

AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

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

First Edition for January 2012

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New Year's Cheer in Rising Trends



Specific skills in high demand in the first three months of 2012 include sales and customer service workers.

By Rick Reed

SACRAMENTO REGION – Hiring in Sacramento will begin the New Year on an upward trend, as Pacific Staffing has discovered fifty-eight percent (58%) of top companies are motivated to hire in the First Quarter of 2012. This trend toward local economic recovery maintains a slow rise that began with forty-six percent (46%) hiring at this time in 2010, fifty-one percent (51%) in the first three months of 2011.

In the recession-driven First Quarter of 2009 more than half of Sacramento's regional employers surveyed weren't hiring anyone while another twenty percent (20%) planned staff

cutbacks and three local companies closed laying off their entire workforces.

In polling the top companies directly by phone between November 21st and December 14th, Pacific Staffing learned that just two companies planned layoffs; one for seasonal reasons with another citing slow business in the First Quarter of the new year.

A positive trend was also evident in demand for new workers in January, February and March. Thirty percent (30%) of employers are motivated to hire for growth in the first months of 2012, maintaining demand levels from the previous quarter of 2011. Another thirty-five percent (35%) reported hiring in the first

three months of the new year due to attrition in their existing workforces.

While benefit cost and management is still a major concern, a new challenge was noted, as companies report finding qualified applicants is becoming an issue. Specific skills in high demand in the first three months of 2012 include sales and customer service workers, technical, warehouse and manufacturing experience.

When asked if their company has a retirement plan, thirty-one percent (31%) of companies polled say No. In addition, twenty-seven percent (27%) also say they have no plan to offer any retirement option in the future. While many companies did have

some retirement plans, most were oriented to employee 401K account options, with just a few offering a contribution match. While some companies couldn't or wouldn't answer, Service firms were most likely to offer retirement while Retail industry companies were least likely.

The top 100 Sacramento Regional Companies By Industry; 40% are Service, 30% are Manufacturers, 20% are Construction and 10% are Retail.

How does this Quarter compare to last Quarter, or last year? Find out for yourself.

For more information, employment blogs & market surveys go to www.pacificstaffing.com.

Fair Oaks Village Gets New Funding

SACRAMENTO – At their December 15, 2011 meeting, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Board of Directors approved \$513,000 in Community Design funding for the "Fair Oaks Village Streetscape Project."

The Sacramento County Department of Transportation will receive these funds to construct a "streetscape" project that will provide improved bike routes, pedestrian facilities including an additional mid-block crossing, increased parking, accessibility upgrades, landscaping, and added decorative street lighting within the Village area. This construction project builds upon a 2010 SACOG grant award of \$136,000 for the Fair Oaks Village streetscape planning and design phase.

According to Supervisor Susan Peters, "This project enables the County to partner with The Fair Oaks Village Enhancements Committee (FOVEC) efforts and Village businesses and residents to make this a more attractive local and regional shopping and entertainment district with a small-town feel — right in Fair Oaks. I'm pleased that SACOG funding has been secured, and look forward to breaking ground on this project in 2012."

In 2007 FOVEC was established to initiate efforts to develop and implement a plan for improvements that enable the Village to increase its viability as a business district, and to create a destination where local residents and visitors have shopping, entertainment and dining opportunities. The Fair Oaks Village Streetscape Project is a first big step in helping FOVEC realize this vision by providing streetscape improvements along the portion of Fair Oaks Boulevard that runs through Fair Oaks Village. This will help create a small town appeal resulting in less dependence on cars while encouraging people to live, work and shop in Fair Oaks Village.

Sac Metro Fire Responds to Overnight Blaze

FAIR OAKS – Sacramento Metro Fire crews responded to the report of a house fire at 4548 Oxbow Creek Place. The fire was reported by a news paper delivery person. Firefighters arrived and found a large two-story home with significant fire showing from the front room. Firefighters said the homeowner was away, and that they believe the fire had been smolder undetected inside the home for more than one day.

Firefighters say the home suffered significant heat damage with an estimated loss of \$400,000. A Sacramento Metro Fire investigator on scene said he could not rule out a Christmas tree as the cause. The fire was brought under control by a single alarm of 24 firefighters, and no injuries were reported.

New Mayor and Vice Mayor for Rancho Cordova

RANCHO CORDOVA – Dr. David Sander and Linda Budge were sworn in as Mayor and Vice Mayor, respectively, at the Rancho Cordova City Council meeting on Monday, December 19th. Both have been members of the City Council since Rancho Cordova incorporated in 2003.

Mayor Sander was sworn in by his wife, Dr. Margaret Parsons, with their six-year-old son, Charles, holding the family Bible. Vice Mayor Budge's special guests were her husband, Lee Garrison, and her 90-year-old mother, Norma Niblett from Tucson, AZ.

Serving his second term as Mayor, Sander said that he wants to keep moving forward on Growing Strong Neighborhood goals with a special focus on economic development efforts and citizen engagement with community meetings, projects, walks, and other activities.

"We've made great progress



Mayor Dr. David Sander

in reinventing Rancho Cordova and changing it from a suburb facing decline to a city with a bright future, but there is much more remaining to be done," he commented. "We will continue our efforts to bolster the health of our neighborhoods, raise our residents' quality of life, and provide every opportunity for future growth and economic development."

Mayor Sander served as



Vice Mayor Linda Budge

Rancho Cordova Mayor in 2007 and as Vice Mayor in 2006 and 2011. He is the Principal and Founder of Sander and Associates, a public affairs and internet consulting/development firm that specializes in medical and scientific projects. He is a member of the National Civic League board of directors and represents the City on several other national, state, and area committees and boards.

Vice Mayor Budge is an American Institute Certified Planner and the owner of Geometra Planning & Permitting. She is a 2011 graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education program. She served as Mayor in 2004 and 2008 and as Vice Mayor in 2007 and Mayor Pro Tempore in 2003.

Other members of the Rancho Cordova City Council are Robert McGarvey who just completed his second term as Mayor; Ken Cooley, and Dan Skoglund.

City Council meetings are held the first and third Mondays of the month (except on Monday holidays) at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, located at 2729 Prospect Park Drive.

For more information about the Council meetings, please contact the City Clerk's office at (916) 851-8720.

Brown Claims 2011 Milestones and Accomplishments



Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.

SACRAMENTO – The Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. recently released his “2011: Milestones and Accomplishments,” a year-in-review report on the Governor’s actions since taking office.

The report covers the actions Governor Brown took in 2011 to:

- Balance the budget honestly and cut our deficit in half
- Enact historic public safety realignment
- Drive job creation and economic development
- Cut waste and curb spending
- Make government more efficient

- Champion renewable energy and environmental sustainability
- Pursue bold, fair pension reform
- Promote equality and justice

The interactive report also covers other highlights, including the State of the State Address, the Royal visit, Sutter Brown’s appointment as First Dog, the California Hall of Fame and more. “2011: Milestones and Accomplishments” can be viewed on the Governor’s website: www.gov.ca.gov.

What Medicare Covers in the Hospital



By David Sayen

include a semi-private room, meals, general nursing care, drugs, and other hospital services and supplies. How much you’ll pay depends partly on how long you stay. Medicare pays for inpatient hospital care and skilled nursing care based on “benefit periods.” A benefit period begins the day you’re admitted to a hospital or skilled nursing facility – and ends when you haven’t had any care in either setting for 60 days in a row.

You can have more than one hospital stay within the same benefit period. There’s a limit on how many days Medicare covers during a benefit period, but there’s no limit on the number of benefit periods you can have over your lifetime. So much actually comes out of your pocket when you’re in the hospital? Part A has a deductible, which is \$1,156 for 2012. After you’ve paid that, there’s no copayment for days 1 through 60 of each benefit period. For days 61 through 90 of each benefit period, there’s a copayment of \$289 per day next year. You also have 60 “lifetime reserve days.”

