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"You Don't Need a Reason to be Happy"

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Expert Answers to
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AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

Volume 7 • Issue 8

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

Second Edition for April 2012

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Women's Empowerment Program Celebrates 900th Success Story



Women's Empowerment graduated 29 women, once homeless, from its comprehensive job training program on March 22. Photo courtesy of Kristin Thébaud Communications.

SACRAMENTO REGION – Twenty-nine women graduated from Women's Empowerment's job-readiness program for women who are homeless on March 22, including the group's 900th graduate, Stacey Jackson, age 53. Jackson is now in housing and enrolled in Paratransit Inc.'s vehicle operator training program.

"Women's Empowerment showed me that you can do things and make changes after 50," Jackson said. "I am now very proud to see what I see

when I look in the mirror. The changes I've gone through have shed a whole new light on my life."

Jackson was born in Missouri to a low-income military family that mostly ate rice and beans. She and her sisters slept in one room while her brother slept in the living room. She married, and 31 years later, her husband left her. She lost her house and turned to Women's Empowerment for help. At Women's Empowerment, she drew on her father's work ethic

and encouragement to continually "better themselves."

"At orientation, I was asked why I wanted to come to Women's Empowerment," Jackson said. "I told them I have too much talent and too many skills not to share myself with the world."

More than 200 community members, including graduates' mentors and families, attended the graduation where each graduate shared her story and future plans through poetry, songs and speeches centered around the theme, "diamonds in the

rough." Each woman received a donated gift bag filled with a day planner and other items designed to help her succeed. The gift bags were donated by the Zonta Club of Sacramento and Soroptimist International of Greater Sacramento.

"We are profoundly proud of each of these 29 women who have joined 887 other women who were once homeless but have found a safe home, a steady job and a healthy lifestyle," said Lisa Culp, Women's Empowerment executive director. "They are breaking the cycle of homelessness for generations to come."

Women's Empowerment offers the only comprehensive job-readiness program in the Sacramento area designed specifically for women who are homeless and their children. The 2009 Nonprofit of the Year has graduated 916 homeless women and their 1,379 children. Last year, 94 percent of graduates found homes and 73 percent found jobs or enrolled in school. The program combines self-esteem courses, job training, health classes and support services to help homeless women across diverse ages, races and cultures. Women's Empowerment is funded solely through private donations from the community. For more information and to donate online, visit www.womens-empowerment.org.

Source: Kristin Thébaud
Communications

Board Selects Thompson as New Superintendent



Glynn Thompson selected San Juan Unified Superintendent of Schools. Photo courtesy of SJUSD.

SJUSD - After conducting an extensive search, the San Juan Unified School District Board of Education has selected Glynn Thompson as the District's Superintendent of Schools with a unanimous vote. Thompson had been in the role on an interim basis while the search was being conducted and will assume his duties permanently effective May 1. His contract will run through June 2015 with an annual salary of \$225,000.

"Throughout the search process we heard students, teachers, parents, principals and community members tell us that the number one priority in selecting a superintendent was to ensure that the work of our community-developed strategic plan continued," said Board President Richard Launey. "Mr. Thompson has been a leader in implementing our strategic plan and we need his strong voice to provide leadership as we build upon the work underway in our schools to close achievement gaps and educate and inspire each student to contribute to our radically evolving world."

Thompson was previously named the District's interim superintendent of schools in June of 2011 while a search was conducted to find a permanent candidate for the position. He became San Juan Unified's first chief academic officer in July 2009 building up on his more than 30 years of experience in New Haven and Los Angeles Unified school districts. He has previously served as a teacher, principal, professional development advisor, coordinator of special education and director of instruction.

"We cannot do more with less, we must do differently," said Thompson. "As state budget cuts continue to take resources away from our schools and classrooms, we must work collaboratively as a community to rethink how we deliver services and educate students to produce 21st century learners and leaders. San Juan Unified has a long and proud history of success which we will continue together."

A graduate of Texas Christian University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education, Thompson also holds a master's in educational psychology from the University of Houston and has completed post graduate studies at the University of California Los Angeles and Pepperdine University. His full bio can be found at <http://www.sanjuan.edu/superintendent>.

Source: SJUSD

Get Ready for the Annual Parkway Half Marathon

SACRAMENTO REGION – Sacramento Friends In Training (SacFit) and Capital Road Race Management (CRRM) announced recently that the Sixth Annual American River Parkway Half Marathon—a leading fundraising running event for the benefit the

American River Parkway – will host over 4000 participants and 300 volunteers this weekend.

On Saturday, April 28, 2012, SacFit and CRRM will present the American River Parkway Half Marathon and 5K (www.parkway-half.com) for runners and walkers.

The race and post-race festivities will be held on the American River Parkway. All the proceeds from the event are committed to supporting the American River Parkway.

Race Director Ken Press of SacFit reflected upon last year's race, "The fifth annual American

River Parkway Half Marathon continues as the only major race in the Northern California area to go Green including the first-ever race to feature race shirts made of 100% recycled materials.

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Have a Heart... Donate Smart Program



Junior Lee (left), Rancho Cordova Code Enforcement Officer, confers with Gregory Steinhauer, Walmart's Asset Protection Manager in Rancho Cordova. Steinhauer says he appreciates working as a team with businesses, residents, and the City to eradicate panhandling. Photo courtesy of City of Rancho Cordova.

RANCHO CORDOVA - Have a Heart...Donate Smart is a joint effort of the City's Police Department and Code Enforcement Division and deals with panhandling and vagrancy.

Working together, the two agencies provide assistance, education, and information to those in need as well as to businesses and residents who experience panhandling.

"Rancho Cordovans are generous and giving people and by donating to shelters and service providers, their donations will go further in helping others," said Mayor David Sander. Another part of the Have a Heart ...Donate Smart program is the Police Department's Transient Enforcement Detail (TED) that targets panhandlers and vagrants. "We don't just make arrests and issue citations, we provide information on resources for assistance," said RCMPD Office Tyler Neff, who heads the local TED taskforce.

Panhandlers usually frequent areas outside of retail stores, gas stations, and restaurants, bothering patrons for money or cigarettes. They can be aggressive and refuse to take no for an answer, leaving people annoyed or fearing for their safety.

Although their signs ask for money for food, panhandlers openly admit that they use it for alcohol and drugs, not food and shelter. According to TED officers, panhandlers often collect \$40 to \$100 per day and then gather in public areas to drink high percentage alcoholic beverages, leading to intoxication and

unsanitary behavior.

They also gather at freeway off ramps, waiting for a turn to get on the island. Officer Neff said that the typical vice of panhandlers who frequent center medians and off ramps is heroin and methamphetamine.

TED's high profile and regular enforcement are deterring panhandlers from loitering in City areas. "Panhandling at freeway off ramps in Rancho Cordova has almost been eliminated," said Police Oriented Policing Officer Chuck Gailey, who has worked the TED detail for more than three years. "The exception is Sunrise Boulevard with out-of-town drifters who are passing through."

Several homeless camps have been cleaned up and removed. "Not only were the camps eyesores, they were filthy with unsanitary conditions," said Gailey. In addition to providing panhandlers with resource information, TED educates and works with businesses on how to deal with panhandling at their locations.

