean "does"
39. Type of TV show
40. Actress ____ Perlman
41. Erasable programmable read-only memory
- DOWN
1. Electrical unit
43. Echoed by the flock
44. John ____ of The Age of the Enlightenment
46. Fodder holder
47. Painter ____ Chagall
48. Like an adoring mom
50. Carbon monoxide lacks this
52. Heavy-duty cleanser
53. D in DINK
55. Blue
57. "Like a certain TV race
61. Exposes
65. Actor Matt ____
66. Rocks in a bar
68. Pool problem
69. Faulkner's "As I Lay ____"
70. Yes move
71. Writer behind a writer
72. Cold ____
73. Gloppy stuff
74. * John and Kate plus how many?
2. Hodgepodge
3. Like one who lacks confidence
4. Put out on a curb
5. " ____ Weapon"
6. Great Barrier ____
7. E in BCE
8. "Rigoletto" composer
9. "The Big ____ Theory"
10. Primary source for Scandinavian mythology
11. Late designer Christian ____
12. Girl hogs
15. Perceive or think about in a particular way
20. Grind down
22. "Future home network for "Partners in Crime"
24. Venomous talk
25. "MTV's "The Real ____"
26. Cowboy's cry of joy
27. Not slouching
29. "Entering its 25th season
31. Pull an all-nighter
32. Middle Eastern porter
33. Salon file
34. "So you think you can do this?"
36. Goes well with sushi
38. Phone button
42. Natasha Fatale's enemy
45. Concluding or finishing
49. "It's often bought on "Pawn Stars"
51. What pirates do
54. Wine ripening
56. Indian metropolis
57. Contributes
58. Waldorf salad ingredient
59. Arabian chieftain
60. Type of defense
61. Word processor command
62. Bug-eyed
63. Mascara site
64. Badger's den
67. Bird word

For Solution
See Page 7

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with Mary Jane Popp

THANKFUL

They were somber Pilgrims all dressed in black outfits and clunky shoes with buckled hats, sitting down to a diet-busting Thanksgiving feast in 17th Century New England with the Native Americans. At least that’s what we thought. The friendly natives came to the rescue and saved the starving settlers. That’s the scene we all grew up believing. But it was not exactly that way, according to historian Ken Davis, author of the “Don’t Know Much About” series. Here is what Ken told me. “The Pilgrims didn’t wear black. The feast was more of a surf and turf affair, full of venison, turkey, and mussels and scallops from the nearby ocean.” The turkey was not today’s turkey, but wild turkey and there were pumpkins not pumpkin pie. Dessert would have been cornmeal breads and puddings. As for the “Happy Meal” with the friendly Indians, Ken said the peace and good will of that celebration lasted about a generation. It was quickly followed by fighting and bloodshed as relations with the Native Americans deteriorated when the colonists took land from the indigenous people. By the way, to the Pilgrims, a true day of thanksgiving simply meant a day of prayer and fasting, not what most of us have in mind when we pass around all the goodies! And the Pilgrims did not call themselves Pilgrims. They referred to themselves as “saints” or “First Comers.” Only later did William Bradford call them Pilgrims. But not even all the passengers on board the Mayflower were Pilgrims. Of 102 people on board, only 50 were Pilgrims. The others were members of the Church of England who had signed on simply as laborers, soldiers, or those looking to gain property in the “New World.” The Pilgrims called them strangers.

According to Davis, what we now call “Thanksgiving” was in fact a harvest festival for the Pilgrims who celebrated in October, not November, 1621. Those Pilgrims were mostly grateful just to be alive...half

of their company had died during the bleak first winter in Massachusetts after they had landed at Plymouth in December 1620. And no, Ken said there was no mention of Plymouth Rock back then. That notion was cooked up more than a hundred years later.

Let’s face it, we have more to be thankful for in this country than anywhere else in the world. Perhaps we should say a prayer or two before we dig into that feast and settle in for the day to watch umpteen football games, So what do you have to be thankful for? I had the opportunity to ask a few celebs I had on my show recently what they are thankful for. You might be surprised at their answers.