These can be used after day 90 of each benefit period, and your co-pay is \$578 per day in 2012. After you use up these “lifetime reserve days,” you must pay all costs yourself. If that all seems a bit complicated, you can always call us with your questions at 1-800-MEDICARE. You can also find a lot of good information in the “Medicare & You” handbook, which is mailed to all Medicare beneficiaries in the country each fall. The handbook is online at www.Medicare.gov.

Keep in mind that Part A doesn’t cover doctor fees or other medical services. That’s where Part B comes in. To get Part B, you must pay a monthly premium, which for most people will be \$99.90 per month in 2012. Then you’ll pay 20 percent of the Medicare-approved amount for most doctor services while you’re an inpatient. Part B also helps cover outpatient costs, such as doctors’ fees, emergency and observation services, lab tests, and X-rays.

I should also point out some of things Medicare doesn’t cover in the hospital. It doesn’t pay for private-duty nursing, a telephone or television, personal items (like toothpaste or razors), or a private room, unless it’s medically necessary. For hospital outpatient care, you pay a copayment for each individual outpatient service. The copayment can be different for each service, but never more than the Part A deductible.

In some cases, your total copayment for all services may be more than the inpatient hospital deductible. I’ve very much enjoyed bringing you Medicare information over the past year. And I hope you and your family have a happy and healthy holiday season!

David Sayen is Medicare’s regional administrator for California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, and the Pacific Trust Territories. You can always get answers to your Medicare questions by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

Gas Prices Start 2012 with Jump

SACRAMENTO REGION – Average retail gasoline prices in Sacramento have risen 6.2 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$3.53/g yesterday. This compares with the national average that has increased 2.4 cents per gallon in the last week to \$3.25/g, according to gasoline price website www.SactoGasPrices.com.

Including the change in gas prices in Sacramento during the past week, prices yesterday were 27.7 cents per gallon higher than the same day one year ago and

are 2.5 cents per gallon lower than a month ago. The national average has decreased 4.1 cents per gallon during the last month and stands 20.9 cents per gallon higher than this day one year ago.

“Average gasoline prices are moving up as we enter the New Year, a trend that has held since 2008,” said GasBuddy.com Senior Petroleum Analyst Patrick DeHaan. “The biggest problem with that trend holding true this year is that we’re starting 2012 about 20-cents per gallon higher

than 2011, breaking yet another high price record and setting up an ugly year for motorists,” DeHaan said.

Early indications show this year may see the highest ever recorded prices at the pump, with real potentials for some areas to see close to \$5/gal gasoline if conflict arises in Iran over several key issues.

GasBuddy.com operates over 250 live gasoline price-tracking websites, including SactoGasPrices.com.

Democrats Seek Handgun Ban

Commentary by Charles Nichols

Under current California law, if you live within 1,000 feet of a K-12 public or private school you can legally transport a handgun so long as it is unloaded and in a locked container.

Under a bill introduced by State Senator Ted Lieu (D-28 Redondo Beach) the law will change. It will expand the so-called “gun free” zones to 1,500 feet and a handgun can only be transported, unloaded and in a locked container, within your motor vehicle.

Take it one step outside your automobile on a public street, even if you are just carrying it to a firing range or purchasing a handgun from a sporting goods store, and you are guilty of a misdemeanor or potentially a felony with a seven year prison term.

For the millions of Californians who live in residential areas without parking spaces on private property, this law will make it impossible to take your handgun out of your home or bring a newly purchased handgun into your home.

For those who may be unfamiliar with Senator Ted Lieu, the Democrats recently passed two of his bills. One bans the sale of shark-fin soup, the other makes it a crime for persons under 18 years of age to use a tanning booth.

Senator Lieu is currently boycotting Lowe’s Home Improvement stores and “may consider legislative action” because the company pulled an advertisement from an anti-American, pro-Muslim cable TV show.

In short, Ted Lieu is your typical left-wing, lunatic Democrat politician from California which has made this state the laughing

stock of the nation.

Ironically, it would take just over 11,000 signatures on a recall petition to give the voters an opportunity to remove Senator Lieu from office.

His bill, SB661, has a hearing before the Senate Public Safety Committee on January 10th at 9:30am in room 3191 at the state capitol in Sacramento.

The Senate Public Safety Committee is stacked with similarly minded Democrats.

If you would like more information about this topic, please send inquiries to Charles Nichols: email Press@CaliforniaRightToCarry.org

California Right To Carry is a California nonprofit registered with the California Secretary of State. It does not solicit or accept public donations for its organization. Operating expenses are provided entirely by its membership.

Del Campo High School Resource Center

From Michele Moore

Del Campo High School is proud to announce a valuable tool for both students and parents, The DC Family Resource Center. This center will be staffed by parent volunteers and will provide the following services:

*Community Resource directory
Zangle and Naviance access
Local job leads
After school tutoring
Parenting classes
Community service*

opportunities

Extracurricular activity

opportunities

Summer program opportunities

DC Program explanations

(AVID, ROTC, AP, etc)

DC Parent-Teacher communication ideas

College pathways information

In order to provide these services on a consistent basis we need volunteers! Volunteers can work regular days and times on a weekly or monthly basis, or random days as needed. Shifts will

run from 7-10am, 10am-1pm, and 1-4pm daily.

Drop-in tutoring is available in the FRC for all students after school Mon-Thurs. We can also make it available before school if there is enough interest – please let us know if that would work better for your child. To contact the center: Del Campo Family Resource Center, Del Campo High School, 4925 Dewey Drive, Room 33, Carmichael, CA 95608 (916) 971-5682 or DCFamCenter@SanJuan.edu.

The Rich Are Getting Richer; So Are the Poor

**Commentary by Jarrett Skorup
www.VisionAndValues.org**

“No matter your thoughts about the Occupy Wall Street movement, the protesters were right in at least one respect: The rich are getting richer, and the poor are getting poorer.”

Variations on this statement were repeated in dozens of blogs, commentaries, and even news reports in the past months. The claim comes via a Congressional Budget Office analysis that shows incomes for the top 1 percent of Americans growing by 275 percent between 1979 and 2007, while the lowest 20 percent saw their inflation-adjusted incomes grow by “only” 18 percent.

The numbers from the report are correct, but the assertions based on it are true only because of careful

wording. While the “top 1 percent” had the highest growth of income, if broadened to include the top 20 percent (the usual way of analyzing such figures), the growth rate was a far less stratospheric 65 percent. This contrasts with about 40-percent growth for the middle three-fifths of all wage earners, and 18 percent for the lowest one-fifth.

Statistically, the lowest 20 percent of households are poor for one main reason: They don’t work as much. Among the causes are medical issues, disability, and bad incentives. Not surprisingly, households in the top 20 percent are far more likely to include people with jobs. Here’s how professor Mark Perry, a member of the Mackinac Center’s Board of Scholars and chairman of the economics department at the University of Michigan-Flint, described it:

“American households in the

top income quintile have almost five times more family members working on average than the lowest quintile, and...are far more likely...to be well-educated, married, and working full-time in their prime earning years. In contrast, individuals in low-income households are far more likely to be less-educated, working part-time, either very young or very old, and living in single-parent households.”

More significantly, the “rich getting richer” storyline insinuates that the top 1 percent and bottom 20 percent include the same individuals over time. For example, as reporter Julie Mack writes, “Overall, the numbers show that the more affluent you are, the better you’ve done in the past three decades.” Note how this ignores the reality that many individuals who were in

the poorest group years ago have long since moved up and out, while among the rich are many families who are literally nouveau riche—they’ve recently arrived from lower income levels.

