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Carmichael Times

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JULY 10, 2020

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Cultivating Summer



Teenagers volunteer for pathway maintenance at Carmichael Community Gardens

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - There's a whole lot of raking going on in Carmichael's Community Garden. Now in its 17th season of cultivation at Sutter-Jensen Park, the victory-style garden is a triumph for green thumbs and a safe spot for social distancing in fresh air. Rented plots yield a cornucopia produce. Zinnia, roses, and sunflowers bloom beside runner beans, strawberries, cucumber and corn as high as any elephant's eye.

The garden took root in 2003, when planners requested use of Carmichael Park District acreage

on the corner of Sutter and Hollister Avenues. Pioneer volunteers dug in to clear weeds, install irrigation and erect fences. In the first year, half of 60 available plots were leased and gardeners began taking produce home. There is now a waiting list for 22 by 20-foot spaces at \$60 per year. The fee includes water use.

A link between the allotments and Jensen Botanical Gardens was completed in 2015. Meandering through century-old olive trees, the path allows a picturesque stroll between the two CRPD properties. The combined reserves are a jewel in the district's crown, hosting an annual Dinner at the Park fundraiser (recently cancelled in the year of COVID) for Carmichael

Park Foundation. This event traditionally starts with sunset appetizers at the Community Garden before offering a gourmet dinner in the Jensen property.

"We've had our problems - weeds, deer invasion - but we achieved a lot," says garden co-founder Anne Berner. "I'm especially pleased with our diversity of people. We have Romanians, Russians, Armenians - they're terrific gardeners. They use every bit of soil and produce amazing amounts of food. We have grandparents working with grandchildren. Our first gardener was an 88-year-old who walked over every day from his house on Orangerie Way. He had more energy than any *Continued on page 3*

Taxpayers Should File by July 15

By David A. Tucker II, IRS

WASHINGTON, DC (MPG) - The Department of the Treasury and IRS announced the tax filing and payment deadline of July 15 will not be postponed. Individual taxpayers unable to meet the July 15 due date can request an automatic extension of time to file until Oct. 15.

The IRS reminds taxpayers filing Form 1040 series returns that they must file Form 4868 by July 15 to obtain the automatic extension to Oct. 15. The extension provides additional time to file the tax return - it is not an extension to pay any taxes due.

The IRS urges people who owe taxes, even if they have a filing extension, to carefully review their situation and pay what they can by July 15 to avoid penalties and interest. For people facing hardships, including those affected by COVID-19, who cannot pay in full, the IRS has several options available to help. To avoid interest and penalties, the IRS encourages them to pay what they can and consider a variety of payment options available for the remaining balance.

Individual taxpayers have several easy ways to file Form 4868, Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, by the July 15 deadline. The IRS also reminds taxpayers to check their state filing and payment deadlines, which may differ from the federal July 15 deadline.

IRS Direct Pay allows payment directly from a checking or savings account. This service is free; Electronic Federal Tax Payment System, or EFTPS. Pay by phone or online. This service is free; Debit or credit card payment. This service is free, but the processing company may charge a fee. Fees vary by company; Check or money order made payable to the United States Treasury (or U.S. Treasury) through the mail.

Several payment options are available on IRS.gov/ payments to help taxpayers who can't pay in full and some can offer taxpayers smaller penalties. Though interest and late-payment penalties continue to accrue on any unpaid taxes after July 15, the failure to pay tax penalty rate is cut in half while an installment agreement is in effect. The usual penalty rate of 0.5% per month is reduced to 0.25% For the calendar quarter beginning July 1, 2020, the interest rate for underpayment is 3%. For more info see IRS.gov. ★

Block Parties Celebrate July 4



Dozens of Tennyson Parade bicyclists staged their own parade. See more photos on Page 4.

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - The spirit of small-town Americana surged in the suburbs on July 4. With Carmichael's famous parade canceled due to COVID restrictions, many residents resurrected down-home neighborhood traditions.

Scaled-down pageants brought out bicycles, volunteer bands, lemonade stands and front-porch bunting.

Tennyson Parade mom Mary Maguire organized a pageant to circle a mile of Carmichael blocks near Jacob Lane. The Associate Dean of health and Human Services at CSUS also used the event to gather food and toiletry items for the Women Escaping a Violent Environment organization

(WEAVE) and rejoiced in many full containers of donations. "With the COVID crisis, domestic violence has increased," she explained. "Shelters are filling up; they're struggling because people can't make donations in the normal way. We also wanted to give our neighborhood kids a July 4 celebration they'd feel like they had a part in. On the morning, I felt like we'd stepped back to the 1970s. In those days, the focus of celebrations was really on neighborhoods. I organized this parade exactly as my parents did when I was child in St Louis, Missouri."

The event united more than 20 families and assembled a colorful phalanx of bicycles, pedal cars, wagons and decorated doggies. Along the route, resident onlookers sipped coffee and

applauded. A local musician and his wife dragged drums out to the street and beat a vibrant marching tempo.

The procession's youngest patriot was two-year-old Chase Findley, who rode in a 1930s Ford Model A. At the wheel, his grandmother Connie Thomas sounded the horn to herald the procession. "My husband and I drove in the Arden Park Parade for years," she explained. "I was sad there couldn't be one this year. Then my daughter asked if I'd come to her neighborhood with the old car. It always gets a lot of attention. The kids loved it and people came out of their houses to wave. It was a smaller gathering for us this year, but I'm happy we could still be part of a July 4 parade." ★

Measure A: The Next Trojan Horse

Commentary
by Bruce Lee

Hey, are you aware of the half-cent sales tax increase proposed for Sacramento County on the November ballot to raise \$8.4 billion over the next forty years for transportation purposes? It would make the county-wide tax a whopping 9.25% - higher than 88 percent of all counties nationally!

(And, if you think this is a bad idea, you can go directly to the bottom of this Op-Ed to learn what you can do about it!)

What's going on?
On May 14th, the Board of Directors at the Sacramento Transportation Authority (STA) passed ordinance NO. STA 20-01 (Measure A) with a one vote margin sending it to the County Board of Supervisors on July 14th - the last step before the November ballot.

