



Special Proclamation for Eppie's Great Race Week

Page 2

PLUS:
*It All Comes
Down to This*

Page 9

AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

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

Second Edition for June 2012

Red Cross Canoeing Program Begins 37th Season



Page 2

Ronnie McBrayer: A City on a Hill



Page 6

Get the Most Bang for Your Buck: 2012 Fireworks Buyers Guide



Page 10



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Raising Funds for Freedom

By David Dickstein

SACRAMENTO REGION – What they're selling can't explode according to state law, but that's not stopping local non-profits from hoping for booming business starting June 28, the day fireworks can be sold in Citrus Heights, Orangevale and Fair Oaks.

If fingers are crossed a bit tighter this season, it's because America's 236th birthday falls on a Wednesday, the first Fourth of July on "hump day" since 2007. Consumer fireworks leaders suggest a 10 percent drop in sales when Independence Day is smack in the middle of the week, but at least one industry leader believes that every smoke cloud has a silver lining.

"Because many people won't be able to make a 3-day or 4-day weekend out of holiday, they'll probably stay home, and that's a good thing for our non-profit groups," said Cathy Castilone, vice president of TNT Fireworks' Northern California region. "We've seen that when families don't go out of town they often light fireworks the week-end before the fourth and on the fourth itself."

The competition agrees. "Sales are strong on the fourth no matter what day of the week it is, and we're actually expecting better sales than usual on the 29th and 30th with people wanting to celebrate early on a weekend," said Linda Hass, Phantom Fireworks' Sacramento-based regional manager. "Sales should be brisk as well because the weather is cooperating, the economy seems to be moving in the right direction and Californians are eager to celebrate our great Independence Day with fireworks."

That should be patriotic music to the ears of dozens of cash-



Annual sales of fireworks represents a critical fundraising effort for many non-profits in Placer County. Photo courtesy TNT

strapped area charities, athletic groups, youth organizations and service clubs.

Hoping to hit a home run with its fireworks fundraiser is Bella Vista High's Baseball Boosters, which last year was able to pay for new uniforms with proceeds made at its TNT stand next to McDonald's at Madison and Hazel avenues in Fair Oaks. Sharing the wealth, and ensuring adequate staffing, the boosters are offering \$10-20 an hour to supporters of other Bella Vista High clubs.

"It's a way to help other BV groups while the baseball boosters earn money toward operating costs, field maintenance, equipment, umpires – well, everything, since we get no funding from the school," said first-year fireworks co-chair Joanna Lee, a Fair Oaks resident who is expected to have

two sons pitching next season for the Broncos; Gavin as a returning senior and Aaron as a freshman.

With TNT Fireworks carrying a fountain named Home Run, the Bronco baseball team might push that 2-year-old item a bit harder than other groups. Same can be said for TNT's best-selling Piccolo Pete by Bella Vista High's Band Boosters, which will be banking on heavy sales at its own TNT stand.

For the volunteers supporting the school's music groups and drill team, the week-long fundraiser means that every Big Timer assortment, Delirium fountain and ground bloom flower stand to come. On Wednesday, July 4, the day starts with the Rancho Cordova Kiwanis Club Fourth of July parade at 10 a.m. The parade marches down Coloma Road

to Olive Garden at 5425 Sunrise Blvd., raised \$4,000 in net profits a year ago, and first-year fireworks coordinator Tami Miller is looking to make a grand more this go-around.

Triple-dipping with TNT stands in Fair Oaks, Orangevale and Rocklin is Retro Teen Center of The Family Church in Roseville. Multiple locations will enable the church's rock club-teen center to share profits with two public schools and a food bank.

"This is the first year that the Retro Teen Center is donating some of the proceeds to other non-profits throughout the region," said the church's executive pastor Matthew Oliver. "Our goal has always been to give back to the community, and this year we plan to do just that."

Continued on page 12

SMUD Goes Mobile

SACRAMENTO REGION – Electric utility's user-friendly website is now available on smart phones. SMUD has a new way for customers to view their account, see their energy usage, pay their bill and check on power outages via their mobile phone.

SMUD's new mobile website, SMUD Mobile, is optimized for use with iPhone and Android smart phones and is compatible with many other browser-enabled phones as well. The application was also designed to minimize impact to mobile phones that have data plan caps.

SMUD Mobile is very easy to navigate. It features a single menu button in the upper right section of the screen that is available from any page. It flips or fades the screen to display a full-screen option that presents the user with all available navigation options in one place. When a user logs in, the logout button is available in the menu as well as from any page.

Since smart phones make up about 50 percent of the mobile market nationwide, they are an important way for SMUD to connect with customers.

The My Account section of the site offers those with a login the ability to view the outage status at their specific location, see their energy usage, view their bill and pay their bill—all online from their phone. The mobile site accepts Visa or Mastercard or users can pay with a bank account.

To make it easier for customers to pay their bill, SMUD Mobile also provides alternative ways to pay such as showing users where local pay stations are and allowing them to display a map of their location or call the pay stations. It also allows a user who does not have a My Account login to make a one-time payment.

The outage map lets users see the entire SMUD service territory and gives them the same data available on the current website.

Already, about 10 percent of SMUD customers are using SMUD Mobile, which can be accessed by typing smud.org in your mobile phone's web browser.

Something for Everyone at Rancho Cordova Fourth of July

RANCHO CORDOVA – An army of volunteers is preparing for Rancho Cordova's big red, white and blue bash that returns to Hagan Park for a 28th year on July 3 and 4, 2012. The thrills and chills of carnival rides, fireworks, a parade and much more are packed into a two-day event designed with families in mind.

New this year will be a July 4 outdoor concert by the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band, now rehearsing for its Fourth of July debut. The 50-piece band will be performing patriotic tunes and leading a sing-along in the main area of the Fourth of July festival in Hagan Park. The fun starts at 4 p.m. Tuesday, July 3 when admission gates swing open for an evening of music, festival food, carnival rides, and fireworks.

July 3 activities include: 4-8 p.m. It's Kids Zone fun with free games and more designed with children in mind. Lots of free games and prizes, bounce houses, plus exciting options like the popular Bobble Lagoon and more 4-11 p.m. The carnival comes to town! Lots of rides for fun-seekers and thrill-seekers alike.

Unlimited ride wristbands are



available for those who purchase coupons in advance. 8 p.m. Back by popular demand, Bay Area favorite "Hip Service" comes to town for a big July 3 stage show. This performing group fills the stage with more than a dozen musicians, dancers and singers, putting on a hard-to-forget show in the heart of Hagan Park. 9:45

p.m.

The holiday is official with the July 3 Fireworks Mini-Show, an appetizer event that foreshadows the big Fireworks Spectacular to come. On Wednesday, July 4, the day starts with the Rancho Cordova Kiwanis Club Fourth of July parade at 10 a.m. The parade marches down Coloma Road

from McGregor Drive and into Hagan Park. The Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band will be presenting a free concert immediately following the parade as visitors escape to the cool shade of Hagan Park.

The "All American Fourth of July" continues all day with carnival attractions, exhibits, booths, and children's activities. The Rancho Cordova Fourth of July Kids Zone, sponsored by the Folsom Cordova Community Partnership, is filled with fun, free activities for the younger kids set from noon until 8 p.m.

Also on board in the Kids Zone is the Folsom Cordova School Readiness group and others with lots of free fun for children. Take a train or pedal boat ride and visit the Petting Barn during a visit to the Kids Zone. Older kids will have a blast at the "All American Zombie Shooting Range." Watch your kids make like a hamster in the Bobble Lagoon, or try their luck on the deceptively simple, but infuriating Crazy Bike. From 4-7 p.m., meet up with friends for country music favorites as Kymmi and the Diamondbacks take the stage in the Main Street area.

