



M Citrus Heights Messenger

“Written by the people, for the people”

Volume 3 Issue 1

Serving the City of Citrus Heights and Sacramento County

First Edition for January 2013

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New Driver Laws Bring Changes



California Highway Patrol Special Report

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) – New rules that govern the California driving public went into effect on January 1, 2013. These rules are the product of legislation passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in 2012.

“The changes to California’s traffic safety laws are designed to protect the motoring public,” said California Highway Patrol (CHP) Commissioner Joe Farrow. “Citizens are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these new laws in advance of the new year. Adhering to the rules of the road may save your life, or the lives of your fellow motorists.”

The following are summaries of some of the new laws taking effect January 1, 2013:

- **Driving Under the Influence** (AB 2020, Pan) The law no

longer allows a person who has been arrested and is suspected of driving under the influence (DUI) of drugs, the option of a urine test. Prior to this change, a person had the option of submitting either urine or blood to determine the drug content of their blood.

- **Charter-Party Carriers of Passengers: Alcoholic Beverages: Open Containers** (AB45, Chesbro) This new law prohibits underage drinking in charter-party carriers (limos, buses, etc.) and makes the carrier and driver responsible for communicating this to their passengers. The law also requires a designee, who is at least 25 years of age, to be present whenever there are passengers who are under 21 years of age on board the vehicle and alcohol is being transported. The designee shall be responsible for ensuring the rules are followed, and the safety of the underage passengers throughout the duration of the trip.

- **Electronic Wireless Communications** (AB 1536, Miller) This law allows California drivers to use hands-free technology to talk and text while driving. This will require the use of a device that is specifically designed and configured to allow voice-operated and hands-free operation to dictate, send or listen to a text-based communication. The device is required to also be used in a voice-operated, hands-free manner to be in compliance with the law.
- **Financial Responsibility and Insurance** (AB 1708, Gatto) Drivers will now have the option of providing proof of insurance and registration on an electronic device (smartphone, tablet, etc.), when it is requested by law enforcement.
- **High Occupancy Toll Lanes** (AB 2405, Blumenfield) This law creates the Choose Clean Cars Act, which allows cars with a Clean Air Vehicle Sticker free access to carpool lanes that are

converted to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes.

- **Autonomous Vehicles** (SB 1298, Padilla) This new law allows driverless cars to be operated on public roads for testing purposes, provided that each vehicle has a fully licensed and bonded operator in the driver’s seat to take control if necessary. The bill also instructs the Department of Motor Vehicles to adopt regulations that govern the licensing, bonding, testing and operation of autonomous vehicle technology.
- **Emergency Services: Seniors** (SB 1047, Alquist) Similar to an AMBER Alert, the CHP would activate a “Silver Alert” upon request if a person, age 65 or older, is reported missing to a law enforcement agency and that agency determines that certain criteria is met.

Continued on Page 5

Be Aware of School Zone Traffic

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA – (MPG) - The Citrus Heights Police Department Traffic Unit wants to remind drivers that school is back in session this week, after the holiday break. Drivers are reminded to be attentive and slow down in school zones.

The City of Citrus Heights General Services Division has been working closely with the Police Department Traffic Unit to improve traffic safety in School Zones.

To increase visibility of school zones throughout the city, new high visibility signs have been installed in all schools zones. Drivers are reminded to drive 25 MPH or less in the school zones and watch out for children, as children will do the unexpected.

Officers will be conducting extra patrols in all the school areas, enforcing the school zone speed limits, looking for distracted driving, and/or right-of-way and pedestrian violations. Parents are reminded to ensure that their children are wearing helmets when riding, scooting, or skating to school.

On January 11th 2013, the CHPD traffic unit will be working with students of the Sylvan Middle School science classes to demonstrate speed and distance measuring devices such as Radar and Lidar. The students will participate in a speed survey. The Radar is utilized to measure the speed of traffic on a roadway when conducting a speed survey. Speed surveys are used to set speed limits. This will be an opportunity to build positive relationships between the youth and police in the community of Citrus Heights. This interactive demonstration will be a learning experience for the students.

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City Council Welcomes New Member, Mayor and Vice Mayor



Council member Jeff Slowey with wife Laurie, left, and family. Photo by Elise Spleiss.

By Elise Spleiss

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) – The ‘changing of the guard’ for the Citrus Heights City Council went smoothly on December 13, 2012 as one new council member and one re-elected member took their oath of office. The new mayor and vice mayor were then elected by the council.

Sue Frost and Jeff Slowey were sworn in by their spouses, Jack Frost and Laurie Slowey. This is Frost’s first term, and Slowey’s third. In December 2003, Slowey was appointed to city council to fill a vacancy left by the death of Citrus Heights’ first mayor, William “Bill” Hughes. In 2004 Slowey was elected to a four-year term, which ended in 2008. He served as mayor in 2007 and 2012. His present term ends in 2016.

Steve ‘Sparky’ Miller, our new mayor, has been on the council since 2005, first appointed to finish out the term of Bret Daniels

who resigned mid-term. Elected in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, he served as mayor in 2008.

Incumbent council member Mel Turner is our new vice mayor. Elected in 2010, his term expires in 2014. Jeannie Bruins has served Citrus Heights from 2002, serving as mayor in 2006 and 2011. Her present term also ends in 2014.

Following the swearing-in Frost was invited to assume her place among her fellow council members. All welcomed her to council, while Bruins reminded her she is now the ‘Honorable Sue Frost’.

The change of command was final as Slowey and Miller ceremoniously switched chairs and Slowey turned the gavel over to Miller. It took a few moments to get used to the change, but there was no question who was now in charge when Miller declared, “okay let’s go, it’s Miller time.”

The business of the city then resumed.

REACH Neighborhood Associations End Year with 14th Annual Make-a-Wish Pot Luck Supper



Center: Jon Paul Burke, director Area 5 & V.P. of REACH. Ed Portillo, director Area 4. Anna Portillo, president of Area 4 & REACH treasurer. Photo by Elise Spleiss.

By Elise Spleiss

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) – The Citrus Heights Community Center was aglow with anticipation for the new year as over 60 members representing their neighborhood associations came together to bid ‘goodbye’ to the old and say ‘hello’ to the new. Citrus Heights is comprised of 10 Neighborhood Associations throughout the city, which together form REACH – Residents Empowerment Association of Citrus Heights.

The order of the evening on December 27, 2012 was to feast on the wonderful dishes and desserts brought by members, recall personal and community high points and challenges of 2012, and share member’s wishes for Citrus Heights for the coming year.