At the March STA Board meeting, there were 435 comments of opposition compared to about 60 in favor. In May, there were as many as 700 opposition emails running at a ratio of 10:1 to those in favor. However, despite the large outpouring of public opposition to the ordinance, most STA directors first justification of their vote was by casually dismissing the opposition as "organized", and then argued that "voters should decide in November." Three days later, one STA Director who voted against the measure (Citrus Heights Vice Mayor Steve Miller) commented in the Citrus Heights Sentinel, "I got over 700 emails against it ... I don't know how some of the directors on the STA board could ignore that. ... I think it's

going to go down in flames, ... I don't think it's the time."

Nobody forced these hundreds of people to take time out of their day to express to their concern publicly. I saw the emails. Many, many of them were well-crafted missives written from a wide variety of community members. If you were one of the more than 600 people who took time to write a letter of opposition to this sales tax, sorry, your opinion does not matter -- it was "organized." It makes you wonder if the Board of Directors, who are also duly elected officials whose primary goals are to serve their constituents, really values the "voters" as much as it does carrying out its predetermined agenda.

And, the second justification used by the STA Board that we should let the voters decide in November is an almost universal "cop-out." (That is avoiding doing something that one ought to do.) It's saying, "don't blame me!" Having served as a local-elected myself, it's just a too easy thing to say. But this is really a question of how we are going to spend \$1 million of the taxpayer's money and it's a question of good stewardship. (STA polling has clearly shown that the public does not want this tax for the services proposed.)

Apparently the STA board would rather force the public to foot a one million dollar bill, the estimated cost of putting the measure on the ballot, than seriously listen to the public stakeholders.

If that one million dollar figure made you do a double take, it should have! This figure comes directly from the Sacramento County

Registrar of Voters. In fact, they put the exact cost of putting the sales tax on the ballot at \$1,027,913.08! (The basic setup fee is \$4,920.00; the sample ballot will cost \$148,382.54, and staff-related costs add up to \$874,610.53 - God knows why it costs that much, but it does! (The cost of the public sector vs. the private sector is another topic.)

Those opposed to the sales tax have real concerns regarding both the timing and nature of the proposed tax. For one, we are in the middle of a pandemic, with over 35 million people nationwide facing unemployment and economic hardship. The April California unemployment rate was 15.5% - higher than the great recession of 2008! The STA's response, "Let's tax everyone more on the things they buy!" How can it possibly be a good idea to increase sales taxes at a time like this? However, the Directors at the STA argued their third justification that "things" will be different in November, but is there any evidence to arrive at that conclusion?

Yes, indeed in five to six months, things will be different. They could be better or they could be worse. We don't know. However, every forecast I have heard is that the recovery from this economic melt-down caused by the pandemic will be very slow and will take many months, if not years to resolve all of its ramifications.

Meanwhile, the tax impacts every resident of the county. And, if smart and you want to purchase a large ticket item, I would take the short drive to Roseville in Placer County to purchase it where the tax

rate is only 7.75%. Let's see, on a \$30,000 purchase, maybe something like equipment, a vehicle, or whatever, I would save 1.5% (9.25%-7.75%) which would be \$450. Hell, yeah, many people would drive 20 minutes to save that. Now, I wonder if that type of economic impact was factored into this tax proposal?

And, speaking of economic impact, there's the inconvenient reality that sales taxes disproportionately affect those with the least disposable income: the elderly, those in single income families, the economically disadvantaged, and children. What about them? A sale tax is inherently regressive. That is precisely why social justice organizations such as the National Action Network and the NAACP are officially opposed to Measure A. And, others are rallying to oppose this including business groups, and many others.

But, as their fourth justification, STA directors pointed out that *the sales tax would be an economic stimulus in this time of global pandemic!* To which you might reply, "Huh? I don't get that." On the morning of May 14th, I sent STA Director Jeff Harris (Sacramento City Councilmember) a current opinion piece in the Sacramento Bee which noted that statewide, people are rejecting tax increases, to which he kindly replied, "It's a good article, but did not cover employment. ... Please watch the meeting today!" His comment mystified me.

Then, at the meeting, several STA directors touted that the sales tax will

provide an economic stimulus for Sacramento County by hiring on average 3,300 workers over the next forty years. The logic is that we tax every resident a combined \$8.4 billion (most of which is not being spent on road repairs - which is what residents want), but we will also hire 1,212 construction workers, 1,079 people to support "expanded" transportation services (light rail?), and 1,010 jobs which will be due to indirect suppliers and "induced" consumer spending.

However, *to say the tax is justified as an economic stimulus strikes me as a "Trojan Horse."* It's just saying we'll take the money from taxpayers to pay a relatively few construction workers and others for a limited period of time! Meanwhile, most of the \$8.4 billion is still not being spent on what the taxpayers want - our roads repaired!

It is an economic stimulus for whom? The April unemployment rate in Sacramento County is 14.7% (up 4.8% from March and growing). In the region, there are *NOW* 148,100 unemployed per the May 22, 2020 EDD report. 3,300 jobs *IN THE FUTURE* would be a tiny fraction of the currently unemployed. Meanwhile, an \$8.4 billion dollar tax that would have an immediate harmful impact on working-class families. The promise of tiny, theoretical benefits in the future is not very convincing.

Residents are already paying a half-cent sales tax for transportation until 2039, as well as the recent SB 1 (2017) twelve cent per gallon gas tax for transportation, when is enough, enough?

When a government agency ignores public opinion, offers flimsy justifications for their actions, and then just presses through, it seems that the bottom line is that they just want to do what they want to do. And, when all of this flies in the face of logical reason, it leads one to question what is their reason for the rush?

What you can do!
Join me, the Sac County Residents Against Measure A (use the "Sign Up" button to register your online protest).

Please contact your county supervisor before July 14th and let them know that now is not the time to push an additional sales tax onto the upcoming ballot - especially during a pandemic. You can email your opposition message to Phil Serna, Chair of the County Board of Supervisors and separately to Darren Suen, Chair of the Sacramento Transportation Authority. In your emails, it is important to include the instructions of, "Please read my public comments aloud at the meeting." The emails for both government organizations are the same: BoardClerk@SacCounty.net.