At 7 p.m., The Somebods

– winners of the Cordova Recreation and Park District's Battle of the Bands – warm up the crowd on the Concert Stage. At 8 p.m., Superlicious is back by popular demand with hits from the 80s and newer in the best outdoor concert of the year. At 9:45 p.m. the skies will explode with fireworks in an all new pyrotechnic spectacular with more fireworks than ever. Fourth of July Beer Gardens are open both July 3 and July 4.

During the day, "family restaurant" rules apply, but after 6 p.m., only adults 18 and older are allowed in the Beer Gardens. Hagan Park converts to a festival ground during the Fourth of July festival.

No personal fireworks, pets or barbecues are permitted for the safety of all. Presented by the Cordova Community Council and Cordova Recreation and Park District, plus a host of corporate sponsors, Rancho Cordova Fourth of July Festival admission is just \$2, with children under 5 admitted free. Parking is \$10 and helps defray the cost of fireworks. All concerts are free! For a full schedule of events and parade application, please visit www.ranchocordovajuly4th.com.

Red Cross Canoeing Program Begins 37th Season



SACRAMENTO REGION – With summer just around the corner, the American Red Cross Canoeing Program provides the perfect opportunity to take advantage of Sacramento’s local crown jewels: the American and Sacramento Rivers and Folsom Lake.

Born in the 1970s from US Olympic team roots, the Red Cross Canoeing Program has been fortunate to boast some of the best paddlers in the state to staff its dedicated, all-volunteer instructor corps. The program offers a comprehensive curriculum that can take you from bird watching on serene lakes and otter spotting on lazy rivers, to the rush of whitewater paddling. Throughout California, nowhere is enthusiasm for canoeing felt more strongly than here in Sacramento.

With its warm weather and easy river and lake access, the Capital City has long been a destination for canoeing enthusiasts. Just ask veteran canoeist and Red Cross instructor Holly Wenger. “I have a blast helping others

learn how to be safe, skilled paddlers and luckily Sacramento is blessed with beautiful lakes and rivers which make this all possible,” Wenger shared. Wenger is not alone in her enthusiasm. As one student reports, “Fundamentals [of Canoeing] is an all-around awesome class. A really fun weekend where I met people I still canoe with. We were surrounded by gorgeous views that make you appreciate the sport and what Sacramento really has to offer.”

Patrick Welch, a Red Cross instructor since 1998, says “Whenever I’m canoeing, I’m happy! Throughout the years I’ve taught canoeing in Sacramento, I’ve met hundreds of wonderful people. Looking back, it’s been more rewarding than I ever could have imagined. It’s provided me with a solid network of friends and we exchange ideas about the outdoor opportunities in the region.”

Red Cross Canoeing classes are open to anyone age 11 and up. Classes range from beginner to advanced, include all paddling

equipment and gear, and range from \$50 to \$85. They offer an affordable introduction to skills that enable anyone to paddle with confidence.

To register for a Red Cross Canoeing class, or to learn more about the Canoeing Program, call the American Red Cross at 916-993-7070 or register online at www.redcrossrc.org/canoeing. The Red Cross Canoeing Program is made possible, in part, by a generous grant from the American River Parkway Foundation.

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and counsels victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation’s blood supply; teaches lifesaving skills; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization – not a government agency – and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its humanitarian mission. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org or join our blog at www.redcrosschat.org.

Sacramento County Announces Community Development Director

SACRAMENTO – The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors has approved the appointment of Lori Moss for the position of Director of the Community Development Department. The appointment will be effective 7/1/12.

“We are very lucky to have a candidate of Ms. Moss’ caliber,” said Brad Hudson. “She will be

instrumental in forging a successful new department that will streamline community planning and development in our region.” Ms. Moss has 27 years of experience in county development and planning with the County of Riverside and city management with the Cities of Murrieta and Canyon Lake. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in

Economics and Urban Regional Planning from Indiana State University.

The Sacramento County Community Development Department houses the Divisions of Planning, County Engineering (which includes Surveyor), Code Enforcement, Environmental Review and Building, Permits and Inspections.

Rancho Cordova Proclaims Eppie’s Great Race Week

RANCHO CORDOVA – The Rancho Cordova City Council declared July 11 to July 21, 2012 as Eppie’s Great Race Week at Monday’s City Council Meeting. The 39th Annual Eppie’s Great Race takes place Saturday, July 21, 2012.

The world’s undisputed oldest triathlon, Eppie’s Great Race consists of a 5.82-mile run, 12.5-mile cycle, and 6.35-mile downriver paddle on a race-course located on and alongside the American River in Rancho Cordova and Sacramento.

The City of Rancho Cordova is an annual event sponsor, and two teams of City volunteers will compete in the race alongside many Rancho Cordova residents.

“Eppie’s Great Race is a grand local, fitness event showcasing one of Rancho Cordova’s best known assets: the American River,” said Mayor David Sander.

“Eppie’s Great Race Week honors the event’s importance and encourages residents to participate in the triathlon, volunteer their time, or cheer on the athletes.” The event has become a summertime tradition for elite athletes,



The Rancho Cordova City Council presents Eppie Johnson, founder of Eppie’s Great Race, with a proclamation recognizing July 11 to July 21, 2012 as Eppie’s Great Race Week.

fitness enthusiasts, and families since Sacramento-area restaurateur and entrepreneur Eppie Johnson founded the event in 1974. Mayor Sander presented Johnson with a proclamation at Monday’s meeting officially recognizing Eppie’s Great Race Week.

“I had a vision that someday we should call this Eppie’s Great Race Week,” said Johnson. “I humbly appreciate the support that Rancho Cordova has given

us.” Net proceeds from the event benefit the Sacramento County Therapeutic Recreation Services (TRS), an organization that helps thousands of people with physical and mental disabilities to live more fulfilling lives through organized trips and community events.

The race has raised approximately \$970,000 to support this cause. To register, volunteer or learn more about Eppie’s Great Race, visit www.eppiesgreatrace.org.