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Fair Oaks Community Update

Have a Heart... Donate Smart Program



By Supervisor Susan Peters

FAIR OAKS – Through the generosity of The American River Messenger this column serves to provide an update periodically about matters affecting the Third District, which includes the unincorporated community of Fair Oaks. This is my third report to you since Fair Oaks became part of the Third District following redistricting.

Support the Parkway with a Parks Pass

The American River Parkway is a unique 23-mile long natural resource that provides a quick escape from the stress of urban life and offers plenty of outdoor recreational amenities. It is a public asset worth protecting and preserving – and your support is needed!

Please show your support of the Parkway by purchasing a year long unlimited Parks Pass. This convenient annual parking/day use pass is great for joggers, bicyclists as well as outdoor and nature enthusiasts who frequent the Parkway. The pass costs only \$50 per year – and pays for itself after ten trips.

The American River Parkway Foundation sells passes online at arp.org and you can also purchase them locally in Fair Oaks at Patriot Bicycle, 4719 San Juan Avenue, as well as at the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District Office, 4150 Temescal Street, or the East Area Sacramento County Neighborhood Service Center, 5229-B Hazel Avenue (near Madison Avenue).

California’s June Primary Election

May 21 is the last day to register to vote in California’s Presidential June Primary Election. Voter registration forms must be mailed (postmarked by this date) or delivered to the Elections Office by that date.

All area voters can go online to confirm that they are registered by visiting the Sacramento County Elections Office’s web site at elections.saccounty.net. The web site also allows you to find your polling place. In addition you can call 875-6451 for more information.

Registered voters also may apply for a vote-by-mail ballot for the upcoming election to avoid having to physically travel to your polling place. May 29 is the last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot be mailed to you. More information including an application is available on the Elections Office’s web site.

Under Proposition 14 passed by voters in June 2010, primary ballots for all state and federal offices starting with this election will now include every candidate regardless of political party except for President and county central committee offices. This “top two” primary election system lets you vote for any candidate even if you are not in the same political party since candidates will be running in a single election open to all voters, with the top two vote-getters advancing to a runoff in the November General Election.

Alcohol Ban keeps Parkway Family Friendly

This Memorial Day weekend there will be a complete ban on alcohol consumption and possession both on land and in the water within the American River Parkway between Hazel and Watt avenues. An exception exists for Ancil Hoffman Golf Course.

In past years holiday weekends had become major problems along the American River making the parkway less of a family friendly outing because of fights, public nudity, profanity and littering. The problem was very apparent Fourth of July in 2006 when hundreds of rafters and partygoers consuming excessive

amounts of alcohol created what one observer called a “chaotic scene.”

The Board of Supervisors restored decorum beginning with the 2006 Labor Day weekend and the ban is also applicable for the holiday weekends of Independence Day as well as Memorial Day. Since the restriction has taken effect, families I have talked to have expressed appreciation for making these holiday weekends once again a time for everyone to enjoy the American River. Parkway.

Next Economy Regional Forum

The upcoming Next Economy Regional Forum is scheduled for Friday, May 4, at Sacramento State University and will unveil strategies that are emerging from dozens of work sessions as part of a continuing region-wide effort to mobilize joint action to jump start our economy.

I am co-chair of the Next Economy, a public-private partnership effort that seeks to create a path to lead the region out of the downturn by diversifying the regional economy and leveraging our inherent strengths. For too long our economy has depended on two sectors that have suffered in the recession – government and construction.

The group consists of employers, business, and other entities with the goal to create quality jobs in areas where we have a distinct competitive edge, including agribusiness, healthcare and biosciences, information technology and professional services.

The CSUS forum will be held in the University Ballroom, 6200 J Street, between 9 a.m. to 12 pm with door opening at 8:30 a.m. The event is free but registration is required to obtain a campus parking permit.

For more information and to register, please visit nexteconomycapitalregion.org.

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



Rancho Cordova’s Growing Strong Neighborhoods (GSN) initiative is proactive in many ways throughout the City.

Continued from Page 1

Larger stores have security staff who may ask the panhandlers to leave. Business owners and managers as well as shoppers may call the RCPD non-emergency number (916) 362-5115 to make a report. The purpose of TED and GSN is to make Rancho Cordova

a welcoming place for people to do business and enjoy life while being compassionate to those in less fortunate circumstances. “Having worked with TED for several years, I believe the program is beneficial for the community as well as the panhandlers,” said Gailey.

RCPD Officer Tracy Jacobs (left) and RCPD Sergeant Jeff Hattersley arrest a vagrant for trespassing. As part of the procedure, the arrestee was told about several options of free services and programs. Photo courtesy of City of Rancho Cordova

Comparison of Short Sale

Frequently Asked Questions About Surrendering Your Home Through Short Sale, Foreclosure and Bankruptcy

By Attorney Kristy A. Hernandez

Due to job loss and the poor real estate market, many of my clients are electing to get out of real estate. Most clients that I consult with are families that have always paid their bills on time and, prior to the economic decline, never would have considered bankruptcy or foreclosure as a viable option. However, making smart choices now may mean that a family can bounce back from financial hardship faster and get back into real estate again one day.

I spend a lot of my time in appointments helping families decide what makes more sense for them: foreclosure, short sale, or bankruptcy. The following are some of the most common questions I receive about getting out of real estate, and how I answer them.

How much will my credit be affected?

Short sale: Credit impact depends on how many months of mortgage payments you miss before the short sale is complete. If you never missed a payment, plan for your credit to drop 85 to 160 points. If you are missing payments, add additional point reductions depending on the number of days late. For 30 days late, plan for an additional drop of 40 to 110 points, for 90 days late or more plan 70 to 135 points.

Foreclosure: 200 to 300 points depending on how good your credit was to begin with.

Bankruptcy: 130 to 240 points depending on how good your credit was to begin with.

How long will it take before I can buy a house again?

The answers provided are based on current lending guidelines if, at the time of applying for a new mortgage, you have saved enough money for a down payment and your credit has improved.

Short sale: 2 years minimum
Foreclosure: 5 to 7 years
Bankruptcy: 2 years for FHA loans; 4 years for most other lenders

Will the lender be able to come after me for any money?

Short sale: No. If a lender approves a short sale, California Senate Bills 931 and 458 provide that the lender cannot seek a deficiency after a short sale.

Foreclosure: Possibly. This depends on whether the loan was a purchase money mortgage or not. It is wise to consult with an attorney to help determine your liability.

Bankruptcy: Generally no. If you surrender real estate and do not reaffirm the debt in your bankruptcy case, then it will be discharged in your bankruptcy.

Can I receive money to assist me in moving out?

Short sale, Foreclosure and Bankruptcy: You may be paid “cash for keys” by agreeing to a

specific move-out date with the lender and leaving the property in good condition. The amount of cash upon move-out is negotiable and varies depending on the lender.

Other Important Considerations

Short sale: The lender has to approve you to do a short sale. You must show your home to prospective buyers and usually need to hire a real estate agent to list and market the property. Plan for this process to take between 4-8 months.

Foreclosure: Many clients have difficulty tracking the foreclosure timeline and find the move-out date unpredictable. Failure to move out on time could result in an eviction being filed against you.