That’s the risk of relegating real people into statistical categories. Economist Thomas Sowell explained it this way: “The actual empirical evidence cited has been about what has been happening over time to statistical categories turns out to be the direct opposite of what has happened over time to flesh-and-blood human beings, many of whom move from one category to another over time.”

Data that tracks real people show that Sowell is correct. For example, as reported in The Wall Street Journal, IRS tax-return data shows that individuals in the bottom one-fifth back in 1996 experienced income growth of

91 percent by 2005. In contrast, individuals in the highest one-fifth saw their incomes increase just 10 percent over the same period. Incomes of households in the top 5 percent and 1 percent actually declined, by 7 percent and 24 percent, respectively.

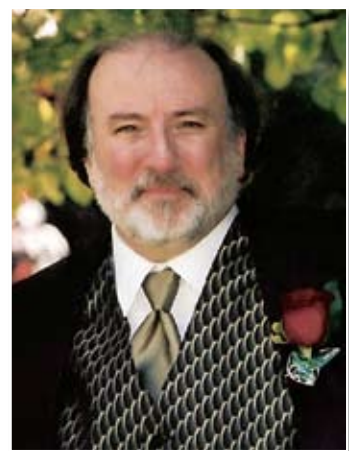
Anecdotally, this makes sense: For example, in 1985, my father was just out of college and probably in the lowest 20 percent. But by 2007 he had moved up. Such examples are commonplace, but are completely missed by statistical aggregates.

In the late 1970s, Steve Jobs was trying to expand a struggling computer company. Bill Gates was writing code and just beginning to start working on a personal computer. And one of the founders of Google, Sergey Brin, had just arrived as a six-year-old immigrant from the USSR. These

are individuals who did not enter that top 1 percent until many years later—in the process displacing former “one percenters.”

It was these individuals, not statistical categories, who created companies and wealth by making products people wanted. Establishing conditions in which individuals can move up the income ladder by creating, innovating, and building is what America is all about.

Jarrett Skorup is a 2009 graduate of Grove City College and former student fellow at The Center for Vision & Values. He is the research associate for online engagement for Michigan Capitol Confidential at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a research and educational institute headquartered in Midland, Mich. See www.VisionAndValues.org



**Publisher,
Paul V. Scholl**

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AMERICAN RIVER MESSENGER

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A New Year and a New Beginning



By Bryan Golden

very difficult to succeed without an internal drive. So, in order to successfully make a change or reach a goal, you have to make sure it's what you really want. Don't start off on the wrong foot by making excuses as to why you will probably fail. If you don't truly believe you can do it, you won't. People who do this will say something like, "I'll try to do it, but ..." Or you may hear, "I tried before and it didn't work but I'll give it another go." Before you begin, make sure the only things you are telling yourself are, "I can," "I will," and "I will do whatever it takes." A new beginning is a three step process.

You have to first know what you want, formulate a plan to achieve it, and then take the necessary action to get it. Setting a specific goal is essential. The more detailed the better. If you want to lose weight, how much and by when? If you want a new job, what will it be and how much will it pay? If you want to save money, how much and how often?

Next, you need a plan. Just like your goal, your plan must be as detailed as possible. If you are going to lose weight, what will be your menu each week? Are you going to go on a specific diet, cut out certain foods, or just eat less? For finding a new job, what will be your strategy? Do you need a new resume? Will you

look on line, in the classifieds, use an employment agency, network, cold call, or all of these? If you want to save more money, in what areas will you cut back? Do you know where your money is going? Have you created a budget? You want your plan to be doable. The smaller the steps are, the more likely you will be to succeed. Any time you feel a step is too big, break it down further. It doesn't matter how small each step is so long as you keep going and never give up. Losing 20 pounds may feel overwhelming, but dropping two pounds a month doesn't seem too bad. If you keep at it for 10 months, you will reach your goal. Saving \$3000 might appear beyond reach, but cutting back \$9 a day on family spending is manageable.

Finally, you must take action. The best goals and greatest plans will go nowhere without action. The reason you divided your plan into small sections is so it would be easy to take action, one day at a time. All you have to do is keep going, until you achieve your goal.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com or your bookstore. Bryan is a self-development expert, syndicated columnist, and professor. E-mail Bryan at bryan@columnist.com. © 2011 Bryan Golden.

Memorial Plaques Stolen from Patriots Park



Thieves vandalized one of Carmichael's sacred landmarks.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY – The Sheriff's Department is seeking information regarding the theft of several memorial wall plaques from the Wall of Honor at Patriots Park. The plaques are memorial tributes to former Carmichael residents who were first responders in law enforcement and medical professions, as well as members of the United States military, and

who sacrificed their lives while working in their professions.

It appears that the suspect(s) responsible attempted to take other plaques from the wall, but did not complete the theft of those remaining. In addition to the dedication plaque, which measured 24" by 24" and weighed approximately 10 pounds, four individual plaques were stolen. Those measured approximately the size of

a steno pad, and weigh approximately 1.5 pounds each. All of the plaques are made of bronze.

Anyone having information regarding these stolen plaques, or the person(s) responsible for this incident is asked to call the Sheriff's Department Property Crimes Bureau at (916) 874-5051.

Source: Deputy Jason Ramos Sheriff's Spokesman

KOVAR'S CORNER on Real Estate Q&A



By Tim Kovar, Realtor/Broker

a job loss have made it nearly impossible to pay our mortgage consistently on time. Our lender is open to a loan modification, but we're not sure what route to take. Can you help? Thanks, Vincent.

A: First, you are not alone in this. A sudden loss of income has not been an uncommon problem! Here's what you need to know. Mortgage modification is where the homeowner negotiates for a reduction in their payments. A reduction can take several different paths with the most common being an interest rate reduction.

Another method used is to add more payments on the end of the mortgage. Sometimes lenders will do both – reduce the interest rates and add time on to the end of the loan. In these cases the principle amount stays the same. It is important to keep

your credit rating strong as the lender will pre-qualify you much like they did when you originally got the loan. If you no longer qualify they will not do a mortgage modification. Choosing a specific strategy is involved; knowing your ages, income expectations, equity and other factors are important. Some outside professional assistance is recommended in making a decision. However, if your lender is uncooperative you can call HAFA at (888) 995-4673 for additional free help.

Arm yourself with real estate knowledge! Real estate, mortgage and other property questions can be emailed to tim.kovar@gmail.com or get immediate assistance by calling (916) 549-4340. Kovar Family Real Estate, DRE# 01831154.

Kovars Upcoming Seminar
Come meet author and realtor Tim Kovar on Saturday, January 14 at 6 pm at the Carmichael Library. Find answers to your questions on foreclosure, avoiding bankruptcy to save your credit future.

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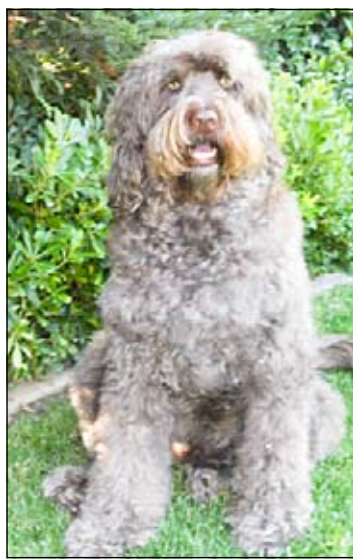
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Roscoe, a 68 Pound Lap Dog

Roscoe is a brown wavy, 4 year old Portuguese water dog owned by Pete and Becky Reiter. He weighs 68 pounds and thinks he is a lap dog. He loves fishing, going to the dog park and being with his friends and family. Roscoe is well behaved, mischievous, and very smart. He is a good friend and companion.

