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Dixon Independent Voice

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AUGUST 11, 2023

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Skipping Around Construction



Emily Reina brought her three children down to her daughter's new school to see some of the work going on there. Photo by Debra Dingman

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Although most school children have a summer away from their school grounds, the children at Anderson Elementary participating in the Catalyst program have added the extracurricular activity of watching construction – and all the orange-vested workers in hard hats – work around them.

“We constantly count and make sure we have all the children,” said Teacher Brienne pointing to a clip board with the names of all the students. She was monitoring about a dozen kiddos playing tetherball, bouncing balls, and drawing pictures under a shade umbrella.

Just a short time earlier, they were all tucked inside their classrooms



Anderson Elementary Principal Rayito Farris needs parents to be extra nice while the school is getting renovated. DUSD courtesy photo

when a huge big rig carrying portable bathrooms and pulling in a 12-foot

portable bathroom onto the playground.

“In my 35-year career in school construction, I have never seen this,” Leigh Coop of School Site Solutions who is overseeing the Anderson Elementary School renovations, told the Board of Trustees at the Dixon Unified School District meeting. “It takes very long to do a construction project. Our team has been diligent in preparing for school opening...” She then listed factors affecting the project that was started in June and should have been completed before school started again.

“There have been supply issues. It’s hard to find contractors. Boomers are retiring so there is a labor shortage. There are agencies competing

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Neighborhood Christian School Gets New Principal



NCS New Principal Mica Seibert. Courtesy photo

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - If you’d like to know more about Neighborhood Christian School, they will be holding a ‘Welcome to School’ night for the preschool and the main school at 6 p.m. on Friday, August 11 at 955 East A Street.

It’s also a chance to meet the new Principal: former teacher Mica Seibert who will be leading the school this year after the departure of Principal David Callison.

The school is also welcoming a new kindergarten teacher, Katie Hopkins, and a new 3rd/4th grade teacher, Amy Cruz.

The school has a 2-year-old program all the way through 8th grade, according to new school secretary Jennifer Schwarzbach.

The private Christian school was started in 1979 to meet the educational and spiritual needs of children in Solano and Yolo Counties by Deryl Radder, an educator and man of faith, who had a heart for missions. David and then his younger brother, Rick Vidmar, ran the school for years after that. This is the third year it has been located at the church and now offers preschool through middle school classes.

The 44-year-old school has about 150 students in prekindergarten through 8th grade. Students come from Dixon as well as the surrounding cities of Vacaville, Winters, Woodland and even Sacramento. Unlike the Catholic school, church membership is not required.

The school is inter-denominational and is project based. They partnered with Sustainable Solano which helped build a large garden in the front of the church grounds and Callison reported they have future plans to use the kitchen to expand lessons from the produce grown.

The NCS motto is “Educating students for life.” For more information, call (707) 678-9336. ★

End of Silveyville Pumpkins and Start of Wedding Venue

Story and photo by Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - If I’d only known it was going to be their last Silveyville Pumpkin Farm, I would have stayed longer, slid down the haystack slide again, painted another pumpkin, and would have bought more funny-looking gourds. I would have savored the great family fun my children had, and my grandchildren enjoyed.

“Our Pumpkin Farm had its final season in 2022, and we have closed the doors on the Pumpkin Farm experience at Silveyville,” Jeri and Ted Seifert posted on the Silveyville Tree Farm website. One of Solano County’s most popular pumpkin patches was located at 6248 Silveyville Road in Dixon on a 20-acre site which was the brainchild of the Seifert family, namely Ted and Jeri although the entire family and extended family came alongside as the many hard-working hands of the Seifert family.

They expressed



The peaceful, pumpkin fields of Silveyville will be no more. The company’s focus returns to their Christmas Tree Farm and a new wedding venue.

“heartfelt gratitude” to their longtime Pumpkin Farm customers. But reminded all that the Silveyville Christmas Tree Farm would operate as normal.

“We have replaced our pumpkin fields with additional Christmas trees to bring a quality product to our thousands of loyal Christmas customers,” they wrote. “It’s been a very rewarding experience to share a bit of country charm with all of you.”

But all that country charm isn’t going away at

all. Like a fairy godmother, Jeri has waved her magical and creative hands, transforming a large portion of it into a wedding venue. Could it be that grandchildren are now getting married?

