

AMERICAN RIVER

M E S S E N G E R



Rev. Kev,
He's Definitely
on His Way

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Fair Oaks Theater
to Audition
"Broadway Babies"
for its Annual Series

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Volume 6 Issue 12

Serving Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks, Carmichael, Orangevale & Gold River

Second Edition for June 2011

The Spirit of Americans



Celebrating the 4th of July with family and friends is the truest way of honoring our independence. Photo courtesy Susan Maxwell Skinner

Commentary By Bryan Golden

It's the Spirit of Americans that makes us the greatest country with the most freedom and prosperity the world has ever known.

Human history is characterized by domination and subjugation. From virtually the beginning of mankind, tyrants, monarchs, dictators, and oppressors of all types have been the norm. What is different about Americans? What enables Americans to achieve more than any other people in history?

Before our founding, a country built on freedom had never existed. Americans' spirit of liberty, combined with a can do attitude, has allowed us to attain more in several hundred years than other cultures have accomplished in thousands. The unprecedented success of America has inspired people around the world to fight for and establish their own independence.

The yearning to be free from oppression is our core. We recognize freedom as a fundamental, unalienable right. Even before our founding, people from other countries

flocked here to escape the chains of bondage and repression. In America, we are free to succeed or fail. It's an individual choice, not the dictate of any ruling class. We are free to take personal responsibility for our lives rather than expecting others to take care of us. It is this freedom to succeed and be the masters of our destiny that is the spirit of Americans.

Our Declaration of Independence affirms that we are all created equally and endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights which include life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Our government is designed to be empowered by us rather than to control us.

Americans define pioneer spirit. Just like the pilgrims, Americans risked everything seeking a better life and opportunity. Those families, who packed all of their belongings into wagons and headed into the American west, personified self-reliance. They carved homesteads, towns, and cities out of the wilderness. They built, created, and invented whatever they needed. They took no handouts and didn't rely on

anyone else to take care of them.

Without persistence, perseverance, and determination, America would never have survived. We have a yearning to succeed. We want a better world for ourselves and for others. The things we accomplish are not easy.

Americans persist in spite of fear. We venture into the unknown where the outcome isn't guaranteed but dependent on courage. Brave Americans fight for and defend freedom around the globe. The entire world counts on the generosity of Americans. Americans are first on the scene helping others in need with their time, money, and supplies. Wherever disaster and misfortune strike, Americans are there to help.

Americans are known for their innovations. We are responsible for more discoveries and inventions than anyone else. Propelled by the freedom to be rewarded for our efforts, we create products and services in all areas of life that generate the highest standard of living in history. Americans are creative. We figure out how to do things that have never been done before. We don't believe

"it can't be done." People everywhere are living better lives because of the spirit of Americans.

Americans are driven. In America, anyone can achieve their dreams. We are free to accomplish anything we want. We don't have to belong to any group or organization. In America, individual talent and effort is rewarded. We put in whatever energy is needed, for as long as it takes, to get where we want to be. American *exceptionalism* is rooted in an uncompromising work ethic, combined with the highest standards. Because there are no externally imposed limits on how much an individual can attain, Americans can start from anywhere and achieve anything.

Stand up, speak out, and do your part to care for and protect our great country. You are the spirit of America.

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@columlist.com. Copyright 2011 Bryan Golden.

Whooping Cough Cases Remain High In California

Sacramento Region – Dr. Howard Backer, the Interim Director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), has warned recently that the number of pertussis (whooping cough) cases in 2011 continues to be above both the 2009 baseline levels and the numbers seen by this time last year. Backer also encouraged parents to ensure that their adolescent's immunizations are up-to-date in compliance with a new California law that is slated to go into effect July 1, 2011.

"In 2010, California experienced a record high number of pertussis illnesses, including 10 infant deaths," said Backer. "While it is too early to know if this year will reach the same high levels of this debilitating disease, California is currently experiencing more cases than would be typically expected, but fortunately no fatalities."

Backer also called on parents of children in grades seven through 12, to ensure that they comply with AB 354, which requires documentation of an adolescent pertussis booster shot prior to school entry. More than one million students statewide still remain to be vaccinated before the fall semester.

"Vaccination, including critical

booster shots, is the best defense against pertussis," added Backer. "Parents of 7th to 12th graders must ensure that their children receive the necessary booster shot to avoid a delay in having their children start classes in the fall semester."

The vaccination series for pertussis can begin at the age of 6 weeks. Infants, however, are not adequately protected by vaccination until the initial series of three shots is complete. For new mothers and anyone in close contact with infants, CDPH encourages a "cocooning strategy," where individuals in close contact are vaccinated to protect the not-fully-immunized infant. Anyone who might be coming into contact with newborns and young infants should ensure that their immunizations are up-to-date.

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease. Unimmunized or incompletely immunized young infants are particularly vulnerable to severe disease. Numbers of reported pertussis cases typically increase during the summer months. More information on pertussis and the numbers of reported cases is available at www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx.

Rancho Neighborhood Center Is Moving

Rancho Cordova – The Rancho Cordova Neighborhood Center (RCNC) is moving from leased quarters to a City-owned building located at 2880 Gold Tailings Court.

Responsible for Code Enforcement and Animal Services in the City, RCNC will open for business at the new location on Monday, June 27th. Residents can purchase animal licenses, file code violation complaints, and check out cat traps. After taking the initial phone calls and reports, RCNC dispatches a Rancho Cordova Animal Services Officer but contracts with the SPCA for its animal sheltering, found pets, and adoption services.

"The new quarters are a bit larger and the space is set up to better suit

our needs," said Kerry Simpson, the City's Neighborhood Services Manager. She continued that another advantage is that the Center is located next to the Rancho Cordova Police Department's (RCPD) new headquarters. The two buildings are in the same complex, separated only by the RCPD's and Code Enforcement vehicle parking lot.

"We often work on joint cases and projects with the Police Department so it will be more expeditious to have our offices closer together," said Simpson.

In addition, two Sacramento County probation officers will have offices in the RCNC building.

For additional information, please call the Center at (916) 851-8770.

DMV Now Offers Veterans Plate Online

Sacramento Region – Customers can now easily show their support for California Veterans

The California Veteran special interest license plates can now be easily ordered through the DMV's online services with a click of a mouse. Proceeds of these popular specialty plates go to the Veterans Service Office Fund and are used to expand important veteran services statewide.

"These plates reflect the rich and storied history of the contributions of California Veterans," said George Valverde, Director of the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

The plates are available in sequential (original \$30/renewal \$30) as well as personalized (original \$40/renewal \$30).

"Veterans plates make it easy for Californians to show their support and pride in the men and women of our military, National Guard, Reserve Services and our veterans,"

said Peter James Gravett, Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

Since the inception of the Veterans plate program in 1995, approximately 24,500 Veteran plates have been issued resulting in \$6.8 million raised and distributed by the California Department of Veterans Affairs to benefit participating county veteran service offices and to commemorate veteran organizations.



Employment Trends Show Renewed Concerns

Sacramento Region – Hiring in the 3rd Quarter of 2011 will reflect Sacramento regional employer's concerns about unsteady gasoline prices and economic agitation resulting from renewed fears about State government budgets and overseas debt. Despite those worries local companies are actively hiring for attrition while growth of workforces has been slowed. Growth was given as motivation to hire by just twenty-five percent (25%) of the top employers surveyed directly by telephone between May 22 and June 6th. Hiring attributed to growth has dropped seven percent (7%) from the previous Quarter. More companies are hiring but fewer workers are being employed as sixty-eight percent (68%) will hire in Q3, but forty-three percent (43%) of those hires are motivated only by expected workforce attrition.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of hiring was attributed to seasonal needs in construction, agriculture and summer service industry employment. Thirty-two percent (32%) of Sacramento employers surveyed on behalf of Pacific



Looking for a new job, or even writing a resume, brings anguish to job seekers.

Staffing indicate no hiring planned for July, August and September 2011. Just one company indicated any plan to reduce their workforce in the next three months.

Graduate Hiring Demand

2011 will be a difficult year for new graduates entering the workforce.