Remember the classic TV programs “Big Valley” and “Dynasty?” Then you have to remember that blonde, blue-eyed beauty **Linda Evans**. She played Barbara Stanwyck’s daughter Audra in “Big Valley” and Krystle Jennings who married oil baron Blake Carrington on “Dynasty” to mention just a few things she’s done. Now 70 years old, Linda has a great attitude about life. She is grateful to be healthy with lots of life left. She speaks to women’s groups about being yourself, don’t imitate others, and develop the unique you. Incidentally, Linda loves to eat and does not miss the days when she had to constantly watch her weight. Her latest project is her book “Recipes for Life” in which she shares recipes of her famous friends and anecdotes to go along with them. In a word, she is grateful to be alive!

Now think back to a dad who had three sons, the dad being Fred McMurray, and you have the TV series “My Three Sons.” It became a classic in its own right, and so has Stanley Livingston who played “Chip” on the series. When I queried him on what he is thankful for, this is what he told me. “In a business where the majority of actors, directors, and producers get their shot—then come and go—I’m still here. I am extremely grateful for that! My 15 minutes of fame has lasted 57 years! Why? It’s part luck, part perseverance...and a willingness to push and re-invent myself and not be afraid to learn new things.” Speaking of new things, Stanley has a new movie out called “In the Picture.” If you’d like to check out the link, go to www.stanleylivingston.com/id56.html.

Now this name might not grab you immediately, but it will when

I tell you what he has done. If you like to be scared, then **Irwin Yablans** is your man. He is the man who created the movie series “Halloween” and he has a new book out called “The Man Who Created Halloween.” But what he told me he was thankful for is all but scary! He explained how he was a poor boy raised in Brooklyn, New York. His dad was a taxi driver, and yet his brother became the President of Paramount Pictures, and his fame as the man behind the Halloween series is unparalleled. And what he is thankful for is his drive to overcome adversity and to use two words in your life...”show up.” Opportunity presents itself if you show up. Only in America, right?

Okay, I have to dig deep to share with you what I am thankful for because the list is long. I must begin with a wonderful husband who has always supported me in whatever I chose to do, and sometimes it was pretty wacky. But he would just smile and say “go for it.” And that has lasted 41 incredible years. I hear so many folks tell me how difficult a time they have with family, and yet, I have a super brother with whom I speak across the country most everyday about stuff from health to politics. And finally, I, like Stanley Livingston have had an incredible run in the Radio and TV business, and still going strong. I never stop learning every single day with every guest I have on POPPOFF. And like Stanley, I have branched out into writing this column and writing books like “Marilyn, Joe and Me.” Perhaps that is the key. Go with the flow and love to go to your work every day, then it no longer is work, it’s an energizing rush just to be there!

I will leave you with this thought as we near that special day of thanksgiving. Keep in mind people can be divided into three groups: 1) Those who make things happen, 2) Those who watch things happen, and 3) Those who wonder what’s happening. Which do you want to be? Here is my hope for you. I hope you have much to be thankful for on this Thanksgiving Day. Share that time with family and friends, and save a turkey leg for me!

A HAPPY AND BLESSED THANKSGIVING TO YOU AND YOURS!

Join Mary Jane for the KAH! Noon News Monday–Friday and then again for POPOFF 10 PM – Midnight.

Folsom Dam’s Operating Rules Based on Real-Time Data

Commentary by
Shauna Lorance

With a new spillway planned for Folsom Dam, state and federal officials are obtaining input about new rules for the dam’s flood management operations. The new rules will govern how much water the dam can hold and how much can be released during different scenarios.

There’s a balancing act between flood protection and water storage when managing water supplies. We’re working with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency to strike a balance as they prepare for the new spillway and update the dam’s rules.

The spillway will provide Sacramento a 200-year level

flood protection, meaning it will increase the dam’s ability to withstand the largest storm seen in a 200-year period. Scheduled for a 2017 completion, the spillway will operate in conjunction with Folsom Dam’s existing spillway gates to manage flood flows. The new spillway’s gate will be 50 feet lower than existing ones, allowing water to be released more safely from Folsom Lake during high water.

We’ve encouraged the Corps of Engineers to develop rules based on real-time forecast technology and runoff data. This information should be used to accurately manage the storage and release of water, rather than the current approach of releasing water based on the time of year.

The new rules should also adhere to existing State Water

Rights terms. The release of American River water should not interfere with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation’s water right terms for customer water deliveries.

We believe our recommendations will protect our region’s water supplies and support flood control efforts. We hope the rule makers agree.