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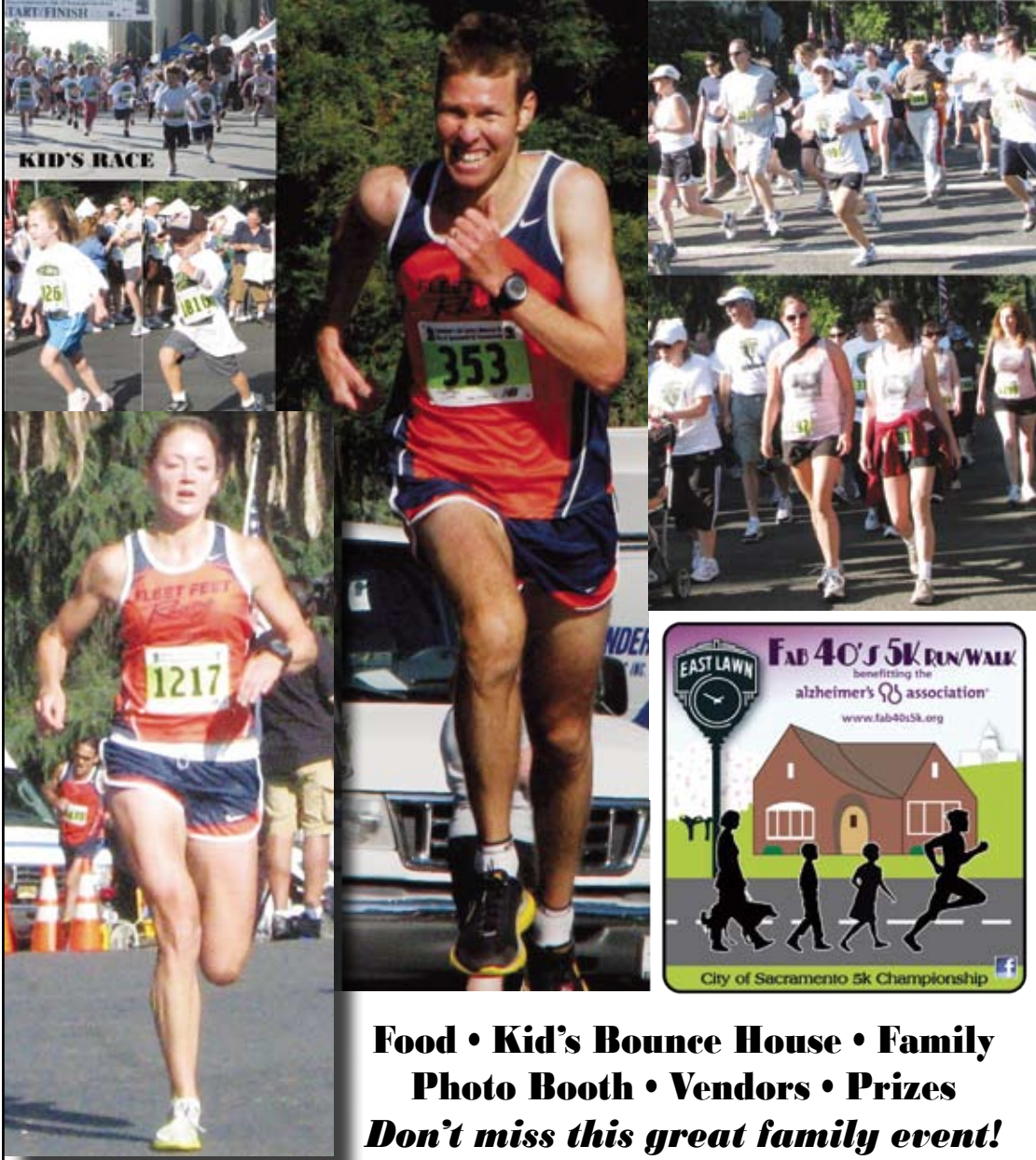
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HAPPINESS IS AS
HAPPINESS DOES

Are you happy? I bet it's a question that has crossed your mind a time or two. But do we really know what happiness is? *Todd Patkin* took a stab at it. A businessman and philanthropist, he kicked anxiety and depression but does admit that everyone's path is different, but he believes the real key for all of us is self-love. When we can stop beating ourselves up over mistakes and start celebrating all the things we do right, we can finally be happy. He's come up with some simple steps for us to be happy in *"Finding Happiness."* Here's the top ten.

- 1) *If you don't exercise, start.* You already know exercise keeps you healthy. But did you know it's also a natural antidepressant?
- 2) *Be easier on yourself.* You know like I'm too fat etc? There's nothing wrong with self-improvement, but it needs to come from a place of love.
- 3) *Find some way to put your gifts and talents to work.* Talent wants to express itself. If your job doesn't allow it to do so, find

POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

something that does. Playing to your strengths brings real happiness.

4) *Build richer relationships* with loved ones. Is your marriage running on autopilot? What about your relationship with your kids? Do you come home from work and just sit in front of a computer or TV and never engage with your family in a meaningful way?

5) *Celebrate your spouse.* If you're mired in negativity with bickering and tension, you'll never be happy. But ending the relationship is a last resort. The good news is that it may not take a lot of effort to dramatically change the tenor of your marriage.

6) *Let the people you appreciate know it.* Of course you need to let your close friends and family know how you feel about them. That's a given. But what about your coworkers...your barber...your child's teacher? Even the neighbor who keeps an eye on your house when you are away?

7) *Forgive someone who has wronged you.* This is the other side of the "forgive yourself" coin. Just as you deserve a break, so do other people. Forgiveness is an act of love. If you can't let go of pain and anger, you can't be happy.

8) *Become a giver. Happiness is not about how much you make; it's about how much you share.* Your income and/or net worth has nothing to do with happiness. You

should find a way to share your fortune (not necessarily the monetary kind) with others.

9) *Take a "baby step" toward finding some faith.* Think a little more about your faith. Check out a few spots and read a couple of spiritual books. Happy people have a connection to a higher power.

10) *Make this year one of gratitude.* If you only make one change this year, make it this one. Work to be more appreciative in general. Did you know that, for the most part, becoming more grateful just means opening your eyes to the blessings you already have.

There you have it. It's not rocket science, but according to Patkin, it is ironic. He says, "The tragedy is we're sleepwalking through life without really noticing the truth. If we could learn to live with an attitude of gratitude, for our kids, our homes, our friends, our health, the food on our tables...we wouldn't need worry about finding happiness. We'd be living it every day. Check it out "Finding Happiness" One man's quest to beat anxiety and depression and finally let the sunshine in. You can also check out his website at www.FindingHappinessbook.com. Let life shine for you today!!!

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

Sacramento County DA Reports
Recent cases of interest

CASE: SSD Deputy Kelly Smith (06/25/12)
PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Michael Blazina
District Attorney Jan Scully announced today that 43-year-old Kelly Curran Smith pled no contest to felony charges of unlawful possession of a controlled substance and identity theft. While a deputy with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, Smith befriended the 90-year-old victim. Smith ordered and acquired Hydrocodone (Vicodin) using the victim's prescription information she obtained during a visit. Under the plea agreement, Smith will be referred to a drug diversion program on the unlawful possession of a controlled substance charge. She will be placed on probation and ordered to serve 120 days on the identity theft charge. Sentencing is set for August 6, 2012 in Department 8 before the Honorable Kevin McCormick.

CASE: Company Nurse, LLC (06/22/12)
PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Dale Kitching
District Attorney Jan Scully joins Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo and the District Attorneys of Amador, San Joaquin and Yolo counties in announcing the settlement in a civil law enforcement action against Company Nurse LLC, an Arizona company, and its parent company Comptivity, Inc., a Delaware corporation. The civil action was filed in Monterey County Superior Court, and the settlement resolves allegations of unlawful business practices. Company Nurse provides telephone medical advice services for employees of numerous businesses and public entities throughout California. An investigation found that Company Nurse had failed to register with the California Department of Consumer Affairs' Telephone Medical Advice Services Bureau, and also failed to ensure that all persons providing telephone medical advice services were California licensed registered nurses as required by law. After the investigation began, Company Nurse came into compliance by registering with the Telephone Medical Services Bureau and working to ensure that it uses California licensed nurses when providing telephone medical advice services. Company Nurse cooperated with the investigation, and without admitting or denying any wrongdoing, agreed to pay a total of \$200,000. These payments include \$150,000 in civil penalties and \$50,000 for the costs of the enforcement. The terms of the settlement also provide for a permanent injunction. Sacramento County will receive \$9,000 in costs and penalties.

CASE: Saul Isidoro-Ausencio & Francisco Delgado (06/22/12)
PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Donell A. Slivka
District Attorney Jan Scully announced today that the Honorable Judge Helena Gweon sentenced Saul Isidoro-Ausencio and Francisco Delgado to three terms of life in prison without the possibility of parole for the first degree murders of 15-year-old Jamir Miller, 16- year-old Richard Ward and 20- year-old Robert Corpus. Isidoro-Ausencio was sentenced to an additional term of 75 years to life and 16 years, 8 months in prison for the personal and intentional discharge of a firearm for each murder and for committing the crimes for the benefit of the Surenno Street Gang. In February 2011, the victims were shot as they were riding their bikes on Malaga Way in Rancho Cordova because Isidoro-Ausencio was seeking revenge for a beating he suffered at the hands of rival gang members. When he was unable to find the gang members who had assaulted him, he and Delgado drove up behind the victims and shot them instead. They believed that the victims were gang members, even though they had nothing to do with the assault on Isidoro-Ausencio.

