



George Floyd Protests in Rancho Cordova

PAGE 10

Newsom Announces New Policing and Criminal Justice Reforms

PAGE 4



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JUNE 12, 2020

SEE INSIDE

SMUD CLEARING TREES AND BRUSH NEAR LINES



PAGE 2

594,300 CLEAN ENERGY JOBS NOW LOST



PAGE 8

HAVING PATIENCE IS TRULY ONE OF TODAY'S HARDEST GOALS



PAGE 4



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Public or Private, Fireworks this 4th will be Different



Cash-strapped non-profits are hoping for brisk business with so few professional displays being staged this season. Photo by David Dickstein

By David Dickstein

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - This is the first in a two-part series covering how the Sacramento Valley will celebrate Independence Day with traditional fireworks in an untraditional year. Watch for our annual fireworks buyers guide in the next issue.

Between California's months-long shelter-in-place order and other "don'ts" issued by governments of all levels during the coronavirus pandemic, citizens might feel that they're living in the home of the brave, but not so much the land of the free.

That sentiment could make this coming Independence Day the most important one since the first.

"I don't disagree with that," said John Kelly, vice president of TNT Fireworks, the nation's largest reseller of perhaps the most recognizable symbol of the

Fourth of July after Old Glory. "People are feeling constrained in response to the coronavirus crisis. Social distancing has gone on since winter, and for those who have suffered through the loss of loved ones and jobs, this ordeal has been an especially painful journey."

One way humans cope through crisis is by sharing happy and entertaining physical experiences, even in the era of social distancing. It's no surprise, then, that Kelly, part of a consumer industry hoping to salvage a season, proclaimed that "celebrating America's birthday with fireworks is about as happy and entertaining as it gets."

Bought for therapeutic or patriotic purposes, consumer fireworks sold by non-profit organizations out of temporary stands in Sacramento County and other areas where legal will be how many Americans get their bang-boom

on for the nation's 244th birthday. The reason is scant few of the 16,000 public fireworks displays typically staged in country on the Fourth of July are expected to go forward, according to the American Pyrotechnics Association.

"There have been widespread cancellations of Independence Day parades, concerts and fireworks displays nationwide," said APA Executive Director Julie Heckman. "Due to social distancing mandates related to COVID-19, the skies will be dark above the vast majority of cities, towns and municipalities."

Giving a rare green light to skies of red, white and blue is Elk Grove. The city council approved an aerial show for July 4, but instead of setting off fireworks over Elk Grove Regional Park and the 22,000 or so gathered there, the staging area will be at an undisclosed location so that residents

Continued on page 3

Board Ratifies Local State of Emergency

By Kim Nava,
Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the ratification of the Local State of Emergency Proclamation for Civil Unrest. The County will review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 60 days.

With the ratification and letter to the Director of the California Office of Emergency Services, Sacramento County is asking the Governor to Proclaim an Emergency for Sacramento County, along with authorization for California Disaster Assistance Act funding. With the ratification and letter, the County is also asking for a Small Business Administration Declaration to provide loans to support businesses that sustained economic injury due to civil unrest beginning and after May 30, 2020.

The proclamation went into effect retroactively to May 30 because of civil unrest in Sacramento that resulted in damaged storefronts, looting activity and property damage. Preliminary damage estimates indicate a dollar loss of \$10,030,000.

The proclamation does not call for additional National Guard troop deployment to the area beyond those that arrived last week to assist with local law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the County did not enact a curfew with the proclamation. Both items are made clear in the Board of Supervisors' Resolution.

According to First District Supervisor and Chairman of the Board Phil Serna, "It was obvious to all of us that we needed to make expressly clear what our intent is and what it is not. The actions, in fact, are the first steps to assure our access to state resources to help small businesses affected by recent violence, and to also protect our General Fund - a budget that is already severely stressed by the onset of the pandemic but that is nonetheless expected to continue funding important programs like the Black Child Legacy Campaign."

The County will review the need for the continuing local emergency at least every 60 days and will terminate it at the earliest possible date conditions warrant. ★

Having the All-In Attitude

New Firefighters Graduate to Join Metro Fire

By Captain Chris Vestal,
Sac Metropolitan
Fire District

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - On Friday, May 29, 2020, the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Metro Fire or the District) welcomed eighteen new Firefighters, as Recruit Class 20-1 graduates from the Metro Fire Recruit Academy, a California State Fire Marshal Accredited Fire Fighter 1 Academy. Metro Fire Chief Todd Harms highlighted to the new recruits the fact that it was a memorable moment in which "you all are starting your careers and this [same] weekend members are [also] retiring from their careers."

The Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522 Honor Guard marked the opening of the ceremony with the presentation of the Colors and a procession by a bagpiper from its Pipes and Drums Society.



The Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522 Honor Guard marked the opening of the ceremony with the presentation of the Colors. Photo: Captain Mark Nunez/Metro Fire

This was a special class, challenged not only by the usual grueling physical demands and intense academics but by the COVID-19 pandemic. Metro Fire is particularly proud of these new Firefighters for their ability

to adapt; ensuring they continued to be successful on the academy grounds while maintaining obligations to their families and other loved ones during this atypical period in all of our lives.