Bankruptcy: You must meet income eligibility in order to qualify for bankruptcy relief. If you have a foreclosure date set, bankruptcy can give you additional time to move out of the property by stopping the sale date for a period of time. Also, bankruptcy may help get rid of other debts you have accumulated.

Bear in mind that the responses above are general. Your specific income or property may not apply. If you are interested in learning which way to get out of real estate is right for you, my office offers a free consultation. To set an appointment, call 916-728-1500 or visit us online at www.hlwincc.com.

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Rancho Cordova Employee’s Wife Goes from Being Healthy to Having a Liver Transplant in Less than a Month



Shivon Watson (second from left) celebrates her 38th birthday with her daughters and husband on February 18th. Two weeks later, she was deathly ill and needed a liver transplant. Photo courtesy of City of Rancho Cordova.

RANCHO CORDOVA – Shivon Watson, the 38-year-old wife of Tim Watson, a facilities maintenance worker for the City of Rancho Cordova, was the recipient of a liver transplant on Friday, March 2nd. The operation was the culmination after a whirlwind illness that started with heartburn symptoms on February 18th. Less than a month ago, Shivon was a healthy, busy wife and mother of two daughters, 9-year-old Kaylee and 7-year-old Paige.

The Saturday before President’s Day, she went to a

weekend clinic with abdominal and chest pains. She was given a prescription for heartburn medication and worked all week at her job as an account manager for an insurance company. The following week after developing a violent cough, she saw her physician who ordered several tests that revealed something was very wrong with her liver. She was admitted to UC Davis Hospital in Sacramento for tests and treatments but by the following Wednesday had been transferred from a regular room to ICU.

According to her husband,

Tim, she had “very rare acute liver failure that only occurs in about 2,000 people a year.” On Thursday, she was transferred by ambulance to the University of California San Francisco Medical Center and was rated a 1A, the highest priority, for a liver transplant. Fortunately, the young family has relatives in the Bay Area that Tim and the two daughters could stay with. But even with insurance covering the medical bills, the family has had major expenses.

“It costs \$28 a day to park at the hospital,” said Tim who has been almost non-stop at his wife’s side since she was admitted to the hospitals. “Plus, Shivon had not been at her insurance job long enough to qualify for Family Medical Leave Act benefits.” He said that Shivon faces several months of recuperation and that her employer, a small firm, would have to replace her after two weeks. But he joyfully said, “The good news is that Shivon made it through Friday’s surgery.”

The City of Rancho Cordova has started a fund for the Watson family. Staff members have contributed about \$1,000. Donations can be made to The Watson Family and dropped off at the Rancho Cordova City Hall cashier’s window, Monday through Friday, or be mailed to Rancho Cordova City Hall, 2729 Prospect Park Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670. Checks should be made out to Tim Watson.



FAIR OAKS CEMETERY
MEMORIAL DAY
AND AVENUE OF FLAGS
CEREMONY HONORING
CIVIL WAR VETERANS

The Fourteenth Annual Memorial Day Ceremony will be held Saturday, May 26th, 2012 at the Fair Oaks Cemetery, 7780 Olive Street, Fair Oaks, with formal ceremonies starting at 10 AM. Tom Askins will be the Master of Ceremonies. The musical program will be provided by the American Veterans Band, conducted by Warren “Bud” Turner.

There will be a Color Guard and Rifle Salute team from Civil War Member Organizations. Also a ceremony of the laying of the wreath at the memorial in honor of over sixteen hundred veterans who are buried in the cemetery.

The cemetery will be decorated with hundreds of flags lining its roadways as “The Avenue of Flags.” We will be adding more names to the Veterans Memorial Wall.

The Fair Oaks Historical Society and Orangevale/Fair Oaks Grange will provide complimentary refreshments after the ceremony.



More information will be coming as we finalize the Speakers.
916-966-1613



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Woman’s Thursday Club to hold Luncheon and Fashion Show

From Cheri Fuller, WTC Publicity

FAIR OAKS – Woman’s Thursday Club of Fair Oaks Luncheon and Fashion Show, April 19, 2012 The Woman’s Thursday Club of Fair Oaks will present its annual luncheon and fashion show on April 19th at the North Ridge Country Club in Fair Oaks. Tickets are available for \$40.00. This includes a delicious lunch of chicken crepes

and fashion’s provided by Cho Cho’s Boutique of Fair Oaks. Proceeds from the luncheon will go to provide four, \$1,000.00 scholarships for local graduating seniors who plan to continue their education. This year’s theme is Springtime Serenade. The centerpieces will include beautiful bird houses made for us by the Casa Roble high school wood shop. These birdhouses will be available for sale at the luncheon. Social hour will begin at 11:00 AM with a

No Host bar and lunch will be served at 12:00 PM. The festivities will include door prizes and drawing prizes. Tickets may be purchased by calling Lynn at 916-719-2304. If you require a vegetarian meal, please let her know when you order your tickets. If you or your business would like to donate an item for the drawing, please contact Claudia Thorn, 916-961-8291. This should be a wonderful event. We hope to see you there.

Better Your Business Skills

FAIR OAKS – Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce announces monthly “Better Business Skills” meetings, beginning Monday, May 14th, at The Village Bistro. 8:30 – 10:00am. Meetings will take place on the 2nd Monday of every month. So mark your calendar!

Cost (including delicious coffee, juice and pastries) is \$20.00. Each meeting will focus on one specific topic, hosted by Pete Schroeder, Chamber Program Director and Certified Business Coach. The topic of May’s meeting is “5 Keys That Will Make A

Difference In Your Business.” The format of the meetings will be interactive. Future topics will be determined by the participants. No registration necessary – just stop by and grab a chair! Limited seating, however! The Village Bistro can accommodate 36.

Garrick Worrell Named LeTourneau University Heritage Scholar

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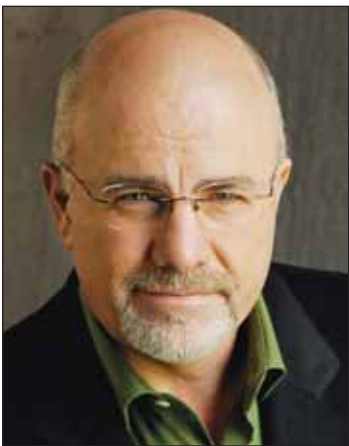
Difference In Your Business.” The format of the meetings will be interactive. Future topics will be determined by the participants. No registration necessary – just stop by and grab a chair! Limited seating, however! The Village Bistro can accommodate 36.

Metro Fire Responds to Garage Fire in Fair Oaks

FAIR OAKS – On April 10th, at 5:45pm Metro Firefighters responded to the report of a garage fire in the 8900 block of Bluff Lane. Prior to arrival, firefighters were told by the dispatch center that there were multiple 911 calls confirming a fire. Metro Fire

crews arrived to a fully involved garage fire which was attached to a home, and also found flames lapping onto a second nearby residents. Crews were able to quickly contain the fire to the garage, preventing it from spreading. The fire was contained with

a single alarm of 24 firefighters, and an estimated fire loss of \$60,000. One person complained of a minor burn injury to his hand, and smoke inhalation, which occurred when he opened the garage door. No other injuries were reported.