Wishes of all kinds, from world peace and personal health to more businesses opening,

better streets and street lighting were written down and deposited into the Wishing Well in the center of the dessert table. Wishes were read aloud as participants brainstormed about what they would like to see for their city in 2013.

Hosted by Area 10 (SOAR), which has been holding this year-end event since 1999 for it’s own area, has been hosting all members of REACH for this feast since 2011. Event host, former Citrus Heights mayor and Area 10 (SOAR) president, Jayna Karpinski-Costa, greeted members and guests including Mayor Steve Miller, Area 10, and council member and former mayor, Jeannie Bruins, Area 7&8.

Following the meal and wishes, Mayor Miller sent participants into the New Year with a toast for 2013—a wish for continued success for Citrus Heights and its’ committed Neighborhood Associations. New members

are always welcome to add their ideas, experience and helping hands to their own Neighborhood Association (NA). Karpinski-Costa emphasized that; “most residents don’t realize that if you live in the City of Citrus Heights you are automatically a member of your association. There are no dues. Just come to meetings when you can and help out with projects you have a passion for that benefit where you live. You are needed.” To find out which NA you belong go to www.citrusheights.net or call the City at 725-2448.

Become an active part of your city so that instead of asking others what is going on in your neighborhood, you will be the one with the answers.

Members are not only kept aware of what is going on in their own areas: government, crime and other safety issues, roads, new businesses, health, schools, and much more, but can become an active part of their community’s growth and improvement. Working together through collaborations with the City, Chamber of Commerce, businesses, non-profits and all aspects of city life make this a better place to live.

To also be kept informed of what is new in the City as it happens, sign up for ‘E-Notifier’ to receive information on City news and events, police issues, council and other meetings, employment, special projects and more. Type in ‘E-Notifier’ in the home page ‘search’ box at www.citrusheights.net to register.

Fire Raged Above Sleeping Resident



Sac Metro Fire Special Report

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) – Just before 2:00 am on January 5th, the female resident at 6058 Peoria Dr. in Citrus Heights woke to a “crackling” sound. Both she and her sleeping

husband were unaware or the raging fire in their attic. According to her, “the crackling was so loud as I walked down the hallway.” She called 911 once they realized the emergent nature of the “crackling” noise.

According to Metro Fire

Captain Mike Lozano, our first arriving engine was faced with “thirty to forty foot flame lengths coming from half of the duplex.” A coordinated effort of the twenty-four firefighters on scene quickly extinguished the fire and saved the other half of the structure.

This fire is being attributed to a fire in their fireplace being unattended.

Metro Fire would like to remind you to be sure your fireplace fire is out before you go to bed. Also, never close your damper with hot ashes in the fireplace. A closed damper will help the fire to heat up again and will force toxic carbon monoxide into the house.

Please use the link to our website below for other winter heating safety tips. <http://metrofire.ca.gov/index.php/cs-safety-tips/153-winter-heating>

Ami Bera Sworn in to 113th Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Ami Bera has been sworn in as the U.S. representative for California’s 7th Congressional district. He offered the following comment: “I am incredibly honored humbled that the people of Sacramento County have placed their trust in me to represent them in the U.S. House of Representatives. Now begins the hard work of addressing the many challenges facing our region and our country. I look forward to working with my new colleagues from both parties to find common ground and to rebuild an economy that works for the middle class. My parents emigrated here from India in the 1950s with very little but the dream of a better life. I grew up believing America was a land of opportunity, where if

you worked hard and played by the rules, you could reach your full potential. Thursday, my father was among those watching as I was sworn in to the U.S. House of Representatives. My family’s story isn’t unique; it’s the story of the American Dream. I will work every day to ensure that we continue to invest in the next generation and keep the American Dream alive.”

Bera was also recently named to the House Committees on Foreign Affairs and Science, Space and Technology. “I am honored to have been named to the House Foreign Affairs Committee,” he said. “In an increasingly complex global landscape, relationships with other nations have tangible effects here at home and we need strategic thinking to

guide our foreign policy in the 21st century. Additionally, the Sacramento region is uniquely situated to benefit from opening up new markets for our goods and services around the world. That would help create jobs here at home. Through my new role on the Science, Space and Technology, I’ll also work to foster innovative industries that can bring good jobs to the 7th district.”

Congressman Ami Bera represents Sacramento County in the 113th Congress. A life-long Californian and first generation American, Bera is a medical doctor and the only Indian American currently serving in Congress. He and his wife Janine live in Elk Grove with their 15-year-old daughter Sydra.

SCOE 20 Districts Part of Groundbreaking Program

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA – (MPG) The Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE), in partnership with over 20 districts throughout the greater Sacramento region, will be part of a new state program designed to help students graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college and careers.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced that twenty participants throughout California will participate. Combined, the selected local educational agencies serve approximately 600,000 high school students across the state. Legislation (AB 790) by former Assembly Member Warren Furutani approved last year called for the establishment of these Linked Learning pilot programs. The pilot program will be used to assess how Linked Learning can be expanded to schools across California.

“Linked Learning is helping to create a productive future workforce for California that is ready to succeed in college, career and life,” said David W. Gordon, Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools. “Studies show that when students love what they are learning, they work harder and learn more.”

“Linked Learning” programs use coursework, technical training, work-based learning and related support mechanisms to forge real connections between high school and college and

career. Students in these programs are demonstrably more likely to graduate from high school than their statewide counterparts, and do so with the skills and knowledge that California employers say they need.

SCOE is part of the Capital Region Academies for the Next Economy (CRANE) Consortium. It is a multi-county regional partnership that includes El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. The consortium comprises 21 school districts and county offices of education reaching some 70 high schools and 197,000 students. Led by SCOE through collaboration with NextEd, the consortium also includes community colleges, businesses and business associations, hospital systems, labor organizations, city and county government, and a wide range of public sector agencies. CRANE will create a region-wide system of support to assist individual districts implement, develop and sustain rigorous career academies aligned critical industries identified by Next Economy, the Capital Region’s economic development strategy.

“Rigorous career academies are not only key to improving public education, but they are critical to the economic competitiveness of our region and its residents,” noted Dave Butler, CEO of NextEd.~ “CRANE, written in partnership with

nearly two dozen local districts, will create a competitive edge for the Capital Region, and is, by far, the most ambitious – and potentially the most transformative- career academy initiative in California, if not the nation.”