Under the direction of

Metro Fire Assistant Chief/Director of Training Adam House and Drill Master/Captain Jason Harris, the sixteen-week academy included hundreds of hours on the drill ground and classroom combining the

Continued on page 3

www.RanchoCordovaIndependent.com

SMUD Clearing Trees and Brush near High-voltage Lines

SMUD Press Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - SMUD vegetation management crews are busy clearing large areas of trees with high fuel loads and elevated fire risk in the Sierra foothills under and near high-voltage transmission lines. With the 2020 fire season approaching, tree and brush work is essential to SMUD’s efforts to mitigate wildfire danger during the hot summer months.

Crews working in the Rescue area east of El Dorado Hills are conducting the latest in planned vegetation management work in El Dorado County that’s been going on for several years. SMUD owns rights-of-way in its transmission line corridors that span forested areas all the way to Loon Lake in the Crystal Basin area.

The transmission lines move electricity from SMUD’s hydroelectric plants in the Upper American River Project (UARP), which produce about 700 megawatts of electricity or about 20 percent of SMUD’s customer demand. This carbon-free resource is especially valuable in the hot summer months when air conditioning load in SMUD’s service territory can push demand to near peak levels.

Though SMUD doesn’t serve El Dorado County, the community-owned electric company works directly with property owners to plan the work, which in some cases crosses private property near homes and businesses including orchards and vineyards. In many cases, property owners request the removal of trees and brush on their properties as wildfire danger has become considerably more threatening in recent years.



SMUD contract tree pruning workers clear high-fuel vegetation and brush under and near high-voltage transmission lines in Rescue, El Dorado County. Photo: SMUD

“Managing this vegetation near our transmission lines that feed the SMUD grid is critical to keeping our system reliable,” said SMUD Chief Energy Delivery Officer Frankie McDermott. “This exhaustive planning and work execution also go a long way in mitigating potential wildfire danger.”

In fact, SMUD’s comprehensive approach to vegetation management using industry best practices has delivered life- and property-saving results. The work aided firefighters in gaining control of the King Fire in 2014, which impacted SMUD’s transmission lines near Camino. A key turning point came as SMUD’s already-managed transmission line rights-of-way provided critical fire breaks for firefighters to stop the fire’s spread. CAL FIRE officials even publicly acknowledged SMUD’s vegetation management programs as critical factors in protecting the foothill communities of Camino, Pollock Pines and Apple Hill from the catastrophic King Fire.

SMUD patrols these lines annually, by truck, on foot

and by helicopter. To identify trees proven to be historically associated with causing power outages, SMUD uses Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology and a helicopter to efficiently and strategically pinpoint those trees for pruning or removal that are within defined clearance limits of SMUD’s power poles, towers and lines. LiDAR measures distance to a target by illuminating it with an FAA-approved pulsed laser light and measuring the reflected pulse – like SONAR but with light instead of sound – producing digital 3D pictures of the target. The imaging technology is even capable of identifying chlorophyll, which makes plants green and is an accurate measurement of plant health, which is utilized to identify potential hazards from weak, dying or dead trees, the result of recent drought years.

SMUD also manages trees and brush below and near clearances in the neighborhoods with overhead lines in the SMUD service territory at least every 36 months. Some trees grow faster, and

any potential situation that can cause an outage or safety issue is prioritized and addressed to ensure public safety and reliability.

Trees are beautiful and provide excellent natural benefits including comfort and energy savings from the shading canopy, but their growth needs to be managed in an environmentally friendly way. The elected SMUD Board of Directors makes Environmental Stewardship a Core Value. SMUD’s “Do No Harm” edict coincides with public safety and electric reliability.

SMUD has also been recognized by the Right-of-Way Stewardship Council (ROWSC) for demonstrated excellence in managing the vegetation growth near the SMUD electrical system.

Remember, during this time of heightened concern over COVID-19, if you see our field personnel out, please greet them from afar with a thumbs up or a wave.

For more information about SMUD and its vegetation management programs, visit SMUD.org.

Vitalant Begins Testing Donations for Antibodies to COVID-19

By Drew Fowler, Vitalant

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Vitalant became the first national blood bank to test all blood donations for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. The nation’s largest independent, non-profit blood collector – serving hospital patients across the country, including Northern California and the Central Coast – is providing the test results to donors who complete successful blood donations, which are critically needed now.

The antibody test – authorized by the Food and Drug Administration – will indicate if the donor’s immune system has produced antibodies to the virus, regardless of whether they ever showed symptoms. It is possible that over time, the broad use of antibody tests and clinical follow-up will provide the medical community with more information on whether a person who has recovered from COVID-19 is at a lower risk of infection, and if so, for how long.

“While a positive antibody test does not mean that someone is immune to COVID-19, it does mean that they may be eligible to donate convalescent plasma in the future and help people with the disease,” said Cliff Numark, Vitalant’s Chief of Marketing. “Convalescent plasma can be given directly to patients currently battling COVID-19 to help boost their ability to fight their illness.” Vitalant began collecting and distributing convalescent plasma in April. For

more information, visit vitalant.org/COVIDfree.

Donations of all blood types are critically needed right now, with an especially high need for type O, A- negative and B-negative red blood cells. In addition, platelets are always needed by patients for cancer treatments, surgeries and emergencies. Because of its short shelf life – only 5 days – the supply of platelets must be continually replenished.