Dave Ramsey is a personal money management expert, popular national radio personality and the author of three New York Times bestsellers – The Total Money Makeover, Financial Peace Revisited and More Than Enough. In them, Ramsey exemplifies his life’s work of teaching others how to be financially responsible, so they can acquire enough wealth to take care of loved ones, live prosperously into old age, and give generously to others.

Downsizing House to Get Out of Debt?

Dear Dave, Is it ever a good idea to sell your home and buy a smaller, less expensive one in order to get out of debt more quickly? - Kelly

Dear Kelly, There are two problems here. One is financial in nature, and the other is a lack of boundaries. You’re walking face-first into both of them. Marriage counselors will tell you if you can agree on four things – religion, money, children and in-laws – then you’ve got a good chance of having a successful marriage. You’ve got two of these yanking your chain right now–money and children–and they’re both wrapped up in one spoiled little girl. If you and

Dave Says

50 percent of this figure, then it’s time to unload the house. But selling your home can be a tough thing emotionally. I’d never advise someone to sell the place they love and move down in house if their payment is reasonable. In these situations there are usually other areas where you can cut back, keep your home, and still get out of debt in a reasonable amount of time. - Dave

Boundaries ...

Dear Dave, I’m getting married to a wonderful man, but his 19-year old daughter from a previous marriage is very irresponsible. She doesn’t want to make her own car payments and doesn’t want to work. Lots of days, she sleeps until noon and just lies around the house. He agrees that he’s been too lenient and that she needs to grow up, but doesn’t want to pull the rug out from under her. What do you think? - Kelly

Dear Kelly, There are two problems here. One is financial in nature, and the other is a lack of boundaries. You’re walking face-first into both of them. Marriage counselors will tell you if you can agree on four things – religion, money, children and in-laws – then you’ve got a good chance of having a successful marriage. You’ve got two of these yanking your chain right now–money and children–and they’re both wrapped up in one spoiled little girl. If you and

Vote to Give Fair Oaks Park A Fresh New Basketball Court!

FAIR OAKS – The Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District is going out for a grant to resurface the basketball court at Fair Oaks Park and we need your support!

The top three parks with the most votes will receive a grant to help refresh a local basketball court on behalf of Sprite® and Raley’s. Enter your email address to cast

your vote now! Each person can vote once, every day until April 25th. Please tell a friend. Go to www.SpriteSparkParks.com/raleys and vote!



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A Film Review by Tim Riley

AMERICAN REUNION
(Rated R)

For today’s youth market, the delectably humorous “American Pie,” though familiar in pop culture, will not be as fresh as, let’s say, baked goods straight from the oven.

The sexual frustrations of high school seniors in 1999 was the foundation for plenty of raunchy humor, and by contemporary standards, “American Pie” is now almost dated.

In the intervening years, we’ve been subjected to the crude humor generated by Judd Apatow’s school of comedy, from “Superbad” to “Knocked Up” to “Bridesmaids,” just to name a prominent few.

Now, for no apparent reason other than to cash in on the good name of the “Pie” franchise, along comes “American Reunion,” which wants to recapture some of the original film’s underlying sweetness. And in spite of the misfires of previous sequels, it actually does.

Yet, the modern climate almost requires descending to the elemental nature of crude humor, whether brilliantly realized in “The Hangover” or uncouthly hewing to “American Pie’s” unfortunate straight-to-video disasters.

Riley Reviews

RAUNCHY, CRUDE HUMOR APTLY REFRESHED IN “AMERICAN REUNION”

“American Reunion” is a gamble by any measure, as its focus on a high school reunion that takes place, oddly enough, 13 years later is a sign of something off-kilter.

To enjoy a sequel happening so many years later, “American Reunion” demands familiarity with all the lovable characters, from the Stifmeister and Finch to Jim’s dad and Stifler’s mom.

The nominal protagonist is the awkward good guy Jim Levenstein (Jason Biggs), who married his high school sweetheart Michelle (Alyson Hannigan). Now, they have a toddler son, but a sex life gone stale.

Jim, of course, remains famous for a viral YouTube posting of his sexual antics in his school days. A return to East Great Falls for the reunion will rekindle a lot of memories, many of them embarrassing.

The reunion brings together the other familiar old school pals. Finch (Eddie Kaye Thomas) travels the world on his motorcycle, and we wonder if we will reunite with Stifler’s mom (Jennifer Coolidge), who remains as lustful as ever.

Kevin (Thomas Ian Nicholas), now also married, is an architect. The flamboyant Oz (Chris Klein) has found his place as a sportscaster and competitor on “Celebrity Dance-Off.”

Both Kevin and Oz, one

married and the other in a committed relationship, find some old passions rekindled when their former loves, Vicky (Tara Reid) and Heather (Mena Suvari) respectively, also show up.

Only Stifler (Seann William Scott), eternally crash and rude, with his wicked smile expressing unrestrained mischief, lingers in a state of perpetual adolescence.

Whether it is doing something unspeakable to someone’s beer cooler or hitting on high school girls by faking interest in “Twilight,” Stifler continues to be game for adventure and temptation.

Come to think of it, Jim’s dad (Eugene Levy), always ready to give his son unwanted advice on sexual matters, is a comforting constant presence, because he’s so damn funny.

Some of the best humor involves the discomfiting and embarrassing situations that usually ensnare the often inept and clueless Jim, even now that he’s all grown-up.

A classic case is when Jim ends up in a compromising position with the drunken, naked body of the hot 18-year old neighbor Kara (Ali Corbin) that he used to baby-sit.

As Jim tries to get Kara back up into her bedroom undetected, Oz, Stifler and Finch fumble through clumsy efforts to pre-occupy Kara’s parents from discovering an unpleasant truth.

The agreeable reality of “American Reunion” is that, even if it is an irrepressibly ribald comedy with plenty of coarse gags, it is just outright funny.

To fully appreciate the bawdy humor one must be familiar with the “American Pie” franchise, but only the films that made it to a theatrical release.

LaMalfa on HSR Business Plan: No Business, Not Much Plan

SACRAMENTO – Senator Doug LaMalfa (R-Richvale) today (April 13th, commented on the California High Speed Rail Authority’s (CAHSRA) approval of a final business plan, which contains no investment from private business or any other credible funding source and drastically shrinks the scope of the project.

LaMalfa has authored Senate Bill 985 to place the project on the ballot and allow voters to consider the plan’s true costs, now estimated at over 200% of original claims. The Authority also voted to include a \$6 billion extension to Anaheim, which had not previously received any public review. “The Authority’s changes today mean that we’re now on the fifth plan to build this system, one which hasn’t had any public review and pushes the

costs to about \$75 billion,” said LaMalfa. “Instead of respecting the two-thirds of Californians who want a new vote on the project, the Authority is ramrodding a plan that is both smaller and more expensive than what they promised voters. It says a lot about the Authority’s integrity that they’re claiming the new \$75 billion is somehow less than the original \$34 billion cost they promised voters.”

The CAHSRA’s new plan eliminates high-speed service to San Francisco and Los Angeles, with high-speed service now set to terminate in San Jose and Palmdale and trains traveling lower speeds beyond those points. Proposition 1A, which authorized the project in 2008, clearly requires high speed service to SF and LA.