MAKE BIGGER IMPACT: join us at our 8am July 14th rally at the County Board of Supervisors - 700 H Street, Sacramento (between 7th and 8th at the Parking Garage Entrance). Please RSVP. For more see <https://july14rallynommeasurea.eventbrite.com>.

W. Bruce Lee, is President, Sacramento Taxpayers Association and Chair, Sac County Residents Against Measure A ★

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Cultivating Summer



Carmichael Parks Foundation supporters enjoy a sunset reception during an annual dinner at the park celebration.

Continued from page 1 of us. He grew tomatoes, melons, okra, everything. Another lady has grandchildren doing a pumpkin patch for Halloween. We've had boys working on their Eagle Scout awards -- they've built us gates and shade structures. The Carmichael Water District taught us about drought-tolerant plants and watering. The gardens look really lovely. We often have painters planting their easels and doing pictures here."

Organic gardening methods are encouraged in allotments. Beyond feeding families, the agrarians also donate produce to food banks.

Cash or equipment donations to the non-profit community project are welcomed. To contact e mail Slal@carmichaelpark.com



Beyond tending their own allotments, renters must contribute 10 hours of volunteer work in the Carmichael Community garden every year.

Census Bureau Reveals Which Workers Are Hardest Hit by COVID-19

United States Census Bureau Press Release

WASHINGTON, DC (MPG) - Self-employed workers in states where businesses are hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic are more likely to face economic hardships, according to new findings from the U.S. Census Bureau's experimental Household and Small Business Pulse surveys.

Creating jobs and running small businesses are just a couple of examples of the vital roles self-employed workers play in the U.S. economy.

Economic uncertainty related to COVID-19 has presented unique challenges for self-employed workers, from temporary closures to revenue losses.

We combined results from

two new surveys to shed light on these challenges, using the Small Business Pulse Survey to identify states with businesses most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and demographic data from the Household Pulse Survey.

Self-Employed Hit Harder Where More Businesses Closed Temporarily

In states where business conditions were hardest-hit by COVID-19 (states with 25% or more of businesses temporarily closed for one day or more), 13.9% of self-employed workers received free groceries or a free meal during the last seven days from sources such as food banks, religious organizations, community programs, or family, friends or neighbors.

In contrast, 8.7% of

non-self-employed workers in these states received free meals.

In the least-affected states (those where 10% or less businesses temporarily closed for one day or more), there was no statistical difference by self-employment status in the rate of those receiving free groceries or a free meal.

Self-employed workers in the hardest-hit states reported either "sometimes not having enough to eat" or "often not having enough to eat" 5.9% of the time in the past week, which is not statistically different from the rate reported by other workers in these states.

Similarly, there was no statistical difference in food insufficiency by self-employment status in states least affected by the pandemic. ★

What is California Thinking by Adding to its Small-Business Owners' Woes?

Commentary by Anthony Malandra

On the day California hit motorists with its annual increase in the gas tax and on the eve its state Senate is looking to pass a greatly expanded family leave law socking small-business owners with new costs, NFIB's month Jobs Report showed, to little surprise, a worsening economy.

"You have to ask if California's policymakers think the whole COVID-19 crisis is just a minor, ephemeral distraction that shouldn't stop their regulatory agenda from proceeding at its breakneck pace," said John Kabateck, California state director for NFIB, the nation's leading small-business association. "As our Jobs Report cries out, every effort should be made to make re-opening small businesses and fostering their ability to stay open Priority No. 1, but instead we get things like Senate Bill 1383, which expands leave time for employees who may never get it if they don't have jobs to return to. State leaders talk a good game about the need to help small business, but then pass bills like SB 1383, which is opposed by more than 100 business organizations. Just

because you can force new mandates on small employers doesn't make it right."

Today's Jobs Report showed the small business labor market has further weakened in June. Firms reduced employment by 0.28 workers per firm over the past month, weaker than the decrease of 0.17 workers per firm in May. Unchanged from last month, 6% reported increasing employment an average of 2.6 workers per firm and 22% (up one point) reported reducing employment an average of 4.6 workers per firm (seasonally adjusted).

Commented NFIB Chief Economist Bill Dunkelberg, "As states change reopening rules and dates, sometimes easing restrictions, small businesses are feeling various levels of uncertainty as to what comes next. With recent COVID-19 spikes in some cases, many state governments are reversing prior decisions and reducing the potential for small business to earn needed revenue."

Keep up with the latest on California small-business at www.nfib.com/california or by following NFIB. ★



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DIEZ & SIGG PROPERTIES

4030 Canonero Court, Fair Oaks | \$949,000

This timeless English Tudor home is an entertainer's dream! Tucked away in a large corner lot in a well-established neighborhood, this estate captures the best of both worlds for a buyer who wants a private retreat with the ease of having in-town conveniences. Within 1 mile, you can access Lake Natoma, the American River and Highway 50. Step inside this immaculately kept home where you will find a grand entryway, formal dining room overlooking the picturesque backyard, spacious living room, family room and home office. Large kitchen offers tons of storage space for dinner parties/events. Two separate staircases lead to an oversized master bedroom and two guest bedrooms. Backyard is an entertainer's dream with two Brazilian hardwood decks overlooking gorgeous landscaping, including a bridge and water feature. New 580k roof installed 10/18. 3-car garage features a built-out shop and pristine epoxy floors. Tons of storage space inside and outside. Top rated schools K-12. House is 100% electric through SMUD.