Donors are urged to give blood as soon as possible. Appointments are strongly recommended: visit vitalant.org or call 877-25-VITAL (877-258-4825).

The antibody tests are part of a full panel of tests that Vitalant performs on successful blood donations. Donors are not charged for the tests and costs are subsidized, in part, by The Blood Center Foundation of the Inland Northwest and The Bonfils Blood Center Donor Advised Fund. Donors will be able to see their results approximately 2 weeks after donating by logging into their online donor accounts.

In addition to Vitalant providing lifesaving blood to patients in need, Vitalant Research Institute is leading several research initiatives related to SARS-CoV-2 antibodies.

June 14 is World Blood Donor Day, a campaign developed by the World Health Organization to raise awareness of the ongoing need for blood. Vitalant strongly encourages donors in the U.S. to step up and give blood to support patients undergoing emergency procedures and receiving ongoing treatments.

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All-In Attitude



Firefighter Recruit Class 20-1 graduated from the Metro Fire Recruit Academy, receiving their badges and first station assignments. Photo: Captain Mark Nunez/Metro Fire

Continued from page 1

knowledge and skills critical for performing emergency operations on scene at fires, emergency medical incidents, and motor vehicle accidents. Recruits also trained in live structural fires, simulated structural collapses, wildland fire suppression, and learned countless other firefighting and rescue skills.

Captain Harris noted that “all these things are simple in concept, but they are very difficult to execute, especially when you are at the limits of mental and physical endurance ... and all under time constraints.”

Physical fitness and overall health was also emphasized to reinforce proper physical training for the rigors of firefighting and the healthy lifestyle and nutrition choices required to ensure a long and healthy career.

Many fire service traditions were on display. Graduating Firefighters received their badges, took their oaths to serve the public, and received their probationary station and shift assignments. Chief Harms told the recruits, “You’ve each earned your badge; the challenge now is to live up to the traditions and standards that go along with that badge that will go along with you.”

Chief Harms said to the 20-1 class passing on the advice of Metro Fire retirees, “Thirty years comes and goes by really quickly. Enjoy the good times, and know that there is going to be bad times along the way.”

Due to restrictions on large gatherings the event was celebrated without families of the graduates and only District staff essential to the graduation ceremony was in attendance. ★

Public or Private, Fireworks this 4th will be Different

Continued from page 1

can watch from their homes.

Elk Grove is lighting up, but from Rancho Cordova and Folsom to South Lake Tahoe and Davis, aerial displays were announced as grounded to the disappointment of pyro fans and the detriment of pyro producers.

“The business is on life support. We are down 90 percent in sales and shows,” said James Souza, CEO of industry bellwether Pyro Spectaculars, which does have the Elk Grove gig. “Everyone wants a show but is not going to commit due to the state’s public gathering policy.”

At press time, hope was being held out for the show to go on in a smattering of locations awaiting health data on the staged reopening approach. Even with favorable figures, putting on a professional firework display still might not be possible given the short fuse.

“All the more reason for the general public to stock up on consumer fireworks and plan a backyard or neighborhood celebration – of course, abiding by social distancing guidelines,” said the APA’s Heckman.

Many of the nearly 33 jurisdictions in Sacramento, Placer, Yolo and Yuba counties warm to consumer fireworks had left existing laws as-is at press time, while others may enact a one-year moratorium on sales that has no impact on use. Best to check with your local fire department before lighting. A list of “open” communities can be found at <http://ca-fireworks.presskit247.com>.

For most of the state including Sacramento County, June 28 starts a potentially big week for non-profits that could be more cash-strapped than usual.

Whereas residents of other states can also let the sparks fly on New Year’s, if not year-round, celebrating the anniversary of our country’s fervent declaration of independence from Great Britain in 1776 is the occasion for which California consumers can legally light fireworks, and only the state-approved “safe and sane” variety.

Depending on ordinances in effect at the time, law-abiding revelers and sellers may need to wear masks and separate households by at least six feet during the show.



Except for rules around personal protection equipment and distancing, buying fireworks may not be all that different from non-pandemic years.

“Key guidelines that will need to be met are already built in,” said Kelly of TNT, which has its Northern California regional offices in Sacramento. “We’re already selling out of stands where the volunteer salespeople and customers are separated by wood panels and chicken wire. Buyers don’t touch product until purchase.”

Phantom Fireworks, the state’s second-largest fireworks reseller, is confident that patriotism, community support, a hunger for outdoor family amusement and the most favorable day of the week for a Fourth of July will outweigh any inconveniences associated with compliance.

“A weekend Independence Day is always great for fundraising, but with the fourth falling on a Saturday, that’s even better,” said Linda Hass-Kreman, Phantom’s West Coast operations manager based in Sacramento. “A Saturday July Fourth means many among the workforce have that Friday off as a corporate holiday and the next day off as well being a Sunday. I think society is so ready to have fun outside the home, enjoying something separately, but together, that we’re going to have one of the most special and successful fireworks seasons ever.”

It’s not as if the country doesn’t have experience dealing with pandemics at this time of year. Smallpox, measles and other diseases had wary colonists shutting themselves in their houses at the time future president John Adams correctly predicted that the first Independence Day would be celebrated with “bonfires and illuminations.”