The plan also relies on

demonstrably false assumptions to cut costs on paper; for example, the CAHSRA claims that the 2012 inflation rate is 1%, when the current rate of 2.9% could rise even further this year. “They’re asking for billions that should go to schools and have no plan aside from ‘Take our word for it,’” added LaMalfa. “California’s budget is already stretched too thin, and this is a luxury our citizens don’t want, don’t need and can’t afford. Voters deserve a chance to reconsider this project with all the facts.”

Senator Doug LaMalfa is a lifelong farmer representing the fourth Senate District including Shasta, Tehama, Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Siskiyou, Sutter, Del Norte, Placer, Trinity, Yuba and Nevada counties.

Elks Honor Council Member McGarvey



RANCHO CORDOVA– Elks Honor Council Member McGarvey Robert J. McGarvey, a Rancho Cordova Council Member, proudly displays his Distinguished Citizenship Award for Outstanding Meritorious Service to Humanity that was presented at the Rancho Cordova Elks Lodge’s annual Appreciation Night on March 10th.

McGarvey was selected for the prestigious award because of “his long history of working in our

community and for his many contributions to make it a better place,” said Jim Wash, an Elks Lodge staff member.

Ironically, McGarvey was unable to personally accept the award because he was in Washington, D.C., attending the National League of Cities Conference and while there, garnering support for a public safety grant and improvements on White Rock Road. His wife, Terri, accepted the award on his behalf.

Robert J. McGarvey. Photo courtesy of City of Rancho Cordova.

Rancho Cordova is Finalist in Workplace Competition

RANCHO CORDOVA – The City of Rancho Cordova is a finalist for a Sacramento Workplace Excellence Leader (SWEL) award that recognizes outstanding Sacramento area organizations for unique and exceptional work place practices. The competition is co-sponsored by the Sacramento Area Human Resource Association and the Sacramento Bee.

The winners will be announced at the awards banquet on April 18th at the Sacramento Hyatt Regency Hotel Rancho Cordova is one of two finalists in SWEL’s small government category. The City won the award in 2009.

“We recognize that our employees are our greatest asset. We focus on engaging and empowering them through innovative programs,

strategy teams, collaboration, effective communications, recognition, continuous professional development, and community volunteer efforts which fosters team building and replenishes staff with a greater sense of purpose and meaning in their jobs,” said Stacey Peterson, the City’s Human Resources Manager.

High-ranking GSA Official Apparently Billed Taxpayers for Night in Vegas

From Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Congressman John L. Mica, Chairman

WASHINGTON, DC – A high-ranking General Services Administration (GSA) official associated with the agency’s 2010 lavish conference in Las Vegas billed the taxpayers for an extra night at the swanky hotel where the conference was held, according to information from the GSA Inspector General’s office. According to transcripts from the IG, the GSA official, who was scouting the hotel location for the conference being planned, stayed four nights at

the M Resort, Spa and Casino.

While the first three nights were billed as government travel, the official added the fourth night as a personal day. For that fourth night, the official paid the government rate of \$93, while the overage for the suite, which cost more than \$1,000 per night, was apparently charged to the taxpayer.

“The fact that taxpayers were going to be paying more than \$800,000 for this government conference is outrageous enough, but apparently charging taxpayers so one of the officials responsible for this boondoggle could add a personal day to this Vegas vacation is the icing on the cake,” said U.S. Rep. John

L. Mica (R-FL), Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “As we continue to learn of GSA’s extreme misuse of funds, now adding personal vacation stays in Vegas to our taxpayers’ tabs, there must be serious action for the outrageous spending habits of the General Services Administration,” said U.S. Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA), Chairman of the Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management Subcommittee. Information from the GSA IG investigation also demonstrates that 50 GSA employees apparently were given cash awards of between \$500 and \$1,000 in recognition of their work in putting together the conference in Las Vegas.

“It would also appear that a number of GSA bureaucrats who helped arrange the Las Vegas junket were handed cash bonuses for their work in wasting the better part of a million dollars,” Mica said. “This appears to be fraud, plain and simple, and the American people deserve to know what’s going on with their tax dollars,” Denham added.




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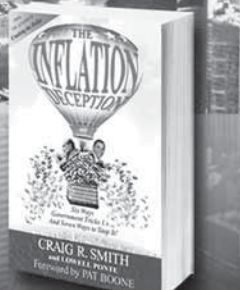
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The HARP 2.0 program is the most ambitious federal mortgage program to date, aimed at helping millions of underwater homeowners. The program just became available March 17, 2012. HARP 2 has removed many of the harsh stipulations that caused the original HARP to be ineffective, and the ease of the new HARP 2.0 program should appeal to all homeowners.




I have been in this business for over twenty years and am so pleased to see a program that is truly helping out people during these difficult economic times. My greatest satisfaction is when I am able to help people save money on their mortgage with this HARP 2.0 program, and, in some cases, actually help them save their home.

This program has several key points you should know about:

- HARP 2.0 is for homeowners who have outstanding mortgages in excess of 125% of the current resale value of their home. Under this new 2.0 version of HARP, there is no upper limit on permissible loan-to-value ratios. Your current mortgage can be twice the current market value of the home, and you may still qualify for a refinancing at today’s low interest rates.
- Homeowners are not required to contact the original lender of their current mortgage; They can call any mortgage broker or agent they desire saving them time and confusion.
- This latest version of HARP also comes with streamline underwriting with no requirement for physical appraisals in many cases! This is one of the most anticipated new revisions!
- Only Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac loans are eligible. I can look up this information for you in a matter of minutes.
- Your loan must have been purchased or refinanced prior to May 31, 2009.
- You must be current on your loan with no 30-day late payments during the last six months, and no more than one late payment in the last 12 months.
- This program includes second homes and Investment properties.
- Borrowers have grown frustrated as they hear repeated announcements of relief programs that do little to help them. HARP 2.0 has the potential to succeed.

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 8

5	8	4	2	6	3	9	1	7
2	1	6	9	7	5	8	4	3
7	3	9	8	1	4	5	6	2
3	4	2	5	8	6	7	9	1
6	5	1	4	9	7	2	3	8
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4	2	7	3	5	9	1	8	6
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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 9

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71						72				73			

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CLUES

ACROSS

1. Landing road

6. "The ____ cage protects the heart and lungs

9. Slang for heroin

13. Billy Joel's "____ Man"

14. International Labor Organization

15. Formed by running water

16. Imitating

17. Santa's helper

18. King's domain

19. "Ca or K, e.g.

21. Nightmare character

23. He played Opie on "The Andy Griffith Show"

24. Disdainful, pouting grimace

25. "When exercising, you get ____

28. Between mini and maxi

30. Metamorphic rock

35. Makes a mistake

37. Bart Simpson's sister

39. Saint in Mexico

40. Miners' passage

41. Swamp plant

43. Yelled to shoo a cat

44. Puzzle in pictures

46. "Smells Like ____ Spirit" by Nirvana

47. "A focal point in workouts

48. Type of coat

50. Dame ____, Australian celeb

52. Christian Chi-____ symbol

53. The upper one is used for ruling

55. Coffee pot

57. Allegiance

60. "E or D, e.g.