When Sacramento regional employers were asked, "Will your company make any effort to hire new graduates?" seventy percent (70%) said No. Among the thirty percent (30%) indicating they would seek help from recent college graduation, those students with science and technology degrees were

in highest demand. Service industry firms were looking for IT, Economics/Business, RN's and Laboratory science degrees. Manufacturers and Construction firms indicated interest in hiring IT, Business, Biology/Lab Science expertise and degrees including Mechanical, Chemical, Civil and Structural Engineering.

The top challenge ahead for HR pros in the area remains concerns over healthcare costs and benefit changes. Some employers indicate problems with overtime, morale and increasing difficulty in finding qualified skilled applicants.

Of the top 100 Sacramento Regional Companies By Industry 38% are Service, 34% are Manufacturers, 17% are Construction and 11% are Retail.

How does this Quarter compare to last Quarter, or last year? Find out for yourself, for more information & surveys go to www.pacificstaffing.com.

Charlie Pillman Celebrates 1,000th Tour with Family



This year Charlie enjoyed the celebration of his 1,000th tour with his family and friends.

By Reanna Leon

Citrus Heights – Charlie Pillman was born in Gilroy, California on December 11th, 1931. Charlie served on active duty with the United States Nave Reserve on a repair ship in the Korean War. Before and after his time served during the war, Charlie worked in printing and eventually became a Journeyman printer on the Gilroy Dispatch. Through the years,

Charlie always had an interest in trains and the railroads. Charlie was part of the restoration crew of a Southern Pacific P-10 Pacific type locomotive in San Jose, California. When he moved to Sacramento in 1998, Charlie volunteered at the California State Railroad Museum where he worked in the restoration shop. In 1999 he became a docent there. Charlie was asked to tour his granddaughter

Julie and the rest of her 5th grade class for a field trip. This triggered his interest in becoming an official tour guide. Charlie began to train for this position and became an official tour guide for the California State Railroad Museum in 2001. This year Charlie enjoyed the celebration of his 1,000th tour with his family and friends, including Julie who is now 21 years old. Congratulations Charlie!

City of Citrus Heights to Pay \$196,758 to Six Families

By Leslie Carrara

Citrus Heights – Demolition and relocation efforts are under way as former Sayonara Drive residents receive stimulus money from a \$1 million federal grant, with the residents receiving final checks next month. One of the 11 families will receive a combined total of \$96,000, based on family size and income levels, according to Katherine Cooley, Development Specialist with the city. Former residents

began receiving monthly checks in March, and based on federal guidelines, they are all to be paid in full by September. Six families qualify for a pay out check as they received over \$5,000 each. Total paid out will be \$196,758 with six families receiving a pay out check in July. The majority of properties on Sayonara Drive were in foreclosure when demolition began a year ago and only 11 units were occupied with the people needing to be relocated, Cooley said. The city purchased 64 units

with the Federal Neighborhood Stabilization grant before the demolition project began. The grant paid for the 15 properties, the demolition, the fencing and for the relocation of the families that lived there at the time. Grant monies will also pay for the redevelopment of the street, with the city required by federal law to rebuild affordable housing. All guidelines by HUD (Housing and Urban Development) and HCD (Housing and Community Development) are being followed, Cooley said.

Greenback Lane and Auburn Blvd Intersection Construction Planned

By Leslie Carrara

Citrus Heights – The intersection of Greenback Lane and Auburn Blvd. will be undergoing a facelift beginning mid-July while the city

attempts to make the intersection more disabled user friendly, including making the area cleaner and moving the bus stop. The work will be done on Greenback up to Indian River Drive

and a few feet in on both the east and west sides of Auburn Blvd. Estimated cost of the work, which is slated to be complete by mid-September, is \$1 million. Monies will be pulled from the gas tax fund.

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MEDICRUISER

With all the hubbub about medical care and medical costs, folks are on the lookout for better prices. Did you know that medical tourism is a major world industry estimated at billions of dollars per year, and expanding 30% annually. India, Singapore, and Thailand generate \$2 billion per year in revenue. Most medical tourists come from European and Middle Eastern countries, but the numbers are growing from the United States. In 2006, over 770,000 residents of the United kingdom traveled for health care. The principal barrier is unfamiliarity and distrust of the services, and concerns about the availability of post-procedural care. Enter Dr. Paul Gahlinger with his Medical Tourism Support Services who alleges he can solve these limitations and facilitate overseas health care. He covers a lot of territory in his book “The Medical Tourism Travel Guide.” It is a complete reference to top-quality, low-cost, dental, cosmetic, Medical Care, and Surgery Overseas.

POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

Dr. Gahlinger claims there are lots of reasons for this travel like:

1. Decreased costs...for example, a bone marrow transplant is about \$250,000 in the United States vs as little as \$25,000 in India. Medications are also cheaper, often less than 50% of the cost in the U.S.
2. Avoidance of lengthy delays in treatment...this is particularly true with managed care insurance in the U.S. including Medicare and Veteran's Administration.
3. Availability of high quality care...many overseas hospitals excel in new or highly sophisticated procedures. Excellent hospitals in the U.S. are generally limited to major coastal cities.
4. Cosmetic or medical procedures that are unavailable in the home country...for example stem cell therapy, which is not generally available in the U.S.
5. The opportunity to combine a vacation with medical care. This is not available in the U.S. except for very limited procedures and highly expensive accommodations.
6. The opportunity to combine medical care for multiple family members in a single trip. This is not available in the U.S., where each family member is treated entirely separately and often in different facilities.
7. The opportunity to combine diverse types of health care: for example, cosmetic surgery, dental care, and executive physical, spa treatment,

and alternative methods such as ayurvedic care. In the U.S., separate facilities and individual arrangements would be needed for each.

1. The doc does cover some of the concerns like:
2. Lack of knowledge
3. Lack of advice
4. Lack of trust
5. Lack of follow-up care
6. Lack of medical malpractice protection
7. Lack of quality assurance
8. Lack of travel experience or preparatory knowledge

Dr. Gahlinger is a physican and medical school professor who has traveled and studies medical tourism in 120 countries. He serves as an adjunct professor of medicine at the University of Utah and as a funding analyst for the Bioastronautics Research Division of NASA. He attempts to tackle all the issues in “The Medical Tourism Travel Guide” or you can check out his website www.medicrUISer.com. As Dr. Gahlinger puts it this way, what if you could get top-notch medical care by highly skilled, U.S.-trained physicians in a world-class medical facility, all at a cost far less than treatment in the United States? A new idea to ponder! But always keep in mind...Buyer Beware...no matter what country you choose.

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July 9 th	Washington Kastles	Drop Shot Diva Day featuring <i>Serena Williams</i>
July 10 th	Newport Beach Breakers	Play Tennis Sacramento
July 12 th	Kansas City Explorers	Family Night featuring the <i>Bryan Brothers</i>
July 15 th	Newport Beach Breakers	Catch the Wave featuring <i>Mardy Fish</i>
July 20 th	Boston Lobsters	Caps Go Green
July 21 st	Springfield Lasers	Fan Appreciation Night

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A Case in Point

The Case of the Tragic Traveller

By David Graulich, Esq.

Harry was driving home after shopping at Safeway. While waiting at a stop sign, his car was hit from behind by a negligent driver. Harry suffered severe back and neck injuries and his car was totaled.

The vehicle that struck Harry was a delivery truck owned by Loaf Inc., a regional distributor of bakery goods. The truck driver, Biff, told police that he was texting with his girlfriend when he smashed into Harry's car. Biff was a full-time employee of Loaf Inc.

If Harry sues for damages, can Loaf Inc. be named as a defendant?

This question involves an area of employer liability known as "respondeat superior." It is well established in American courts that employers have liability for wrongful acts of their employees that are committed within the scope of employment.

Note that critical phrase, "scope of employment." Was Biff on his assigned route to deliver bread at Safeway when the accident happened? If yes, he was within the scope. However, if Biff was making a detour through a residential neighborhood to drop off a box of donuts at his girlfriend's house when he negligently hit Harry, Biff was outside the scope – and Loaf Inc. avoids liability.

What about an employee's normal commute? Wrongful acts committed by an employee while commuting to and from work are generally outside the scope. This is called the "going and coming" rule.