Two and a half centuries later, American history will repeat itself when patriotic citizens ooh and aah to star-spangled fireworks under pandemic conditions.

“Fireworks are the most widely anticipated tradition of celebrating our nation’s independence,” Heckman said. “Americans are ready to celebrate and looking for something to do after being cooped up for so long, and many of us still are in parts of the country.” ★



Pam Oien
Folsom Cordova Unified School District

FCUSD Selects Coordinator of Educational Technology

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - We are pleased to announce Pam Oien as our new Coordinator of Educational Technology

Ms. Oien began her career in 1991 as a mathematics teacher at Earle E. Williams Middle School in Tracy, CA. She joined Folsom Cordova in the Fall of 1995 as a Mathematics teacher at Folsom High School. During her time at Folsom High, she helped develop and manage the Digital High School Grant, one of the early grants that brought an influx of technology and training to our schools.

In 2003, Pam moved into the role of Education Technology Lead Teacher and has since worked closely with our schools on all aspects of our technology integration. She brings a wealth of experience with our district systems and programs. She serves as President of CapCUE, the local Sacramento CUE Affiliate supporting teachers across the region on technology implementation. ★

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By Bob McGarvey

The world is still fighting the coronavirus, and there are many countries who are looking at and responding to the impact of George Floyd’s death. There are protests in other countries where they are responding because of his death, just as the protests in our country are responding to how he died. Today’s youth have been impacted in rather drastic ways because of how their lives were changed this year of 2020. Think of how a child’s life is relatively simple, at least in their minds, because of school, mom and dad are working, and how much they learn so quickly because their minds can and do absorb information like a sponge. My “sponge” has to be soaked in what I want to remember for quite a while and for many times sometimes. Oh well. That’s life.

Going back to the changes not only our kids are seeing,

And Another Thing

Having patience is truly one of today’s hardest goals

but all of us are facing today. The coronavirus has done that. It has closed our schools, closed many businesses, created lost jobs for millions, closed parks and their playgrounds, organizations like our churches, the American Legion, the Cordova Community Council, etc. are not meeting because of COVID-19, and the list goes on. Then on top of all that, today’s demonstrations are bringing up some questions that were brought out in the 50’s and 60’s when the civil rights movements were across our country. How do you explain to children how their lives can be changed so dramatically? The adults are supposed to have the answers to all of their questions. I haven’t been able to find the answers for me. So how do I give the answers to a child?

I am looking forward to some things that are coming back. Things as simple

as going back to a dinner in “your” restaurant, or going to a park, or going to church. They are slowly coming back, but after three months of being stuck in/at home when most of us aren’t used to that, it has a tendency to create problems at home that aren’t usually there. Having patience is truly one of today’s hardest goals. We will get there, but it will take more time than you want it to.

And again, I want to thank the volunteers who put out the flags along Folsom Boulevard and rotating displays on digital billboards along Highway 50 honoring veterans on Memorial Day, May 25, 2020. As a veteran, I know how much giving years of your life to the country means. Thank you for your service.

From Councilman Bob McGarvey, God bless, and we’ll see you next time. ★

Governor Newsom Announces New Policing and Criminal Justice Reforms



Governor Gavin Newsom
Office of Governor Gavin Newsom Press Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - After a week of engagement with civic leaders and law enforcement in the wake of the killing of George Floyd and demonstrations nationwide, Governor Newsom announced his support for new policing and criminal justice reforms. Governor Newsom will work toward a statewide standard for policing peaceful protests and ending the carotid hold. This announcement follows the work California did last year to enact the nation’s strongest standard for police use of deadly force.

“We have a unique and special responsibility here in California to meet this historic moment head-on,” said Governor Newsom. “We will not sit back

passively as a state. I am proud that California has advanced a new conversation about broader criminal justice reform, but we have an extraordinary amount of work left to do to manifest a cultural change and a deeper understanding of what it is that we’re working to advance. We will continue to lead in a direction that does justice to the message heard all across this state and nation.”

Governor Newsom called for the creation of new standards for crowd control and use of force in protests. Governor Newsom committed to working with the Legislature, including the California Legislative Black Caucus, the California Latino Legislative Caucus and other legislative leaders, in consultation with national experts, community leaders, law enforcement and journalists to develop those standards – much like the collaboration that produced AB 392 last year, California’s nation-leading use-of-force bill.

Additionally, he called for the end of the carotid hold and other like techniques in California, directing that the carotid hold be removed from the state police

training program and state training materials. He committed to working with the Legislature on a statewide ban that would apply to all police forces across the state.

Criminal justice reform has been a key priority of Governor Newsom’s first year in office. He placed a moratorium on the death penalty, citing racial and economic disparities in how it was applied. He proposed to close the Division of Juvenile Justice and proposed closing two state prisons. In his May Revision budget, Governor Newsom proposed expanding opportunities for rehabilitation and shortening prison time for offenders participating in treatment programs, in education programs and otherwise engaging in good behavior; as well as increasing access to higher education for young people who are incarcerated.