NextEd (formerly known as LEED) is an employer-educator partnership serving the six county Sacramento region and is the education/workforce affiliate of the Sacramento Metro Chamber.~ NextEd will serve as a primary partner with SCOE and the other districts on CRANE, serving as intermediary to employers, post-secondary institutions and civic partners.

With such far-reaching collaboration, the CRANE Consortium has the potential through Linked Learning to completely shift how schools throughout the greater Sacramento region prepare students for careers and college.

Members of the statewide Linked Learning Alliance, including ConnectEd, The California Center for College and Career, National Academy Foundation, and the College and Career Academy Support Network, worked with the CDE on the development of a Request for Applications for the pilot program and provided intense outreach, coaching, and support to prospective applicants.

Source: Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)

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Keith Hall, Well Known Local Builder, Dies

Keith Hall, a well known figure in the construction business in the greater Sacramento area for over 60 years died Thursday 12/27/12 at his home in Sacramento.

The Hall family, moved to Carmichael in 1938 when Keith was 11 years old. Carmichael had about 300 residents. The family attended Carmichael Presbyterian church. He graduated from Carmichael Elementary School and then from San Juan High School in 1945. Marvin Marshall, Jimmy Van Maren, Harry Dewey and Ancil Hoffman were boyhood friends and Laurel Ruff was his elementary school principal, not names of schools, streets and parks.

As the youngest of eight, his work life started early at age 11 working on Mr Henshaw's farm earning 50 cents a day and the value of hard work. He enlisted in the US Navy after high school and during WWII served as Sonarman aboard the USS Gainard with a mission to locate one man submarines trying to leave Tokyo Bay.

After returning home he went to work for H. S. Crocker Co, a stationery and office supply company in Sacramento. His job was to call on businesses in the area. For those that knew him,

Keith Hall, Builder, Active community Member and Patriot.

he knew your name – from the first meeting -and remembered it. That remained a lifelong passion. UPK, Ukropina, Polich & Kral, a commercial builder, and one of his clients, offered him as job as a timekeeper and more importantly the position also included job cost accounting and with that the construction career was born.

With experience as a bridge construction superintendent at UPK, he formed Folsom Ready Mix with partner Bob Skamnes and later with Knox Easterling formed Easterling & Hall concrete contracting

company where he remained until joining long time friend Ken Duncan and Carmichael Construction Company in 1967. Over the next 45 years the company completed over 200 tilt up buildings, 150 restaurants and numerous warehouses, banks and churches. Commercial projects included the Metro Business Center, PG&E regional office, Sunrise East Business Park, UPS-West Sacramento and most recently the Meyers Cookware Distribution center in Fairfield.

Hall was also an active community member and a passionate patriot. He would always, always thank every veteran he saw. He is a past President of the Orangevale Chamber Commerce, a past Folsom Lion and past Folsom Rotarian. He is also a proud member of American Legion post 637 in Citrus Heights.

His wife of 44 years, Marilyn Hall, died in July 2011. He is survived by his former wife Lorna Thorson and children-Cristie Gerard, Bryan Hall, William Gutenberg, Terri Soloman, Donna Gary and Lynda Kahn, 18 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. Very few men have been as big an influence in our lives as he has and is already greatly missed.

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- Jack T., Citrus Heights, CA





Reports from Citrus Heights Police Department

Officer Involved in Shooting, Car Theft

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) – On January 3, 2013, at approximately two o'clock in the morning, Citrus Heights Police Officers (CHPD) responded to the 8000 block of Debbie Ann Court to a report of a possible vehicle burglary in progress. The caller reported a dark colored vehicle, occupied by two subjects, drove into the neighborhood. A subject, wearing a hoodie, exited the vehicle and entered another vehicle located two houses away from the caller. The caller did not recognize either subject or the vehicle and believed the suspects were committing a crime.

Officers responded to the area in an effort to locate the suspects. The first officer arrived and located one of the suspects. A confrontation ensued at which point the officer, fearing for his safety, shot the suspect. Officers immediately rendered first aid until Sacramento Metro Fire Department arrived. The suspect was transported to an area hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

Officers located the second suspect nearby, in a vehicle which did not belong to the suspect. The suspect was arrested for attempted vehicle theft.

No officers were injured during this incident and there are no outstanding suspects. CHPD investigators are in the initial stages of the investigation and are processing the crime scene.

01/04/13 – Below are the parties involved in the incident on 01/03/13:

Lichen Drive Homicide

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) On 01/04/2013 at 6:01 P.M., Officers responded to the 7800 block of Lichen Drive regarding an assault with a firearm. Officers arrived on scene and located one adult male victim deceased from an apparent gunshot wound. The victim was located inside a parked vehicle. The identity of the victim is not being released at this time.

Investigators are on scene gathering information from witnesses. This is believed to be an isolated incident and the subjects involved knew each other. Witnesses described the suspects as two light skinned black or Hispanic males. The suspects fled the scene in a dark color sedan towards Antelope Road. The suspects had not been arrested at the time of this press release.

Investigators are encouraging anybody who may have information regarding the incident to please call the Citrus Heights Police Department at 916 727-5500.

CHPD Special Release

Victim Struck Fatally with Unknown Object

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) 01/05/2013 - At approximately 0628 hours, Officers were dispatched to a medical aid at 6300 block of Stonehand Avenue, regarding a subject that was struck with an unknown object. Upon arrival the victim was found unconscious outside of his residence. He was transported to the hospital by ambulance where he was pronounced deceased.

The motive is unknown at this time.

Investigators are actively following up leads.

No names will be released at this point in the investigation.

This incident is not related to the incident that occurred on Lichen Drive twelve hours earlier. Although the events occurred in close proximity, they are separate events and in each incident the involved parties knew each other.

CHPD Release.



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Motorists Prepare for Change: New Laws

Continued from Page 1

The criteria includes: the person is missing under unexplained or suspicious circumstances or the law enforcement agency believes the person is in danger due to age, health, mental or physical disability, environment or weather conditions; the person is in the company of a potentially dangerous person; or there are other factors indicating that the person may be in peril. Finally, there is information available, if given to the public, may assist in the safe recovery of the missing person.