Shauna Lorance is the general manager for San Juan Water District. A graduate from the University of California, Davis with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, Shauna has more than 20 years of experience in the water field. She has been with SJWD for 16 years, and has served as general manager for the last eight. Shauna is a registered civil engineer and a certified special district administrator.

Outdoor World

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Jerry Martin is a member of the RedHead® Pro Hunting Team

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For Solution See Page 7.

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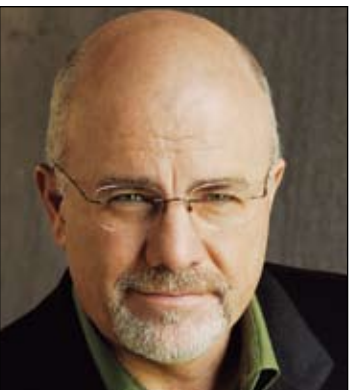
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Dave Ramsey is America's most trusted voice on money and business. He's authored four New York Times best-selling books: *Financial Peace*, *More Than Enough*, *The Total Money Makeover* and *EntreLeadership*. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 5,000,000 listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on Twitter at @DaveRamsey and on the web at daveramsey.com.

Authorized Users Don't Help Your Credit

Dear Dave, My brother asked me to put his name on my credit card as an authorized user. He said it will help improve his credit score. Is this true, and would it help my score in any way?

- Anna

Dear Anna, Your brother is wrong. It will not improve his credit score at all. As an authorized user, he is not the owner of the debt. There's a high likelihood that it will affect your credit score in a negative way, though, because there's a good chance he'll do some dumb things with your card. Look at it this way. Why would someone give him credit,

Dave Says

or raise his credit score, just for using your credit? It doesn't make sense. Your credit score is affected by things like whether or not you pay your bill on time. The card isn't in his name, so really all this amounts to is him having fun with your card, and you're the one who's liable for the damage. The truth is that authorized users shouldn't even show up on a credit report.

It sounds like your brother has some financial problems. While I admire the fact that he wants to fix things, this is not the answer. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying, Anna. Chances are he's not trying to con you. He probably just got some bad information. But the hard truth is this: If you go along with his idea, it's not going to help him, and it's going to hurt you. Don't do it!

- Dave

Season Tickets are A Luxury

Dear Dave, In terms of a family's financial plan, when is it okay to purchase something like NFL season tickets? Is this the kind of thing that should wait until you're debt-free and can afford to pay cash for them?

- Greg

Dear Greg, Absolutely, you should wait until you're debt-free and can

pay cash. That kind of thing is a prime example of an expensive, luxury purchase.

I'm an NFL season ticket holder for the Tennessee Titans. But I've been debt-free for years, and my family's financial future is very secure. Whether the Titans win or lose, or whether I watch the games in person or in front of the television, has no impact on their security. However, if you're sitting there with credit card debt, a car payment and living paycheck to paycheck, you've got no business buying season tickets. Get yourself out of debt, build an emergency fund, and make sure your family is taken care of first. Then you can have some fun. Live like no one else so that later you can live like no one else. And then, if that includes season tickets to your favorite football, baseball or hockey team, have a blast!

Remember, this kind of thing is entertainment. I know a lot of silly people out there act like whoever wins a football game is a matter of life and death, but it's just a game. Your life and your financial future are not games, and they're not things to be taken lightly. First things first, Greg. There will be plenty of time for that kind of fun when you can afford it!

- Dave

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



Dare to Live Without Limits

THANKSGIVING: SO MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR



by Bryan Golden

Thanksgiving is much more than a big meal with family and friends. It's a time to reflect on, and be thankful for, all of the good things you have. Even with all of the uncertainty and turmoil in the world, you have so much to be thankful for. It's important to be grateful, not just on Thanksgiving, but each and every day. Rather than lamenting what you feel is lacking in your life, begin each new day by developing an attitude of gratitude.

Take inventory of your blessings and you will be surprised at just how much you have to be thankful for.

If you have enough to eat, a place to live, a way to get around, people who care about you, or people you care about, then you are wealthy. If you lack any of these elements, you must still be grateful for what you do have, while striving to obtain whatever is absent.

Focus on all positive aspects of your life. Take nothing for granted. Every morning, recharge your appreciation. Be happy for everything there is, not upset over what you feel is missing.