Roscoe became very ill this year and was diagnosed with Addison Disease. He must have a monthly shot and needs prednisone every day to keep him alive and well. All this is very costly but Roscoe is an important part of the Reiter family and they do what it takes to keep him healthy. Addison Disease is a condition caused by under active adrenal glands indicated by pigmentation of skin, weakness, and



Portuguese water dog, Roscoe.

digestive disturbances.

The Portuguese Water Dog once existed all along Portugal's coast,

where it was taught to herd fish into nets, to retrieve lost tackle or broken nets, and to act as a courier from ship to ship, or ship to shore. Their coats are profuse, non-allergenic, non-shedding, and waterproof. Its coat can be curly or wavy and is black, white or brown, or a combination of black or brown with white. Midsized and robust the breed possesses the ability to swim all day.

The breed also has web feet.

Roscoe is lovingly known as *Cuddle Bug*.

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

To share your family pet story with our readers, email Kayburton1@comcast.net.

Rancho Cordova Employee Earns "Green" Certificate

RANCHO CORDOVA – Laurel Bane, Facilities Service Representative for the City of Rancho Cordova, has earned a LEED Professional Credential from the Green Building Certification Institute that signifies professional excellence and a strong depth of knowledge and understanding of the LEED rating systems.

LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a rating system for buildings that is comparable to a gas mileage rating for cars. It is an international building certification system that provides third-party verification that a building is designed and built to increase performance, reduce waste, and improve quality of life.

Bane completed several sustainability classes before she joined the Rancho Cordova staff in 2009. She also served on a LEED Certification project team in 2008 when she was employed by VSP. In 2009, she completed a continuing education certificate program through Sacramento State. And she has attended several conferences and organized building tours of LEED Certified



Rancho Cordova City staff member, Laurel Bane, has been awarded a Green Associate Certificate in association with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

commercial properties. "This year, I set a goal to study and take the two-hour exam to obtain my LEED Green Associate certificate," she commented. Bane's main duties at the City are helping manage and coordinating building operations, maintenance contracts, tenant improvement, rentals, and tenant and staff education at City buildings. She says that LEED

principles help her to "efficiently and effectively manage our City facilities, thus saving money, reducing our impact on the environment, and providing a healthier indoor environment for our staff and customers."

Rancho Cordova City Hall was awarded the LEED-CI in 2006 and the City operates their other buildings per LEED standards.

Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District Events Schedule

Flashback Cinema: 1920's
Friday, January 27th @ the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse 7:00p.m. - 9:30p.m.
Silent movie along with live theater organ accompaniment
Family event
Presented by Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District and the Sierra Chapter American Theatre Organ Society
\$3 per person presale/ \$5 at the door

Father Daughter Dance
Friday, February 10th & Saturday, February 11th @ the Fair Oaks Clubhouse 6:30p.m. - 8:30p.m.
Refreshments, great music, pictures, and more!
Presented by the Fair Oaks Youth Advisory Board (FOYAB)
\$20 per couple/ \$5 each additional daughter

Ladies Night Out
Saturday, March 3rd @ the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Entertainment, shopping, pampering, raffle, and wine tasting (presented by the Active 20/30 Club of Greater Sacramento)
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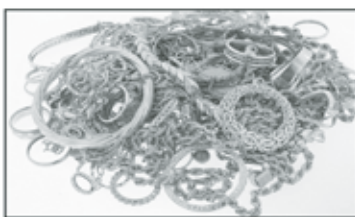
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As Heard On Radio!





By Ronnie McBrayer

Belief, not Belligerency

a number of essential beliefs important to me and to which I hold. Yes, some of these beliefs are in conflict with the beliefs of others, and these conflicts are not easily dismissed. But my beliefs, as important as they may be, do not give me the right to be belligerent toward others who do not share my beliefs.

I will allow that Christians aren't the only ones who behave this way. Devotees to other faiths, politicians of all parties and persuasions, soccer fans, college alumni, and those with all manner of competing opinions will attack, degrade, and smear those they consider their opponents. The intent, it seems, is clear: Win the argument at all costs.

This cutthroat way of life is consuming every facet of our society, resulting in a complete collapse of common civility — that's a column unto itself — and there is no relief on the near horizon. Anywhere there is an "us" versus "them" attitude there will be nothing but antagonism and disappointment until "them/they" are somehow rehabilitated or totally vanquished in favor of "us/we."

In other words, peace will only come when all our adversaries are destroyed. This may be the way the world works, but it is not the way of Christ. For Christians, if Jesus is who this thing is about, then things should be different. Just because we have some assurance of our faith and beliefs, we forfeit the ability to share that assurance when we behave badly.

Our beliefs need not — should not — cannot — must not

— be used to hurt or harm others. Consistently, and this should rend our hearts to pieces, Christians are characterized as mean-spirited, judgmental, critical, and inflexible (You don't need research statistics to confirm this conclusion. Simply do an informal interview on any street corner).

This is a reputation we have largely earned, because we have been more concerned with proving we are right, than we have been proving God's profound love and grace. We have been more concerned with providing answers than we have with providing gentleness and respect.

Personally, I don't think Jesus came to create an "in" group, an assembly of elitists who have truth held down under lock and key. I believe he came to create a "come on in" group, a crowd of fellow-journeymen who come to know God, experience grace, live life, and serve others together. But why would anyone want to come in to such a group if its representatives are constantly rude, arrogant, and unyielding.

Even if such a group had all the answers to all the questions in the world (and humility should caution anyone from making such a claim), it would be impossible to hear what they had to say, because it is simply impossible to hear the truth when it is communicated from a hard heart.

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, speaker, and author. His books include "Leaving Religion, Following Jesus" and "The Jesus Tribe." Visit his website at www.ronniemcbrayer.net.

Here We Go Again; the Art of Redundancy

By Rev. James L. Snyder

Forgive me if I have said this before, but, "Happy New Year." It may be the epitome of redundancy but I have given this greeting for 60 years and I mean it as sincerely this year as I have all the years preceding.

The first few years of my life, I had no teeth and so all I could say was "Goo-goo, daa-daa." It meant the same thing. This year I have all of my teeth but I am not certain how many more years.

The way we start life is the way we usually end life, with no teeth and drooling all the time with a silly grin on our face.

Why is it so cute to have a toothless drool at three months but rather disgusting when you are 93 years old?

We all start life wearing diapers and if we live long enough we will end our life wearing the same apparatus. I guess it all depends upon what we do between the two events.

I suppose I could be guilty of not learning as much as I could at my age, but one thing I have learned and that is the good things in life are always repeated. Sure, there are some things that we do once in a lifetime and cherish their memories, but the good things in life are those things we continually repeat.

I would wager that in this New Year there would be relatively few, if any, new things. The past year was supposed to carry with it a lot of brand-new things. Most things were those repeated ad nauseam for many years.

This year is an election year. Of course, the purpose of this year is to elect a new president. Every four years we elect a "new" president and I have participated in many presidential elections. At least, I went to the voting booth and voted. In all those years of electing a "new" president it has usually worked

out that the new president was remarkably quite like the old president.

Some political pundits make a great deal between a Republican and a Democrat. It may be my age, but it seems to me that most Democrats are Republicans in disguise and most Republicans are Democrats in disguise. If I was backed up against a wall with a firing squad in front of me and asked to tell the difference between a Democrat and a Republican, the only thing I could come up with would be the spelling.

A Republican when elected will always act like a Democrat and a Democrat when elected will usually act like a Republican. Then they wonder why the voting public is confused.