“We are excited to announce that we will soon be launching our new venue, The Timbers at Silveyville,” she wrote. Their new website, atthetimbers.com, shows pictures of a wedding venue nestled amongst the trees and rich in country

charm. Some of the rustic decorations available are a wine barrel table, old bottle centerpieces, rustic wood arbors, various antique lanterns, and a countryman’s display ladder shelf.

Nonetheless, and after 41 years of Christmas Tree Farm memories, they will continue serving those seeking a ‘real’ Christmas Tree experience for many more years, they said. For more information, call (707) 365-4223 or email info@atthetimbers.com. ★





Barbie Sends Too Many Messages

By Debra Dingman

You might want to look into some of the movie reviews of Barbie if you are thinking that you want to go see it. I had planned on taking my granddaughter with me because all the television promos looked fun.

But, when I told my son that I was going to take her, he explained that the movie was made for women who played with Barbies when they were children and that it wasn't made for children.

Well, I am not a sophisticated movie reviewer by any means, but I have taken a college course on women taught by a 2nd-wave feminist who was interesting, and I have taken a media course that taught me to look critically at entertainment. I learned there is always a message.

My friend and I went to the beautifully renovated downtown Woodland theater that is only \$8.50 for matinee times (only \$5 anytime on Tuesdays). I noted that it was PG-13 "Parents Strongly Cautioned." After that, I settled in curious what feminist slant I would see from Director Greta Gerwig.

The movie starts with little girls playing with baby dolls in a stone-age background. They were seen feeding, bathing, and rocking the babies, then this first-ever doll that was a grown up is introduced: Barbie. Then the young

girls bash and shred their baby dolls. I found it disturbing because I felt the scene made mothering babies some kind of obscene choice. Thankfully, it was brief.

As the movie progressed, I thought it was showing some pretty fair-sided points such as how Barbie was supposed to open doors for women, showing they could be pilots, scientists, doctors, or anything they wanted to be. But there was an unintended consequence in that girls then grew up feeling that if they weren't perfectly proportioned, blonde and slim, then they didn't measure up... and truthfully, that idea basically stuck until the Kardashians' full bodies made mainstream media.

It was interesting to learn why some dolls came and went (like pregnant Midge.)

The movie has music and dancing, and different personalities get introduced while Barbie (Margot Robbie) has a perfect life. She's sweet, happy, popular, and everyone adores her – especially Ken (Ryan Gosling.) But Barbie isn't interested in him that way. To her defense, he has no substance at this point other than his tan abs.

But then Barbie starts to age. She thinks about death, gets cellulite, and drops a tear. The rest of the movie is about her travelling to the real world to meet with her makers, Mattel, Inc. who

is surprised at the all-male Board and CEO Will Farrell. She finds Ruth Handler, the actual doll creator, tucked in the back of the huge office building in a little kitchen from yesteryears.

From here the movie is a blur where I felt too many different issues were brought up and left hanging – like patriarchy vs. matriarchy and men feeling lost due to the focus on the women's movement, to name just a few.

I was wearing out and stopped feeling 'entertained.' I wished I had bought a bucket of popcorn.

Was it worth it? Yes. It was glamorous, fun, and silly. I loved the nostalgia of the mother, America Ferrera, playing with dolls and the reality scenes of the teenage daughter being moody and distant during her teen years.

Would I see it again? No. I have enough chaos and unanswered observations in my real life. I think my granddaughter would have been in awe of the make-up, hair, and outfits but wouldn't have got a clue about the messages and it might have confused her more about being a young woman. So I'm glad someone clued me in on this and I hope I'm doing that for you.

Know that we have just begun to see 'toy' movies. Next up are movies on Polly Pocket, Barney, even Thomas the Tank. ★

American Pickers to Film in California!



Follow Mike Wolfe and Danielle Colby as they hunt for America's most valuable antiques in the hit show American Pickers. Photo courtesy of Cineflix

Cineflix News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The American Pickers are excited to return to California! They plan to film episodes of The History Channel hit television series throughout your area in September 2023.

AMERICAN PICKERS is a documentary series that explores the fascinating world of antique "picking" on The History Channel. The hit show follows skilled pickers in the business, as they hunt for America's most valuable antiques. They are always excited to find historically significant or rare items, in addition to unforgettable Characters and their collections.

As they hit the back roads from coast to coast, the Pickers are on a mission to recycle and rescue forgotten relics. Along the way, they want to meet characters with amazing stories and fun items. They hope to give historically significant objects a new lease on life while learning a thing or two about America's past along the way. The Pickers have seen a lot of rusty gold over the years and are always looking to discover something they've never seen before. They are ready to find extraordinary items and hear fascinating tales about them.