CASE: Emery Allen (06/15/12)
PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Michael Blazina
Sacramento County District Attorney Jan Scully announced today that Emery Allen was sentenced by the Honorable David De Alba to 40 years to life in prison. In April, Allen was convicted by jury for the attempted murder of his co-defendant and rival gang member, Junius Winters. The jury also found true arming and gang allegations connected to that charge. On September 15 2009, Allen, a Gunz-Up gang member, instigated a conflict and engaged in a mutual combat shooting against several members of the rival gang G-Mobb/Guttah Boy in south Sacramento. It is believed that as many as six Gunz-Up gang members and seven G-Mobb/Guttah Boyz gang members participated or were present during the shooting. This was one of 26 shootings that took place between 2008 and 2010 as a result of a gang conflict between G-Mobb/Guttah Boyz and the Oak Park/ 4th Ave Bloods and Gunz-Up street gangs.

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By Ronnie McBrayer

When that little group of Separatists left England for the New World in a little boat called the Mayflower, they landed at Plymouth Rock in a territory that would eventually become known as the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The Colony became, obviously, the seedbed for the nation whose birthday we celebrate this week.

These Pilgrims had been oppressed and persecuted by the state church and, looking for relief, set out to create a type of religious retreat and sanctuary. The Pilgrims were not very successful and a decade later, under a new charter, they were replaced by the Puritans.

The Puritans were governed by a man who continues to have influence on the New World, Governor John Winthrop. Winthrop claimed that God had given the Puritans this new land in order to purify Christianity, to save this continent from being wasted, and to serve as an example to the Old World for building a model society.

John Winthrop delivered his most famous sermon to this end, before he even set foot on North American soil. Just off of the beach on the boat that had brought the Puritans to their new home, he preached a sermon entitled, “A Model of Christian

A City on a Hill

Charity,” delivered in 1630.

A portion of that sermon reads: “The Lord will be our God and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways...He shall make us a praise and glory...We shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us. Keep his commandments and his laws that the Lord our God may bless us in the land we go to possess.”

This high idealism that a human nation, united with religious fervor, can serve the grand and glorious intentions of God has been written into this nation’s history and psyche. That phrase, “city on a hill” or “shining light” has been used to describe the hopes and dreams for America by everyone from John Adams and Abraham Lincoln to John Kennedy and Ronald Reagan – but these words have been terribly misappropriated.

“City on a hill” language is verbiage that belongs in the realm of faith, to followers of Jesus, to disciples who are on the path into the Kingdom of God. No government, country, or Empire can ever serve as the light of the world. Any earthly nation claiming otherwise has plagiarized the words of Jesus, attempting to use human power to birth what can only come into the world by the power of God.

Many Christians in the United States have been operating under the illusion, from John Winthrop forward, that this is a Christian nation. No such entity exists. Just because we live in a nation that treats people of faith with some respect and allows us to pursue our personal ambitions, does not mean that the power-protecting

Empire and the self-sacrificing way of Jesus are compatible.

Eugene Peterson makes this point eloquently clear. He says the North American church conspicuously embraces the way of the Empire while living “in Jesus’ name.” The church “replaces the Jesus way with the American way. Yes, the American way works, sometimes magnificently, in achieving grandly conceived ends. Wars are fought, wealth is accumulated, elections are won, and victories posted. But the means by which those ends are achieved leaves a lot to be desired.”

So with apologies to John Winthrop, do not expect government – any government – to be the light of the world, shining as a City on a Hill. Do not expect this from your employer, a corporation into which you invest, a social service organization to which you belong, or a charity to which you give. Expect great and noble things from these other organizations – even demand it – but do not expect more than these can give.

We might wish things were different, that nation states were our partner in advancing the Kingdom of God, but they are not. They can’t be. All Empires belong to this dog-eat-dog world of power and power-seeking, even the Empire begun with a sermon off the Massachusetts shore.

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.

How to Ruin a Perfectly Good Day

By Rev. James L. Snyder

Speaking of good days, and who isn’t these days, I am looking forward to two in a row. I know it may be wishful thinking on my part, but a person has to do something with his time.

Last week I almost broke my record with two consecutive good days. But, wouldn’t you know it, it just did not happen.

With all my experience in this matter, I plan to write a book someday: “How to Ruin a Perfectly Good Day.” I know 197 different ways to ruin a good day. Who knows, by next week it might pass the 200 mark. When that happens, I will celebrate. For those who do not know how to ruin a perfectly good day, let me outline some tried and true suggestions from my vast wealth of experience.

The first thing is to define what a perfectly good day is. After all, how can you ruin a perfectly good day (PG day) if you don’t recognize it? Of course, I agree that nothing is really perfect.

Perfect is in the eye of the beholder and nobody can hold her for very long. What is perfect to me may not be perfect to someone else—like my wife.

A perfectly good day is one of those rare days when everything goes according to plan—my plan that is. I like to get up in the morning and over my morning coffee, review my “to-do-list” for the day and put things in order of importance.

A successful “to-do-list,” in my opinion, is a list that does not take all day to do. I need some time for myself.

If my “to-do-list” has too much to do, the chances of the day being a PG day is between slim and nil.

A PG day has more hours in it than things to do. I hate it when I run out of day before I finish my “to-do-list.”

Last Monday, I had just finished my morning cup of Joe and finished reviewing my “to-do-

list” and seemed to have the day well in hand.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage noticed my face sporting a playful smile. If there is something my wife can’t stand, it is a playful smile across my map. For some reason she thinks I’m up to no good. Usually she’s right.

“Why don’t you call and straighten out the telephone bill?” she said, as coolly as a preacher at a summer picnic.

It was on my list but not anywhere near the top.

I was rather nonchalant and not ready for this task. I had not seen my chalant for weeks but it did not concern me. Looking back, I should have been concerned, or at least looked for my chalant.

Actually, I was upbeat and gingerly picked up the phone and dialed the number.

Soon a cheery voice was giving me instructions; “Our options have changed to serve you better. Please listen carefully. If you wish to continue in English please press 1.”

In the confusion, I pressed 4 and got Japanese.

I began the process all over again. This time I pressed the right button and got the rest of the instructions in English. From then on, I pressed number after number and got nowhere.

For the next 12 minutes, I was pressing numbers and listening to instructions. Finally, I heard the telephone ringing and a cheerful voice answered. At this point, I thought I was home free, but alas, fate was only putting a hefty mortgage on my home.

“Ello, can I to help please you?”

“Huh,” I said as diplomatically as I knew how.

“Can I to help please you?” the voice in the phone repeated.

I may not be the sharpest pencil in the box but I knew I was talking to someone as familiar with the English language as a politician is to the truth.

“Is there anyone there,” I pled, “who speaks English?”

“Ah, yes, I to speak berry goot English. Can I to help please you?”

So, I threw caution to the wind and explained the mix-up on my bill.

“Aaah, I understand. This is billing problem. I transfer you to billing department.”

For the next 20 minutes, I was treated, and I say this with tongue firmly planted in my cheek, to a musical interlude. It was elevator music; it raised my blood pressure.

For the next three hours, I went from pillar to post in the telephone department and got no nearer to solving my telephone-billing mix-up.

One of the problems with being a minister is you are not allowed to swear. By 2:30 in the afternoon, I had an overwhelming urge to swear. My difficulty was simply, I could not think of any swear words to use and “ah, fiddlesticks” does not seem to carry much significance in such circumstance.

By 4 that afternoon, I still had no solution to my billing problem. I had exhausted all my options, not to mention my patience, and nothing to show for it. All I wanted to do was pay my bill.

Through my experience with the telephone company, I was reminded of one of my favorite verses from the Bible. “Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” (Jeremiah 33:3 KJV.)

It is comforting to know that God is only a prayer away.

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 jamesnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.