Another important rule is the "special errand." This applies when an employee is on a journey or special duty for the employer

away from the workplace. An employee performing a special errand is within the scope.

Now let's leave Harry's hypothetical case and examine an actual 2009 California decision, which concerned an employer's liability in a fatal accident. Here are the facts:

A vice-president of Warner Bros. Entertainment, Mr. Brandon, attended a three-day business conference in Sunnyvale that concerned his area of expertise, anti-piracy Internet operations. Warner, based in Burbank, approved Mr. Brandon's trip and paid all expenses. Mr. Brandon left the conference and flew back to Burbank Airport, where he retrieved his personal car and drove home around 4:30 p.m.

The executive drove past his Warner office without stopping. He took his normal route home for two or three miles when he was involved in a collision with another car. One or both cars then struck three pedestrians, killing one of them. The injured pedestrians and the decedent's estate named Warner as co-defendant in a lawsuit, along with Mr. Brandon and the driver of the second car.

Warner filed a motion to be released from the litigation. Under the going and coming rule, Warner argued, the executive was commuting home in his personal vehicle and was outside the scope of employment. Even if the special errand rule applied to the executive's trip to the Sunnyvale conference, the special errand terminated when he returned to Burbank, passed his office without stopping and drove his regular route home at approximately his usual time.

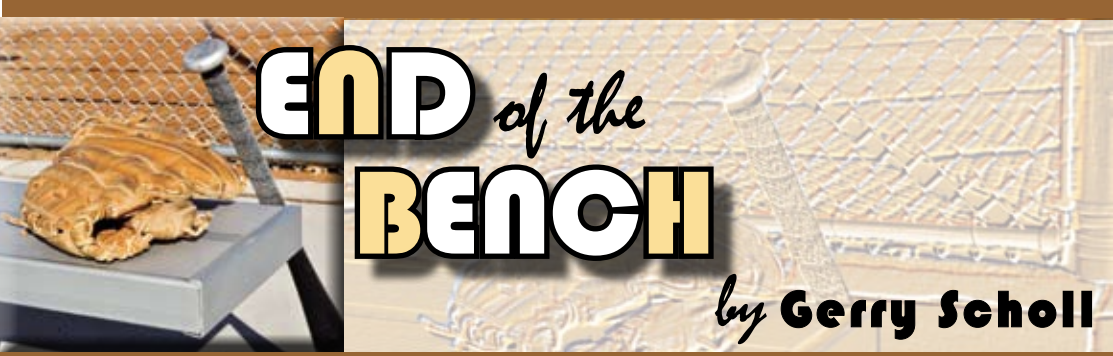
The plaintiffs countered that Mr. Brandon was still on the special errand for his employer at the time of the collision, because he had not made any stops and not yet completed the journey home from the conference.

The trial court agreed with Warner and dismissed the company from the suit. The plaintiffs appealed, asking that the higher court keep Warner as a co-defendant. What happened on appeal?

Reversed! In holding for the plaintiffs, the appellate court said the special errand rule was the key issue: "When an employee intends to drive home from the errand, the errand is not concluded simply because the employee drives his regular route home, but rather, the errand is concluded when the employee returns home or deviates from the errand for personal reasons."

In other words, a special errand continues until the employee either arrives at his destination or deviates from the route for his own purposes -- say, to buy a take-home pizza at Papa Murphy's. Since Mr. Brandon intended to return home after the conference and did not make any personal stops, he was still within the scope of employment when the fatal accident occurred. As a result, Warner Bros. Entertainment still had liability for his wrongful actions.

David Graulich, Esq. is a resident of Fair Oaks and an attorney with The Law Firm of Tim O'Connor. David welcomes comments on "A Case in Point" columns and can be contacted at (916) 932-2312 or by email: David@timoconnorattorney.com.



A Special Joy

What's so special about the Special Olympics? Just everything, that's what!

There was an overwhelming sentiment of sheer joy permeating the scene at Toomey Field on the UC Davis campus Sunday during the track and field events in the 2011 Special Olympics Northern California Summer Games. It was evident on all the faces in the crowd: the many volunteers and organizers; the teammates, coaches, family members and friends on the field, in the stands and hugging the railings during events; and the athletes preparing to compete, toeing the starting line or celebrating the completion of their events.

In many ways it was just like any other track meet. It was hot. There was a lot of standing around and sometimes a lot of time between events. There was intensity on the marks before the starter's gun and last-second coaching tips from the sidelines. There was a reasonable gathering of fans, mostly comprised of people with immediate connections with the competitors. And yet, it was a totally different vibe. The focus wasn't centered

on winning, but on exulting in personal triumphs. Every time the greatest cheers came as the final runner came down the stretch.

Last week in this space I was exorcising demons, venting on many of the not-so-nice goings-on in the world of sports. And, wouldn't you know it, this week is so completely the opposite. Just a couple of hours absorbing the vibe and I felt as if I'd undergone a sporting spiritual revival.

"Some really do get upset if they don't win," one coach said. "As a coach my job is, win or lose, to make sure they are having fun on the track. Their emotions are the same as anybody else, and then some. They are more open to learning, and have a willingness to learn and get out there and do it."

I visited one of the information booths for some helpful notes. I was welcomed to lots of impressive facts and figures regarding the volunteers, the donors and participants. But most impressive about all of that was the enthusiasm with which it was delivered. "It's about training for life, and self-awareness, self-

esteem and character."

A teacher from a nearby community was out to watch his 18-year-old student, Jeremiah, compete. He bragged on the event, "Well done. A labor of love." He effused pride and joy talking about Jeremiah's second-place finish in the 100m and first in the 4x100 relay. "They're all out there trying hard to be successful, and to feel confident regardless. It's beautiful."

The Fresno Fire, Santa Clara Speedsters, Tri-Valley Rockets, Team Davis, The Sacramento County Chargers and many more wore their team colors proudly and athletes cherished their gold, silver and bronze medals. There were winners on many levels.

A badge that many people were wearing might have said it best: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." This was a rare occasion when many brave souls meant that everybody wins.

"It's so nice when you get the whole family involved," someone said.

Special Olympics: One big happy, joyful family.



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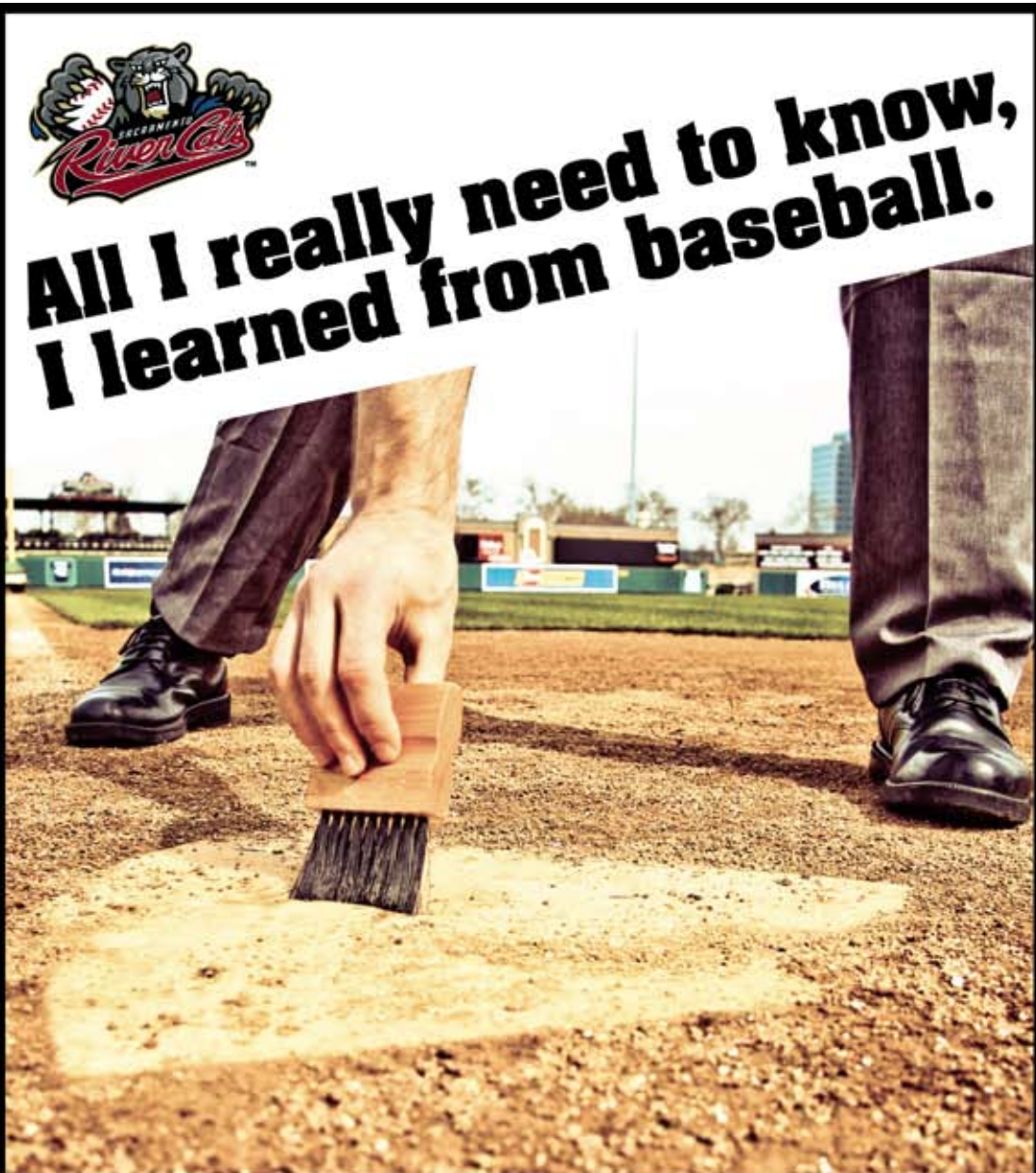
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Sac Metro Fire Investigators Make Arrest