We at American Pickers continue to take the pandemic very seriously and will be following all guidelines and protocols



Mike Wolfe of American Pickers will be visiting area private collections to incorporate California stories and relics into The History Channel's documentary program. Photo courtesy of Cineflix

for safe filming outlined by the state and CDC. Nevertheless, we are excited to continue reaching the many collectors in the area to discuss their years of picking and are eager to hear their memorable stories!

The American Pickers TV Show is looking for leads and would love to explore your hidden treasure. If you or someone you know has a unique item, story to tell, and is ready to sell...we would love to hear from you! Please note, the Pickers DO NOT pick stores, flea markets, malls, auction businesses, museums, or anything open to the public. If interested, please send us your name, phone number, location, and description of the collection with photos to: americanpickers@cineflix.com or call (646) 493-2184 facebook: @GotAPick ★

Dixon News Briefs



Gold shovels were brought out for the groundbreaking and Chamber Ribbon Cutting of the Quick Quack Car Wash next to Denny's on Stratford Avenue recently. Photo by Robin Tully

MPG Staff

Country Music

The Uninvited Presents Country Night with the Tony Marques Band and Buck Ford performing at the Dixon May Fair, 655 South First Street on Friday, August 11. Buck Ford was raised in Vacaville and is now a Nashville-based recording artist. He last played in Dixon at the Cool Patch Pumpkin Farm in 2021. Doors open at the May Fair at 6 p.m. Tickets are available online at Eventbrite. It's open to all ages and there will be strict security. No outside food or alcohol allowed. For more information, call (707) 640-9326.

Dog Show

It's that time again for the Donner Trail Kennel Club AKC All Breeds Dog Show to be held at the Dixon May Fair on Saturday and Sunday, September 23 – 24 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The organization is an AKC licensed all-breed club, based in Placer County, California. For more information, call (916) 716-2369.

Fraud Prevention

Seniors are the most targeted group for scams and fraud with one in five being a victim. The Solano Senior Fraud Prevention and Scam Prevention will be discussed at the Dixon Senior/Multi-Use Center, 201 S. Fifth Street on Wednesday, September 6, from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. For more details, call (707) 678-7441 or email ageorge@cityofdixon.us.

Food Truck & Fun

The Dixon Action Team will present a Food Truck and Family Fun event on Sunday, August 27, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 North First Street. There will be fun for the whole family with food, shopping, and kids play.

DHS Water Polo

Water polo season is approaching quickly! Water Polo Team season is set to run from August through October, and a little longer if our varsity teams qualify for playoffs. If you are interested, please

share your contact information with us via our post on Dixon High School or Dixon Water Polo on Facebook. While swim experience is great, we want anyone who is willing to work hard and attend practice regularly. Reach out to us if you have any questions.

Dixon Youth Basketball

Don't wait until the last minute! Dixon Youth Basketball registration is open until October 21st! Open to players turning five by 12/31 through 8th grade. The season runs January through mid-March. Come join the fun! Go to Dixonyouthbasketball.com

Career Assistance

Need help writing a resume or want some help with interviewing skills? Is submitting an online application a nightmare for you? Learn some of these skills from a Career Advisor from Goodwill on Monday, August 7 from 2 to 4 p.m. For more information, visit solano.library.com/events.

Vendor Fair

Support your local vendors. Come see and shop on Saturday, August 19, at the 'Pop up at Sabado Gigante' at 2000 North First Street starting at 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Host is Solano Life House. Call (707) 365-5054 for more info.

Line Dancing, Bingo

Seniors can join the line dancing class with instructors Joan Giannoni and Sandy Newell on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. Bingo is also being offered on Mondays from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the Dixon Senior/Multi-Use Center at 201 South Fifth Street. Call (707) 678-7022 for more info.

Lions Club Poker

Dixon's 15th annual Poker Fundraiser, the Texas Hold 'Em Tournament will be Saturday, August 26 at the Downtown Olde Vets Hall, 231 North First St. Cocktails start at 5 p.m. and poker is at 7 p.m. Donation is \$100 per person. For more info, call Joe Bruch at (209) 305-5930 and tickets are available from Lions members. ★

A Man and a Bear

Celebrating the Birthdays of Two Legends

By Robert Hudson Westover,
US Forest Service News

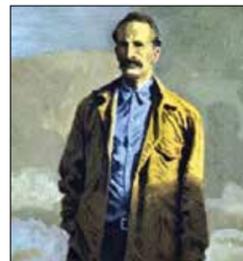
WASHINGTON, DC (MPG)

August is a uniquely special month for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. This is because two very important birthdays are celebrated. The first, on Aug. 9, is Smokey Bear's birthday, and the second, only two days later, August 11, is Gifford Pinchot's birthday. They would be 79 and 159, respectively, this year. Although Smokey needs no introduction either inside or outside the wildland conservation world, Pinchot does.