By Marlys Norris, Christian Author

Believe and you will be saved! No, believing alone is an empty word, there is so much more to just believing. Beginning a walk with God it is necessary for a person to invite Jesus Spirit into their life, committing and surrendering one’s life to His will. **Without this act, “belief alone” is empty and of no effect in a person’s life.** Some say it is “adding to” what Jesus did for us, actually it is a requirement to experience a walk He desires us to enjoy! No surrender or commitment equals absolute spiritual poverty!

Note: Personal Testimony of my own experience: When I was 12 I believed in God and that Jesus died for me and I accepted His death, so if I died I would go to heaven. So yes, I probably was saved. Understanding and Growth was tragically missing of what I did when I was twelve years of age, when I only just believed. BUT my life was a real mess as I strayed away from my childhood belief. 22 years later when I prayed with our pastor and again invited Jesus into my heart and surrendered and committed my life to Him things changed drastically. Someone came along side and taught me about prayer; God’s love and forgiveness and she cared about my growth and knowledge about God. I began to experience TRUTH, “knowledge” of Him, His Power, His Love, His Grace, His Mercy, His Forgiveness and Answered prayer. I changed and

Belief is Merely the Beginning!

Miraculous things began to happen in my life!

I was finally reading and understanding the Bible and obedient to what it said. I was truly “born again” and filled with His Holy Spirit. He filled my life and the fruit of my life surrender and commitment began to be noticed as I served the Lord in various numerous capacities in the church, as His Spirit led me.

ALL Evangelism is God’s tool to “plant good seeds of His love” into a people, but it is not the complete answer to only lead someone to accept God’s Son and leave them alone.

A child of any age (5 to 100) — does not know what to do next without guidance. If you think one only needs to accept Jesus as their Savior, read my story over again. Without anyone to guide, lead or care for my spiritual life, I went astray.

Evangelism is wonderful tool but alone it is not the complete answer when anyone is left to the influence of the world, possibly for years! They may or may not be saved. The devil will deceive them, just as he deceived Eve in the Garden. He cannot possess them because Jesus has been invited into their heart, — but he will “oppress them” and it can last for years. It is equally as devastating, it happened to me! Satan will also lead them off into various cults and ideas apart from Jesus Christ and programmed, they will easily follow — believing his lies that ultimately will destroy their lives.. My desire today is to reach those who have been deceived as I was for 22 years. I am now delivered and FREE. Please contact me if I can help you.

If accepting Christ is ALL that is the only thing really accomplished, lacking no future

connection and teaching — in my opinion and within this experience, something is obviously missing! Yes, we have trusted in the Holy Spirit to do ALL final work, I ASK “so then, has the person who prayed with them been irresponsible?” Every single Evangelist needs to expand their ministry into continued future follow-up of every person that accepts Christ under their ministry. At least letters and a yearly personal telephone call or a visit might help! Otherwise they are just forgotten and are pulled in by the world’s ways and views! Note: Billy Graham did it right — all should too!

One can believe, yet never grow in the richness of God’s teaching. They may believe but there is no fruit of mere belief because they do not really “know” God at all. It takes a study of God’s Holy Word and following and living in obedience to what one learns to grow spiritually. And all those things compile the real meaning of belief and the Salvation message, without them the word belief is all there is..

I do not believe that any kind of follow-up action by a person who has prayed with someone who has accepted Jesus is “not adding to what Jesus did for us” but is with certainty sincere appreciation of His gift” of complete forgiveness and eternal life. Following through is really getting to “know” Him and learning and knowing how to experience the abundant blessings of His gift.

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How God Answers You

on comfort. What is God’s purpose in your problems? He has many of them. But one of them is this verse...1 Peter 1:7, “The purpose of these troubles is to test your faith as fire tests how genuine gold is. Your faith is more precious than gold.”

God wants to test your faith. Sometimes He delays an answer and says, “Will you trust Me?” Sometimes God says no and says, “Will you still trust Me?” It’s like every parent has said to a child : Sometimes when they say, “Why?” and you say, “Because I say so!” At that point you’re saying, “You need to trust me. I’m bigger. I’m wiser. I’m more experienced. I know more than you. I love you and I want what’s best for you. So you need to trust me.” We, as human imperfect parents, say that. Certainly we should be able to trust a perfect heavenly Father who says that.

I have no doubt that many of you are probably discouraged about something in your life. God is saying, “Will you trust Me? Will you trust My timing? My love? My purpose? My plan? My perspective? Will you trust Me?” The antidote to discouragement is to look past your problems and realize that

God is bigger than the problems. Realize that He has a bigger purpose and plan in it all.

If you want to be happy in life and you want to really want to have less stress and more peace, you’re going to have to come to grips with two fundamental truths. First, some things you’re never going to understand. You just need to accept it. There are some things in life you’re never going to understand until you get to heaven. Second, there are some things in your life that are never going to change no matter how much you pray because God has bigger perspective.

So what do you do? Just give up praying? Of course not. You keep on praying but you live day by day saying, “God, I’m going to pray for this, but if You choose not to give it I’m going to still trust You and I’m going to still love You. You are bigger than my problems and You have a bigger plan and purpose in it for me.”

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CLUES

ACROSS

1. #34 Down did this

6. Pre-1947 British rule over India

9. *George Washington chopped one down as a lad

13. *Popular feeling

14. Australian bird

15. ____ two shoes

16. Without illumination

17. Greed or sloth, e.g.

18. *April showers bring May flowers,” e.g.

19. *British soldier

21. *Pre-Independence Day “state”

23. Used for soaking

24. *Dirty Jobs” host

25. NHL’s rival, 1972-1979

28. Deceptive maneuver

30. Lay to rest

35. Abrupt stop

37. 18-wheeler

39. Eagle’s nest

40. Not active

41. Deteriorate

43. Colloquial “aren’t”

44. Ivan and Nicholas, e.g.

DOWN

1. Rider’s prod

2. European sea eagle

3. Like old West

4. *Declaration of Independence, e.g.

5. Roundabout road

6. None of this for the weary

7. Friend from Provence

8. Snowbird

9. Type of list

10. Multicolored horse

11. Jumpy

12. Cyclops had one

15. Major source of lead

20. Bullying, e.g.

22. Be obliged to pay

24. Deep regret

25. *Between red and blue

26. Shakespeare: “Thou call’st me dog before thou ____ a cause...”

27. Islam’s Supreme Being

29. “Will be,” according to Day

31. *East India Company ware, pl.

32. Bay window

33. Kind of pie

34. * ____ Ross

36. Type of seabird

38. Often symbolized by light bulb

42. Like a beaver

45. Form of civil disobedience, pl.

49. Post-Soviet Union union

51. *“Independence Day” invaders

54. Blue and white pottery style

56. Brightly colored snake of southeastern Asia

57. Wrap up in cecreloth

58. One in a million

59. Russian mountain range

60. Therefore

61. Highest volcano in Europe

62. Like those who will inherit earth

63. Gaelic

64. Once around

66. He stung like a bee?

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END of the BENCH

by **Gerry Scholl**

It All Comes Down to This

It has been a very busy sports world of late and I just can't seem to keep up.

There have been so many good story lines recently, I'm having trouble narrowing things down to focus on just one.

I've been deleting recordings from the DVR that I never had time to watch. Even over Father's Day weekend when there is sort of a right-of-way to do whatever you want, there were ones that got away.

Making a point to see most of the great NBA Finals series between Miami and Oklahoma City, at least I got to see King (LeBron) James turn in an all-time performance (a triple-double in the clinching game, while averaging 30.3 pts. 9.7 rebs., 5.6 asts. per game for the series) in winning his first championship. Despite his shortcomings, James is so exciting to watch. Long live the King.

I almost completely missed the Stanley Cup Finals. It was pretty weird that the heart of the hockey world beat in Los Angeles. The 8th-seed Kings made history, steamrolling all comers through the play-offs, going 16-4 to win the first Cup in the franchise's 45-year history.