Sac Metro Fire Report

Sacramento – On June 23, 2011, Delia Soto was located, arrested, and booked into the Sacramento County Jail for Arson.

On May 27, 2011 Sacramento Metro Fire District responded to a report of a commercial vehicle fire at the 6500 block of Den Avenue. Firefighters arrived and discovered a motorhome on fire. The fire was extinguished by firefighters. Fire Investigators determined the cause of the fire was Arson. Two adults where inside the motorhome when the fire was started.

The investigation led to an arrest warrant being issued for Delia Francis Soto for violation of Penal Code Section 451 (b) – Arson to an inhabited dwelling and two counts of Penal Code Section 422 – Making a terrorist threat to cause great bodily harm and/or death. Bail was set at \$250,000.

Delia Soto

Book Sale Will Support Community Library Programs

Sacramento – The Friends of Arden-Dimick Library is planning an all day book sale on Saturday, July 16, to raise funds for local library programs.

The sale will be held from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. in the Community Room at Arden-Dimick Library, 891 Watt Avenue in Sacramento.

Library volunteers have been gathering book donations for months and will offer more than 2,000 books at super-low prices: .25 - \$1.00.

Stock up on your summer reading material now! Event information is listed on the Sacramento Public Library's website, www.saclibrary.org.

The Friends of the Arden-Dimick Library is a volunteer community-based organization. Its dual mission is to advocate for the Library and to provide funding for books and materials, programs and Library activities primarily through selling donated books and materials.

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8			2				3	
6	4				1			
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7		8		4				

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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.

Come back every week for Sudoku!

For Solution See Page 10.

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CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
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CLUES

ACROSS

- Very light wood
- School support org.
- *Don't get fireworks ____
- Once more
- Poetic "even"
- *Done to America on the Fourth
- The ____, Marvel Comics
- Landers or Coulter, e.g.
- One up
- *First to sign the Declaration
- Not yet tested
- Make a mistake
- Clothed
- Ogre-like creature
- Target of grand theft
- *"Wild Blue ____"
- Action word
- This over matter?
- Hollow rock
- Butter substitute

DOWN

- Haze over
- Seed cover
- Twisted cotton thread
- Irritate or disturb
- Printing unit
- 8vo
- City in Nevada
- Eye infection
- SAT, e.g.
- Gremlin or pixie
- Name of geographical place
- *Between life and pursuit of happiness
- What volcanoes do
- *"Home of the brave"
- Ralph in Paris
- Puzzle in pictures
- Cow chew
- Fill with optimism
- *Seamstress Betsy
- *Anthem writer
- Truth ____

DOWN

- Soaking ritual
- Title for Turkish leader
- Past participle of "lie"
- From then on
- Fluffy sweater material
- Pinnacle
- *Number of amendments in Bill Of Rights
- Declare invalid
- Grim
- Not in favor of
- Pie a la ____
- Poking instrument
- *Edible favorite
- Pigeon food?
- Negative response
- Acquire more evidence
- Convex molding
- Antiquity of the past
- Summit
- Wedding cake layer
- Less than average tide
- Singer and actress Day

ACROSS

- Authoritative proclamation
- 4 x 4 race
- Cowboy's necktie
- Clinton's 1996 contender
- *"When in the course of human ____"
- *____ Chinoises, aka shadow play
- Without self-control
- *Famous portrait painter
- Territory, abbr.
- Dunking treat
- Taverns
- Chopin's creation, e.g.
- Tramp's companion
- Lion's sound
- "Swan Lake" outfit
- Big bang theory's original matter
- File a suit

For Solution See Page 8



“Keeping the Faith”
Ronnie McBrayer

I once approached my life and work as if I was building a house. Drive a nail here. Lay a block there. Smear a bit of paint in the corner. Cut out a window now and again. Figuratively, this is how I treated my life, and it is a solid, powerful image. It is also an image with plenty of biblical roots.

None other than Jesus himself said in the Sermon on the Mount, “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.” Of course those who ignore his teaching, Jesus said, are like those who build their lives on a sandy foundation with collapse all but imminent.

Paul stuck with the theme as well, and he spoke of the possibility that our lives can be soundly constructed from things that will last like bricks and mortar – gold, silver, and precious jewels he called them. Or, Paul says, we can foolishly build with the combustible and momentary materials of wood, hay, or straw.

It all reminds me of the story of the Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf: Some things are built to last. Other things blow away about as quickly as they were created, in spite of our

Disappearing Dump Trucks

brave squeals and the hair of our chinny, chin, chins.

I haven’t given up on this building metaphor completely, but recently I did adopt a new narrative. It’s not about construction, but deconstruction. Last year I visited a housing project in San Salvador that is home to more than a thousand people. With homes, churches, markets, and a school, it is a safe and healthy neighborhood, thus far insulated from so much of the gang violence, extortion, and troubles of the city. It is no utopia, but it is a shining light within a very dangerous section of the city.

The land upon which this neighborhood sits was given to a group of USAmerican volunteers by the city of San Salvador because the city had basically given up on it. It was nothing but a forsaken junkyard, filled with crushed cars, old buses, dilapidated construction equipment, and families: People were living in the junkyard because they had no place else to go.

Ultimately, these people were moved out, new homes were built, and the people moved back in. My favorite part of this venture, and my new narrative, involved a dump truck that was just too big and heavy to move. It sat in the middle of the jobsite untouched, until six eight-year-old boys attacked it.

Every day these little boys, none past third grade, would come to the site with their hacksaw blades, pieces of t-shirts wrapped around the edges for handles, and they would saw away. Then they

would take whatever they cut off and sell it for a few pennies at a time on the street, helping to meagerly support their families.

This went on day after day, week after week, and month after month until one day, almost like magic, this huge dump truck weighing tens of thousands of pounds was just gone. Six elementary school-aged children had consumed it, like vultures consuming a carcass.

One of the onsite missionaries told me that when he felt like quitting, that when he thought what he tried to do didn’t matter, or when overwhelming odds made it all hopeless, he would revisit the memory of those little boys confronting their dump truck day after day. They knew, as only children can know, that if they stayed at it long enough, nothing would be impossible. The truck would one day disappear.

Those little boys can help reorient our lives. We may not “build” a whole lot with the few years we have been given, and parts of what we build will get blown away. But with the blessed ignorance of children, we can keep sawing – keep parenting, keep teaching, keep fostering, keep nursing, keep showing up at whatever it is we do – until finally, almost like magic, the dump trucks disappear.