This seems unfair, of course, I mean Pinchot was, as far back as 1905, the founder and first chief of the Forest Service and an early pioneer of the wildland's conservation movement in America. But, as they say in entertainment, you never want to share a stage with a baby or a cute animal, or something to that effect.

You get the picture.

But even though Pinchot's legacy may not be known to many of us, it doesn't take away from the fact that all who have ever swam in, hiked in, camped in, or otherwise just had fun



Gifford Pinchot, the founder and first chief of the USDA Forest Service. His 159th birthday is Aug. 11, 2023. Graphic courtesy of the Pinchot Institute.

in a national forest or grasslands pays unwitting thanks and appreciation to Gifford Pinchot—so much so that the Forest Service has a national forest named in his honor.

So, without this man, the public lands we all own, share, and (try) to visit simply would not exist. Certainly, not in the size and continental sweep of our public lands that exist in every state today. In fact, just Forest Service managed lands alone account for a land area bigger than the state of Texas!

The beauty of what Pinchot, and other early preservation and conservationists, gave to us is seen in the structure of our massive national landholdings managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service and the



Smokey Bear celebrated his 79th birthday on Aug. 9, 2023. Forest Service graphic by artist Rudy Wendelin

National Park Service. In fact, our nation's federal land management structure has been greatly replicated throughout the world!

It was this integrated land management framework that allowed the other legend, Smokey Bear, to be quickly employed across the country to remind us that "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires". With well over 80% of all wildfires being started by people either by accident or intent, Smokey's message is as strong as it was 79 years ago.

Thanks in large part to these towering legends, we have more than 600 million acres of federal public lands accessible to us all and the wisdom, if we are willing to listen, on how to protect them for human-caused fire for generations to come. ★

Is the FFA Barn Ready Yet?

Story and photo by Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - We can't say 'finally' yet, but the FFA Barn is "99-percent complete" according to School Site Solutions representative Leigh Coop in her report at the last Dixon Unified School District Board Meeting August 3.

"We are very happy about that," she added.

Even more happy with that news would be long-time Ag teacher and Future Farmers of America (FFA) Advisor Marcus Tanaka who has expressed frustration with the project taking years to complete and being left out of the planning of his 'own barn.'

They are scheduled to be done with this project by end of this month after a bathroom for teachers and a bathroom for students are complete, a drinking fountain is installed, and some hose reels that drop down for the animals are put into place - along with a livestock fan relocated from the green house.

"This was supposed to be a 99-day project, but the school system has a chain of command and it's almost impossible to speak to anybody. I can only talk to the principal but because things have to go through the chain of command, there is a lot lost in translation," Tanaka said.

He gave an example of being told he was the 'hang up' because he hadn't told them what kind of pressure nozzles were needed on the livestock hoses. When the two - Tanaka and the rep finally did talk, he was asked what kind of pressure nozzle was needed for the tips of the livestock hoses. His answer was simple: if the hose brings water, that's all that's needed. The hoses wind back up above the livestock pens in the FFA barn to stay out of the way but are used often, for example,



Dixon High School Ag Teacher Marcus Tanaka in the FFA Barn last year.

to hose down animals, wash out pens, and clean up tools.

In a community like Dixon, surrounded by row crops, dairies, and a huge lamb processing plant, it's perfectly natural for Dixon High School to have a large agriculture department. The two new school barns and an additional greenhouse were celebrated at this same time two full years ago with a grand opening where long-time instructor John Ramos cut a red ribbon and who, at that time, was relieved after so many years of "begging" anyone with

a bit of extra land to let students raise an animal on their property.

But students still haven't put a pig or a cow or a lamb on the property.

When students interested in farming wanted to raise lambs or pigs at the old high school site, now John Knight Middle School, they were able to utilize space on Sievers Road - a bit of a drive but still in town. But that site was sold to help garner enough monies to build a new barn. That was 2007.

In 2019, a Career Technical

Education Facilities grant was awarded to the school by the State Department of Education and FFA students and staff looked forward. Coop explained that these were unprecedented times with supply and labor shortages but that they were persevering.