- **Driver License** (AB 2189, Cedillo) This law allows a driver's license applicant who provides satisfactory proof that his or her presence in the United States is authorized under federal law, but who is not eligible for a social security account number, is eligible to receive an original driver's license if he or she meets all other qualifications for licensure.
- **Automated Traffic Enforcement Systems** (SB 1303, Simitan) This new law establishes consistency in the operations of red-light enforcement cameras throughout the state by requiring governmental agencies to follow specified guidelines regarding intersections, signage, and the notice to appear.
- **License Plates: Obstruction or Alteration** (AB 2489, Hall) This new law prevents the altering and positioning of license plates from its original markings and clarifies the penalty imposed for obscuring the readability of license plates.
- **Child Passenger Restraints** (AB 1452, Hill) Hospitals, clinics, and birthing centers will now be required to provide and discuss contact information regarding child safety seat requirements, installation, and inspection to parents and caregivers upon discharge of a child, if the child is less than eight years of age.
- There are also two new laws related to **recreational off-highway vehicles**. One (AB 1595, Cook) defines an off-highway motor vehicle to include a recreational off-highway vehicle (ROV) and establishes additional requirements governing its safe operation. The other law (AB 1266, Cook), which goes into effect July 1, 2013, prohibits a passenger in an ROV from riding in a seat location not designed and provided by the manufacturer. It also prohibits operation of the ROV if the passenger is not seated with both feet on the floorboard and able to grab the occupant handhold with the seat belt and shoulder belt or safety harness fastened.
- **Additional Registration Fees** (AB 1404, Feuer) This law authorizes three counties (Los Angeles, San Diego and San Bernardino) to increase vehicle registration fees to help fund vehicle theft programs. Increases would be from \$1 to \$2 for passenger vehicles, and \$2 to \$4 for commercial vehicles.
- **Inflatable Restraint Systems** (AB 1854, Brownley) This law makes it illegal for a person to knowingly distribute or sell a previously deployed air bag or component that will no longer meet the original equipment form, function or proper operation.
- **Driving Under the Influence: Alcoholic Beverage or Drug** (AB 2552, Torres) Although this change in the law does not take effect until January 1, 2014, it distinguishes whether an individual was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Ultimately this change, singling out drugs with its own subsection in the Vehicle Code, will make it easier to track the prevalence of drugged driving in California. This new law, coupled with the efforts requiring the use of Ignition Interlock Devices, will help reduce impaired driving throughout California. These points are only a synopsis of some of the new laws adopted. For complete information on chaptered bills enacted in 2012, please refer to the Legislative Counsel website at www.LegInfo.ca.gov.

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By Ronnie McBrayer

Imagine that tomorrow morning I deposit into your bank account \$86,400. This money is all yours to do with as you please, no strings attached. Now, not only am I going to deposit this amount into your account tomorrow, I’m going to do the same thing every day next week. That is a combined \$604,800 that will be waiting for you. But I’m not finished. I’m going to make this daily deposit into your account every day for the next year (you are *really* using your imagination now). At the conclusion of twelve months you will have received more than \$31.5 million. What if I told you that you have in your possession, today, something even more valuable than \$31 million. I wonder if you would believe me. You see, every day that you awake to draw air into your lungs, you receive that deposit of sorts, though it’s not measured in dollars. It’s measured in seconds. Every day contains 86,400 seconds; every week more than 600,000; and every year more than 31 million. They are yours to spend as you please. The only catch is this: When each day is

It’s Time

over, and after each week passes, and when the calendar turns, your “funds” expire. They have to be spent with urgency, for tomorrow your account will reset. And because it will reset, and because we can only spend those precious seconds we have today, what we do with those seconds matters a great deal. We know this. No preacher behind a pulpit or columnist at a keyboard has to tell us this. Yet, maybe we do need to be reminded. Because there is always the temptation, as Frederick Buechner said, “To believe that we have all the time in the world, whereas the truth of it is we do not...For each of us there comes a point of no return, a point from which we no longer have life enough left to go back and start over.” We seemed to have celebrated New Year’s Day 2012 just last week. Now that year, with all its promise, joy, heartache, dread, and transition is gone. And before we can catch our breath from the race that was, we lurch forward into another January and another year. The real danger for us all is to come around twelve months from now and be exactly where we were twelve months ago. Still stuck in a job we loathe. Still planning to take that big chance, or make that big move. Still at odds with the longestranged loved one with whom we hope to one day reconcile. Still tripping over the same addiction, still trapped in that same poisonous relationship, still struck

in the same soul-sucking routine. Time is far too short to live like this, and deep in our hearts, we know it. We know that there is an unmerciful ruthlessness to time that demands we spend what we have – all we have – while today is still called today. Because today we still have opportunity. We still have time. We cannot, then, put off until tomorrow, next week, or next year what must and can only be done while there are still seconds in our banks. The majestic Erma Bombeck, who cannot be improved upon, provides a summary on this point. She wrote, “I have learned that silver tarnishes when it isn’t used, perfume turns to alcohol, candles melt in the attic over the summer, and ideas that are saved for a dry week often become dated. When I am asked to give an accounting of my life to a higher court, it will be like this: ‘So, empty your pockets. What have you got left of your life? Any dreams that were unfulfilled? Any unused talent that we gave you when you were born that you still have left? Any unsaid compliments or bits of love that you haven’t spread around?’ And, I will answer, ‘I have nothing left to return. I spent everything you gave me. I’m as naked as the day I was born.’” Amen.

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, speaker, and author of multiple books. You can read more and receive regular e-columns in your inbox at www.ronniemcbrayer.net.

Accepted Just As You Are



By Karen Anderson

There is something in your home and work that is all-revealing. It is relentless in its continual observations of you. It will show you every kindness, happiness, joy, awe, and wonder but it can also show sadness, cruelty, anger, depression, and whatever else you can think of. It can be heartless in its reality. The only thing it doesn’t show is love and true emotions. You guessed it...your mirror and any reflective surfaces in your home. This item can be a rude awakening of your humanness and flaws. How many times have you looked in the mirror to walk away in disgust, because your hair’s not right, you’re heavier than you want to be, or you now have a

blemish on your face? You may feel like something is always wrong with you and wonder who could ever care about you. If you think about it, you know there is someone who cares for you, imperfections and all. Remember that your Maker took delight in the mere idea of you before you even existed. His Word says, “*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.*” It really bothers me when I hear others putting themselves down, saying that they can’t do anything right, or they must be the dumbest person in the world. Don’t you realize, dear ones, you are forgetting about the God who made you? He is perfect, and He don’t make no junk. I personally

feel that when you put yourself down like that, it’s like slapping God across the face with the judgment of yourself. Instead, you should be thanking Him for making you unique. There is no one like you! You are special! In His eyes you are precious! Now is the time to accept yourself for how God made you. Get on your knees and thank Him for every imperfection you have. This is a really liberating act. Don’t worry about what other may think. The only opinion that counts is God and yourself. ACCEPT YOURSELF TODAY! Live in the freedom that God loves you unconditionally, “warts and all.” PASSAGE: Psalm 139:13-15 (NIV) Karen Anderson is an accomplished speaker, author, and chaplain. Latest books, “*Nikki’s Tail-Waggin’ Lessons*” and “*The Little Book of BIG Thoughts Series.*” Leave a message for Karen through her website www.doablesteps.com/contact.