As far as I am concerned, a rattlesnake wearing a rabbit outfit does not change its nature. It still has poisonous fangs looking for some human flesh.

What has not changed is the fact that a politician running for office will say anything to get elected and then once elected will develop an acute sense of amnesia, which is not that cute.

Whenever I hear politicians say that when they are elected they are going to change things I know I am either listening to a fool or someone who is trying to fool me. Hundreds of politicians have run on the platform of changing Washington DC. Well, how has that been working?

The coming presidential election will be the same as every other one in the history of the United States.

In spite of that, there are a few things I am glad will not change.

The things that are really important in life are those things that do not change.

For instance, I am glad the sun comes up every morning. Even though every day is a new day, the same sun starts the day with

its rising. The beautiful thing about this is that we can only live one day at a time. I cannot remember how much time I have spent worrying about something in the future and when that day came, I worried in vain.

I am so glad that the rising of the sun is not in the hands of some political committee somewhere. Wherever two or three politicians are gathered together, there is gridlock. If a political committee were responsible for the rising of the sun, it would never rise. The only thing a political committee can do when it comes to the phenomenon of rising is in the area of taxes and their salaries.

As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow so will our taxes and so will the salaries of the politicians. Would be great the politician's salary was tied to the economy? If the economy was up, the politicians would get a raise. If the economy went down, the politicians would take a cut in salary.

I am not sure how to do that, but if it ever became law in our country, the economy of our country would be on the rise for generations to come.

Another redundancy that I am delighted to participate in and that is the mercies of God. "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3: 22-23 KJV).

Although repeated daily, God's mercies are never redundant.

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.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." These are the words of Simon Peter, one of Jesus' first disciples, written to some of the first and earliest Christians. And like most words put down on paper, these instructions have not always honored the intent of the author.

Peter wrote this during a time when Christianity was new, unheard of in most places, and very often viewed with suspicion. Thus, a graceful and thoughtful explanation "for the hope that you have" was absolutely required. Thousands of years later, Christianity is still handled with suspicion by many. Not because it is a novel invention, but because a large core of its adherents have misapplied Simon Peter's good words.

Having a "prepared answer" — that is a ready opportunity to interact, dialogue, and discuss beliefs with others — has been replaced with defensiveness, anger, and out-and-out hostility toward those who see things differently. Many have forgotten to read the second half of old St. Pete's instructions: "But do this in a gentle and respectful way," he said.

Yes, I am a follower of Jesus. Yes, I consider myself a Christian (on most days). Yes, there are



By Marlys Norris, Christian Author

God's Vision for Your Life

for their life? God has a beautiful designed plan for each life and discovering what it is brings unbelievable blessings and adventure beyond measure into life. God searches and knows each heart and His wisdom prevails over every life committed and surrendered to Him. *1 John 4:2-3 Hereby "know the Spirit of God." Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that is should come; and even now already it is in the world.*

Every day should be a day of worship as one thinks about God's plan and call on their life to exemplify His love to the world around them. Beginning each morning with a little prayer of thanksgiving to God starts the day acknowledging God. Asking a blessing on members of the family as they go their way and

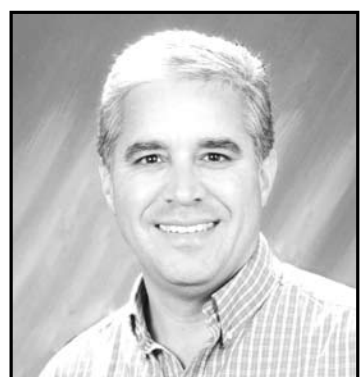
leave for the day enriches everyone's life. It evokes God's favor and blessings on them as well as yourself. His vision will be revealed to those who seek His face early in the day.

Because of His love for each person individually, God's Vision for everyone's life is greater than they ever imagined. To those who have received His Beloved Son, God Almighty will be enabled with gifts of His Spirit to do supernatural things to build-up and edify others in their walk with God. They will minister His love-gifts to the world for Jesus said, "When I leave you, you will do even greater things than I did". BELIEVE!

*Marlys Johnsen Norris, Christian Author
Marlys5934@sbcglobal.net
God Moves Mountains, It was a Miracle!
Intimacy Begins Going God's Way*

One who trusts that God exists will also trust in the Word of God to be truth and authority for their life. Honoring and being obedient to the Word of God becomes a priority for ones life as they surrender their lives into God's care. As one approach their senior years and the end of life is evident, one begins to wonder what the meaningful message of their life will exist after they are gone.

Once deciding to walk with God, have they now walked away, wandering and quit finding the purpose and meaning of their existence? The question exists did they ever think about embracing "God's Vision"



By Pastor Ray Dare

See Yourself as God Sees You

smell, sight. Everything you experience in life comes from those five senses. When you are born again spiritually, you get spiritual senses. You get spiritual eyes to see what God wants to do; you get spiritual ears to hear God's voice.

The Bible is full of examples of people seeing with spiritual eyes. Genesis 21 is the story of Hagar taken out to the desert with her son Ishmael to die. She said, "God, don't let me look upon the death of my son." The Bible says, "God opened her eyes." and she saw a well of water in the middle of the desert and it met her needs. In Luke 24 there's the example of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus after Jesus had been resurrected. Jesus is walking with them but they didn't recognize Him until He opened their eyes and they saw that God had been with them all along. In Genesis 13, God takes Abraham up on a hill and says, "Look as far as you can see. Anything you can see, you can have. This will be the Promised Land. If you can see it, you can have it." He saw with spiritual eyes.

In Numbers 13, we have an example of an entire nation failing to realize their potential

because they could not see with eyes of faith. Because of the way they SAW themselves, the way they SAW their obstacles. They underestimated what God could do through them. "And there we saw the giants...and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers." Numbers 13:33 (KJV)

So let me ask you, as you look into your future, what do you see? What do you see God accomplishing through you? What do you see yourself doing for God? God wants you to see as He sees, because He wants to use you in the world today in a significant way. You know you are created for far more than you've experienced to date. Many people never achieve their full potential because they can't see themselves as God sees. They miss God's plan for their life because of self imposed limitations.

My challenge to you this week is to get a new view of you. Ask God to open your spiritual eyes so you can see yourself as He sees you. God says, "You can be more than you are right now, you can be something you never thought you could be before."

Pastor Ray

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Pool Service

Easing Student Loan Repayments



By Jason Alderman

the unemployed and people with lower-paying, "public service" jobs in education, government or non-profit organizations.

Under IBR, monthly payments are capped at an affordable level relative to your adjusted gross income, family size and state of residence. For example, if you earn less than 150 percent of the government's poverty level for your family size, you would pay zero. You still owe the money, but are not required to begin making payments until your income increases. As your income increases, so will your monthly payment – but up to no more than 15 percent of income that exceeds that same 150 percent of poverty level.

In addition, the government will forgive debt still owed after 25 years of consistent repayment. And those with qualifying public service jobs must only repay for 10 years before the balance is discharged.

Under the recent IBR enhancements, for students who took out their first loan during or after 2008 and open at least one additional loan during or after 2012, the cap will drop from 15 to 10 percent and the forgiveness period drop to 20 years. Those with older loans can still benefit from the original IBR terms.

Other IBR features include: All Stafford, PLUS and Consolidation Loans made under either the Direct Loan program or the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program qualify for IBR, except loans in default, Parent PLUS Loans or Consolidation Loans containing Parent PLUS Loans.

You must submit updated

income documentation each year. If your income rises, so will your payment amount, although never above what you'd otherwise pay under a standard 10-year repayment schedule.

Because IBR will likely extend the term of your loan, you'll probably accrue more interest than under a standard 10-year payoff.

Private student loans don't qualify for IBR.