Governor Newsom acknowledged that more action is needed, and stated that additional reforms around police practices, educational equity, economic justice, health equity and more must be addressed with urgency. ★

FBI Seeks Information on Individuals Inciting Violence

FBI National Press Office

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG) - The FBI respects the rights of individuals to peacefully exercise their First Amendment rights. Our mission of protecting the American people and upholding the Constitution is dual and simultaneous, not contradictory.

Accordingly, we are committed to apprehending and charging violent instigators who are exploiting legitimate, peaceful protests and engaging in violations of federal law. The continued violence, potential threat to life, and destruction of property across the United States interferes with the rights and safety of First Amendment-protected

peaceful demonstrators, as well as all other citizens.

To help us identify actors who are actively instigating violence in the wake of Mr. George Floyd’s death, the FBI is accepting tips and digital media depicting violent encounters surrounding the civil unrest that is happening throughout the country.

If you witness or have witnessed unlawful violent actions, we urge you to submit any information, photos, or videos that could be relevant to the case at fbi.gov/violence.

You may also call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) to verbally report tips and/or information related to this investigation. ★



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Expert Independent Review is Needed to Comb through PPE Contracts, Says Senate Budget Vice Chair

By Nghia Nguyen

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Assembly Accountability and Administrative Review and the Assembly Governmental Organization Committees will host panel discussions on the state’s failed contract with one company - Blue Flame. News reports have since exposed more troubling failures in administration contracting efforts. Senator Jim Nielsen (R-Tehama) who, along with a group of lawmakers, has requested a thorough audit through the Joint Legislative Audit Committee of the sole source contracting practices in these multi-million dollar legal commitments, issued the following statement: “This hearing is a step in the right direction.” “But taxpayers deserve a thorough forensic audit of how the state signed contracts committing hundreds of millions of dollars to bring federally certified masks but failed.” “Lack of an independent, nonpartisan

audit by competent experts is not acceptable. Without a full investigation into the procurement process that transpired, there will be public mistrust.” PLEASE NOTE: As stated on its website, “The California State Auditor is the only state entity that is given full access to all records of state and local agencies, special districts, and school districts. General powers of the California State Auditor include the ability to subpoena records, take depositions, and administer oaths. In all cases, information obtained by the California State Auditor that is legally confidential must be protected from release from the public.” Elected to the State Senate in January 2013, Senator Nielsen represents the Fourth Senate District, which includes the counties of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Tehama and Yuba. To contact Senator Jim Nielsen, please call him at 916-651-4004, or via email at senator.nielsen@senate.ca.gov. Follow him @CASenatorJim. ★



Publisher, Paul V. Scholl

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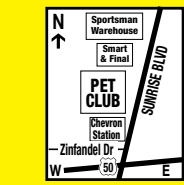
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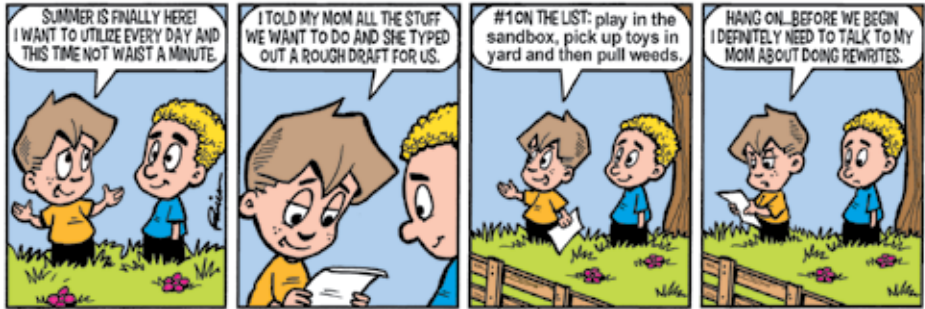
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Crossword Puzzle on Page 7

P	S	A	L	M		A	T	E		E	C	H	O
H	A	N	O	I		G	A	L		U	N	I	O
A	M	O	U	R		O	N	E		N	I	T	R
T	E	N	T	I	N	G		G	A	R	D	E	N
			S	A	Y		P	Y	R	E			
J	A	B			M	A	G	I		E	S	C	H
A	X	I	S		L	O	G	S		T	I	A	R
R	I	L	L		A	L	G	A	E		A	D	I
T	A	B	O	O		F	I	N	D		O	N	C
S	L	O	W	U	P		E	D	G	E		T	A
			T	O	G	S		A	L	A			
		B	I	R	D	I	E		F	R	I	S	B
R	A	D	I	I		E	T	A		S	P	A	R
Y	I	E	L	D		S	A	N		H	E	I	N
E	L	S	E			E	G			A	N	T	E