Let’s Do It All Over Again

By Dr. James L. Snyder

The fact we actually survived another year is a tribute to somebody’s tenacity; I am not sure whose. I know the only thing that got me through the year was the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and boy is she graciously tenacious. I was sure everything would collapse and of course, several times I collapsed in my easy chair. It is a New Year, or so they tell us but I have my suspicions. After this latest episode with the Mayan’s calendar, I am not too sure what date it is or what year it is, for that matter. They certainly got everything wrong and I have my suspicions about the rest of it. How do we really know that January 1 is actually January 1? Moreover, how do we know what year it is exactly? I think somewhere along the line somebody has pulled a scam on civilization and has messed up our calendars. If the Mayans got it wrong, maybe we have it wrong also. Whatever day and whatever year it is I am going to celebrate the New Year. If I am wrong, I have a lot of company. When we celebrate the New Year, there is nothing new about it. Everything we did last year we are going to be doing this year only we will be one year older. Perhaps as we get older we forget about what we have done and think we are doing something new. Hooray for senility! I really do not care about that; my philosophy is, let’s do it all over again. If it is worth doing the first time, it is worth doing again. This brings me to a great point, which is, some things are worth repeating while other things are not. It is trying to find out the difference between these two that makes life challenging. I do not mind repeating things if I am

in charge of what I am repeating. I think we all should choose what we are going to repeat. For example, I wish I could choose a year to repeat. If I could repeat any year, it would be 1971. That year represents the greatest con in the history of mankind. I am not sure anything like it has ever happened before or since. That was the year I married a young lady who turned out to be the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. What bothers me about this is why did she really marry me? Was it my charm and good looks or did she think I was rich? There have been times I have wanted to query her on this very subject but then, I am always afraid she will tell me the truth. I do not mind the truth of it does not involve anything personally. I just will settle with the fact that that was the year I conned her into marrying me. We have been a great team ever since. She has kept me straight and I have given her opportunities to exercise that career, which she has become quite proficient. One of the great things resulting from this marriage is the fact that she has been faithful to point out my mistakes. Through her help, I discovered I have quite a few mistakes. I begin every year with a clean slate. I am able to celebrate January 1 with no mistakes whatsoever but then the next day my wife begins the ominous task of pointing out my mistakes. This is a joint effort, which leaves me out of joint often. I have a little theory along this line. I think that if it is a mistake you have made before it should not count anymore. I think the only thing that should be legitimate to point out are new mistakes. I find myself so busy practicing my old mistakes that I rarely get around

to making new mistakes. All these years I have revealed in my old mistakes. Trying to find something new is a great strain on my little grey cells. At this point in my life, they are exhausted and are encouraging me to rely upon those old mistakes and give them a well-deserved rest. At my stage in life I think new is overrated and, if experience is anything, something new is always taxing and in more ways than one. Do not let the government find out that you have something new or Uncle Sam will come knocking at your door with a gentle request for tax money. There is an old saying that says insanity is doing the same things over and over expecting different results. Well, that does not describe me. I do not want different results. I like the results I have. I like doing the same thing over again because I know what to expect. And if ignorance in this area is bliss, I am the most blissful person on the planet. My challenge this year is to surprise my wife with some unexpected new mistakes. Just one! To get on the right track for the New Year, I start with the Bible. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV). Instead of just celebrating the New Year, I plan also to celebrate that “new creature” in Christ. No mistake about it.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, PO Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 1-866-552-2543 or e-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net. His web site is www.jamesnsnyderministries.com.

What Kind of Love do You Give to Others?



By Marlys Norris, Christian Author

LOVE is the most powerful word and emotion in any language. Most of us experience a form of love as children we receive from our parents. We erroneously believe we know what love is when we approach our teenage years. Love is not mere fascination and we quickly learn real love is much more complicated. When we believe we have fall-in-love, again we believe we know what love is -- only to learn love is even more complicated when two ideas of what family is about is joined in matrimony

we feel confused.. Then, when we have our first child love is expanded as we give our child parental love. Different problems we face are difficult, but each one has a way of teaching and deepening our love for others. In the process of just living life, we most likely don’t understand as we begin to hear God’s grace loves us with an all-encompassing and everlasting love. However, not until we come to the place we understand why Jesus was born and gave His life to mercifully purchase our souls for eternity do we have a deeper understanding exactly that “love” is really about giving. We learn that Love is so much more and it is an all encompassing love, it cannot be defined simply with only one description. The Love of God that graces our existence as believers is given to us when Jesus becomes our Savior and Lord. We learn and experience

His divine love in our lives. Our knowledge about God and His love is expanded as we learn love has four different descriptions: There is a family kind of love; a love between a man and woman; a friendship kind of love; and an “agape” kind of love that is unconditional and complete, the kind of love given to each one of us from God alone. He loves each one of us to the ultimate degree and it is everlasting. All taught and described eloquently in the Word of God. When a Christian who fully understands the four kinds of love and they sign a card or e-mail with LOVE, please understand which love (above) they are reflecting! It is because they really care about you and cherish your relationship with them.

Marlys Johnsen Norris Marlysjn@gmail.com Seven Christian Books Senior Gleanings I now available



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Crossword Puzzle on Page 10

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By Pastor Ray Dare

We have a tendency to get stuck in life. We get stuck in relationships. We get stuck with habits. We get stuck in grief when we lose a loved one. We get stuck in anger. We get stuck in work. Once you're stuck it's easy to feel guilty and even angry. You think, "I wish I could change but I can't!" You start to get angry at yourself. Then your anger turns to fear. "I'll never be able to get out of this...I'll never get this under control." Then your fear eventually turns into depression and you begin to wonder..."Is there any help for me, is there any hope?" You feel like giving up on yourself.

As we enter this New Year what would you like to change about yourself? In what way do you need to become better, healthier and different? You

Hope for the New Year

may think, "I'll never be different...I tried that before...My situation will never change, it's hopeless!"