Dreams of the future shouldn't diminish appreciation for the present. If all you do is concentrate on what you want, you won't enjoy today. Don't be jealous of others; what they do or have has no bearing on you. You can feel bitter or resentful

for a variety of reasons. Perhaps you feel something is missing from your life, things aren't going your way, or you have been treated unfairly.

You may wonder, "why do these things always happen to me?" Life's problems tend to dominate your thoughts, turning your focus to what you feel is wrong. You may start to resent those who appear to be better off. You're apt to dwell on things you think would make your life better if you had them. If only you had more money, more time, a bigger house, a different car, a different job, a different boss, had picked a different career, etc.

Once your attitude becomes one of deficiency instead of abundance and appreciation, you can become overwhelmed by feelings of frustration and feel like a victim. As this happens, a consuming vicious cycle starts. Being bitter or resentful blows situations out of proportion. People who are bitter frequently find that their situations deteriorate and their mental and physical health decays.

It's difficult, if not impossible, to achieve your goals while you are bitter or resentful. Regardless of what challenges might befall you, bitterness makes finding solutions much more elusive. There is no point to feeling bitter since it accomplishes nothing, harms

you and makes things worse.

Filling yourself with gratitude on a daily basis makes you feel good, while driving out negative feelings. Begin your practice of gratitude each morning as soon as you wake. Every day is a great day. If you have any doubts, try missing one. Take inventory of everything, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, that is good in your life.

If it helps, make a written list of all things you are grateful for. Read your list every day. As you do this, you will build and reinforce your attitude of gratitude. Don't waste any time with what you feel you don't have.

Keep things in perspective. Consider all the people who have overcome difficulties far worse than yours. Don't be consumed by your problems, there is always a solution.

Maintaining an attitude of gratitude allows your mind to devise a resolution for your circumstances. Make everyday a day of Thanksgiving and you will be amazed how much better your life will become.

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. © 2007 Bryan Golden.

Lord! I HURT!



By Karen Anderson

The hurt is so deep you are trapped and can't even look up. You feel separated from any source of comfort because all you know is anger and the feeling of, "Why me?" It is that feeling of how can you go on with your life with this grief hanging over you?

In your deepest pit, you may cry, "I don't want to go through this! Lord, I HURT! Where are you in my pain and sorrow? I can't see you and I don't know what to do! In my anguish I want a loving arm to hold me and take away the hurt. But I don't deserve to be comforted! I feel like I can't take another step by myself. I want to lean on someone's shoulder. Someone that will not try and reason with me, or tell me I'm overreacting! I need someone to let me cry, yell, and be angry! I want to feel protected like I'm in my Father's arms as a small child. I want to be wrapped in His warm embrace that makes me feel safe and warm and let me cry until the tears subside. I don't want someone to tell me what to do, but to encourage me to lift my head and look around—it's a

new day. Please! Help me to take that first step. I'm shaky and unsure of myself...I don't know if I can do it." Then that reassuring voice and steady arm of your Father says, "I'm with you all the way and you will make it—trust me".

There are losses that affect each of you differently. These feelings can be devastating and give you the feeling of sorrow and separation. Some of your losses may be the death of a loved one or a beloved pet; but it is so much more. It could be the loss of physical or mental abilities, the cruelty of any type of physical, verbal, or emotional abuse, and even the loss of a dream. In my case it was the loved ones, a beloved pet, physical loss, and the emotional and verbal attacks from ones you think care about you.

God is the voice and the comforting embrace that you want in your time of loss. He is the only one that can support you and encourage you through your hurt. God's Word is the true and trusted source of comfort. When you are ready to move forward, He will give you guidance and direction. For me personally, God's word brought me the comfort I needed in my time of "hurt." I knew He understood my broken heart. Claim His comfort and encouragement as you read and pray.

"God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need him."

It is time for you to take the

next step. Either visualize or find a picture of a cross. Nail your hurt to that cross and believe that your hurt is now with God. He will release you from the pain and then guide you on your next steps. God has promised to be there for you. Now believe what the heavenly Father has done. The blessing is that God has something great waiting for you, just reach out and accept His gift of love.

"If you'll hold on to me for dear life," says God, "I'll get you out of any trouble. I'll give you the best of care if you'll only get to know and trust me. Call me and I'll answer, be at your side in bad times; I'll rescue you, then throw you a party."