4747 Melvin Drive, Carmichael | \$410,000

Beautiful Carmichael home with updated kitchen and baths is looking for its new owner! Complete with separate family room and huge living room this home has plenty of space to really stretch out and enjoy life! Recently painted and updated flooring in kitchen and living room! The large back yard provides ample space for entertaining or just relaxing. RV Parking Possible, HVAC system replaced in 2015. Close to shopping, San Juan Unified schools, parks, restaurants, golf, and just a short jaunt to the American River Parkway. **Contact Listing Agent Russ Teague for more information! CalDRE #01394997 | 916.206.9902**

4308 Hazelwood Avenue, Sacramento | \$639,500

This well-maintained ranch-style home is tucked away on a roomy .45 acre lot in a desirable tree-lined neighborhood. This gracious floor plan features a separate living and family room, and a remodeled kitchen with newer stainless steel appliances, granite counter tops, timeless open shelving and recessed lighting. Main house has 4 or 5 bedrooms (5th bedroom currently serves as a hobby room/laundry room). All 3 bathrooms have been tastefully updated/remodeled. The HUGE lot has a separate oversized one-car garage with a drive-through door, and a large 1,200 sq. ft. detached 2-car garage and 1 bedroom, 1 bath guest home with living room and loft bedroom. Enjoy a wonderful neighborhood near top rated schools and fabulous shopping and restaurants.

6476 Chiquita Way, Carmichael | \$895,000

Vacation at home! This beautiful ranch-style home is tucked away in one of Carmichael's most desirable locations near Ancil Hoffman Park. Enjoy a spacious floor plan with 4 bedrooms and 3 baths and separate living and family rooms. This home functions as a single-story home with a bedroom, bathroom and game room upstairs that could be used as a detached guest quarters. New carpet in the formal living and dining room, new flooring in the master and sunroom, freshly painted exterior, and a newly landscaped front yard. The backyard is an entertainer's dream with a large sparkling pool, stamped concrete patio, and mature oak trees that provide enhanced privacy and shade.

115 E Street, Rio Linda | \$464,000

This lovingly maintained 3 bedroom and 1 bath home is situated on .63 acres and is the perfect for a buyer who needs a large workshop and plenty of storage rooms/spaces for their hobbies. The backyard is well-maintained with highlights including a 10X10 ft. enclosed storage building, a 20X50 ft. breezeway with a clear height of 11 ft. (complete with power, water & lighting for your projects), and a 25X35 ft. enclosed garage with all new lighting and exhaust fans. Multiple storage rooms with shelving for all of your hobbies. Fully enclosed chicken coop, Zen shack with a covered deck and built-in covered pad for your hot tub, and covered patio. Beautiful garden with herb beds, sprinklers, a planting table, and an 8x8 seed shack/greenhouse.

Craig Diez
 CalRE #01019930
916.425.5884
 Realtor/Owner
CraigDiezProperties.com

DIEZ & SIGG PROPERTIES

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Block Parties Celebrate July 4

Carmichael's Patriotic Traditions Continue, even without the Annual Parade



Many Carmichael residents went ape with front-porch decor.



Led by guitarist/singer Phil Caruso, (second right) rock band Sudden Impact entertained Meadowhill Court residents.



Driven by Connie Thomas (standing) a 1930 Model A Ford led a neighborhood parade around blocks near Jacob Lane. Passenger Jody Findley brought two-year-old Chase and whippet Finnegan.



Patriotic Popsicles were a hit with Tennyson Parade party-goers.

Photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

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<p>9 LIVES CANNED CAT FOOD 5.5 Oz All Varieties Limit 1 Case Per Family 37¢ Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20</p>	<p>FANCY FEAST GOURMET CANNED CAT FOOD All Varieties except Elegent Medley 3 Oz Limit 2 Cases Per Family ON SALE Everyday Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20</p>	<p>JONNY CAT PREMIUM CAT LITTER 20 Lb Bag •Regular •Multiple Cat Formula Limit 2 Bags Per Family \$37.99 Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20</p>	<p>FRESH STEP SCOOPABLE CAT LITTER 42 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags Per Family \$13.99 Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20</p>

<p>WELLNESS CANNED CAT FOOD •Pate •Gravies Selected Varieties Also •Signature Select •Core 5.3 Oz Limit 1 Case Full Case 20% OFF REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>	<p>FELINE PINE HEALTHY CAT LITTER 20 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags \$7.99</p>	<p>WILDERNESS DRY CAT FOOD •Chicken •Salmon •Duck •Indoor •Weight Control 100% Grain Free 11-12 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags As Marked \$6 OFF OUR REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>	<p>CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL DRY DOG FOOD As Marked •Adult •Large Breed •Mature •Weight Care •Puppy (Reg & Lrg Breed) 28 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags 10% OFF OUR SUPER LOW PRICES</p>
<p>SCIENCE DIET SMALL BITES DRY DOG FOOD •Adult •Light •Mature (Lamb & Rice Small Bites \$28.99) (Sensitive Stomach & Skin \$28.99) 15 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags \$22.99</p>	<p>CAREFRESH PET BEDDING 60 Liter (Ultra Not Included) \$16.49</p>	<p>CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL DRY DOG FOOD As Marked •Adult •Large Breed •Mature •Weight Care •Puppy (Reg & Lrg Breed) 28 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags 10% OFF OUR SUPER LOW PRICES</p>	<p>PRECIOUS CAT CAT LITTER 20 Lb Box Limit 2 Boxes Cat Attract Touch of Outdoors \$7.99</p>
<p>SWHEAT SCOOP NATURAL WHEAT LITTER (12 Lb Bag - Original \$10.99 Multi-Cat \$11.99) 36 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags Original Multi-Cat \$29.99 \$31.99</p>	<p>SOLID GOLD CANNED CAT FOOD Including •Perfect Pairings Cups •Holistic Delights Pouches 2.75 Oz - 6 Oz Can As Marked 10% OFF OUR REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>	<p>MEOW MIX CAT FOOD Market Select 2.75 Oz Cup Limit 2 Cases 53¢</p>	<p>MERRICK'S WHOLE EARTH FARMS DRY DOG FOOD •Grain Free Chicken/Turkey •Grain Free Pork, Beef & Lamb 25 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags per Family \$7 OFF OUR REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>

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20% OFF
OUR SUPER LOW PRICES

BONUS COUPON FRISKIES BUFFET CANNED CAT FOOD
5.5 Oz All Varieties Limit 1 Case With Coupon Limit One Coupon Per Family Price Valid Only With Coupon Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20
ON SALE Everyday
CHM PLU 367