I caught a good portion of the final game, when the Kings

scored three quick power-play goals to lead 4-0 on the way to a 6-1 rout. A single moment told the story — as players were bludgeoning one another on the ice with an Advil advertisement prominent on the boards in the background, the broadcaster said, "What a night of pain!"

Trying to settle into some tennis a couple weeks ago when Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal faced off in the French Open, just because the top men's singles players have been putting on such great shows, my interest was shattered by an 18-hour rain delay. Nadal rallied for his record seventh French Open title the next day, and I missed it. And now here's Wimbledon.

Also this week is the NBA Draft. I don't get too caught up in forecasts, predictions, what-if's and what-should's. I'm an after-the-fact guy when it comes to player drafts — look it over when it's over.

When the Toyota/Save Mart 350 auto-racing banter hit the airwaves last week I just couldn't go there. Certainly the Nascar Sprint Cup race at Sonoma Raceway, won this year by Clint Bowyer, has been a fantastic annual Northern California event for 24 years. After all, 91,000 people can't be that wrong. But it's not likely I'll be

getting out there (my hearing is already failing), unless I get an offer I can't refuse. I get a little nervous and claustrophobic in big crowds — anything over 35-40 thousand.

That's the range that showed up at the sold-out Coliseum in Oakland for all three games of the latest version of the Bay Bridge Series. Each game went down to the final batter and each was decided by one run, with the Giants taking two of three — showing good cause to keep inter-league play alive in some form.

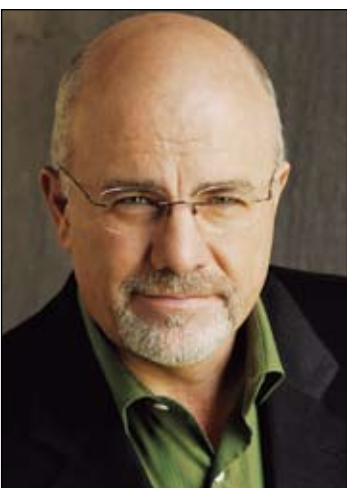
Incredibly bad form was on display in a number of other sports stories. Soon after Roger Clemens was getting off in his obstruction-of-justice trial, former Penn State assistant coach Jerry Sandusky was getting his on the jury in his child sex-abuse case, found guilty on 45 counts. Goodbye.

In the aftermath of the Manny Pacquiao-Timothy Bradley fight, it has been determined that boxing is rigged. (Of course, that's not news). Won by Bradley in a controversial decision, the fight was review by the World Boxing Organization, which determined Pacquiao should have been scored the winner. So, what fans want to know is, who really won? Welcome to the rematch. Save your money.

I was even going to check out my recording of the European Championship soccer match between Italy and England. I have trouble hanging in there for the duration when it comes to soccer. When I heard they played for two hours to a scoreless tie and Italy won its way into the semifinals via penalty kicks — I checked out. This may be my link to the age of instant-gratification, and I'm sure this would be considered soccer-heresy, but my suggestion for soccer is to institute a shot-clock. That would force the games' amazingly-talented players to put those talents on display constantly throughout a match in a more aggressive style. A foolish idea, maybe, but an interesting thought. The hooligans are after me!

Also in bad form was Giants struggling former-ace Tim Lincecum (2-8) in his start in the A's series. He allowed three runs and loaded the bases with nobody out in the first inning. But then, hopefully, he turned a corner and returned to his old Cy Young form, striking out the side and not allowing another hit through six innings.

Which leads me to the real story. That's the Giants-Dodgers for three games at AT&T Park. From here, that story rises above all else. By the time you read this, the pennant race between the two will have taken a few dramatic turns. Hope you didn't miss it.



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.

What Goes up Must come Down

Dear Dave,

I'm about to graduate from college, and I'm following your plan and trying to focus on my future financial situation. Is the current down economy a cyclical thing and just part of life?

- DJ

Dear DJ,

It is. There are always cycles in the economy. I know you hear all this talk about this is the worst recession since the Great Depression, but that's a bunch of bull. It was worse in 1982, when the Jimmy Carter era came to a close. We had double-digit inflation, double-digit unemployment and home interest rates were at 17 percent.

Dave Says

The current situation has been kind of long and boring. Things haven't really rebounded quickly. Instead, they've just kind of wallowed around and crawled along. There are a lot of theories as to why it's happened this way, but the truth is it's a part of life. Just like you have good and bad times in your personal life, there will always be good and bad times in your financial life. That's why you need a solid, common-sense financial philosophy that works when things are up and when things are down. The principles I teach about not having debt and investing conservatively over the long haul work every time.

Right now, I'm tempted to invest like a wild man and put every dollar I can find into investments, because everything is on sale. It's a great time to buy real estate and put money into mutual funds. The best time was about a year and a half ago, but the deals are still there.

Just keep investing and working your plan. The idea that you're graduating at bad time and never going to have a good life is just plain wrong. There's always some good and some bad out there, and the cycles will always come and go.

- Dave

Guidelines for Giving

Dear Dave,

My husband and I are debt-free, and we have \$100,000 saved. We like to give, rather than loan, money to family members if they're having financial

problems. Can you give us some advice on how to establish giving guidelines?

- Susan

Dear Susan,

First, you can't give to a level that it starts to make you worry about your future. Your first obligation is to your own household. Once that's done, you can help family members and your immediate community as best you can without weakening yourself.

The big thing in this scenario, I think, is to make sure you're helping someone get back on their feet. You're not helping when you give a drunk a drink, so you have to ask yourself if your generosity is really helping them or if you're simply enabling irresponsible behavior.

I'm not saying this because I'm a control freak. I'm saying it because I don't believe in investing God's money unless I see a positive return on investment. In human terms, that means helping someone get out of a mess they're in, while at the time seeing that they are working to make sure they never end up back there again. If they're buying cigarettes or lottery tickets with the money, then you're not helping them.

Taking this stance isn't mean, and it doesn't indicate that you don't love your family. It means you're loving them well and want what's best for them.

- Dave

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Get the Most Bang for Your Buck: 2012 Fireworks Buyers Guide

By David Dickstein

Whatever your fireworks budget, getting the most bang for the buck is critical. After all, no one with money to burn, literally, wants to get burned, figuratively, even if it’s for a good cause. Because fireworks range widely in performance and price, we put all the new state-approved fireworks for 2012 to the test, along with other individually sold items.

Fireworks are rated on a 5-star scale for performance, duration, distinctiveness and overall comparative value. Judges included firefighters of Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Station 65 in Rancho Cordova, where the test was conducted. Products are listed in order of price, high to low.

A tip: Shop early or risk having to choose from items not good enough to make this list, meaning, except with the new stuff, they didn’t score at least 4 stars.

Let the sparks fly!

New for 2012



• **Opening Show** (TNT), \$59.99 – Winner of “Best New Finale” honors, this 500-gram marvel is a must-have despite the record-setting price for a California fountain. The spread of sparks at the 2-minute mark is the ultimate crowd-pleaser. Similar, if not identical to Shogun’s Tailgate Party found in other states. 130 seconds. 4 1/2 Stars



• **Stacks Up** (TNT), \$39.99 – Out of the fountain’s dozen “smokestacks” spews a lack-luster combination of glitter, crackles, chrysanthemums, snow and multi-colored rain. Don’t be fooled by labeling that gives the impression this is a 500-gram firework. It’s got to be closer to 350. 144 seconds. 3 Stars



• **Peacock Tail Fan Fountain** (Phantom), \$29.99 – Taking top honors as “Best in Show,” this isn’t the longest fan fountain on the California market, but it is the most impressive. Each stage is different and builds excitement. Dazzles with silver flowers, stars of red, green and blue, and a titanium crackle finish. A must-have. 54 seconds. 5 Stars



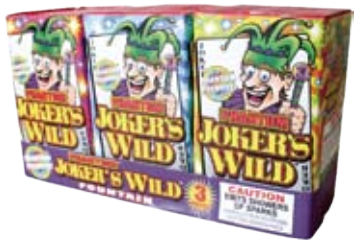
• **Independence Day** (TNT), \$19.99 – With a name like that, of course this fountain has sparks of red, white and ... orange, green and purple? Well, it is a free country. Blue isn’t the only thing lacking in this long-lasting, but run-of-the-mill rookie. 130 seconds. 2 1/2 Stars



Fireworks are rated on a 5-star scale for performance, duration, distinctiveness and overall comparative value.