Do you have to stay in that loss, which is where the enemy wants you? The hurt is so deep you are trapped and can't even look up. Here is a thought for you. "I don't want to continue my hurt—where is it getting me?" NOWHERE! It is time to move on with God and grab onto everything He has for you. God is your comfort, ready to embrace you during the loss. Don't forget Him; He hasn't forgotten you.

PASSAGE: Psalm 46:1 (NIV) Psalm 91:14-15 (The Message)

Karen Anderson is an accomplished speaker, author, and chaplain and has a local TV show, Move Your Mountains. Contact Karen at www.doablesteps.com, or 916-961-4765.

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Fig and Toasted Nut Rolls add a touch of distinction to cheese plates.

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amazing HOLIDAY BITES



Fig, Beef and Olive Empanaditas

Makes 28 to 30 empanaditas

- 1/2 pound lean (15 percent fat) ground beef
- 1/3 cup finely chopped green bell pepper
- 1/3 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped or pressed
- 1 cup chopped stemmed Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs
- 1/3 cup finely chopped pimento-stuffed olives
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 1/4 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 1/4 teaspoons dried crumbled oregano
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon hot sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 refrigerated piecrusts for 9-inch pie (1 1/2 packages, 14.1 ounces EACH)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten with 1 tablespoon water

Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add beef, bell pepper, onion and garlic. Cook, stirring often and crumbling meat into small pieces, until meat is browned and cooked through. Remove from heat and stir in figs, olives, tomato paste, cumin, oregano, hot sauce and salt. Blend well. Cool.

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Let dough rest at room temperature 15 minutes. Working with one piecrust at a time, unfold dough on lightly floured surface. With 3 1/2-inch-round cookie cutter, cut out 8 dough circles from each crust. (Save dough scraps; combine and roll to cut out 6 additional dough circles.)

Brush rim of each circle with beaten egg. Place 1 tablespoon filling in center of a circle and fold to make a half-moon shape. Press edge to seal; flute edge if desired. Place on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Brush tops with egg mixture.

Bake 1 sheet at a time for 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

FAMILY FEATURES

Hosting a holiday party? Add some magic to the festivities with these enticing bites. The cheese and fruit plate is simple yet stylish and acts as a tantalizing table centerpiece. The appetizers — stuffed and studded with luscious bits of fig, cheese and seasonal spices — are the perfect party size.

Fig and Toasted Nut Roll

Makes 28 to 30 servings

- 14 ounces Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Mission Figs (2 cups)
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon or orange zest
- 2/3 cup toasted, blanched whole almonds, toasted walnut pieces, roasted marcona almonds (without skins) or roasted mixed nuts without peanuts

Remove and discard fig stems. Cut figs into quarters. Place in bowl of food processor with lemon or orange zest and process until figs are finely chopped and form a paste, stopping to scrape bowl once or twice as needed.

Turn fig mixture out of bowl onto a piece of parchment paper. If nuts are large, cut into halves or quarters. Work nuts into fig mixture, distributing evenly and covering nuts completely with fig mixture. Form mixture into a compact 8-inch-long log. Wrap parchment paper around log, folding in ends to seal. Place in a plastic bag and seal bag. Chill for 12 to 24 hours.

To serve, unwrap and cut with sharp knife into thin (about 1/4-inch) slices. Serve with cheese.

Stuffed Fondue Meatballs with Fig Honey Balsamic Glaze

Makes 18 meatballs

- 1 large head garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and sliced into 1/2-inch rings
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons sweet Riesling wine (or balsamic vinegar)
- 1/4 teaspoon EACH salt and pepper
- 1/2 pound EACH ground pork sausage and ground beef
- 1 tablespoon Fig Honey Balsamic Glaze mixed with 1/2 teaspoon EACH salt, pepper and allspice (or nutmeg)
- 1 1 1/2-ounce piece of Jarlberg, cut into 18 1/2-inch cubes

Make Fig Honey Balsamic Glaze (recipe follows). Pre-heat oven to 375°F. Cut across the top of garlic head, then place cut side up in heavy aluminum foil. Pour olive oil over exposed cloves, before enclosing garlic in foil, and place in oven to bake 45 minutes.

Place onion rings in a baking dish. Toss with 1 tablespoon each olive oil and wine (or balsamic vinegar); sprinkle with salt and pepper and bake 45 minutes at 375°F. At 1/2-hour mark, toss onion rings with



1 tablespoon more wine (or balsamic). When garlic and onions are cool enough to handle, remove garlic cloves from skins and combine with onion in food processor, pulsing to coarse-chop to produce 1/2 cup. Reserve 1/4 cup for another use.