64. Former French currency

65. Ring of flowers

67. Singer Cara

68. "Some need more of this than others

69. Be in debt

70. What a jazz singer does

71. Bear lairs

72. Not pre-owned

73. Commotions

DOWN

1. Junk e-mail

2. Cone-shaped quarters

3. Often asked to "go away, come again another day"

4. Like a special circle

5. Organized persecution of ethnic group

6. Cambodian money

7. "Not well

8. Very successful

9. What victim did in court

10. Amor-____

11. USSR to USA during WWII

12. "Usually busy after the holidays

15. "Leafy edibles

20. Indigo dye-yielding shrubs

22. Where bugs are snug?

24. Improper act

25. "Ventricular beater

26. Superior's command

27. Cherokee or Hopi, e.g.

29. "Regimented eating

31. "Where green tea tradition comes from

32. Bring upon oneself

33. Cache of money, e.g.

34. Official language of Lesotho

36. Nonlethal gun

38. Wine and cheese descriptor

42. Tedium

45. Carry, as in heavy bag

49. Ladies' Easter accessory

51. 2012 Oscar-winner "The ____"

54. Stocking fiber

56. Those in organized crime relating to narcotics

57. "Your doctor usually keeps one on you

58. Like never-losing Steven

59. Greek god of war

60. "The ____" talk and entertainment show

61. Known for notebooks

62. Keen on

63. Loch ____

64. Psychedelic drug

66. Female sheep

For Solution

See Page 7

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Senator Gaines Honors Lisa Montes as 1st Senate District 2012 Woman of the Year

ORANGEVALE – Senator Ted Gaines (R-Rocklin) honored Lisa Montes of Orangevale as the 2012 Woman of the Year for the 1st Senate District during a Town Hall Meeting in Orangevale Tuesday night. Montes, Orangevale’s former Honorary Mayor, has been involved in the community and local business for more than 20 years.

“Lisa has given of her time and resources to enhance the quality of life for those in the Orangevale community and I deeply appreciate her hard work to make California a better place,” said Gaines. “Lisa embodies the meaning of service to her fellow citizens and she is most deserving of this honor.”

In addition to serving as the Honorary Mayor of Orangevale, Montes has shared her leadership and counsel with numerous organizations and endeavors, including the March of Dimes Walk America, Girls Scouts of America, and has held a multitude of positions within the Girls Fastpitch Softball, Orangevale Girls Softball and Golden Empire Girls Softball.

Orangevale resident Lisa Montes has given back to the community for more than 20 years.

“I am humbled and honored to receive this wonderful award from Senator Gaines,” said Montes. “I have supported the Senator’s events and efforts in Orangevale and we are very lucky to have his leadership, personal commitment and representation in the Senate. I have truly enjoyed every minute of my involvement and dedication within the community and am thankful for this recognition.” Held annually, the “Woman of the Year” award celebrates California’s extraordinary women.

Started at the State Capitol in 1987 to help commemorate Women’s History Month, the remarkable contributions of women who improve the lives in their communities are recognized. Each woman honored has given of herself in significant ways in order to make her home a better place to live.

Senator Ted Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento and Sierra counties.

Annual SSPCA Fundraiser : The Bow-Wow Beauties “Putting on the Dog”

Sonny Boy Burton . Photo courtesy of Kay Burton.

GOLD RIVER – Kay Burton’s Bow-Wow Beauties will hit the doggie runway on Saturday, June 2, at 11:00 am, in Gold River next to Hallmarks. Rick Johnson, SSPCA Executive Directive, will be the guest emcee for the event. Anything can happen when a large variety of dogs, all sizes and breeds are dressed in the latest canine fashions. The pet’s performance and raffles highlight the SSPCA annual fundraiser.

Bel Air Market will have Hotdogs, Chips & Sodas on site for \$2.00. Western Feed of Gold River will be present will have free samples of Pet Foods.

Admission is \$5.00, children and doggies are free.

Kay Burton originated the pet show and fundraiser 16 years ago.

For more details, please call 635-5590.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

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For Solution See Page 7.

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POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

Studies show that it takes 21 days to form a habit. 17 days prevents plateaus and boredom, two problems that plague dieters on most weight-loss regimes.

My next question had to do with his four cycles in his plan. Each cycle plays a specific role in achieving the ultimate goal. That goal is not only weight loss, but better overall health and the improved lifestyle that goes with it. Briefly, here are the cycles.

- 1) **ACCELERATE.** Its purpose is to cleanse the body through the removal of sugars and carbohydrates and to stimulate the fat burning process.
- 2) **ACTIVATE.** This focuses on the concept of “metabolic confusion.” By alternating between high calorie and low calorie intake, you create a process that further encourages fat burning and leads to further weight loss while avoiding plateaus.
- 3) **ACHIEVE.** This cycle reintroduces many common foods that are rich in carbs. The goal here is to resume normal habits after cleansing and manipulating your body’s metabolism. You’ll be able to process, metabolize and enjoy these foods without having a negative effect on your health.
- 4) **ARRIVE.** You are not able to enjoy nearly anything...in moderation...that just 51 days ago would have negatively impacted your life. This cycle is an accumulation of metabolic health, will power, discipline and proper mindset.

Next question. How much

weight can the average person expect to lose? This one was kind of surprising. On average, a person can expect to lose between 10-12 pounds in one cycle. But, because individual metabolisms differ, individual results may differ as well. People who have more excess weight would probably be on the higher end of this range.

Finally, since this promises quick weight loss, isn’t there a risk that we can put it right back again? Dr. Moreno said that “*The 17 Day Diet*” will teach you that the antiquated concept of “slow and steady” may not apply to weight loss. Current studies indicate that rapid results, when done in a healthy way, are not only beneficial but more likely to succeed long-term.

And yes, there is exercise as a key component. You have to get moving. You have to start somewhere and work your way up.

The good doc also provides complete menu plans for each cycle, a total of 51 daily menus. The meals are low in fat, high in fiber, packed with nutrition, and designed to trigger rapid weight loss. And yes, I asked that question too. Do they taste good? I got his guarantee. If you want more info, go to www.17daydiet.com. See you on the other side... svelte and healthy. **GOOD LUCK !!!**

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



ROCK DOC

By Dr. E. Kirsten Peters

About 10,000 years ago Earth’s climate lurched from bitter Ice Age conditions to the much balmy time in which we live today. We don’t fully understand what caused that great climate shift, but we know it was near the time of that great temperature transition that people started to farm. And one of the crops people in some parts of the world learned to tend was wheat.

In the Western world, our love affair with wheat is as intense as it is old. Peasants have lived on bread and not much else, and even those of us with a grocery store full of options at our disposal are likely to have at least some wheat-products each day.

Unfortunately, about 2 percent of Americans suffer from celiac disease, a malady triggered by gluten proteins such as those found in wheat. It’s a serious condition that erodes necessary structures in the intestines called microvilli. Symptoms of celiac disorder range from things like diarrhea to long-term malnutrition because nutrients are not absorbed and transferred to the bloodstream as they should be.