Jesus said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27. The Living Bible says it this way, "God can do what men can't." I like that: God can do in you what you cannot do in yourself. God can make the changes in you that you cannot make on your own. God can give you a power that's beyond your own.

So what area of your life would you like to change? What is it that seems impossible to you? What is it that you want to give up on? A relationship? A marriage? Your finances? Physical health? Maybe a hurt from your past and you think, "I'll never recover from this...I'll never be able to get over this." Maybe it's an emotional or physiological problem and you think, "I'll never break free from this...I'll never become the person that I want to be."

God is aware of the changes you would like to make in your life and He wants to help you. The Bible tells us, "Let us approach (God) with confidence, so we may receive mercy and

find grace to help in our time of need." Hebrews 4:16. Approach Him today in confidence and you'll find His grace and power to help you make those changes that you cannot make on your own. Approach the New Year will confidence by making some new resolutions and new personal goals and He will help you do what you cannot do for yourself.

The Bible says, "For God is at work within you, giving you the will and the power to achieve His purposes." Philippians 2:13. As you enter the New Year, what is God doing? He's at work within you. What's He doing? He will give you the WILL and the POWER to accomplish His purposes. God gives you the "will" that's the desire to make the changes. Then He gives you the "power" that the ability to make the change. God gives them both to you as ask Him and trust Him.

Pastor Ray
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A Film Review by Tim Riley

PARENTAL GUIDANCE
(Rated PG)

Like most holiday seasons, this year has a few epics and a bunch of passable comedies. In the former category, you’ve got “The Hobbit” and Russell Crowe singing during the 1832 Paris uprising, in a movie nearly as long as the French Revolution itself. “Parental Guidance” falls into the grouping of the ostensible family comedies suitable for all ages at a time when kids are out of school and everyone is in a festive holiday mood.

There was a decent reason to believe that the pairing of Billy Crystal and Bette Midler, as traditional-minded grandparents with love in their hearts and hell-bent for family-oriented fun, would result in more than acceptable entertainment.

To a decent extent, Crystal and Midler bring a generational dimension of old-school parenting to the fore in a way that is alternately amusing and frustrating, the latter more so for their own kids than grandkids.

Artie and Diane Decker (Crystal and Midler) have been the type of carefree yet caring parents that proved embarrassing to adult daughter Alice Simmons (Marisa Tomei), now married with three children of her own.

The Deckers live in Fresno, California, where the sports-obsessed, motor-mouthed Artie has been the baseball announcer

Riley
Reviews

COMEDY IN “PARENTAL GUIDANCE” PURELY FAMILY FRIENDLY

for the Fresno Grizzlies. Diane is as equally brash and loud as her husband.

Meanwhile, Alice and her husband Phil (Tom Everett Scott) live in Atlanta, which is almost as far away as you can get from Fresno while still remaining within the continental United States.

Alice and Phil want to slip away for a week’s convention trip, and Phil’s parents are not available for babysitting duty. As a measure of desperation, they call for help from the “other grandparents.”

Possessed of the Type-A parental gene, Alice and Phil are reluctant, to say the least, to turn over their three precious children to parents who may not follow their indulgent ways.

The kids have their own set of issues. The oldest, Harper (Bailee Madison), is pushed constantly to practice her violin. The older son, Turner (Joshua Rush), has a stuttering problem that causes him to be bullied at school.

The youngest, Barker (Kyle Harrison Breitkopf), is oddly attached to his invisible best friend, a kangaroo named Carl. But Barker is also the cageiest sibling, as he cleverly blackmails his grandpa into forking over hush money.

Before Alice and Phil can even pack their bags, the grandparents clash with the overly protective parents over child-rearing tactics. As a result, Alice becomes a nervous wreck, adding to the discomfort that is mined for comic effect.

Phil has designed an ultra-modern home where a computer

monitors everyone’s movement, sort of a creepy Big Brother-is-watching surveillance system that decides, on its own power, to disrespect Artie.

Meanwhile, Artie decides to tackle problems with his own blunt methods. For one, he candidly confronts Turner’s speech therapist over her questionable techniques.

Since Artie was also recently fired from his announcer job, he makes the unwise choice of taking Barker with him on an audition with ESPN, making a fool of himself for trying to fit in with the extreme sports crowd.

Naturally, the grandparents make a ton of blunders in caring for the grandkids. Though sugar has been banned from the household, Artie figures that the sugary treat of a nice cake won’t do any harm. Big mistake!

What’s not a mistake, however, is that the loving grandparents and the kids finally reach a level of familial connection, though it involves something as simple as a backyard game of kick the can.

Artie also helps Turner overcome his stuttering with a clever use of a radio replay of Bobby Thomson’s walk-off home run hit on a pitch by Ralph Branca during the 1951 Giants-Dodgers pennant playoff series.

“Parental Guidance” falls into the trap of forging some of its comedy with the formulaic use of certain bodily functions. Apparently, the filmmakers had to resort to juvenile humor to fill the vacuum in a movie that is well short of two hours.

On the other hand, this is a minor quibble with a film that is, for the most part, a family-friendly entertainment that offers plenty of laughs and heartwarming moments.

“Parental Guidance” is not a film for jaded cynics. Sure, it is rather generic, but it is a welcome relief to some of the corrosive junk that’s out there.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

We make these fabulous New Year’s resolutions, vowing to keep them on the pain of...well you know! Do they last? Most of the time no, but we make them anyway...usually a few minutes before midnight! But do you know how it all began? I checked in on an article on Ezine articles online by a Gary Ryan Blair and found it to be a fascinating history. It goes all the way back to 153 B.C. It seems that Janus, a mythical king of early Rome was placed at the head of the calendar. Supposedly, he had two faces, so Janus could look back on past events and forward to the future. He became the ancient symbol for resolutions and many Romans looked for forgiveness from their enemies and also exchanged gifts before the beginning of the new year. Oh, and the New Year has not always begun on January 1. It doesn’t begin on that date everywhere even today. It begins on that date only for cultures using a 365-day solar calendar. January 1 became the beginning of the New Year in 46 B.C., when Julius Caesar developed a calendar that would more accurately reflect the seasons than previous calendars had. The Romans named the first month of the year after Janus, the god of beginnings and the guardian of doors and entrances. Because Janus was always depicted as having on face on the front of his head and one on the back, at midnight on December 31, the Romans imagined Janus looking back at the old year and forward to the new.

So now that we have reached into a New Year, I thought I’d share some of the New Year’s resolutions some celebrities I had on my POPPOFF Radio Show shared with me. You might be

POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

surprised at what they told me. Were they looking for more money and fame? No way!!!