• **O-Blivion** (TNT), \$19.99 – This lord of the ring-shaped fountains emits multi-colored chrysanthemums with pine and some of the best titanium crackles of any new firework. 125 seconds. 4 Stars



• **Phantom Joker’s Wild** (Phantom), \$9.99 for three – Separately they’re a joke. Together they’re wild. Distancing the dissimilar trio in the driveway and lighting them simultaneously offers a better performance than many single fountains at the same price. 35 seconds. 4 Stars



• **Parfait Fountain** (TNT), \$6.99 – Its namesake means “perfect” in French, but this freshman falls short of that with middling colorful chrysanthemums and silvery crackles. 59 seconds. 3 1/2 Stars



• **Little Miss** (TNT), \$4.99 – One of the few fireworks named and labeled to appeal to young

girls, this well-priced opening act packs plenty of color plus silver rain and crackles. 47 seconds. 4 Stars

• **14” Morning Glory** (Phantom), \$3.99 for 20 – This newbie handheld measures 3 inches longer than regular morning glories, but 2 of those inches are stick. The extra powder makes for a more intense burn, but peters out 30 seconds quicker. 17 seconds. 2 Stars

• **Phantom Magic Torch** (Phantom), \$2.99 for two – A miniature California candle is all this is. Nothing magical here. 21 seconds. 2 Stars



• **Short & Stout** (TNT), \$1.50 – It’s a little teapot, short and stout, it has a handle, it has a spout. More short than stout, but a cute, cheap novelty for kids. 17 seconds. 2 Stars

Best of the Rest (4-5 Stars)

• **Delirium** (TNT), \$49.99 – Fan-shape fountain conserves none of its 500 grams from the get go, making for brief, yet dazzling intensity and beauty. Get ready for a lot of “Are you nuts?” comments from whoever knows the price, which, by the way, went up a Lincoln bill. 133 seconds.

• **New York Harbor** (Phantom), \$39.99 – Stellar burn time and multiple effects, including some of the highest-quality chrysanthemums you can buy. This 500-gram classic proves that not all standard-effect fountains are the same. 195 seconds.

• **Star Voyager** (TNT), \$34.99 – Earned “best new finale” honors last year with a fantastically priced, long-lasting 500-gram performance of bright and crackling titanium bursts that push the 10-foot-high legal limit. A worthy buy even at \$5 more this year. 173 seconds.



• **Phantom Crown Jewel** (Phantom), \$29.99 – Dazzling 500-gram display of white flowers, colored pearls and crackles, gold chrysanthemums and silver crackle. Packs a wallop, though that also reduces burn time. 90 seconds.

• **Brew Haha** (Phantom), \$29.99 – Beer stein-designed fountain brims over with above-average effects, including a loud opening whistle and a cavalcade of color. Fun packaging. 145 seconds.

• **Alpha Wolf** (Phantom), \$21.99 – Green and purple droplets,

gold shower and crackling stars finale are awesome. No whistles, doesn’t need them. Up \$2 from last season. 83 seconds.

• **American Spirit** (TNT), \$21.99 plus bonus – Offers up a patriotic blend of red, white and bluish stars, gold showers and decent whistles and crackles. Comes with the boisterous, multi-colored Sizzler Fountain (90 seconds). Pretty good deal even with the \$2 increase. 80 seconds.

• **Molten Pot** (TNT), \$19.99 – Entertaining combo of colorful blooping globs (always a crowd favorite), titanium crackles, fish, glitter and chrysanthemums. 86 seconds.

• **Pyropalooza** (TNT), \$19.99 – Excellent height, crackle and vivid hues – a vivacious visual. 115 seconds.

• **Hasta La Vista Baby** (Phantom), \$19.99 – Like color and hate whistles? Then this is a solid pick with a screech-free spectrum of fast-changing colors. \$3 more this year, but still a winner. 125 seconds.

• **Funky Monkey** (Phantom), \$18.99 – This pyrotechnic primate features red pearls and a solid overall performance. Worth the \$3 increase because of its distinctiveness. 90 seconds.

• **Apache Firedance** (Phantom), \$17.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Makes the list only because of the two-fer deal. Long burn time is overshadowed by low-altitude and humdrum crackles, whistles, white flashes and multi-colored sprays. 210 seconds.

• **Mad Dog** (TNT), \$14.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Amazing crackles, whistles and multi-color sparks are improved by TNT again making this a two-for-one item. 80 seconds.

• **Firecracker Fountain** (Phantom), \$14.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Lives up

to its name with a remarkable crackling barrage among multi-colored pearls. 76 seconds.



• **Phantom Night Owl** (Phantom), \$14.99 – Phantom’s only internally glowing fountain has four loud screeches and an exciting overall performance. Eyes and mouth that light up make this item a real hoot and a wise buy, even at \$2 more this year. 65 seconds.

• **Night Treasure** (TNT), \$14.99 – Looks like a fan fountain, and it is, albeit only for the final 22 seconds. Went up \$2, but still a value-priced fan. 98 seconds.

• **Flying Stars** (Phantom), \$12.99 – Fantastic fish-featuring fountain that, because it’s noiseless, is also friendly to pets and fuddy-duddy neighbors. 97 seconds.

• **King of Bling** (Phantom), \$12.99 – The crackles heard during the final third sound just like popping popcorn. Majestic chrysanthemums and whistle, even at \$2 more this season. 90 seconds.

• **Volcanic Vortex** (Phantom), \$12.99 for three – Cones usually produce more yawns than sparks, but not this awesomely

intense trio. Definitely worth the \$2 increase. 45 seconds each.

• **L.O.L.** (TNT), \$11.99 – The eyes and mouth of the clown face glow from within, making for loads of fun right after an opening shriek. Hope you’re sitting down -- the price actually went down a buck from last year. 61 seconds.

• **Radiant** (TNT), \$10 – This instant classic debuted last season and got a rare 5 of 5 stars for stunning performance and price, which TNT hasn’t changed. This solid buy pushes the legal limit for spreading sparks. 93 seconds.

• **Luck of the Irish** (TNT), \$9.99 – This classic fountain features gold and silver spray, red and green balls, crackles and four super-loud whistles. 75 seconds.

• **Lil Red Devil** (TNT), \$8.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Packs plenty of heat for the size and price. Ends strong with titanium crackling sparks spreading out an impressive 9 feet. 35 seconds.

• **Pink Diamonds** (TNT), \$7.99 – Not much pink in the fireworks marketplace, so props to this unique item still modestly priced with a dollar increase. 46 seconds.



• **Phantom Mystical Magic** (Phantom), \$6.99 – Fleeting duration, but love those multi-colored, marble-sized blooping globs and a new price that proves last year’s \$8.99 for two offer was mystically crazy. 32 seconds.

• **Phantom Dragon Slayer** (Phantom), \$6.99 – Got some white, blue and lemon chrysanthemums, rowdy crackles and red stars going on. 66 seconds.

• **Electrical Shock** (Phantom), \$5.99 – Red and green showers give way to a raucous whistling and crackling finale. Fantastic buy. 121 seconds.