In large mixing bowl, gently combine pork sausage and beef with glaze plus 1/4 cup roasted garlic/onion mixture. Using 1 tablespoon measure to scoop meat (a 1-ounce portion), place Jarlberg cube in center before shaping into 1 1/4-inch-sized meatballs.

Place meatballs about 2 inches apart on foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 375°F for 15 minutes. Transfer meatballs into small serve-style baking dish and drizzle with remaining glaze.

Fig Honey Balsamic Glaze

- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 8 Calimyrna dried figs, stemmed and quartered
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice (or nutmeg)
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme

In saucepan, mix honey with water, vinegar, figs, brown sugar and allspice. Simmer on very low heat about 45 minutes — adding rosemary and thyme for last 15 — until liquid is reduced to half (the consistency of molasses). Remove herbs before separating liquid glaze from figs. You should have generous 1/4 cup.

Note: Process figs until smooth and, if you’d like, add reserved 1/4 cup onion/garlic mixture. Use as a spread, or add to stews and sauces.



A Film Review by Tim Riley

LINCOLN (Rated PG-13)

Steven Spielberg delivers a brilliant masterpiece on American history with “Lincoln,” from a screenplay based in part on the book “Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Lincoln” by Doris Kearns Goodwin.

Fear not, history is far from a ponderous, tedious exercise with this lively exploration of the full measure of this great president, a man whose passion and humanity is on full display.

The rich human drama that played out near the end of the Civil War is all the more impressive because Daniel Day-Lewis skillfully makes Abraham Lincoln the tall, elegant and imposing figure of authority that history informs us was the case.

To its everlasting credit, “Lincoln” dwells on the final four months of the 16th president’s life and presidency, when a shattered nation teeters on the very real possibility of the Union forever dissolved.

History, but not the movie, enlightens us on Lincoln’s use of Draconian emergency powers during the Civil War, such as the suspension of habeas corpus and outright media censorship.

There’s very little battlefield action here, and what there is merely sets the tone for certain political necessities that follow from ending the war so that the United States is once again whole.

“Lincoln” the movie focuses on the extraordinary steps that the president took in doubling down on the war effort, not merely to end the Civil War but to push for the enactment of the 13th Amendment that would permanently abolish slavery.

Most of the action takes place during the month of January 1865, when the re-elected Lincoln makes an all-out effort to secure passage of the Amendment in the ill-tempered

Riley Reviews

HISTORY SHINES WITH BRILLIANT, IMPASSIONED “LINCOLN” EPIC

House of Representatives.

The president relies on the help of Republican Thaddeus Stevens (Tommy Lee Jones), powerful chairman of the House Way and Means Committee and a fiery and often irascible advocate of the abolitionist movement.

Lincoln’s secretary of state William H. Seward (David Strathairn), a former political adversary during the 1860 election, was an indispensable ally in the fight to save the Union, and as such, he helped, albeit reluctantly, organize a lobbying effort to spread patronage in an ingenious vote-buying scheme.

Some comic relief comes from a trio of lobbyists (John Hawkes, James Spader and Tim Blake Nelson) who run around Capitol Hill offering lucrative government jobs to the very Democratic congressmen who were not otherwise inclined to abolish slavery by any measure.

Meanwhile, plenty of fireworks take place not just in the halls of Congress but inside the White House as well. Sally Field fully realizes the complicated role of Mary Todd Lincoln, alternately supportive of her husband or so emotionally overwrought as to be a thorn in his side.

We often catch the Great Emancipator in a pensive mood as he wanders late at night through the White House tormented by the pressing burdens of his office. On top of that, he’s a vulnerable husband and father who must cope, respectively, with his demanding wife and the ongoing grief of son Willie’s death.

More family drama intrudes with Mrs. Lincoln’s insistence that oldest son Robert (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) not join the war effort. Even against the president’s wishes, Robert wanted to join the Union Army, not seeking any favor because of his station in life.

Without the knowledge of Secretary Seward, Lincoln sends a delegation to Richmond

in an attempt to negotiate the surrender of the Confederacy. Meanwhile, he has to stall this peace effort just long enough to pass the 13th Amendment.