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 7

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

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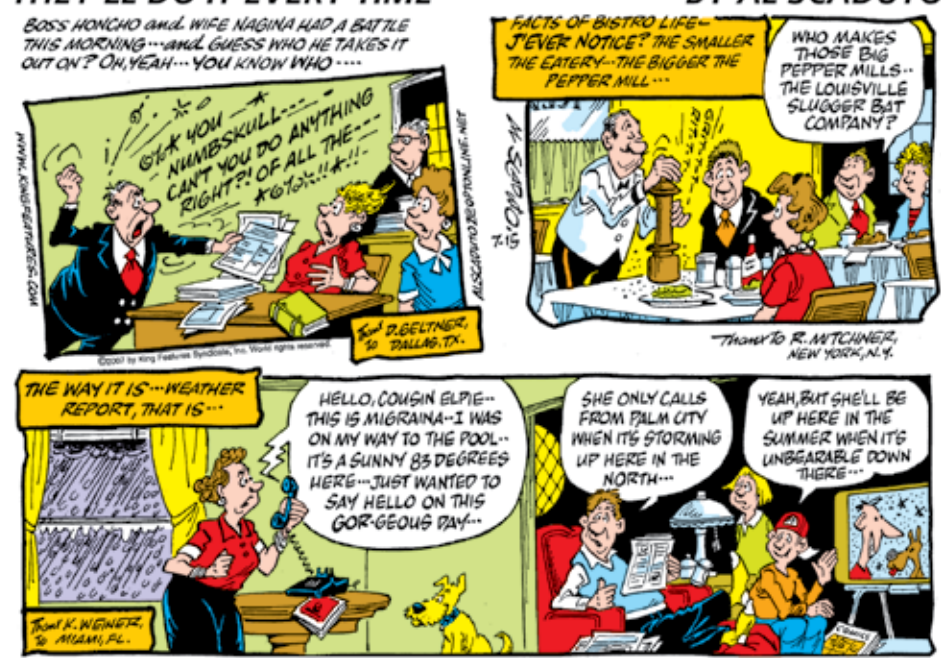
The Spats

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THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINGHOFF



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Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 7

CLUES

ACROSS

- Sacred song
- Chowed down
- Acoustic repetition
- Capital of Vietnam
- 4 qts.
- Teamsters' group
- Affair, in Paris
- Bit of binary code
- Part of TNT
- "Sleeping under the stars"
- "Horticulturist's hangout"
- Articulate
- Combustible pile
- Joe Louis move
- Epiphany guests
- Forgo
- WWII side
- "Bonfire fodder"
- Royal topper
- Tiny river
- Pond buildup
- Miners' passage
- Best not mentioned
- "What seekers do"
- Fairytale beginning
- Same as "slow down"
- Upper hand
- Toni Morrison's "___ Baby"
- Threads
- Pie _____ mode
- *a.k.a. shuttlecock
- "Flying saucer"
- 2 halves of a diameter
- Pilot's deadline
- *Fire starter
- Triangular road sign
- ____ Luis Bispo
- "Die Lorelei" poet
- Other than what is
- One laid
- Poker stakes

DOWN

- First-rate, slangily
- Ditto
- Soon, to a bard
- They are usually drunken
- Biblical prophethood
- Full of excitement
- *Sun kiss
- Funereal lament
- "National Velvet" author _____
- Bagnold
- Give a ticket
- Sound warning
- Lennon's wife
- State of agitation
- African antelope
- "Who _____ we kidding?"
- a.k.a. toes
- "Banned lawn darts"
- Type of rotation
- "The Hobbit" hobbit
- "Played with a driver"
- Bye in Palermo
- Lacked, for short
- The oldest Goldberg sibling
- *Skier's turf
- Snail-like
- *Volleyball turf
- Painter Degas
- Beat the Joneses
- Interesting person, acronym
- Eli Manning's first name
- Ganders' companions
- *Famous ski town
- Get-out-of-jail money
- _____ of March
- Make someone angry
- Jack London's "White _____"
- *Fisherman's supply
- Marine eagle
- Augments
- Pastrami partner
- *"You're it!" game

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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 7

Social Security Matters

How Do I Apply with Social Security Offices Closed?

Astronauts, Riots, and Pandemics: 2020 vs. 1969



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I am 64 years old and would like advice on how to move forward to apply for Social Security now instead of waiting until I am the “magic” age of 66.5 years. Signed: Ready for Retirement

Dear Ready for Retirement: All Social Security offices are currently closed to public visits, but they are still providing telephone services (although telephone wait times are usually longer these days). You can apply over the phone if you wish. However, the most efficient way to apply for your Social Security benefit, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, is to apply online. You will need to create your personal “My Social Security” account prior to applying online, but that is easy to do at www.ssa.gov/



myaccount. For information, Social Security uses a “two-factor” identification process for security purposes, usually by asking you to enter, in addition to your password, a special ID code sent to your cell phone (or email).. Once you have set up your personal account, you can use the online application process at www.ssa.gov/retire. Here is a link to a short video from Social Security which explains the online application process: www.ssa.gov/hlp/video/iclaim_r01.htm. When you start the online process, be sure to write down the reentry code, which will allow you to save and re-enter your online application as many times as needed before you finally submit it. Once it is submitted, Social Security will call you or write you to get any additional information they need. A couple of things I want to be sure you are aware of: By claiming before your full retirement age (FRA) your benefit amount will

be permanently reduced. The reduction is about 0.556% per month prior to your FRA that you claim (at 64, a reduction of about 15%). Finally, if you are still working, you’ll be subject to Social Security’s earnings test until you reach your full retirement age. If you start benefits mid-year 2020, you’ll be subject to a monthly earnings limit of \$1520, and if you exceed that limit you won’t be eligible for benefits for that month. The following years you’ll be subject to an annual limit, until you reach your FRA when there is no longer a limit to how much you can earn. *This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. ★*