Ronnie McBrayer is the author of “Leaving Religion, Following Jesus.” He writes and speaks about life, faith, and Christ-centered spirituality. Visit his website at www.ronniemcbrayer.net.



By Pastor Ray Dare

You have more untapped potential on the inside of you than you’ve ever imagined. If you begin to develop this potential, God will do greater things in your life than you ever thought possible. You were made for more than just getting up and going to work and coming home and getting up and doing it all over again and again for 50 or 60 years.

You must understand that you are a person of destiny. You are here in God’s divine plan. He has strategically placed you here at this particular time in history because He has great confidence in you to be the person, the leader He’s made you to be for Him. God didn’t choose Moses, David, or Paul to live in this hour. He chose you to live in this hour to make a difference with your life.

The Bible tells us in 1 Timothy 1, to “Stir up the gift of God...” that is within us. God is counting on you to make a difference and He has given you incredible gifts and talents that must be developed. The enemy will tell

You Were Made for Significance

you you’re just a housewife. You’re just a businessperson. You’re just a plumber. You’re just an accountant...whatever. No. Listen friend, God has given you something very important to do for Him. You’ve got to be obedient, you’ve got to be open to following the God-given dreams and desires He’s put on the inside of you.

So many people are waiting for a big voice to boom out of heaven to instruct them what to do. But most of the time it’s not like that. It’s going to be a simple desire. The Bible calls it “a still, small voice” (1 Kings 19:12). You may be sitting around waiting for the right time to do what God’s telling you to do. You think as soon as my kids get out of school, I’ll do it. I’ll be obedient to God. I’ll get involved. As soon as this big project at work gets over, then I’m going to get involved. Whenever the right time comes, then I’m going to do what God’s calling me to do. But friend, you all know as well as I do there will never be a right time. The time to do what God’s telling you to do is right now. There is no better time to do it than right now. The hour is late. The time is short. We’ve got to quit making excuses. Every day you put it off you’re missing out on God’s best for your life.

Jesus told the parable of the

talents in Matthew, chapter 25. I encourage you to read it today.

God has given every one of us talents. Let me ask you a very important question today, what are you doing with the talents God has given you? Are you making the most of what God has entrusted you with? Or are there weights that are holding you back? Are you too busy to come to church on a regular basis? Are you letting the enemy deceive you into thinking you don’t have what it takes to do what God’s telling you to do?

Let me challenge you, don’t hide your talents. To be fulfilled you must become the servant God wants you to be. You’ve got to stir yourself up, step out in faith and do what God’s been telling you to do. You will never be truly fulfilled if you compromise what God has put on the inside of you. Get in the race. Get involved. Be committed to church. Act on the dreams and desires He’s put in your heart. You have seeds of greatness on the inside of you. You have more to offer this world than you ever imagined.

See you soon, Pastor Ray
New Community
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By Marlys Norris,
Christian Author

There comes a time in most people’s lives when they begin a sincere search for truth

Becoming a seeker of truth most always brings the seeker to the Word of God, the Bible, because instinctively one knows the Creator of the Universe has the answer to what they want to know. A consistent study of the Word will draw one into a deeper intimacy with God and prepare the reader to live spiritually and to comprehend intellectually how to live in light of God’s memoir about life.

If You Search for “Me” You Will Find “Me”

The intent of the Bible is to reveal the God of the Book and in so doing, to have lives changed and transformed by Gods supernatural power. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That a man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) The goal in understanding the Book is to apply what is learned to one’s life, making it “living word.” Application brings greater understanding of its truth. The experience should bring healthy conclusions and decisions based on scriptural principles that one will decide to become a part of their lifestyle.

Faith is born from hope. Faith comes from trusting and resting upon the truth of God. The study of God’s Word should change our natural ways of living. Faith is needed to enable us to forgive, and to love. It helps us to understand God’s sovereign plan in

the world, for our personal destiny, for the reality of eternal life and must come from the only authoritative source available to man, The Bible! The seeker will find it!

Left to himself, a man does not know how to live or how to die. Man’s opinions only prove his ego is in tact. Mans ideas are filled with selfishness and greed as well as bitterness and anger. Scripture says, “For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?” Only God has the answer to the questions about life and death. The inception of the Word of God brings light and Gods prescription for leading a peaceful, joyful and satisfied life as well as provides the answers to life after death.

May your personal search begin today...

Marlys Johnsen Norris, Author
Marlys5934@sbcglobal.net
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Sacramento Region – The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD) is promoting literacy this summer through its partnership with Reading Tree. The objective is to put books in the hands of local children to promote literacy, and to support recycling and reuse of unwanted books.

SMFD Fire Chief Henke encourages the community to drop off their gently used books at the Reading Tree book donation containers located at SMFD stations. The stations opened on June 17, 2011. SMFD will be hosting the Reading Tree bins through November 18, 2011.

Reading Tree and SMFD have partnered on this book collection effort to develop in-classroom lending libraries in Reading Partner Sacramento schools in the



Sacramento region. All types of books are welcome, including new, used, hardback and paperback. Quality children's books are donated to local, early learning programs and elementary school-age children.

The Reading Tree was established in 2000 as a public charity. The organization has two missions. The first is to collect books from families who no longer want them, and deliver them to children, families, schools, and libraries that need

them. The second is to keep books from contributing to the saturation of the nation's landfills. Reading Tree places and maintains book collection bins in communities across the country to collect and redistribute used books. Reading Tree supports children's literacy by getting books into the hands of children. Over 4 million books have been gifted to families, schools, and libraries since 2007. Reading Tree invites members of the community to become involved by donating books they no longer need to aid the literacy crisis.

Donated books will go to change lives in our community. For more information, please visit www.readingtree.org, or call (888) 402-BOOK.

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He is Definitely On His Way

By Julie Parker

Reverend Kevin Kitrell Ross aka “Rev Kev” has written three books, created “Teen Camps” in four states, has been honored at Tufts University and the Smithsonian Institute, met the Dalai Lama and Nelson Mandela, has been featured in Black Enterprise Magazine, Upscale Magazine, Chicago Sun Times, The Miami Herald, was honored as the 1998 Outstanding Young Man of America, named by Ebony Magazine as one of America’s Young Leaders 30 and Under, hosts a radio show “Design Your Life,” has traveled to Canada, Africa, South America and the Caribbean, and recently appeared as a guest on one of Oprah’s last televisions shows.

He’s only 37. Reverend Ross’ office is a sanctuary of subdued, grounding colors and soothing aromas. A candle on the corner of his desk emits a gentle glow into the room. “Metaphysically and symbolically,” says Ross, “it keeps me holding the light for this community and people in this community.”

Ross grew up in three-story in the south side of Chicago in “Roseland/Pullman,” a unification of two historical towns. In the 1840’s, Roseland was settled by Dutch immigrants, and Pullman was an industrial city created by George F. Pullman, the inventor of the famous Pullman “palace” railway coaches. “It was one of those communities where everybody watched out for each other. My aunt ended up marrying the boy next door.”

In the summer, he and his friends would ride their bicycles and swim at Pullman Park. In the winter they would ice skate on the grass. “It would be that frozen.”

His father, a well-known jazz guitarist in Chicago, performed around the country in Broadway plays. “Part of the summers as a kid, I grew up in the orchestra pit of these wonderful productions. ‘The Wiz’ had such a profound impact on how I see I see the world, because of the messages, ‘Believe in yourself,’ and ‘You’re always home.’”

My all-time favorite person in the world was my grandpapa, John Houston Tayborn. His favorite saying when cooking was, ‘Always put a little love in it.’ He was my best friend; a larger-than-life, yet very down-to-earth individual, who was a conglomerate of a southern preacher/Archie Bunker/Homer Simpson. He was reverent and irreverent all at the same time.”

Walking the mile to school was a “migration,” with waves of children merging with each block. “In the winters in Chicago, snow would be as high as this table. They did not cancel school. Unless a pipe burst, you were going to school.”

He competed in his first speech contest at age four. “I learned Itsy Bitsy Spider and won a trophy, and recited it around the school.” More speech essays followed. “I have a bunch of trophies at home from those years of speaking and writing.”