Do you remember **Martin Kove**? He was the villain in “Karate Kid” and his credits run deep from “Wyatt Earp” with Kevin Costner to “Rambo II” with Sylvester Stallone. Over 100 films under his belt, and what do you think he shared with me. Yes, he wanted to be more disciplined with his exercises on a regular basis, but he also wanted to meditate more, like a couple of times a day. He wanted to develop more positive thinking...as much as he can. And I loved this one, he wants to better his skills. You’d think it would be his acting, but no, his computer skills. Seems like he wants to better himself in as many ways as he can.

Then I got the inside track from **Dr. Elmo**, the man behind “Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer” fame. Did you know the Gray Panthers actually picketed him at a club for singing that song? He thought they were fans outside the club with signs honoring him. Instead, they wanted to attack him. But that’s history. Now Dr. Elmo vows to run a double marathon, and he ain’t no spring chicken. He also vows to tell his dear wife how much he loves her everyday and what she means to him. Ain’t that sweet?

Stanley Livingston wants to do something his mom always wanted him to do. Of course, we will always love Stanley as “Chip” on the “My Three Sons” TV classic. He has done so much since then from director to writer to producer. But his mom always wanted him to follow his natural talent as an artist. He’s done stained glass work too along with his landscapes, florals, and street scenes. He wants to devote his time to getting back to that talent his mom always loved. You can see some of what Stanley is doing at www.stanleylivingstonart.com. I’m sure we can look forward to some real beauty from the heart!

Then I had the opportunity to speak with former Olympic Gymnast **Cathy Rigby**. She was in Sacramento playing Peter Pan on stage, a part she has perfected

to the max. At 60 years old, she is still flying high as Peter, but this will be her last time playing the fanciful boy! Her resolution is to pray for patience, so she can move on and reach out to new goals in her life. I don’t think there will be a problem there. She and her husband Tom McCoy are executive producers in the McCoy/Rigby Entertainment series at LaMirada and they have a conservatory for the arts too. I’ll have more on Cathy’s story in another article.

And then there was **The Amazing Kreskin**. Remember him all the way back to being on with Johnny Carson to today’s Jimmy Fallon. From bending spoons to predicting our president, he has done it all and not a regret in life. No, he is not a psychic, but he is a mentalist. Yeah, just like the TV show. He doesn’t make New Year’s Resolutions generally because he gets his energy from everybody anyway. But he said his favorite Christmas song is “I’ll be home for Christmas.” Why? Because he has done 447 performances in 2012, and that’s being on the road for a very long time. Ten days before Christmas, he was in Saudi Arabia. I’m sure home looked pretty darn good to him!

I know, you are wondering what my New Year’s resolution is. How about to keep bringing you the best and brightest interviews on POPPOFF. I will vow to inquire, challenge, and dig in to get the truth because the truth is out there! Ooooops! Do I hear the theme from “The X-Files?”

And so our hopes and dreams go on. I love to hear the resolutions from all walks of life. I will finish 2012 with the saying I always use at the end of my show, because it is so appropriate for this time. Always live simply, laugh often, love deeply, and most of all dare to dream! Why? Because without a dream, how can you make your dreams come true? **A HAPPY AND BLESSED NEW YEAR TO YOU AND YOURS!!!**

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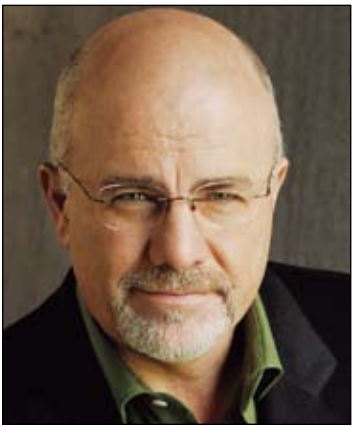
CLUES

ACROSS

- 1. Mt. Everest, McKinley and such
- 6. Cleopatra's cause of death
- 9. Crack in a lip
- 13. "Hot toddy, e.g.
- 14. Former Chinese communist leader
- 15. Glowed or beamed
- 16. Pronouncements
- 17. "___ to Joy"
- 18. Bird of prey weapon
- 19. Hungarian composer Bela ____
- 21. "Popular winter sculpture
- 23. Thus far
- 24. Greenish blue
- 25. Former refrigerator
- 28. "A snow ___ is one for trekking on snow
- 30. Astronomer's sighting
- 35. Miners' bounty, pl.
- 37. One who "___ on the safe side"
- 39. Start eating!
- 40. Heaven's Gate, e.g.
- 41. 1:3, e.g.
- 43. Captured in fun
- 44. "Well-___ machine"
- 46. Falls behind
- 47. Like tiny print
- 48. Like number 1 to hydrogen
- 50. Cuzco valley empire
- 52. Jack Kerouac's Paradise
- 53. Pottery oven
- 55. Everybody or everything
- 57. "___ break
- 61. Done after a trip
- 64. Wombs
- 65. Gas station abbreviation
- 67. Florida Key, e.g.
- 69. Turf, as opposed to surf
- 70. Unagi
- 71. "Heard on sleigh ride?"
- 72. Cab blower
- 73. "Snow falls from it
- 74. Irregularly notched

DOWN

- 1. Sum it up
- 2. Where a baby goes
- 3. Maryland Institute College of Art
- 4. Diary note
- 5. "Used for gliding
- 6. In a frenzy
- 7. "___ but true"
- 8. Literature in metrical form
- 9. Tobacco mouthful
- 10. River islet
- 11. Dwarf buffalo
- 12. In the Ivy League
- 15. Pitted peach, e.g.
- 20. Not the same one
- 22. Indian restaurant staple
- 24. Feeling no doubt
- 25. "Hot treat
- 26. "Ingredient in infamous cake
- 27. Played by Yo-Yo Ma
- 29. Kind of surgeon
- 31. Marty McFly's antagonist
- 32. Tangerine-grapefruit hybrid, pl.
- 33. Tarzan's swing rope
- 34. "Snow impression
- 36. Kind of cell
- 38. "Capricorn or Aquarius, e.g.
- 42. Extinct Italic language
- 45. Tiny antelope
- 49. Result of Truman's National Security Act of 1947
- 51. "Kind of skiing
- 54. Ancient Greeks' harps
- 56. Lightsaber beam
- 57. Be quiet!
- 58. "The Simpsons" palindrome
- 59. Malicious look
- 60. Ayatollah's home
- 61. Pre-swan state?
- 62. Greek mode of history
- 63. Party casks
- 66. Expresses mild alarm or surprise
- 68. "___ End" by The Doors



Dave Ramsey is America's most trusted voice on money and business. He's authored four New York Times best-selling books: Financial Peace, More Than Enough, The Total Money Makeover and EntreLeadership. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 5,000,000 listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on Twitter at @DaveRamsey and on the web at daveramsey.com.