BONUS COUPON WHISKAS TEMPTATIONS CAT TREATS
•Selected Varieties - 3 Oz Limit 2 Pkgs with Coupon Limit One Coupon Per Family Price Valid Only With Coupon Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20
\$1.25
CHM PLU 569

BONUS COUPON JONNY CAT CAT LINERS
Jumbo Drawstring - 5 Ct Limit 1 Box with Coupon Limit One Coupon Per Family Price Valid Only With Coupon Effective 7/8/20 - 7/14/20
\$2.09
CHM PLU 449

www.CarmichaelTimes.com

United Way Offers Virtual Free Tax Help with Get Your Refund Website

By Kristin Thébaud, Thébaud Communications

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - With the tax deadline extended to July 15, households throughout the Sacramento region are still eligible for free virtual help preparing taxes and claiming credits this year, saving an average of \$200 in preparer fees and earning up to \$6,500 in credits. United Way California Capital Region's Free Tax Prep program is partnering with GetYourRefund.org to provide virtual assistance. More households are eligible to participate through the partnership — those earning \$66,000 or less in 2019. Qualified households can upload documents online and a United Way IRS-certified volunteer will call them to help claim the maximum tax credits for which they are eligible before submission, including the federal and state Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC and CalEITC). To get started: GetYourRefund.org/?s=UWCCR.

"More than a third of households in the Sacramento region were a paycheck away from homelessness before the pandemic hit — that number is going to rise in the coming months," said Stephanie Bray, president and CEO, United Way California Capital Region. "United Way's Free Tax Prep program not only saves them preparer fees, it puts money back in their pockets through tax credits that many people don't even know they are eligible for. For some families,

receiving \$6,500 in tax credits can mean the difference between paying rent and living on the streets."

Age qualification for CalEITC expanded last year to include ages 18-24 and working adults ages 65 and up, giving more taxpayers the opportunity to earn credits, including those who are self-employed. Many CalEITC-eligible households are not legally required to file taxes due to low income; however if they file, they can claim state and federal credits.

This tax year, California introduced the new Young Child Tax Credit. To qualify for the credit, taxpayers must be able to claim a child under age 6 on their 2019 tax return and have earned less than \$30,000 for the year. The Young Child Tax Credit can increase the state refund by an additional \$1,000.

More than \$11 million in refunds were claimed across the Sacramento region in 2019 through United Way's program, up more than \$1 million from the previous year. More than 9,000 local households received free

help from nearly 500 volunteers in 2019, saving a total of \$1.8 million in tax preparation fees. Last year, \$18.6 million was received in Sacramento County from CalEITC refunds. With new increases to CalEITC and the Young Child Tax Credit, Franchise Tax Board estimates that Sacramento County could receive up to \$40 million this coming tax season.

For nearly 100 years, United Way California Capital Region has brought local people together to make community change happen. Today, the nonprofit is bringing people together across Amador, El Dorado, Sacramento, Placer and Yolo counties for its Square One Project, a 20-year promise to significantly increase the number of students in our region who graduate from high school ready for success in college and beyond. United Way believes ending poverty starts in school and is working to ensure kids meet important milestones and their families receive support and resources. To learn more and make a donation, visit YourLocalUnitedWay.org. ★



United Way's Free Tax Prep program volunteers prepare to assist a local family with filing their taxes for free last year. Photo courtesy: Thébaud Communications

Sac Zoo Remains OPEN after Health Update

By Leslie Kirrene, Sacramento Zoo

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Zoo wants to make sure our community is aware that the zoo remains open to the public with reserved tickets.

Based on updated guidelines from the California Department of Public Health, the zoo remains open to guests, with the exception of indoor facilities. Given the updated guidance, released on July 1, the zoo's gift shop and indoor dining facilities are now closed however, a wide assortment of gift items, as well as food items will be available for purchase through outdoor kiosks and stands.

The Sacramento Zoo remains open with enhanced protocols and procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of zoo guests, staff and animals including:

All tickets must be purchased and

reserved in advance online. Timed tickets will be available for specific dates to ensure that appropriate visitor capacities and physical distancing are maintained throughout the day;

Zoo members must reserve tickets in advance online as well. Ticket price included in membership;

Visit the zoo's website at "Plan Your Visit" to reserve timed tickets;

Face coverings are required to enter the zoo for visitors over the age of two;

Guests will be asked to maintain a six-foot distance between your group and others when visiting. Physical distancing signage will be placed throughout the zoo;

The zoo is instituting a paperless system — both for transactions and zoo maps.

The Sacramento Zoo is home to nearly 500 rare, endangered and native animals. ★

SMUD's Shine Program is Accepting Applications

SMUD Press Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - SMUD announced that the application period for its Shine program is now open. Shine is a community development program designed to improve and revitalize neighborhoods in the Sacramento region.

Shine awards will range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 and are very competitive. Any nonprofit organization — 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) — within SMUD's service territory, is eligible to apply. Shine awards are available at three funding levels: Spark (up to \$10,000), Amplifier (up to \$50,000) and Transformer (up to \$100,000). Applications will be accepted through Monday, July 27.

While SMUD will consider a variety of projects, it is primarily interested in proposals in the following areas:

(1) Community education related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, health and safety, technology skills, and STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math); (2) Neighborhood revitalization or beautification; Environmental, energy efficiency, energy conservation or greenhouse gas reduction; (3) Services provided to low-income electricity customers; (4) Community and workforce development, particularly for diverse and under-served communities; (5) Public transit access and safety, access and safety for walkability

SMUD will be holding informational webinars to help nonprofit organizations maximize their submissions. RSVP to Shine@smud.org

with the workshop you would like to attend.

Friday, June 5: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Monday, June 15: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Wednesday, July 1: 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Monday, July 13: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Wednesday, July 22: 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

In 2019, SMUD awarded nearly \$400,000 in Shine sponsorships to 19 local nonprofits. SMUD received a wide range of applications, and the selected projects were able to demonstrate collaboration and broad neighborhood impact.