The political intrigue in the nation’s capitol is fascinating. Lincoln realizes that unless the abolition of slavery is enshrined in the Constitution, the reconstituted Union is unlikely to pass the Amendment when Democratic representatives from the South join the Congress.

Politics in its rawest form is fully on display in the contentious debate over the abolition of slavery. The sharp-tongued Thaddeus Stevens is a wonder to behold as he skewers the hypocrisy of his Democratic adversaries.

The most theatrical aspects of “Lincoln” occur as the result of debates in Congress about the 13th Amendment. One great showdown involves Congressman Stevens’ heated and acerbic tongue-lashing of pro-slavery Democrat Fernando Wood (Lee Pace).

The portrait of Abraham Lincoln that emerges is a man of raw paradoxes, one who is funny and solemn, as well as shrewd and vulnerable. The president dotes on his youngest son and is a playful storyteller, but he’s also a fierce power broker and astute commander.

Thrust into the high stakes battle to save the American Union, Lincoln comes into view as a master strategist brokering deals with members of the opposition as well as recalcitrant members of his own party.

It’s never a good idea to come away from a movie with the notion that the historical figures have been depicted with accuracy and fairness. “Lincoln,” though, seems like an honest attempt to capture the essence of one of the most compelling figures in the history of mankind.

Spielberg’s “Lincoln” is ambitious filmmaking at its best. This brilliant film shows that the president was not just a multifaceted statesman and military leader, but also a dedicated and introspective family man coping with an enormous number of challenges.

Daniel Day-Lewis is simply superb as Abraham Lincoln. If he’s not nominated for an Academy Award as Best Actor, I would question the judgment of the voters.



TAX HELP from a Tax Pro Dean Alexander Sr.

How to Get Tax Relief for Inherited Property

There are two issues that one has to deal with when we receive inheritance. The first is an estate tax issue and the second an income tax issue and they are not one. You may be exempt form one but subject to another.

The two usually work against each other. Maybe the mechanics of the events will illustrate the point. Rich Uncle dies and leaves you a piece of land worth three hundred thousand dollars. The first question that people usually ask, or hopefully they will ask is: Am I going to pay estate tax on this money?

Clients that I come in contact with usually ask me how much income tax am I going to pay because I inherited the property. They think that inheriting this property is a taxable event, and a taxable event in their mind means income tax. They don’t differentiate between income tax and estate taxes. In 2011 property inherited up to one million dollars would be exempt from income taxes.

Notice that I said that you inherited property worth three hundred thousand dollars. How did you determine this amount? And what is the big deal about this amount anyway? You may determine this amount by looking up the county tax roll for that year or if the amount is large it could be determined by an appraisal.

This amount can cause you a tax problem if you don’t pay attention. This amount will be your basis if you sell the property two years form the time you inherited it. Basis is something like your purchase price. You will be regarded as if you purchased the property for three hundred thousand dollars. So if you sell it for three hundred and fifty dollars, your gain is fifty thousand dollars.

When do you value the property? You can value the property the day you inherit it or any other date within six months from the date of death. Why the choice? Like I said the value of the property at the time of inheritance will determine your basis (think of cost).

So the higher the basis the better off you are. In the example above, if your basis at the time of death was three hundred fifty thousand instead of just three hundred your gain on the sale of the property would have been zero. So the higher the basis the better tax relief or tax help you get from the valuation.

Remember when I said above that the estate taxes and the income taxes work in the opposite direction? Now it is time to explain. As I said above to avoid income taxes upon sale property that you inherited you would want to push the value up. The higher you push, the higher the amount it cost you to

purchase the property (I am using the analogy of purchase). And the higher the cost, the less income taxes.

But can we push the price up forever? Not quite. As I said above, you had a limit of exempt estate taxes. If you push the value above the one million to avoid income tax, you will fall into the net of estate taxes. Any amount above the million will be taxed at 55%. So the best tax resolution is one that has to weigh both considerations.

If you find yourself owing back taxes as a result to your inheritance, you may be able to negotiate an IRS settlement such as offer in compromise or an installment agreement. But you must ask your CPA or IRS tax attorney to take some sort of initiative to avoid collection actions such as levy or garnishment against you because of the tax debt.

Summary: The best tax resolution for inheritance is to balance the estate and income tax consideration. You can even negotiate an offer in compromise for the new tax debt.

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