Better Safe Than Sorry

Dear Dave,
My wife and I are 70, and we have \$950,000 in annuities in the market, plus \$68,000 in our emergency fund. The only debt we have is our mortgage. I'm considering converting our stocks to a money market account to lower the risk. What do you think?

- Howard

Dear Howard,
There are two sides to this. One is the asset allocation method, where as you grow older you move away from equities like mutual funds toward safer, more conservative investments like money markets, bonds and certificates of deposit. This is standard financial planning theory.

Dave Says

I disagree with that theory, and here's why. Statistics show that if you make it to 72 years of age and are in good health, you have a high probability of living into your nineties. If you're making around one percent on your money market and inflation is four to five percent, then your money isn't going to be worth a lot. You need to outpace inflation, at least with your investments, in order to break even.

You might move some cash over to money markets and CDs for your own peace of mind, but I'd also recommend growth and income mutual funds along with some balanced funds. You want the entire group to be hitting the four to five percent range over the next several years, so you can at least keep up with the rising costs of gas and bread.

In my mind, you're avoiding one type of risk by moving everything to money markets, but you're taking on a different kind of risk—the chance you'll get tackled from behind by inflation. My advice is to balance things out so you can sleep better at night, but at a pace where you and your money stay ahead of the curve!

- Dave

Is This An Emergency?

Dear Dave,
My wife just had our first child. As a result, we now have \$2,500 in medical bills not covered by insurance. We've got \$7,000 in our emergency fund,

and I make about \$25,000 a year. Should we dip into our savings for this or set up a payment plan with the hospital?

- Matthew

Dear Matthew,
Congratulations on your new baby! I know this is going to make the new year extra-special for you.

If I were in your situation, I'd write a check today and knock out that hospital bill. This definitely falls under the heading of "emergency" in my mind, so pay the bill and jump back into rebuilding your emergency fund.

You've done a good job of saving on \$25,000 a year, but let's look around and see what you can do about making more money, too. Additional classroom education or extra training in your field could increase your income pretty quickly. Your emergency fund probably needs to be a little bit bigger as well, and it'll be a lot easier to make this happen if you're bringing in more cash.

I'm sure you're a hard-working guy, but the truth is it's going to be pretty tough for even a small family to make it on what you're bringing home now. Life happens, and the unexpected can become a common occurrence when there's a little one loose in the house!

- Dave

**For more financial help, please visit daveramsey.com.*

So, This is What New Looks Like

By Dr. James L. Snyder

It was just before New Year's and the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were relaxing after a busy week of toil and labor. Not paying much attention to my surroundings, I had immersed myself in a favorite book.

As far as I am concerned, nothing compares to a favorite book when you are trying to relax and unwind. I turned the page and happened to notice on the other side of the room my wife was all a twichy. I have seen this behavior before and I knew she was anxious to say something. I pretended not to notice.

Finally, it was as if she exploded. "I can't wait for the New Year. Aren't you excited?" I answered in the affirmative to try to keep the conversation as minimal as possible. "No, I mean aren't you really excited about the New Year?"

I knew if I was going to get back to my book I would have to let her say, what was on her mind. According to her, the approaching New Year was going to be spectacular. Everything old, she explained to me, would be new again.

We have been in this New Year for a couple of weeks now and, I will not contradict my wife, at least aloud, but this New Year looks suspiciously like the Old Year.

I am not quite sure what she thought would be different this year, but to me it is just the old year run through again. And, that is good with me. I am not one of these persons that needs the latest flash in the pan. I quite prefer the tried and true.

It was about two weeks after the New Year and my wife said, "I'll be back in an hour or two, I'm going shopping." It did not dawn on me at the time but about 10 minutes later,

it did. The reason my wife was so excited about the New Year was that she was going to go out and buy some new clothes.

After all, according to her calculations, the New Year deserves new clothing.

I smiled as I thought about her going to the store trying on dresses, seeking one that would fit her both in size and in fancy. As for me, I am quite comfortable in my old clothes. They fit me just fine, thank you.

Women have to look fine all the time. Men, on the other hand are not that particular about what they wear. I can wear the same shirt for days on end and feel just as comfortable as the first day I put it on.

My clothing does not make me feel any younger. I go along with the saying that says you are only as old as you feel. Of course, I do have some of those Methuselah moments.

Everything old was once new and if new last very long it ends up being old. Therefore, whatever is old was once new and whatever is new will one day be old. This is where most people make their mistake. They fail to see the relationship between old and new.

For example, as much as our culture pretends to be youth oriented, it does everything to get old while looking young. I often have this conversation with my wife. I am not old, I am just getting older and my plans are to get older and older and older.

The great object in life is to get as old as you possibly can while looking and feeling new. Nothing to me is sillier than a 40 year old trying to act 20. The mind may say 20, but the body really knows it is 40.

If people would put the money they spend to look young in a 401(k) their golden years would truly be golden. How much

money is spent each year on plastic surgery? What I want to know is, who in the world do they think they are fooling? Their mirror?

Right after the New Year's celebration, I got up one morning feeling terrific. There was a bounce in my step, a giggle on my tongue; I was feeling like I was 20 something. I had not felt this good since I cannot remember how long. Then it happened.

No matter how good you might feel some day, there is always something or someone who can undermine that and put you in your proper place.

My mistake was going into the bathroom. There in the bathroom for all the world to see, especially me is this ghastly object called a mirror. When I looked into the mirror, I was shocked to see I was not alone. I thought I had come into the bathroom by myself but there in the mirror was this old guy I hardly recognized.

My first reaction was to ask him to leave the bathroom and then I noticed something. That person in the mirror was me! All of those exhilarating feelings dissipated as reality grabbed hold of my soul and soundly shook me.

In my Bible reading that morning, I read what the apostle Paul said. "And be renewed in the spirit of your minds; and that she put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:23-24 KJV).

Only God, in His wisdom, can create in me something that is truly new.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, PO Box 831313, Ocala, FL 34483. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 1-866-552-2543 or e-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net. His web site is www.jamesnsnyderministries.com.



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