The only treatment for celiac disease is to avoid eating gluten. That’s a tall order because

Improving on the Staff of Life

wheat and wheat by-products are in a wide variety of foods. To avoid eating any wheat requires constant vigilance and a lot of home-cooking. That’s why it would be ideal if new wheat strains could be developed that didn’t contain the proteins that cause the malady in the first place.

Enter Professor Diter von Wettstein of Washington State University. Von Wettstein came to this country from Denmark in 1996 when regulations there forced him to retire owing to age. Here in the land of the free, von Wettstein can pursue research into wheat strains and celiac disease.

“Retirement should mean you get to do what you think is fun,” he said to me recently. “I think research is fun.”

At age 82 von Wettstein shows no sign of slowing down. In addition to running a research laboratory of seven, he returns to Europe from time to time to see his family – and ski in Austria.

“I had to give up downhill skiing,” he said with regret. “Too many surgeries on my hip. But I still do cross-country.”

Like many serious research groups in this country, von Wettstein’s research lab is highly international. The team includes men and women from China, Chile and Ghana. The group is hard at work on changing wheat so that it won’t cause celiac disease.

Wheat is full of a mixture of proteins, a number of which can cause problems in people with celiac. Six proteins are needed for giving bread its baking properties, but about 150 proteins are not needed. Using advanced genetic techniques, von Wettstein

and his team are shaping wheat strains to have fewer and fewer of the problematic proteins.

At the moment there’s winter wheat growing on an experimental farm not far from where I work that has 60 to 70 percent of the proteins that attack the microvilli “silenced.” Von Wettstein is confident that in time that proportion will reach 100 percent.

“I wouldn’t work on this problem if I didn’t think we could solve it,” he said.

There are some other potential avenues of research being explored that could help celiac sufferers. One is to find an enzyme that would break down the problematic proteins while food was still in the stomach. Von Wettstein’s group is looking for enzymes that could be added to bread before it’s baked. If the enzymes withstood the temperature of baking in an oven, then they could go to work in the stomach where celiac patients don’t have problems, sparing the crucial intestines.

We’ve had a long and wondrous love-affair with wheat. For myself, it’s tough to imagine what celiac sufferers live with each day. Here’s hoping that with some further scientific research all of us will be able to enjoy a good slice of bread, some noodle soup, or a piece of cake.

Dr. E. Kirsten Peters, a native of the rural Northwest, was trained as a geologist at Princeton and Harvard. Follow her on the web at rock-doc.wsu.edu and on Twitter @RockDocWSU. This column is a service of the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University.

Supervisor Susan Peters to Hold “Office Hours” in Fair Oaks and Carmichael May 5-6 Weekend

SACRAMENTO COUNTY - County Supervisor Susan Peters will be holding another round of “Office Hours” during the weekend of May 5 - 6 first on Saturday, May 5, in Fair Oaks Village after the annual parade kicking off “Fiesta Days” as well as the next day, Sunday, May 6, in Carmichael at that community’s weekly Farmers Market held at Carmichael Park.

The parade through Fair Oaks Village starts at 10 am, Saturday, May 5, and Peters will set up her “office” at the procession’s end (probably around 11 am) at Dianda’s Italian Bakery and Café, 10131 Fair Oaks Boulevard. She will be available for residents who wish to drop by and discuss with her items

of interest until approximately 12:30 pm. No appointment is necessary with visits to be handled on a “first come basis.”

“Establishing ‘Office Hours’ at community events like Fiesta Days in Fair Oaks provide the opportunity to mix business with pleasure,” says Peters. “I’ll be available to talk about county matters while people can enjoy the many activities being sponsored by the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce. The next day I will be in Carmichael at the Farmers’ Market where you can do your shopping for fresh produce and talk to me about county issues.”

On Sunday, May 6, Peters will move her “office” to Carmichael Park, 5750 Grant Avenue, where

she will set up a table during the Farmers Market that operates through the collaboration of the Carmichael Recreation and Park District and BeMoneySmartUSA, a local non-profit training organization specializing in financial and business education for youth in the community. The market features certified farmers selling locally grown seasonal fruits and vegetables. Other offerings include nuts, dried fruits, honey plus specialty gourmet foods, spices and sauces.

More information about “Fiesta Days” can be obtained online at fairoakschamber.com. Information regarding the Carmichael Farmers Market also is available online at bemoneysmartusa.org.



Dare to Live Without Limits

YOU DON'T NEED A REASON TO BE HAPPY by Bryan Golden



Happiness isn’t a reaction, it is a cause. People who wait for specific circumstances to materialize before they are happy are putting the cart before the horse. People who are happy attract positive situations. Those who walk around with a scowl are a magnet for the very things they are unhappy about.

You don’t need a reason to be happy. Being happy is a lot more enjoyable than being miserable. Since feeling crummy isn’t pleasant, and it doesn’t make your situation better, why not be happy instead?

Well, it’s a great concept, but it is not a natural reaction. We become conditioned from birth to consider our emotions to be a reaction to the events we experience. A child cries when he is distressed, complains when things don’t go his way, whines when he wants something, and smiles and laughs when things are good.

For most people this ingrained cause and effect behavior continues throughout their lives. This leads us to believe we do need a reason to be happy. Therefore, many people wait, day after day, for the perfect combination of circumstances which will create the justification for happiness.

Since life is not perfect, there will be situations that are constantly below your expectations. These can range from minor

annoyances to major challenges. If you are waiting for everything to be perfect before you can be happy, you will be waiting a very long time.

Being miserable won’t bring you good fortune. Furthermore, it will attract more of the same circumstances you are unhappy about. You have the power to choose to be happy or not. Deciding to be unhappy is a dead end.

You can be happy just to be happy. You may think you have nothing to be happy about, but you are wrong. Everyone has much more to be happy for than they realize. The problem is we become more focused on what we feel is wrong than what is really right.

Regardless of how you feel, start out by smiling. When you smile you will feel better. Force yourself if you have to. A better approach is to think about anything that makes you happy. It can be something from your past or what you desire now or in the future.

Next, think about your own life. What do you have to be happy about? Just the fact that you woke up this morning means the day ahead of you is full of promise and potential. What else do you have that is good? Your health, family, friends, a place to live, food to eat, or that you live in our great country?

You will quickly realize that you do indeed have many things to be happy about. So even though you don’t need a reason to be happy, you have many reasons to feel that way. As you get into the habit of being happy, every aspect of your life will seem better.

Being happy will improve your attitude. As your attitude improves, you will start to attract the things into your life that you want and need. You will thus create a positive cycle where happiness attracts more happiness.

This is a gradual process. Many people are in the habit of living without happiness. This happens so gradually that they aren’t even aware of how unhappy they are. They have accepted unhappiness as a normal way of life. So reversing it takes time.

One thing is certain. As you start to feel happier, you will wonder how you accepted feeling any other way for so long.