Borrowers with two different types of federal loans – at least one each issued under the Direct Loan and FFEL programs – may consolidate their loans under a new Special Direct Consolidations Loans program between January 1, 2012, and June 30, 2012. This will lower FFEL loan rates by 0.25 percent, plus an additional 0.25 percent discount if you sign up for automatic payments. Visit www.studentaid.ed.gov/specialconsolidation for details.

If you expect your financial hardship to be temporary, other loan repayment options, including economic hardship deferment, forbearance and extended repayment, may be better options. For details, visit the Federal Student Aid site, www.studentaid.ed.gov and search "Postponing Repayment." Other good resources include www.finaid.org and the Project on Student Debt (www.projectonstudentdebt.org).

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs. To Follow Jason Alderman on Twitter: www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney.

College costs are out of control. Total outstanding student loans hover around \$1 trillion, second only to home mortgages. Student loan repayment takes a hefty toll on starting salaries even during good economic times. But with so many recent graduates unable to find a decent job – or any job – repayment can be a nightmare.

You can't walk away from student loan debt. It's practically impossible to get it discharged through bankruptcy and there's no statute of limitations on how long lenders can pursue you through collections. Indeed, the government can withhold tax refunds and garnish wages indefinitely.

The Obama administration recently accelerated improvements to a readily available, yet underused, student loan repayment plan called Income-Based Repayment (IBR) that had been slated to begin in 2014.

IBR is available for many federally guaranteed student loans and can be particularly beneficial for low-income families,

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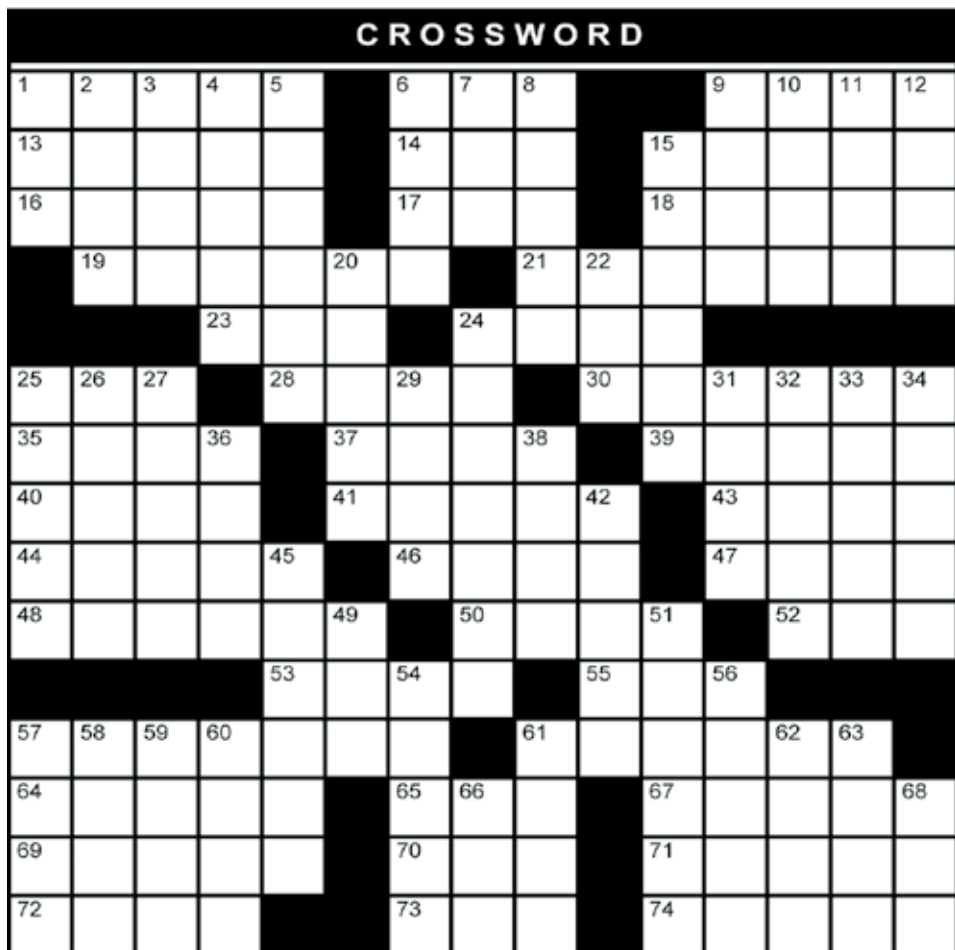
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CLUES

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| <p>ACROSS</p> <p>1. Found on a necklace</p> <p>6. Cul de ____</p> <p>9. Loads</p> <p>13. Furry coats</p> <p>14. Make a mistake</p> <p>15. "Snow impression"</p> <p>16. Nets basketball coach</p> <p>17. Major record label</p> <p>18. Bogart's "Key ____"</p> <p>19. "Dripped shape"</p> <p>21. "Like cleanest snow?"</p> <p>23. Sigma ____ Epsilon</p> <p>24. Never wave the white one?</p> <p>25. Bayerische Motoren Werke</p> <p>28. Somebody ____</p> <p>30. "It means more winter?"</p> <p>35. Paper unit</p> <p>37. One of many on a list</p> <p>39. Pro teams do this all the time</p> <p>40. Therefore</p> <p>41. "The Bear Who ____ Through Christmas"</p> | <p>43. Algonquian people</p> <p>44. Sour in taste</p> <p>46. Dunking treat</p> <p>47. Retained</p> <p>48. Often done for ransom</p> <p>50. "Eternal life" character</p> <p>52. "____ & the Family Stone"</p> <p>53. It's projected in frames</p> <p>55. Long time</p> <p>57. "Popular sculpture"</p> <p>61. Result of audience demand</p> <p>64. Hades river with magic water</p> <p>65. Cause annoyance in or disturb</p> <p>67. Native of American Great Plains</p> <p>69. Worry</p> <p>70. Female reproductive cell, pl.</p> <p>71. Ruhr's industrial center</p> <p>72. Between stop and roll</p> <p>73. Type of sweet potato</p> <p>74. Used in fermenting</p> | <p>DOWN</p> <p>1. Accounting degree</p> <p>2. ____ Strauss</p> <p>3. Actor recently kicked off airplane</p> <p>4. Used for landing</p> <p>5. Psychologist's domain</p> <p>6. Withered</p> <p>7. Part of a circle</p> <p>8. Front ____ in swimming</p> <p>9. Annoying biter</p> <p>10. Mike Myers animated character</p> <p>11. What panhandler does</p> <p>12. Vegas bandit</p> <p>15. Ablaze</p> <p>20. Jaunty rhythms</p> <p>22. Possesses</p> <p>24. F in FBI</p> <p>25. "No school"</p> <p>26. Sarkozy's thank you</p> <p>27. Engaged, as in war</p> <p>29. Unaccompanied</p> <p>31. St. Louis monument</p> <p>32. Challenges</p> <p>33. Nancy ____ of</p> | <p>"Entertainment Tonight"</p> <p>34. Like untended garden</p> <p>36. Between dawn and noon</p> <p>38. Welcoming sign</p> <p>42. ____ of appreciation</p> <p>45. Male mixologists</p> <p>49. Princess tester?</p> <p>51. "It features six on six"</p> <p>54. Diplomat on a mission</p> <p>56. It can be loud or white</p> <p>57. "Pulled ride"</p> <p>58. Not far</p> <p>59. Von Bismarck or Hahn, e.g.</p> <p>60. Wallop</p> <p>61. Ophthalmologist's check-up, e.g.</p> <p>62. Civil Rights icon</p> <p>63. Female sheep, pl.</p> <p>66. Actress Longoria</p> <p>68. The little one "stopped to tie his shoe"</p> |
|--|--|---|---|

For Solution See Page 7



FAT TALK

Hope you're having a wonderful holiday season, but it's almost that time to start thinking of the New Year.