• **Moondance** (Phantom), \$3.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) -- 4-inch dynamo spews loud crackles, purple pearls and glittering gold and white sparks. [Note: Identical to TNT’s **Purple Rain**, \$5.99 for two.] 45 seconds.

Happy Fourth of July to All Our Readers!



Buy Fireworks from Your Local Charities to Support Them!



Village Green Park Friday Free Summer Movies and Concerts

RANCHO CORDOVA - Grab some lawn chairs and the family and head to Village Green Park Friday for free summer movie nights presented by the Cordova Community Council.

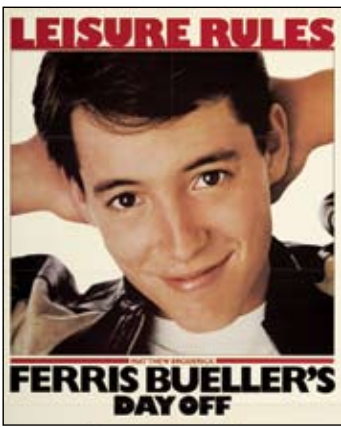
The movies begin at 8:45 p.m., but come early and taste treats from a visiting food truck or neighboring restaurants.

The movies will be shown at the award-winning Village Green Park amphitheater at 3141 Bridgeway Drive, just off

Highway 50 at Zinfandel Drive.

There will also be two more free concerts to be held on second Fridays: 80s and newer cover band Rock Monsterz (www.rockmonsterz.com) on July 13; and a special "Pops in the Park" concert by the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band on August 10. Admission to all concerts is free of charge.

The remaining movie series includes free outdoor family movie nights to be held on



fourth Fridays. The line-up: E.T. (The Extra Terrestrial) on July 27; and Ferris Bueller's Day Off on August 24.

The Summer in the City series is produced by the Cordova Community Council and supported by the Cordova Recreation and Park District. Series sponsors include: City of Rancho Cordova, Rancho Cordova Dental Group and Orthodontics, Cordova Veterinary Hospital, SMUD, Golden State Water



Company, Heritage Community Credit Union, National Career Education, SCS Security Fencing, REA Real Estate America specialist Reuben Nazareno, and the California Carnival Company.

For more information about Summer in the City, please contact Shelly Blanchard, Executive Director of the Cordova Community Council, at (916) 273-5704.

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Raising Funds for Freedom

Continued from page 1

While Orangevale Food Closet and yet-named elementary schools will get a cut, the lion's share will help keep Retro open and operating.

"Thousands of young people are helped every month," said Oliver, now in his 10th year as fireworks chairman. "Retro is a place teens can call their own. Throughout the year we provide tutoring, counseling, secular and Christian nightly events and so much more."

Retro's two most local stands are in Orangevale, next to Save Mart Supermarket at 8839 Greenback Lane and in the Walmart parking lot at 8961 Greenback Lane.

Supplementing funds raised through its annual crab and spaghetti feeds, Faith Lutheran Church in Fair Oaks is putting faith in fireworks with a TNT stand on its premises at 4000 San Juan Ave.

With a goal of \$10,000-\$12,000, according to fundraiser chairwoman Alice Beltran, a retired Faith teacher, proceeds are earmarked for capital improvements to its preschool, which currently serves nearly 40 children.

Also praying for bang-up business is New Life Community

Church, which will have two stands for a third straight year. A portion of the proceeds from its dual Fair Oaks locations, at the church at 8101 Sunset Ave. and near Carl's Jr. at 8121 Madison Ave., will help send youths to church camp, noted Kathy Garcia, who is chairing her fifth fireworks fundraiser.

New San Juan High is also getting in on the pyrotechnic action. Proceeds from the Spartan Booster Club's TNT booth at 7598 Greenback Lane will benefit a range of programs, including football, wrestling, cheerleading, Sober Grad Night and PTSO.

Over at Mesa Verde High, its softball team is banking on fireworks sales to buy equipment and new fencing for the two backstops among other needs, according to fourth-year fundraiser chair Mike Wilgus of Citrus Heights. The team's TNT stand will be near Kmart at 8477 Auburn Blvd.

Also in Citrus Heights, the Lions Club will use profits for such causes as year-round eye care and assistance to needy families during Thanksgiving and Christmas, and offering scholarships to students of Citrus Heights' high schools. Fireworks represent the group's second-largest fundraiser, after an annual crab feed, and Phil Olaverri is

hoping experience pays off this year.

"Last year we made \$3,000 and this year our goal is \$5,000," said Olaverri, who will have a season as chairman under his belt when he runs the TNT stand adjacent to Panera Bread at 7901 Greenback Lane.

True for most of the 30 years Knights of Columbus Council 4964 has sold fireworks, a wide range of uses are planned for what it brings in at its stand.

"Monies will go to various charities," said Joe Moureaux, who will manage the TNT stand at Holy Family Catholic Church, 7817 Old Auburn Blvd. in Citrus Heights. "We will help homeless vets with health and legal assistance through the Operation Stand Down program, prepare a breakfast for veterans and their families who are homeless, bring in doctors and dentists for those who cannot afford it and donate to Holy Family itself."

Moureaux, who is chairing his 14th fireworks fundraiser for the council, said any surplus could also be used on Thanksgiving dinner for seniors in the surrounding area, provide bibles to hospitals as well as 8th graders in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine program and wheelchairs for those in need here and in Mexico.

The Sacramento Sirens women's football team will try to blitz the competition by having players sign autographs and take pictures at its stand on all but June 30 due to a playoff game that day for the four-time national champions. The Sirens, a member of the full-tackle, non-profit Independent Women's Football League, play their home games at Natomas High School, but its TNT stand will be in Citrus Heights, next to Jack in the Box at 7807 Sunrise Blvd.

For its fourth fireworks fundraiser, the team will raise money for scholarships given to girls who play football as well as helping offset travel expenses to the league's championship game in July in Texas, according to the team's optimistic treasurer Sally Rydell. Besides being confident that her team will make the finals, the North Highlands resident is poised for a strong Fourth of July despite the holiday falling on a statistically slower Wednesday.

"We are thinking that people will want to start early in the evening," Rydell said, "so by selling some of the smaller fountains that can be seen while it is still light and then working up to the bigger ones as it gets darker, it should be a fun night for all."

Rancho CordoVan Shuttle Modifies Service to Anatolia

RANCHO CORDOVA – The Rancho CordoVan shuttle service will change its existing route and add a new route starting Monday, July 2, 2012 to improve service to residents and business commuters.

The existing shuttle route will be modified to maintain a 15-minute loop designed to serve business commuters in the morning and afternoon. The largest change is the relocation of the route start. The shuttle will no longer pick up from Cordova Town Centre Light Rail Station, near Koreana Plaza. The shuttle will now pick up from Zinfandel Plaza, next to the Zinfandel Light Rail Station. By relocating to Zinfandel Plaza, the CordoVan improves drive time efficiencies by avoiding Folsom Boulevard and Olson Drive traffic.

To maintain the expediency of the loop, the service will no longer make stops at Quality Drive and Data Drive, or Quality Drive and White Rock Road. Additionally, the shuttle service will run in opposite directions in the morning and afternoon. Morning

operations will run clockwise while afternoon service will run counter-clockwise, meaning the morning and afternoon stops will be on opposite sides of the street.

A new route has also been added to serve the Anatolia neighborhood at the south end of the City. This service will be a 45-minute loop (22-minutes from Anatolia to Zinfandel Plaza) aimed at providing access to light rail for residents in the Anatolia neighborhood. Those residents pay a special assessment tax specifically for this service, a model that can be implemented in additional neighborhoods whose residents are willing to pay a special assessment tax.

Further information including revised route maps and schedule of operations can be viewed at www.cityofranchocordova.org. For questions, please contact David Gassaway in the Public Works Department at (916) 851-8896 or dgassaway@cityof-ranchocordova.org.

Source: City of Rancho Cordova

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