America Has Lost 594,300 Clean Energy Jobs; 850,000 Expected by June 30

By Alex Frank, Hastings Group

WASHINGTON, DC (MPG) - Nearly 600,000 U.S. clean energy workers have lost their jobs since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic after 447,208 new workers filed unemployment claims in April – tripling the claims filed in March. That’s according to a new analysis of unemployment data released by E2 (Environmental Entrepreneurs), the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE), E4TheFuture, and BW Research Partnership. The analysis of Department of Labor data found that 594,347 workers in clean energy occupations, representing 17.8% of the industry’s workforce, filed for unemployment benefits in April and March. The number of jobs lost is more than double the number of clean energy jobs created since 2017. Before March, clean energy had been one of the U.S. economy’s biggest and fastest-growing employment sectors, growing 10.4% since 2015 to 3.4 million jobs at the end of 2019. That made clean energy by far the biggest employer of workers in all energy occupations, employing nearly three times as many people as the fossil fuel industry. In the coming months, the analysis projects that job losses will continue to rise unless Congress and the Trump administration take quick and substantive action to support the clean energy industry and its workers. If nothing is done, the report forecasts that 850,000 clean energy workers will have filed for unemployment by June 30. A loss of that magnitude would mean that one out of every four clean energy workers employed at the start of 2020 will have lost their jobs in just six months. **Industries Hit Hardest** According to the unemployment data analysis, energy efficiency lost more jobs than any other clean energy sector for the second consecutive month in April. The energy efficiency sector accounted for nearly 70% of all clean energy job losses in April, with more than 310,000 energy efficiency workers filing for unemployment. Renewable energy lost nearly 13% of its workforce, with more than 71,800 unemployment filings in April. There are now nearly 100,000 renewable energy workers out of work since March. If trends continue, more than one out of every five

renewable energy workers will soon be jobless. Both the clean grid and storage sector and the clean vehicles sector lost 14% of their workforces in April, losing 54,700 jobs combined. In total, those sectors have lost 26,200 and 46,500 jobs, respectively. The clean fuels sector lost the largest percentage of its workforce among all clean energy industries, losing 10,400 jobs in April, or 26% of its workforce. Since March, the sector has lost 12,500 jobs or more than one-third of its workforce. **States and Localities Hit Across Country** California continues to be the hardest hit state in terms of total job losses, losing 77,900 jobs in April alone and more than 100,000 since the crisis began. Texas, Michigan, Florida, and Georgia also had a high total of clean energy unemployment filings in April, with each state experiencing more than 22,000 job losses. An additional 23 other states had at least 5,000 clean energy unemployment filings, according to the new analysis. While Kentucky, Hawaii, and Louisiana all saw job losses exceed 25% of their clean energy workforces, no state was hit harder in terms of total number and share of its clean energy workforce than Georgia. In addition to suffering the fifth most total job losses, the state lost 31% of its clean energy workforce — the highest percentage of any state and double the national average of 15%. **Local Economies Hit** April’s edition of the analysis expanded to include losses by metropolitan areas and counties. By total job losses, five counties lost more than 5,000 clean energy jobs in April alone, including Los Angeles County, Calif.; King County, Wash.; Harris County, Texas; San Diego County, Calif.; and Cook County, Ill. As a share of their workforces, California and Georgia counties suffered the most, with four counties in each state losing at least 23% of their clean energy jobs. The metro areas that lost the most clean energy jobs in April were metro areas with the largest populations and economies, including Los Angeles, New York City, and Chicago. Metro areas that were hit hardest as a share of their workforce varied more, with Cleveland, Las Vegas, New Orleans, and Pittsburgh all losing at least 18% of their clean energy jobs. ★

Commentary by Paul G. Kengor

In July 1969, three American astronauts landed on the moon. It wasn’t just a great technical triumph. It was a much-needed respite amid social and political chaos. America was already beset by Vietnam and civil rights struggles. That summer of 1969, things got worse. The nation was shocked by news of a riot after a confrontation between gay rights activists and police outside the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village on June 28. Then came news of the drowning of Mary Jo Kopechne in a fatal vehicle accident by an intoxicated Senator Ted Kennedy in Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts late-night July 18-19. August brought word of the hideous Manson “Family” murders of pregnant actress Sharon Tate and others in a brutal attack the night of August 9-10. A week later came the spectacle of Woodstock, where a half million gathered in rural New York in an unprecedented display of rock n’ roll, drugs, and hedonism. And still more was stirring beneath gathering storm clouds. The National Convention for Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) opened on June 18, 1969 at the Chicago Coliseum on South Wabash, just down the street from police headquarters, home of the so-called “pigs” with whom the radical Weathermen prepared for battle. A mighty clash ultimately erupted in October in what became known as the Days of Rage. The organized riot commenced on October 5, 1969 when the “flower children” dynamited the statue commemorating Chicago police killed in the 1886 Haymarket Riot. As far as the protesters were concerned, these men were not Chicago’s finest, but jackbooted swine. Cops were bad. Violent clashes with over 1,000 policemen ensued. Americans watched on their televisions in horror. Adding fuel to the fire, not only was there social and political chaos in 1969, but even a pandemic afoot. A malicious virus emanated from Asia. Known as the Hong Kong Flu, technically called “H3N2,” it killed several million worldwide, including over 100,000 in America – a death toll chillingly similar to COVID-19. It was brutal on the respiratory system. And thus, amid the turmoil, the moon landing on July 20 by the Apollo 11 crew of Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins was a wonderful respite. The whole of humanity watched with admiration and appreciation. All of which seems very appropriate and very ironic context given current events. Once again, America has boldly gone forth with another historic space mission. In Florida, SpaceX lifted into orbit, heralding a new era. Here was a private company sending astronauts into