One of his favorite teachers was Barbara Powell, with whom he keeps in touch. “She was funny and personable. She would come to your house and say, ‘Hey, Kevin’s not doing well’ or ‘Kevin’s doing great.’ She was very in your business. There was no getting around Miss Powell.” At his wedding, around 20 years later, Ms. Powell presented to him a letter he had written to her. “It said something like, ‘Dear Miss Powell, I know I’ve not been doing the best in my grades and I’ve been acting up in class, but I promise to do better. You can count on it.’ She had saved it for maybe 20 years. That was really sweet.”

She took his class on a college tour, which included Morehouse College, which Dr. Martin Luther

King attended. “That’s when I made up my mind that that is where I was going.”

“I remember going through the application process for Morehouse. They denied me. My grades by comparison to some of the other students from around the country weren’t good. They were stellar scholars, and I just wasn’t, I was always kind of a B student. They got the cream of the crop at Morehouse. Fortunately for me, I had a lot of extracurricular activities, community service and leadership abilities from high school that really helped my cause.” He was accepted on a probationary status. His minister, Dr. Johnnie Coleman, lent him \$3,500 to supplement his Pell Grant. “She asked me if I was going to graduate. I said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Will you make me proud?’ ‘Yes.’ I did, and she was at that graduation.”

When then President Jimmy Carter partnered with the Atlanta Project to help children receive immunizations, they produced a concert which included Gladys Knight and Michael Jackson, free to all children who received immunizations. “My mentor at the time, Les Brown, was married to Gladys Knight, and she got me VIP tickets. It was really cool. I was about 20 years old. Jackson was sitting down front. I was a couple of rows back. People were literally passing their children to him from the upper bleaches; an assembly line of passing their children down to Michael to hug. He’d kiss them, then send them back up.



Rev. Kevin Kitrell Ross designs his life with wife Anita.

“Dr. Johnnie Coleman taught us that we could create the world we desire to live in, by the way we thought. She became a spiritual mother to me. She christened me from birth, was at my high school graduation, came to see me while I was in college, and attended

I made. There were over 101 religious traditions represented there. Not people. Traditions. We young adults were called the ‘next generation.’ We created our own conference, called “Spirit Into Action,” which we hosted for about five years. All of us have continued to work together, do great things in the world and support each other’s work consistently.”

He met his wife, Anita, via an on-line dating service. They moved to Kansas City, where he led a Unity Church, and then resumed his coaching practice and itinerant speaking career from the Brothers of Thunder days. Subsequently, he has been working with the Christ Unity Church in Sacramento a little over a year.

Meanwhile, Ross sat in the audience during a couple of tapings of Oprah’s show. “The audience gets to talk, and one time she really liked what I had to say. She says, ‘Why didn’t you say that when we were filming? Now we’re on the commercial break. Can you say it as well as you said it during the commercial break?’ I said, ‘I can say it better!’ She says, ‘Okay, when we come back from the break, I’m going to point to you and I’m going to ask you to repeat yourself.’ I said, ‘Okay, no problem.’

In one instance after that, she sees me and says, ‘Weren’t you here before?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Didn’t you say something profound then?

Weren’t you sitting there with a gray suit on and a silver tie?’ She described me to my teeth. I said, ‘Yes.’ She says, ‘What’s your name?’ I said, ‘Kevin Ross.’ My dad was sitting there. She said, ‘Watch out for this guy. He’s gonna be sharp. That’s Kevin Ross, y’all.’ So, she kind of flagged me at the time.

It was always a dream to be an invited guest on the show. I had her on the vision board. They asked for ‘ultimate male viewers.’ I said, ‘That’s me! They asked ladies to write in about the men in their lives who loved Oprah Winfrey. So, my wife wrote in. Essentially, she said, ‘Kevin is your ultimate male viewer and you are the other woman in our lives.’ We heard nothing back, it was almost over, and I gave up. Maybe it wasn’t meant to be.

On May 5th or so, my wife comes screaming upstairs, ‘The Oprah Winfrey Show is on the phone!’ I said, ‘Stop it, Anita.’ ‘No, they are, and they’re going to call you on your cell phone.’ I’m on the treadmill working out, and sure enough they contact me. I’m huffing and puffing, and was kind of delirious there for a minute. ‘Your wife outed you, that you’re Oprah’s ultimate male viewer. We were wondering if you would be willing to come to Chicago to tape a surprise tribute to Oprah Winfrey.’

I get another phone call. ‘We would love for you and your wife to come back for Oprah’s Surprise Spectacular. We’re going to reveal two shows that we’re taping – all surprises to Oprah. Your tribute will be among them.’ Anita and I flew back to the United Center in, where 13,000 people were gathered for this huge surprise. All of Hollywood, was there it seemed like. They just dumped Hollywood upside down.

The greatest part of this whole experience wasn’t even that my dream was coming true, but to witness what one person can do with his or her life. I witnessed her witness her own impact. Oprah has sent 65,000 people to school, and there were thank you’s from the people. Among those, she put 414 Morehouse men through college, through her Oprah Winfrey scholarship. They came back to say thank you. So, that was really the greatest take-away for me. That’s what has me on fire right now. I get to use my life, not to get that effect, but to lead such a life like that.”

He is definitely on his way. He and Anita are the driving forces behind Teen Dream Camp (teendreamcamp.org). “It’s committed to interrupting teen patterns of self-sabotage and suicide by launching the dreams and hearts of teenagers, starting at the ages of 13 through 19. We help them identify, awaken, develop their dreams, and teach them the principles of manifestation, so they can actually see some of their dreams coming true. It’s a series of intensive weekend camps over the summer. We have them in Florida, Kansas

City, Chicago, but they originally started in Atlanta in 1994, when I was a student in Morehouse. We’ve started exploratory work for Sacramento.”

Two of his books are on backorder, and he’s working on another. “It’s semi-autographical and self-help in nature. We extrapolated principles that I use to create these amazing stories - stories that excite, but then help you to do it. It will help you become the person it takes to live your boldest dreams. You’ll blow yourself way. It will always be better than you think it could be.”

Anita has also authored a book, “Mean Time Love; A Woman’s Journey From Self-Loathe to Self-Love”. “She’s helping women to reconnect with their authenticity and to break through cycles of abuse and to chart their own path.” (anitaross.net)

And speaking of books, he carries Deepak Chopra’s “Seven Spiritual Laws of Success” with him. “I just love it. It’s raggedy. It’s a good friend.”

He hosts the radio show “Design Your Life” on the Unity Church’s online radio network Unity.Fm. “I interview experts and everyday people for their success principles on how they have achieved certain things in life and how we can design and live the lives of our dreams. Sometimes you can design it, but you’re not living it. I’m urging people to become people of purpose, passion, peace and prosperity.” The show airs every Wednesday at 10:00 PST (unity.fm/).

Some of his parishioners may be surprised to learn he loves to dance Salsa and Maranga, roller skate and is an interior design buff. “When I was in college, at the time I was with my former fiancé, we had a business called, ‘Almost Home,’ and we would decorate college dormitories to make them feel a little more like home. If you notice in my office, you have a blend of wood, steel, glass; the different elements.”

He recently played a small cameo role Sacramento State University’s production of one of his favorites – “The Wiz.” “That was so huge, because I was again living my dream.

I feel like the Wiz. He inspired me to take the journey. When people say, ‘I love coming to your church. I love hearing you.’ I inspired you to get here, and get to a place where you wake up to who you truly are.”



Rev. Kev experiences a dream come true.

As he was making his entrance, I was walking around, and there was this narrow corridor. He and his entourage were coming into the area, and somebody stepped on my foot. I looked up, and there was Michael Jackson. I got out of the way. When I was finally able to walk up and talk to him, it was very brief, because they had security on that front row. But, I did get to say, ‘Hi.’ He was magical.”

Oprah visited his church. “It happened to be a church that Oprah was a favorite of. One of her colleagues, Dr. Barbara King, was a minister there and one of Oprah’s spiritual mothers. She took our whole church to go see the movie, ‘Beloved.’ Afterward, there was a post-talk with the cast and the church staff and congregation. I got a chance to have a little dialogue with her.”