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



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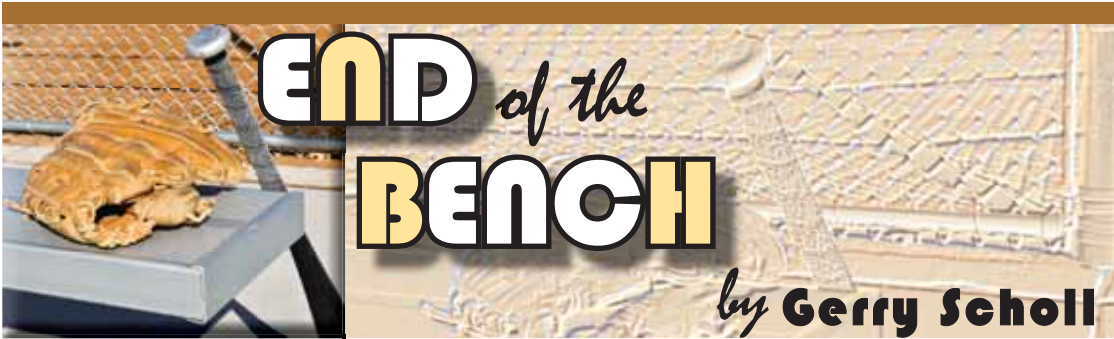
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No Fear! No Fair!

Fear the sideburns. Fear the goatee. Fear the old pro. Fear the current Dominican Dandy, or the really smart, handsome guy out of the University of Virginia.

With The Beard, closer Brian Wilson, shaved from the San Francisco Giants active roster, probably for the rest of the season with structural damage in his pitching elbow, who will batters face in fear at the end of close games?

Initially, manager Bruce Bochy has indicated he will be going with “closer by committee” tactics. Not a particularly scary proposition for the opposition. The Giants’ vaunted bullpen, which Wilson calls “the best in the league,” suddenly has a huge flaw — no seasoned, dominant closer to take the mound and get those final, toughest outs. Without Wilson’s nasty slider, will the Giants slide?

Already, some are saying, “Closers are overrated... they should save just as many games... they may be better off without him.” But those statements are hedged with the acknowledgement that the ninth inning is a different deal.

Wilson is a three-time All-Star, was Closer of the Year in 2010, has 171 saves in 196 tries for his career and has blown only five saves each of the last two seasons. He saved six of seven postseason chances through the Giants’ 2010 championship run, including the final game of the World Series. Who’s not going to miss all that, along with his quirky persona and leadership qualities?

The “committee’s” numbers don’t match up and, likely, won’t in Wilson’s absence. Dominican hard-thrower Santiago Casilla had some success last year, saving six of seven, and is 12 of 18 for his career.

Lefty Jeremy Affeldt is 25 of 43, Javier Lopez five of 15, Guillermo Mota 10 of 34, Sergio Romo three of eight, Clay Hensley seven of 14, and Dan Otero... zero. Quick, add that up and you get 62 of 122, barely fifty percent and horrible as closers go. That looks like trouble. No Fear? No Fair!

The situation reminds me of the old “NO FEAR” logos that were so popular in the ’90s — as some kind of statement for some, I suppose, and not about their clothes. People had those “NO FEAR” decals in the rear windows of their cars. We had an ancient, beat-up Celica, held together with duct tape, that the wife had to use to chauffeur kids around for awhile. I wanted to take one of those decals, rearrange the letters and trim down the “E” to look like an “I” and put “NO FAIR” in our window. Maybe the humor would ease the pain, but probably not.

It’s no fair that Wilson’s bad elbow has “Got Heem” headed for a second Tommy John surgery and many months on the disabled list. And there’s nothing funny about it.

The fear factor will have to shift to the Giants’ starting rotation, The Fearsome Fivesome: The Freak with the long hair that’s not quite as long as it was, and the two Cy Young Awards, and the two lousy starts to open this season (Tim Lincecum); the big, clean-cut rock and senior member of the staff, who was nearly perfect on Opening Day (Matt Cain); the young stud Hick from Hickory, who could avoid being nicknamed Rocket II if he abandons his unsightly habit he employs on the mound (and should, simply because the only endorsement he might get would be for Kleenex), and who just signed up for at least five more years (Madison

Bumgarner); the first-time All-Star a year ago with the great career-revival story, who showed very well in his first start coming off a mild preseason back injury (Ryan Vogelsong); and the overpaid, much-maligned, persevering former Cy Young veteran who stepped into the Wayback Machine and came out with two great starts to begin the season, including a complete-game shutout (Barry Zito).

It’s way too early to tell if the offense will strike any fear upon pitchers around the National League, despite the team’s hot start. Except for Pablo Sandoval, fear may not be the word. If Melky Cabrera can duplicate his 200-hit-plus performance of a year ago in Kansas City and catcher Buster Posey rebounds from injury to fulfill the hopes of Giants fans everywhere and become a perennial All-Star, perhaps the offense may sustain its improved production.

The rest of the batting order still appears to be a mix-and-match thing for Bochy. World Series hero Aubrey Huff is coming off a down season, is in a “contract year,” and looks good but hasn’t done a lot. Newcomer Angel Pagan is off to a slow start and must get on base to be a base-stealing threat at the top of the order. Bochy has a number of relatively young, unproven players, including over-hyped Brandon Belt, who hasn’t belted much. He still looks like a lost baby giraffe in the box against big league pitching.

The L. A. Dodgers, beating up on two of the worst teams in the league, are off to a fast start, as are the defending division champion Arizona Diamondbacks. With the loss of Wilson, if the Giants are to catch and pass the competition, it will take a sum of all fears.

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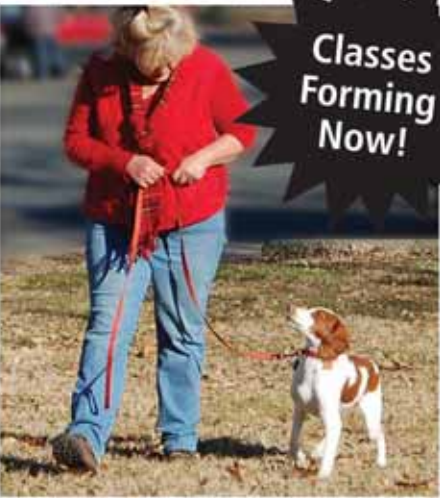
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By George Valverde – Director,
California Department of Motor Vehicles

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Q: I am moving out of state. I know my California vehicle registration is due soon. Should I notify the California DMV that my car will no longer be in the state?

A: As with any time you move, you should report this change of address to the California DMV using a Change of Address form that can be found at www.DMV.ca.gov. Please also notify DMV, in writing, to report that the vehicle was removed from California and will be registered in another state or country. Your letter must include the following information:

- California License plate number, and/or,
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A: Points are not something you want on your driving record, and they can be assigned as a result of collisions or traffic tickets. Generally, collisions where you are at fault are one point and tickets are between one and two points. The only way to remove points from a driving record is to wait. Most points stay on your record for three years. Depending on severity, points may stay on your record for up to 10 years. If you receive a traffic citation, some courts will allow you to attend traffic violator school to keep a point from being added to your record. To avoid accruing points, always follow the traffic laws and avoid reckless behavior. Be certain that you are driving defensively and never distracted while on the road. Keep this advice in mind, and you will be able to keep points off of your driving record! For more detailed information about points on your driving record, visit www.DMV.ca.gov.

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COMMUNITY COFFEE CALENDAR

Senator Ted Gaines has several “Community Coffee” sessions scheduled to give everyone an opportunity to meet with him and discuss individual and community issues.

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