First, take a look in the mirror. Are you happy with the way you look? If you are, then you don't have to read any further. But if you have some lumps and bumps that make you a bit queasy, then listen up because you are not alone.

Obesity has become an epidemic in our country. The Surgeon General told us back in 2001 that more than 61% of adults are overweight...31% obese. Obese means 30% over ideal weight. Kids fare no better at 13%. According to research done in 2002, people overweight at 40 are likely to die at least three years sooner than those who are slim and trim. Would you believe being fat at 40 and beyond is just as bad as smoking for your life expectancy? **Dr. William Parsons** says it's time

POPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

for "Tough Talk About Fat"... How to Reach and Maintain Your Ideal Weight. 10 pounds or 100 pounds, you can lose it. "Tough Talk" doesn't scold you for being fat. It teaches us how to get rid of it...all of it!

Dr. P says it works like your bank balance. Take out more than you put in, and it goes down. There are some other incredible edible facts like, don't fret about protein vs. carbs or whatever. Calorie control is everything. Then there's the exercise thing. Although important for fitness, exercise plays a minor role in weight control.

Dr Parsons also put it very bluntly when it comes to books on weight control. There are thousands of ideas out there. According to Dr. P, in the U.S., the weight loss industry is a \$58 Billion business with a 98% failure rate. Encouraging huh! But Dr P says he is more concerned that obesity is now a major risk factor for Heart Attacks and Diabetes. He added that by wearing out weight-bearing joints, obesity is a major cause of disability. Then there's the big surgery surge movement for morbid surgery. Dr Parsons says it saves lives, but he feels "Tough Talk" can save more.

He gets into a lot of great tips like reducing our eating by 500-700 calories a day can drop 4-5

pounds a month. He goes into tips on how to design your own program to lose weight, along with special strategies for your weight reduction program like:

- 1) Buy small...not the largest banana, apple, melon, other
- 2) Cook smaller amounts.
- 3) No nibbling while cooking
- 4) Use smaller plates
- 5) Stop eating when you feel satisfied not stuffed
- 6) Leave some food on your plate...contrary to what mother told you about cleaning your plate

The list goes on and on, and it's pretty simple reading with basics to follow. Dr Parsons even gets into Legislation Congress should pass for a major attack on the epidemic of obesity.

Now that the holidays are almost over, you may want to fortify yourself from the mounds of desserts and taste desires by boning up on "Tough Talk About Fat". You can find all the information you need about Dr Parsons and his books at www.cholesterolnodiets.com. Just a bit of tough talk to make a difference in our life. Happy Eating I mean nibbling!!!

Join Mary Jane for the KAHN Noon News Monday-Friday and then again for POPOFF 10 PM-Midnight.

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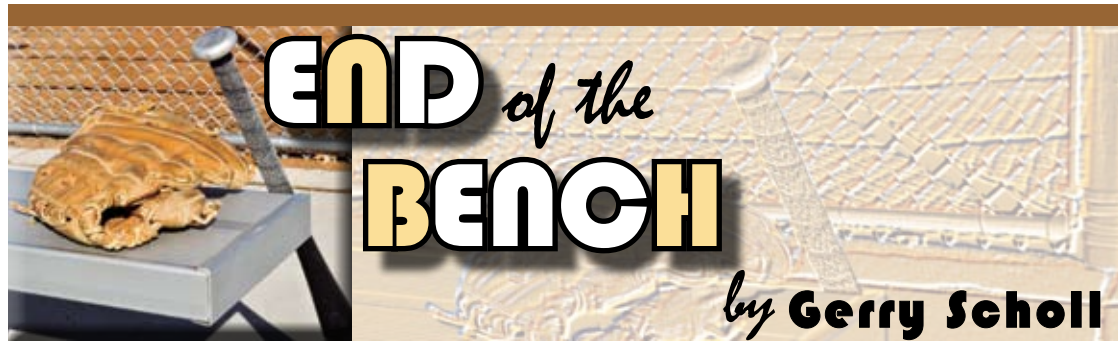
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Hail the Great Prognosticator!

Bet you didn't know I'm a football expert.

Like few others, I correctly predicted the San Francisco 49ers would win their division. They completed the regular season Sunday defeating the St. Louis Rams, 34-27, to finish 13-3 and earn a first-round bye in the playoffs. I knew it!

Maybe they will go all the way, as I prognosticated, and win their sixth Super Bowl. If they do, I shouldn't boast too loudly, since I always pick "my" teams to win it all every year.

Why do I do that? Because I would hate to be wrong — to have them actually win it and I didn't pick them. Horrible.

So, I've been right on the 49ers five times before, but not in the last seventeen seasons. Why not this time? Don't give me the list of reasons. It's time to break the drought.

I pick the Oakland Raiders the same way, despite serious doubts. There are always so many doubts. I should give up on them, just like their suspect defense (I suspect they have one) gave it up on their final-day opportunity for the postseason. The Raiders defense couldn't force a single punt all day, while getting eliminated, 38-26, by the San Diego Chargers.

I forecast the San Francisco Giants to win the World Series every year. I was right on it in 2010, and have been correct almost two percent of the time.

The Oakland A's — I admit I've stopped picking them (though I had a great run in the '70's), since they have stopped trying to field a real major league roster.

But, back to the football expert... after all, I did cover one pro football game live as an active media member way back when, and experienced the horror that is an NFL locker room — no place for the faint of heart. Remember how the old announcer Keith Jackson called the linemen "The Big Uglies?" He wasn't kidding!

Every other so-called expert sportswriter and broadcaster and their brothers feels compelled to make (and fill space and air time) his/her preseason predictions. I was surprised to hear one on the air actually reviewing his picks and comparing them to the final results at season's end. That rarely happens.

So, I took a look back at my Sports Illustrated NFL Preview edition to see how the best experts fared. Not that well.

SI picked the 49ers to go 5-11 and place last in the NFC West. The Rams were to win the division, but were last at 2-14. The SI pro's had four teams finishing last in their respective divisions, with a combined 19-45 record. Of the four, three (49ers, Cincinnati Bengals, Denver Broncos) made the playoffs, and the fourth (Tennessee Titans) was alive until the last few hours Sunday. Combined those teams went 39-25.

SI predicted the correct win/loss records of only six of the 32 teams. It had only three of the eight division winners — and those were the "gimmies" — New England, Green Bay and New Orleans. Any expert could be that good.

The magazine had the Atlanta Falcons, who are in as a wild-

card, defeating the Chargers in Super Bowl XLVI. It read, "San Diego won't make the same mistakes." No. The Chargers made a whole bunch of new ones, missing the playoffs while finishing a disappointing 8-8, only after a late-season rally.

In its preview, SI also had a special on defenses called "Chaos by Design." It was chaos for the most part, all right. Some have called this "The Year of the Quarterback," as four of the 11 highest single-season touchdown passing totals were set this year. Aaron Rodgers (Packers), Drew Brees (Saints), Matt Stafford (Lions) and Tom Brady (Patriots) combined for 166 touchdowns! Rodgers, everybody's MVP choice, finished with a record-breaking quarterback rating of 122.5. His back up, Matt Flynn, had a franchise record 480 yards and six TD's filling in the final game. Patriot Rob Gronkowski set a single-season record for tight ends with 1,327 receiving yards.

In short, all those tricky defenses didn't work out so well. Except, of course, for the top-ranked "D" of your 49ers and the perennial stalwart Baltimore Ravens.