Meanwhile, he and childhood friend David Montgomery, who also attended Morehouse, paid for their college tuition by forming a youth motivational speaking duo called “The Brothers of Thunder.” “We motivated our peers to stay off of drugs, go to school, to live their dreams.” They spoke at colleges, churches and anywhere else people would have them. Eventually, they spoke at Dr. Coleman’s church. “That church was the largest in the City of Chicago; 5,000 people attending. That launched us.”

my college graduation. She was there when I became ordained as a minister, and when I got married. I was very privileged to have her in my life, because she taught me so much about who I really am and what my possibilities are.”

In 1999, he read an article about the Parliament of the World’s Religions that would be taking place in Cape Town, South Africa. Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama would be attending. “I said, ‘I’m there.’ I circled the dates on my calendar.” When he discovered Dr. Coleman was too busy to host a prayer breakfast for the Chicago delegation of the Parliament, he offered to host it for her. He gave the closing prayer. “It turned out that Dirk Ficca, the President of the Parliament of the World’s Religions, was there and he says, ‘Young man, you are so impressive. We need people like you at the Parliament. Would you be interested in going?’ I said, ‘Absolutely I’d be interested.’ He says, ‘Well, I’d like to sponsor your trip, and if you have some other friends like you, introduce them to me. I may be willing to send them as well.’ So, I got an all expense paid trip to Cape Town, South Africa. Ela Ghandi, Ghandi’s granddaughter, and some other incredible luminaries were there.

For me, the Parliament was life changing, because of the friends



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Casting Call for Broadway Babies



Curtain call. Singers and dancers wait backstage for their cue to dazzle in the Best of Broadway stage production. Auditions for the show's 38th annual series began in Fair Oaks this month. Photo by Susan Skinner

By Susan Maxwell Skinner

If not exactly American Idol, Sacramento's Best of Broadway series annually plucks talented artists from obscurity and drops them center-stage. Auditions for the 2011 production began this month. Singers and dancers from seven years old and up may make appointments to show their talent for producers at the Fair Oaks Theater (7991 California Ave, Fair Oaks). After three months of rehearsal, the review will kick off on

September 16 and continue weekend performances until October 2. Around 120 volunteers usually comprise the cast. Wannabes should have performance experience but any talent is considered. "We'll have many openings for dancers this year," predicts producer Dave MacDonald. "Many of our regulars are now in professional stage careers." Much lauded and applauded, the glitzy review's 38-year run has launched famous careers. Belting out an "Annie," song, actress Molly Ringwald made her debut in the 1976

production. Recalls MacDonald: "She was eight and she stopped the show every night. Weeks later, I drove her to "Annie" auditions in San Francisco. That was the start of her career." Singer Teal Wicks followed a similar route and now has the New York lead in "Wicked." Applications are also open for the scores backstage helpers who augment MacDonald's volunteer labor force. The Fair Oaks Theater Festival co-produces the show. For audition information, go to www.bestofbroadway.org.

The Orangevale Grange Presents it's Free Fireworks Demonstration on July 3rd

By CindySue Jones

Orangevale - The Orangevale Grange in association with the Overalls Square Dance Club is

sponsoring their annual FREE fireworks demonstration on July 3rd. Bring the entire family and don't forget your lawn chairs and picnic blanket. There will be a snack bar on

site, prizes, live entertainment and a free fireworks demonstration starting at dusk. The festivities and snack bar opens at 6:00 P.M. The magnificent firemen will be there with their fire truck for the kids. They will have some great tips to share with you and stickers for the kids.

The demonstration will be held on the beautiful grass meadow behind the Orangevale Grange hall located at 5807 Walnut Avenue (between Madison Avenue and Greenback Lane) If you can't make it to our fabloulous display of dazzling lights, come by and check out our fireworks booth in front of the Grange hall. We are selling pull tabs and raffling off great prizes through out the week. We will be set up from June 28th through July 4th. Make this a tradition with your family and friends as we have made it with everyone. For more information call (916) 417-9750 or (916) 988-8871. See you there!

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 5

5	8	4	1	3	2	9	7	6
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4	1	2	3	9	5	7	6	8
3	5	9	8	6	7	4	1	2
8	7	6	2	1	4	5	3	9
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1	9	3	7	8	6	2	4	5
7	2	8	5	4	3	6	9	1

Sudoku Puzzle on Page 5

Enjoy Sudoku Every Week!

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Fab 40's "Un-Run for Understanding"

An Alzheimer's Awareness Day

Saturday, July 9, 2011
Location: East Lawn Memorial Park, 43rd St. and Folsom Boulevard
Time: 9:00 AM - Noon

Calendar of Events:

9 AM - Welcome, and a light breakfast.

9:30 AM - Panel discussion featuring Hospice Care, a Neurologist, family members who have cared for a person with Alzheimer's disease and family members who are dealing currently with Alzheimer's disease, and an Elder Law Attorney.

10:30 AM - Unveiling of the "Wall of Honor." A place where people can create an inscription in honor of or in memory of a family member who has suffered from Alzheimer's disease.

10:45 AM - Untimed one-mile walk within East Lawn.

11:30 AM - Free luncheon.

There will be a variety of children's activities and a photo booth for your family's memories.
We will be having a kid's race as well!

There will be many vendors at the event to answer any questions you may have.

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RETIREMENT & ASSISTED LIVING

Get the Most Bang for Your Buck: 2011 Fireworks Buyers Guide

By David Dickstein

Sacramento Region – The diversity of consumer fireworks sold in honor of America’s Independence Day is wide, not unlike the Melting Pot whose birthday they symbolize. What’s new? What’s loud? What’s colorful? Is that \$30 fountain really worth the money and how long is it?

As sure as Betsy Ross could sew, a trip to a fireworks stand can be a puzzling pyrotechnic experience.

To help you get the most bang for your buck this Fourth of July, we present our 2011 fireworks buyers guide. Every new state-approved fountain was put to the test along with selected returning items. TNT and Phantom, which enjoy a duopoly in Northern California, have more than a dozen new items between the two.

Fireworks were rated on a 5-star scale for performance, duration, distinctiveness and overall comparative value. Judges included firefighters of Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Station 65, who graciously provided the test site. Products are listed in order of price, high to low.

A tip: Shop early or risk having to choose from items not good enough to make this list, meaning, except with the new stuff, they didn’t score at least 3 1/2 stars.

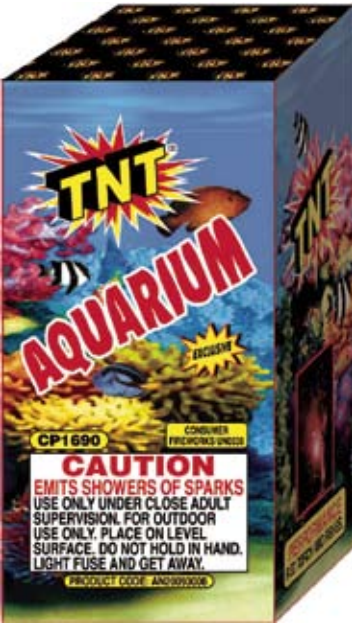
Let the sparks fly!