Each year SMUD contributes approximately \$3 million in cash and in-kind services to community-based organizations. SMUD will continue to support healthy, vibrant and economically sustainable neighborhoods for all of our customers with a special eye to improving equity in our region through SMUD's Sustainable Communities Initiative. For more information and for access to the application, visit SMUD.org/Shine.

As the nation's sixth-largest community-owned, not-for-profit, electric service provider, SMUD has been providing low-cost, reliable electricity for more than 70 years to Sacramento County and small adjoining portions of Placer and Yolo Counties. SMUD is a recognized industry leader and award winner for its innovative energy efficiency programs, renewable power technologies, and for its sustainable solutions for a healthier environment. SMUD's power mix is about 50 percent non-carbon emitting. For more information, about SMUD, visit SMUD.org. ★

Board of Equalization Member Ted Gaines Criticizes Gas Tax Increase

By Betsey Hodges, California State Board of Equalization

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - State Board of Equalization Member Ted Gaines issued the following statement on the July 1 gas tax increase of three cents per gallon:

"California already had among the highest gas taxes in the country before the state Legislature passed SB 1 and essentially guaranteed increasing gas taxes every year. But we also had some of the worst roads. That's a rotten combination for taxpayers, who have gotten no value from their government.

"Before raising taxes a single penny, legislators should have reformed labor and environmental rules that make California road building so incredibly expensive

compared to other states. They should have redirected the billion dollars a year of diverted weight fees to road maintenance and construction. And they should have prioritized practical road building over high-speed rail service that most drivers will never use but will pay for.

"But instead of reforms or cost savings, they just reached their hands deeper into taxpayers' wallets.

"Three cents a gallon might not break the bank itself, but when you add it to our highest-in-the-nation sales tax, astronomical rents and housing costs, and electricity rates that are 50 percent higher than the national average, it adds up to a cost-of-living nightmare for California families and businesses.

"With California's

unemployment rate at its highest level since the Great Recession in 2010, I can't imagine a more ill-advised time to make daily life even more expensive, when families are simply trying to pay rent and keep food on the table.

"California politicians shouldn't be filling up their own tanks while family budgets are running on empty. Drivers were already paying nearly 80 cents a gallon in combined state and federal taxes before today's increase. We can build better infrastructure and a brighter future for our state with existing revenues and without higher taxes, at the pump or anywhere else."

Ted Gaines represents 10 million people across 30 counties as the Board Member for the First Equalization District. ★

Vacationers Arriving at Second Homes Need to Respond to the Census ... Again

By Mama K Davis, U.S. Census Bureau

WASHINGTON, DC (MPG) - Many families will head to their vacation homes and cabins this holiday weekend in the more rural counties in California. They are likely to find a 2020 Census questionnaire packet at their doors even if they already responded from their primary residences.

It's required that homeowners complete a separate census form for every house they own, including seasonal residences. If homeowners have been staying in their seasonal homes during the COVID crisis, they still need to complete a census form for their primary residence. People should count themselves at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time under normal conditions.

Here are instructions on how to self-respond online with information on a cabin,

vacation rental property, or any other home where someone does not live and sleep most of the time:

Visit www.my2020census.gov; Enter the Census ID or address for this secondary property. Owners will find the ID number in the information packet that census takers left on the property or at a mailbox if the home has a regular mailing address; Enter "0" for the number of people living at this property; Hit Next... the survey will not advance, but it will show a second prompt. Hit Next again to advance; Select "No" when asked a confirmation question about how many people live there; Select primary reason — Seasonal (most likely); Complete!

You may also respond to the 2020 Census by calling (844) 330-2020, or returning the paper questionnaire by mail.

For more information go to www.2020Census.gov ★

Supervisor Peters Update: Sewer Work

Dear Friends,
Phase 2 of the Mission Trunk Sewer Project will be proceeding this month in Carmichael by the Sacramento Area Sewer District (SASD). This trunk line generally follows the Mission Avenue corridor, beginning near American River College and ending downstream near the American River. The purpose of the work is to return a critical stretch of sewer pipe to optimal operating performance so as to ensure continuing reliable sewer service for the community.

Phase 1 started earlier this year at the southern end of the Mission Trunk. Phase 2

will occur in the northern end near Arcade Creek crossing Winding Way following the path along Bonnie Jean Way with a bypass route along Winding Way and Pasadena Avenue. Most work along the bypass pipe and trunk line will take place Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., although night or weekend work may be necessary at times to complete critical tasks. Pumps and generators will be located in the southwest parking lot of American River College. This phase is expect to finish in October.

Throughout the project SASD will maintain uninterrupted sewer service and do

everything possible to minimize construction impacts, including traffic slowdowns, parking restrictions, and lane or road closures.

Information about the project phases along with maps are available on the project webpage which is accessible www.sacsewer.com/mission-trunk-sewer-project. Construction information and updates will be also be posted there to keep impacted residents informed. If you have a question or concern, please call the project hotline 916-876-SASD (7273).

Susan Peters
Supervisor, Third District

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The initial Annual Percentage Rate (APR) is currently 4.25% for a new Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC), and is fixed for the first 5 years of the loan which is called the draw period. After the initial 5 year period, the APR can change once based on the value of an Index and Margin. The Index is the weekly average yield on U.S. Treasury Securities adjusted to a constant maturity of 10 years and the margin is 3.50%. The current APR for the repayment period is 4.25%. The maximum APR that can apply any time during your HELOC is 10%. A qualifying transaction consists of the following conditions: (1) the initial APR assumes a maximum HELOC of \$100,000, and a total maximum Loan-to-Value (LTV) of 70% including the new HELOC and any existing 1st Deed of Trust loan on your residence; (2) your residence securing the HELOC must be a single-family home that you occupy as your primary residence; (3) if the 1st Deed of Trust loan is with a lender other than El Dorado Savings Bank, that loan may not exceed \$200,000 and may not be a revolving line of credit. Additional property restrictions and requirements apply. All loans are subject to a current appraisal. Property insurance is required and flood insurance may be required. Rates, APR, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. Other conditions apply. A \$25 early closure fee will be assessed if the line of credit is closed within three years from the date of opening. An annual fee of \$75 will be assessed on the first anniversary of the HELOC and annually thereafter during the draw period. Ask for a copy of our "Fixed Rate Home Equity Line of Credit Disclosure Notice" for additional important information. Other HELOC loans are available under different terms.