Will this be a season in which the old axiom, "defense wins championships," holds true, or will all these prolific offenses change the old thinking. All the new rules and the new talent may be leading to a new axiom. But, if I am to be hailed as The Great Prognosticator, "old school" will rule — and the 49ers win!



by David Dickstein

Family Films

Beauty and the Beast
Opens Jan. 13, rated G
disney.com/beautyandthebeast

Beauty needs a makeover more than Beauty, but the eventual sweethearts both get spruced up for a limited 3-D theatrical run of the 2-D 1991 classic. Disney's take on the tale that concludes that true beauty comes from within is already viewable in 3-D thanks to a home video reissue, but seeing the first animated film nominated for Oscar as Best Picture (losing out to "Silence of



the Lambs") on the big screen promises to be a short-windowed treat.

In a month typically shy on family films comes something unique in that Disney is debuting a sequel not on its own in feature-length form, but as an animated short audiences don't have to pay extra for. "Tangled Ever After" (rated G), the follow-up to last year's animated hit, "Tangled," is being shown before every screening of "Beauty and the Beast" in 3-D. The bonus film picks up where the original left off. The royal wedding of Rapunzel and Flynn Rider has the Kingdom in a festive mood, but that could all change if Pascal and Maximus, the irresponsible flower chameleon and ring bearer, don't find the bride and groom's gold bands. Returning to voice Rapunzel and Flynn are Mandy

Films and DVDs for the Whole Family

Moore and Zachary Levi.

If your family enjoyed seeing the "The Lion King" re-released and reformatted in 3-D back in September, this reissue of "Beauty and the Beast" will be your cup of tea, poured, of course, from the motherly and proper Mrs. Potts (voiced by Angela Lansbury), who is the kitchen head when not cursed like everyone else of the prince's castle.

More good news for fans of Disney 3-D reissues: You'll be donning those uncomely eyeglasses for "Finding Nemo" (Sept. 14), "Monsters, Inc." (Jan. 18, 2013) and "The Little Mermaid" (Sept. 13, 2013).

much preschoolers learn without realizing it — the DVD is that entertaining. *Grade: A*



Penguins of Madagascar: Operation Blowhole (ages 3-10, out Jan. 10, not rated). The best thing about it is Neil Patrick Harris voicing Dr. Blowhole, arch nemesis of the crafty penguins who spun off from the animated "Madagascar" features for a successful series on Nickelodeon. The six original musical numbers are amusing, and though it's not fair to expect the same level of quality from the theatrical releases, this made-for-TV stuff lacks production muscle. *Grade: B*

Timmy Time: Timmy Needs a Bath (ages 2-5, out Jan. 24, not rated). Heavy on slapstick, light on dialogue — in fact, there is none — this program on the Disney Channel is a winner for preschoolers who, like Mary of nursery rhyme fame, want to have a little lamb. Timmy is its name, and this title has him in a sticky situation after adventures with mud, glue and paint. British humor might not be every tike's cup of English tea. *Grade: B+*



Family DVDs

Barney: I Love My Friends (ages 2-6, out Jan. 3, not rated): Pretty much every "Barney" title is about making friends, but this one adds lessons in keeping promises, being honest and expressing one's feelings in a constructive way. All good stuff, and, as is the case wherever and whenever the imaginary purple dinosaur is around, there's lots of singing and dancing. *Grade: A*

LeapFrog: Number Land (ages 2-5, out Jan. 31, not rated): Complementing its toy line, LeapFrog has put out another DVD featuring Scout the puppy and his friends, moving from letter sounds with the debut title "Phonics Farm" of last November to early numeracy skills. The storyline's backdrop is a surprise birthday party. The real surprise may be how

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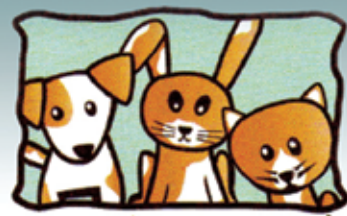
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Photo courtesy of Getty Images

SIMPLE TRICKS

to REFRESH Your Home

FAMILY FEATURES

Staying indoors so much during the winter months can create clutter and mess around the house. But you don't have to wait until spring to give your house a good spring cleaning, and you don't have to do an extreme makeover. You can wake up and spruce up a tired-looking home with a few simple cleaning and organizing routines.

Here are some tips and tricks for making your home spring-clean right now, one room at a time.

Living Room

- Window blinds collect dust and dust mites all winter. To clean plastic blinds, add Greased Lightning to tub water. Remove blinds and let them soak in the tub. Clean them with a well-bristled brush, then let them dry and rehang them.
- Remove fabric window coverings and clean as needed. Use a feather duster around window frames to remove cobwebs and dust.
- Freshen up carpets by sprinkling baking soda on them, letting it sit for 30 minutes, then vacuuming.
- Carefully wipe the tops and bottoms of ceiling fan blades, which provide a perfect, level surface for dust to collect.

Kitchen

- Clean out the refrigerator and freezer, making sure to get rid of all expired products and old leftovers. Remove shelving and drawers and wipe them down using mild soapy water.
- Tackle your oven, inside and out. If your oven is self-cleaning, set it in the self-cleaning mode. Consult your manual for an estimated cleaning time. Also, make your stovetop and hood shine like new with a quick wipe from a sponge sprayed with Greased Lightning. If your oven is not a self-cleaning appliance, use the cleaning solution to wipe away baked on grease and grime. Remember to make sure the oven is cool before applying the solution.
- Don't forget to clean your dishwasher, too. Remove trapped food particles from the bottom and around any moving parts. Pour a cup of vinegar into the empty dishwasher and run it to clean the inside.
- Wipe down the outside of your cabinets, especially around the stove area.
- Vacuum and mop the floors, and launder any area rugs.

Bedrooms

- Launder bed linens — including dust ruffles, bedspreads and pillow shams.
- Move furniture around so you can vacuum underneath and get rid of any dust bunnies that might have accumulated. While you're at it, try a new furniture arrangement to freshen up the look of the room.
- Now's a great time to clean out clothes closets. Empty closets to vacuum and dust inside. Then, before putting clothes back, sort through them and get rid of those items that no longer fit or that you don't wear anymore. You can donate them to a local charity.
- Clean blinds, light fixtures and ceiling fans. Wipe smudges off of light switch covers and door frames, too.

Bathroom

- Wipe down and disinfect all fixtures. Remember lighting fixtures, too. Carefully remove glass fixtures and clean with warm, soapy water. Let them dry thoroughly before reattaching.
- Sort through products and discard or recycle old bottles and containers. Get rid of excess clutter in your bathroom cabinets. Remove items from the medicine cabinet and wipe down all surfaces.
- You can use Greased Lightning to remove grease, grime, mildew stains and soap scum from your bathroom surfaces, including tubs, sinks, toilets, counters and baseboards.

Fresh Ideas for Cleaning

Furniture Moving Trick

When you need to move heavy pieces of furniture across uncarpeted floors, fold two clean towels, put one under each end of the furniture piece, then slide it across the floor.

Clean Lampshades

Use an adhesive lint roller to get the dust off of fabric lampshades.

Use Smart Cleaners

You don't need a separate cleaning product for every room in the house. The pros use a few good, general cleaners to tackle multiple types of messes. Learn more about the Greased Lightning family of products at www.glcleans.com.

Keep Your Tools Handy

Get a plastic tote tray to carry with you from room to room. Load it with your cleaners, rags, rubber gloves, dusters and a couple of extra trash bags. You'll be surprised at how much faster the cleaning goes when everything is right where you need it.

To get additional tips to spruce up your home, as well as coupons from Greased Lightning, Like them on Facebook, or visit www.glcleans.com.

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