orbit, almost a decade after the shelving of the space shuttle program. Appropriately, the two astronauts shot off from the same Florida launchpad that had served the Apollo missions. This time, however, resurrecting the program was not the broke federal government but a private company called SpaceX, founded by billionaire Elon Musk. The impressive partnership between NASA and the private company breaks new ground in many ways. President Trump, who rightly called the feat “an inspiration for our country,” noted that the launch “makes clear the commercial space industry is the future.” Sights are literally now set on Mars. Of course, this launch in 2020, like that in 1969, likewise occurs during a time of social-political chaos and pandemic, with cities smoldering in protest over the police killing of George Floyd, with demonstrators masking up as COVID-19 continues its morbid march. The disease has robbed the lives over 100,000 in America alone. With such bad news, the SpaceX launch should have been a welcomed respite. And yet, unlike July 1969, this seems to have elicited comparatively little coverage. Sure, this launch wasn’t as historic as July 1969. Apollo 11 is hard to surpass. What’s striking, however, is how little attention SpaceX seemed to receive. You could’ve easily missed it. This launch is likewise historic, particularly the horizons that can literally open up. Nonetheless, those hopes and dreams were overshadowed by the Floyd protests and by COVID-19. That’s too bad. This should’ve been a moment of unity during a time of crisis. Today, it seems, all news is political news, or bad news. Well, here was some good news for a change. The SpaceX launch says something promising about human achievement amid trial, about our humanity rising above our sinfulness. And yet, have we paused to recognize that? I think not. And that, too, seems a sign of our sinfulness. The world is on fire in 2020. It was in 1969 as well. It’s easy to focus on the negative. And we should rightly call out injustice. But we should also pause to reflect on what is good. Dr. Paul Kengor is professor of political science and chief academic fellow of the Institute for Faith and Freedom at Grove City College. His latest book (April 2017) is A Pope and a President: John Paul II, Ronald Reagan, and the Extraordinary Untold Story of the 20th Century. He is also the author of 11 Principles of a Reagan Conservative. His other books include The Communist: Frank Marshall Davis, The Untold Story of Barack Obama’s Mentor and Dupes: How America’s Adversaries Have Manipulated Progressives for a Century. ★

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George Floyd Protests in Rancho Cordova

Things That Were Done Wrong Can Be Turned to Good



Students, parents and sympathizers to the social injustices suffered by African-Americans spoke about discrimination in area schools, the potential racism in hiring employees and the necessity of having protected channels for denouncing these injustices. Photo by Patrick Larenas

From the City of Rancho Cordova

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - On Monday, June 8th, people exercised their right to peacefully protest, and we stood with them. What happened to George Floyd was horrific and unacceptable. Our city stands for justice, and we are united in our opposition to violence and racism.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, among other rights. In this country and in our city, people have every right to gather in protest, and we celebrate that right and will protect it. However, we will not tolerate violence or destruction of property in our city.

The protestors focused on the horrific death of George Floyd, as well as a recent incident between a 14-year-old and one of our Rancho Cordova Police officers. The 15 second video of this incident was both disturbing and unacceptable. The city contracts its police services from the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office, and this officer is an employee of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office. Our contract allows us to reassign officers if their behavior or actions are not consistent



Khyra Clark, a Cordova High Senior, led a discussion saying, "I wish I should not have to tell professional educators about how they address my culture and history... Ignorance is not bliss". Photo by Patrick Larenas

with our values. Based on the video, the city asked that the officer be reassigned and transferred out of Rancho Cordova. Personnel action falls with the Sheriff's Office as does the full and transparent investigation that is being conducted and overseen by the Inspector General. In the meantime, we are focused on listening to our residents, understanding their concerns, making changes where necessary, re-earning trust and healing. ★

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BURNING TIPS & RESTRICTIONS

During the COVID-19 health crisis breathing clean air is more important than ever, especially for those with underlying health conditions like asthma or respiratory illness.

LIMIT RECREATIONAL BURNING

- ⇒ Wood smoke harms our respiratory and immune systems and is unhealthy for everyone. It is particularly harmful to children, seniors and those who have respiratory illness.
- ⇒ The District recommends all residents limit or cease recreational burning during this health crisis.
- ⇒ When deciding to have a recreational burn, please consider your neighbors and the need to preserve good air quality during this time.

DON'T BURN TRASH or YARD WASTE

- ⇒ Burning trash is extremely harmful to respiratory health.
- ⇒ Burning trash is always illegal and will result in fines.
- ⇒ Open burning or burning yard waste is also illegal in most of Sacramento County and will result in fines.
- ⇒ Check our website and contact your local fire department for a permit.

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