By Noah Howard

My girlfriend faced a problem that many people close to me have faced before. She was interested in learning more about the artistic medium that I, now a junior in college, have been writing about every month since middle school, a medium to which I have devoted countless hours of my time and endless quantities of mental energy. The question was, where to start? We briefly booted up *Star Wars: Battlefront II*, and she laughed as she spun Yoda in circles in the middle of a raging battle, unable to get enough of a handle on the controls to do much else. We high-fived after a round of *Dynasty Warriors*, the one-button simplicity enough to fit her skill level but the confusing level design still leaving much to be desired. She grew tired of the violence and the complexity.

That's when I remembered a humble game that had been given out for free by the PlayStation Plus subscription service years ago: *LittleBigPlanet 3*. Though I was a fan of the first two entries, the good-not-great critical reception of the third, and my growing desire for experiences that were more thematically and mechanically rich, led to the third in the trilogy

Game Plots

Artistic Medium

sitting untouched in my PlayStation's hard drive.

I booted it up, and a switch turned on in my girlfriend's brain. This was a game not about killing, but about creativity, where the avatars aren't grizzled warriors in a bleak world, but adorable dolls (called "sackboys") in a universe that looks made entirely out of materials found in a fabric store. It was approachable, teaching us the ropes of its inventive platforming while still unafraid to present a challenge. And most importantly, it was something we could play together, actively cooperating rather than fighting different wars on the same battlefield.

Even the smallest aspects of *LittleBigPlanet 3* seemed custom-made for co-op. One sackboy could grab another and drag them around the environment in a tiny tug-of-war. Though we could cleverly sabotage each other by running off-screen, nobody was ever "dead" for long before joyfully popping back into play. We quickly found that verbal communication was a big bonus when it came to challenging puzzles or sections that required relatively quick reflexes, but the difficulty was tuned such that she (as someone who has never played console video games) never felt overwhelmed and that I (as someone who plays console video games almost every day) never felt bored.

Though some aspects of the game are undeniably mediocre (a pointless story, overly long loading times, etc.), it was refreshing to see this type of game on a current-generation console. Nintendo has gotten so far in the lead in the genre of casual couch co-op games to play with your family that other developers have virtually given up. *LittleBigPlanet 3* is the only high-profile game of its type made for the PlayStation 4, leaving the console within the purview of hardcore gaming hobbyists rather than aiming for casual family settings (like the hugely successful Nintendo Wii).

The question on my mind now is, why not pursue both markets? With Nintendo still dominating among less frequent gamers, it may be wise for other companies not to compete, but we all miss out as a result. There has been a recent clamoring for more games that we can play with family and friends, but the critically acclaimed games *Cuphead* and *A Way Out*, both of which have developed a cult following, seem to be the only titles to have answered the call in the past few years. With a new generation of consoles around the corner, this is the time for PlayStation and Microsoft to up their game and do their best to fill the niche of titles that everyone and anyone can enjoy. ★

Masks for Sacramento Seniors is a Collaborative, Grassroots Effort

By Patrick Larenas

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - As California attempts to reopen to its more normal economic, recreational and occupational activities, Seniors should keep in mind that those who are 65 years and older are still the most vulnerable to COVID-19. Arising to the task of protecting those most at risk, Cindy Rose of Rose Senior Placement organized Masks for Sacramento Seniors, a collaborative effort to donate and produce masks for those in need.

Rose was inspired by the great enthusiasm demonstrated by some 300 members who joined the mask-making effort. Seamstresses who regularly create Christmas stockings, Halloween costumes, sports outfits and a number of other hobbies all converged to make "a dynamic workforce".

"My mom taught me



Senior support groups are a very collaborative workforce. In the photo: Jennifer Davis (left) and Evelyn McGrath (right). Photo provided by Cindy Rose Caregiver

to sew when I was young, but people don't sew anymore," Rose said, "so it's been fun to have the opportunity to connect with different personalities who enjoy contributing their own unique work."

Masks for Sacramento Seniors contributor Dot Boyd, a Senior Safety

Specialist for Electronic Caregiver for the Sacramento area, said, "Because we are all working individually from home, we have a cadre of fabric cutters, seamstresses, delivery drivers, and donations. We're a tight-knit community filled with big hearts and busy hands."

So as governors and public officials remain under great economic and political pressure to reopen their respective states, counties and cities, adding uncertainty about COVID-19, make sure that you are protected.

The masks at Masks for Sacramento Seniors are free of cost according to its Facebook page: "We are all volunteers and run off donations and people's charity. The masks that are donated are donated for free. No community will ever pay for the masks from this group."

For more information call (916) 582-1654 or visit roseniorenplacement.com ★



A positive and enthusiastic ethos overtook some 300 members, including Jennifer Maurer, who joined the mask-making effort. Photo provided by Cindy Rose

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Visit us online and see a collection of ideas and resources we have put together for you:

carmichaelpark.com/virtual-recreation

For more information go to carmichaelpark.com or call (916) 483-7826

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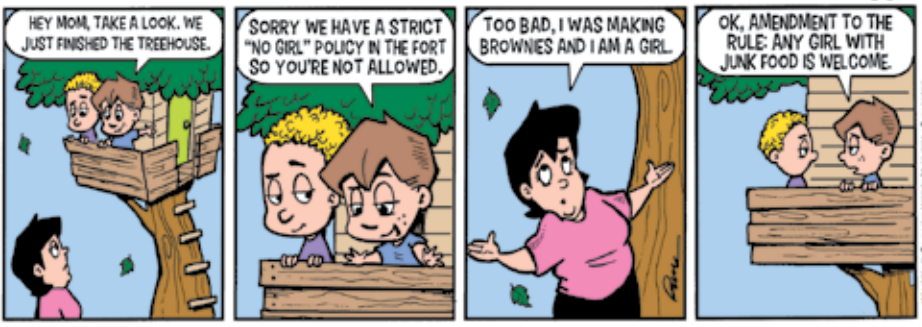
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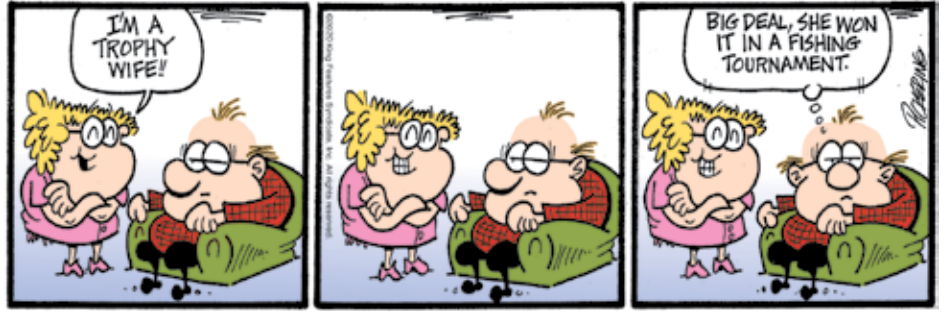
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Amber Waves



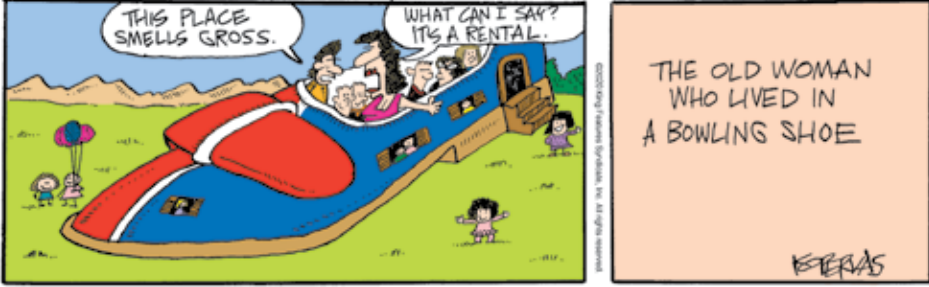
by Dave T. Phipps

The Spats



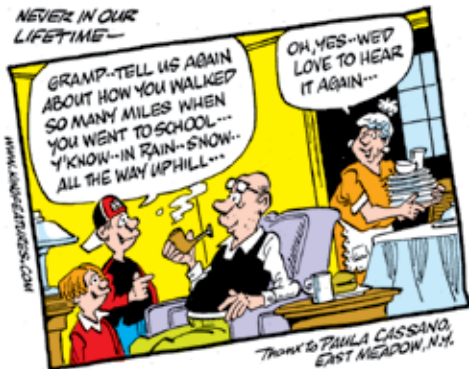
by Jeff Pickering

Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



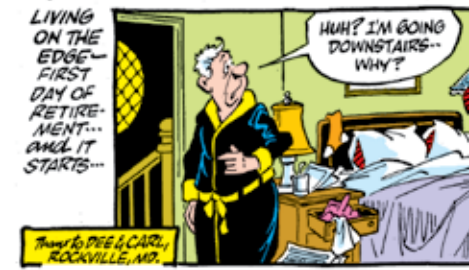
BY AL SCADUTO



R.F.D.



by Mike Marland



GRIN & BEAR IT



LAFF-A-DAY

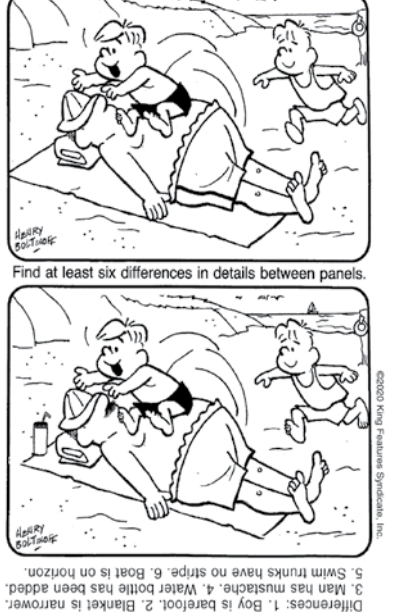


Just Like Cats & Dogs



by Dave T. Phipps

HOCUS-FOCUS



BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Crossword Puzzle on Page 9

N	E	W	S		H	A	J		P	E	A	T						
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					C	L	E	F			O	S	S	I	C	L	E	S
S	H	A	R	E					M	I	T	E		C	A	L	K	
K	I	W	I	S					I	S	I	S		A	C	A	I	
A	N	N	A						L	E	A				L	Y	N	N

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CLUES

- ACROSS
- It's often breaking
 - Pilgrimage to Mecca
 - Bog deposit
 - Mine entrance
 - *Blood fluids
 - Sinbad the Sailor's home
 - Delhi dress
 - Ball of yarn
 - On the radio
 - *Brain's "fear factory"
 - Gulf War missile
 - Monkeys, in Spain
 - *"Elise"
 - Capital of Tasmania
 - Unlike Pinocchio
 - Be mistaken
 - Meteorologist's line
 - Radiant light
 - Popular horse breed, pl.
 - VIII predecessor
 - Lit test format
 - Prima donna
 - Like meters and kilograms
 - Step on it
 - a.k.a. association football
 - ___ Hood and Christopher
 - *Result of UV exposure
 - Southern chicken stew
 - Staff leader
 - *The smallest bones
 - Social media button
 - Mange carrier
 - Plumber's sealant
 - Fuzzy fruit, pl.
 - a.k.a. The Islamic State
 - Antioxidants-rich berry
 - Tolstoy's Karenina
 - Grazing spot
 - Country singer-songwriter Loretta
- DOWN
- "For the Benefit of All" org.
 - Cheese in red casing
 - Lean like an athlete
 - Bad rep

Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 9

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			
12				13					14				
15				16					17				
18				19					20				
				21					22				
23	24	25					26		27	28			
29				30	31	32			33	34			
35				36					38				
39				40					41		42		
				43					45		46		
				47					48	49			
				50	51				52		53	54	55
56									57				58
59									60				61
62									63				64

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

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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.

Solutions on Page 9

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 9

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

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