New for 2011
Festival of Lights (Phantom), \$49.99 – A synonym for “festival” is



“fair,” and a homonym of that is an adequate assessment of this so-so 500-gram newcomer. Has all the standard effects except whistle, but when you can buy six Apache Firedances of similar performance for just a few dollars more, well, you do the math. 148 seconds. 2 1/2 Stars

Star Voyager (TNT), \$29.99 – Earns “best new finale” honors with a long-lasting, 500-gram performance of bright and crackling titanium bursts that reach the 10-foot-high legal limit (maybe even surpassing...shhh!). 146 seconds. 4 1/2 Stars



Phantom Crown Jewel (Phantom), \$29.99 – Dazzling 500-gram display of white flowers, colored pearls and crackles, gold chrysanthemums and silver crackle. Packs a wallop, but that also reduces burn time. 84 seconds. 4 1/2 Stars

Bonsai Pipeline/Magma Glow Fountain (Phantom), \$29.99 – Terrific burn time and the tallest of the fresh-man class, if size matters to you, but a far better pick from Phantom at this price is Brew Haha. The cylindrical newbie goes by both names and different labeling. 119 seconds. 3 Stars

Jumbo Purple Rain (TNT), \$24.99 – TNT’s best-selling Purple Rain gets super-sized, offering up juiced-up gold, purple and crackles. 89 seconds. 3 1/2 Stars

Pyropalooza (TNT), \$19.99 – Excellent height, crackle and vivid hues – a vivacious visual. 115 seconds. 4 1/2 Stars



Main Squeeze (TNT), \$19.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Pleasing red, white, orange and pink sparks spew from cute, unique packaging that gives this fountain its name. 90 seconds. 3 1/2 Stars

Phantom Night Owl (Phantom), \$12.99 – An instant classic is hatched among the growing category of fountains with an internal glowing feature. Three loud screeches and an exciting overall performance make this nocturnal newbie a hoot. 65 seconds. 4 1/2 Stars

Radiant (TNT), \$10 – Top of the class of 2011, this low-priced beauty pushes the legal limit for spreading



sparks. One of the few fountains living up to its name. 82 seconds. 5 Stars

Home Run (TNT), \$9.99 – Middling crackle finish, low altitude, OK burn time for the price. Despite its name, score this one a double. 105 seconds. 2 1/2 Stars

Snakes in the Grass (Phantom), \$5.99 six-pack – Clever name and having those black pellets in a canister keeps fingers clean, but these snakes that grow while aglow are better when free range. 2 Stars

Viva El Futbol (TNT), \$4 – Terrific altitude and crackle for the price. 43 seconds. 3 1/2 Stars

Aquarium (TNT), \$3 – So-so stars and red globs. Nothing memorable. 24 seconds. 2 Stars

Orchid (TNT), \$2 – Don’t blink or you’ll miss an impressive burst of crackling sparks. 17 seconds. 2 Stars

Best of the Rest (4-5 Stars)
New York Harbor (Phantom), \$39.99 – Stellar burn time and multiple effects, including some of the finest chrysanthemums for a consumer firework. 195 seconds.

Brew Haha (Phantom), \$29.99 – Beer stein-designed 500-gram fountain brims over with effects, including a loud opening whistle and a cavalcade of color. 145 seconds.

Rock Around the Clock (Phantom), \$24.99 – Unique spinning hands are hard to see at night, but this

clock-designed novelty-fountain is a stunner with a powerful fan-like spray. 84 seconds.

TNT Fountain (TNT), \$23.99 – Long-burning, powder keg-shaped fountain has a colorful, crackling performance. 154 seconds.

American Spirit (TNT), \$19.99 plus bonus – Offers up a patriotic blend of red, white and bluish stars, gold showers and super-loud whistles and crackles. Comes with the boisterous, multi-colored Sizzler Fountain (90 seconds). Super deal. 125 seconds.

Molten Pot (TNT), \$19.99 – Entertaining combo of colorful globs, titanium crackles, fish, glitter and chrysanthemums. 73 seconds.

Alpha Wolf (Phantom), \$19.99 – Green and purple droplets, gold shower and crackling stars finale are awesome. No whistles, doesn’t need them. 83 seconds.

Triple Gemini (TNT), \$17.99 – Impressive pink and gold fish, and crackles that sound like a string of titanium-laced firecrackers. 85 seconds.

Apache Firedance (Phantom), \$17.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Low altitude is more than compensated by a super-long burn time and marvelous sequence of crackles, whistles, white flashes and multi-colored sprays. Up \$2 from last season, but still a solid combo deal. 210 seconds.

Hasta La Vista Baby (Phantom), \$16.99 – Like color and hate whistles? Then this is a solid pick with a screech-free spectrum of fast-changing colors. 125 seconds.



Funky Monkey (Phantom), \$15.99 – This pyrotechnic primate features red pearls and a solid overall performance. 80 seconds.

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

Firecracker Fountain (Phantom), \$14.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Lives up to its name with a remarkable crackling barrage among multi-colored pearls. 106 seconds.



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

L.O.L. (TNT), \$12.99 – The happy 3-D face on the package features a red mouth and blue eyes that glow from within, making for loads of fun. 80 seconds.

King of Bling (Phantom), \$10.99 – The crackles heard during the final third sound just like popping popcorn. Majestic chrysanthemums and whistle. 90 seconds.

Night Treasure (TNT), \$12.99 – Looks like a fan fountain, and it is, albeit only for the final half-minute. Still, a reliable, fair-priced item. 113 seconds.

Volcanic Vortex (Phantom), \$10.99 for three – Cones usually produce more yawns than sparks, but not this awesomely intense trio. 45 seconds each.

Luck of the Irish (TNT), \$9.99 – This classic fountain features gold and silver spray, red and green balls and some super-loud whistles. 80 seconds.

Painted Desert (Discount Fireworks Superstore), \$8.99 – Pretty thing with gold, copper and green flashing stars, and orange and pink globs. 76 seconds.

Lil Red Devil (TNT), \$8.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Packs plenty of

heat for the size and price. Titanium crackling sparks spread out an impressive 9 feet. 30 seconds.

Electrical Shock (Phantom), \$7.99 for two (buy-one-get-one) – Red and green showers give way to a raucous whistling and crackling finale. 40 seconds.

Pink Diamonds (TNT), \$6.99 – Not much pink in the fireworks marketplace, so props to this unique, modestly priced item. 61 seconds.

Phantom Mystical Magic (Phantom), \$8.99 (buy-one-get-one) – Fleeting duration, but love those multi-colored, marble-sized blooming globs. 24 seconds.

Phantom Dragon Slayer (Phantom), \$5.99 – Got some white, blue and lemon chrysanthemums, rowdy crackles and red stars going on. 66 seconds.

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



Honorable Mentions (3 1/2 Stars)
Komodo 3000 (Phantom), \$49.99, 240 seconds; **Delirium** (TNT), \$45.99, 94 seconds; **Blooming Flower** (Phantom), \$29.99, 70 seconds; **Hexagon Magic** (Phantom), \$19.99, 104 seconds; **Jade & Butterfly Duo** (Phantom), \$4.99, 28 seconds each; **En Fuego** (TNT), \$4, 31 seconds; **Black Widow** (TNT), \$3, 42 seconds.

For more information, visit: TNT Fireworks (www.tntfireworks.com) and Phantom Fireworks (www.phantomfireworks.com).



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Del Campo High School 25-Year Class Reunion

Del Campo High School's Class of 1986 will hold its 25-year class reunion this summer. The event, which will take place on Friday, August 12, 2011, will take place at the Radisson Hotel Sacramento. The doors will open at 7:00pm.

The theme for the reunion, "Ready to Have Fun Again", sets the tone for the much-anticipated event that is expected to reunite the class of more than 500 students. The 1986 graduates of this high school, which is located in the Fair Oaks suburb of North Sacramento, are encouraged to attend the reunion and catch up with classmates from 25 years ago, to revisit old friendships and create new ones. All alumni and their guests are invited to attend the reunion. The Reunion Planning Committee has established affordable registration fees for the convenience of classmates.

During the reunion, guests will

enjoy a delicious assortment of hors d'oeuvres, while mingling throughout the venue, which will include a scenic outdoor terrace. For out-of-town alumni, guest rooms will be available on site at a discounted rate. A disc jockey will also be on hand to play an assortment of music, including the music of the 1980's.

Registration for the 25-year reunion is available via PayPal. Payments may be made by using MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Discover Card and bank debit cards. To register online, please go to www.dccougars1986.com. This website has been created exclusively for the Del Campo 1986 alumni. Registration may also be made via check. To register using this option, please contact staff@dccougars1986.com for details.

A Facebook page for the Del Campo reunion has been set up to aid classmates in getting in touch with one another. On this Facebook

page, Del Campo High School Class of '86: 25-Year Class Reunion, important information is often posted. Classmates are encouraged to join this Facebook page to receive updates on the reunion and to converse with fellow classmates. The Committee seeks help in locating classmates. For information, please contact staff@dccougars1986.com.

Del Campo High School Class of 1986: 25-Year Reunion:
Date: Friday, August 12, 2011
Time: 7:00pm - 1:00am
Locale: Radisson Hotel
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For additional information about the Del Campo reunion, please contact the Reunion Planning Committee at staff@dccougars1986.com.

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