"It's still not open and they could sit on that for another five years," said Mike Hamilton who has raised two sons here and has felt passionate about the project, blaming the lack of support from the administration. "I'm passionate because

it's been a loss for the kids. It should have been done long ago. The only ones that suffered were our youth. It's great that it's 99-percent but it's still not open. When the kids start using it, that's when I'll believe it."

The buildings are located at the end of the high school football stadium and parking areas and are not far from the long row of Ag classrooms where students learn welding, soil composition, floriculture, and animal sciences. They have hands-on experiences that help them be job ready. ★

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- Government meetings, bids & contracts
- Foreclosures
- Unclaimed property
- School Board issues
- Elections/Polling places, initiative petitions
- Tax assessments/proposals

Skipping Around Construction



Plenty of construction workers will continue to be busy through opening weeks of school. Photo by Debra Dingman

Continued from page 1

with agencies for the work and equipment that would get here in a few weeks, now takes months,” she explained. When Trustee David Bowen asked about costs that could go into next summer, she said that, of course, there will be costs.

“When going into an occupied school, everything changes,” she explained. “It is all about safety, safety, and safety.” She warned of fences, blocked entrances, re-routed pathways, and the addition of the large, a portable restroom that offers two commodes and a hand washing station.

The front entrance will be blocked off due to the building of ramps and the

temporary entrance will be to the west side of Building A so the principal and two assistants will be in a different location temporarily.

The multi-purpose room will be off limits due to asbestos removal as well as Room 31 so meals will be brought in and disbursed from a different area with children getting to eat outdoors until the weather is prohibitive.

Roofs need to be replaced along with the air conditioning and larger, more efficient electrical panels will be installed. There is a lot of work to be done and while some will be finished in a few weeks, some are now moved to next summer for completion. ★

BLM Announces Plan to Reduce Wildfire Risk

BLM News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Bureau of Land Management is taking an ambitious and coordinated approach to accelerate fuels reduction projects on public lands with high wildfire risk throughout California and north-west Nevada. The signing on August 8, 2023, of the Statewide Wildland-Urban Interface Fuels Treatment Programmatic Environmental Assessment will streamline plans to protect communities, reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health.

“This plan helps reduce the intensity, severity and spread of wildfire near communities that border public lands managed by the BLM,” said BLM California State Director Karen E. Mouritsen. “Through partnerships with local and state agencies we will prioritize and coordinate fuels treatments to protect people, property and vital infrastructure.”

Under this plan, fuels treatment projects will be coordinated across land ownerships to provide the best results for communities, creating a landscape-level network of strategic fuels treatments and breaks within the wildland-urban interface.

The Statewide Wildland-Urban Interface Fuels Treatment Programmatic Environmental Assessment conducted a broad analysis across 930,000 acres of public lands. As local communities and the BLM identify wildfire concerns, the

new streamlined fuels treatment plans will permit on-the-ground work to begin in a matter of months. This will allow us to treat an anticipated additional 20,000 acres of public lands each year.

The plan covers 44 counties in California: Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba; and two counties in northwest Nevada: Douglas and Washoe. Projects under this program can begin as soon as this fall.

To learn more about this programmatic environmental assessment, visit the BLM NEPA Register. For more general information, please contact your local BLM Field Office.

The BLM manages approximately 245 million acres of public land in the Nation, primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. ★

Senate Democrats Take One More Step Toward Socialized Medicine



By Sally C. Pipes

It’s been less than a year since Democrats enacted the Inflation Reduction Act, which gives Medicare the power to set the prices of certain medicines.

Those price controls have yet to go into effect. But Democrats already want more. They’ve introduced new legislation in both chambers of Congress that would amp up those price controls, and even permit the government to refuse to cover drugs in order to drive a harder bargain with pharmaceutical companies.

They say their bills would “build on” the IRA.

That law, which President Biden signed last August, subjects 10 medicines to price controls under Medicare in January 2026. The government will set the prices for 15 more in 2027, another 15 in 2028, and 20 more per year in 2029 and beyond.

The SMART Prices Act would take things even further. It would empower Medicare to set prices for 20 drugs in 2026, instead of the current ten under the IRA. In 2027 and every year after, that number would jump to 40, many more than the IRA stipulated. The House bill is even more radical, extending Medicare’s price controls to the private insurance market.

The SMART Prices Act would also subject medicines to price controls five years after approval by the Food and Drug Administration. That’s up

to eight years quicker than under the IRA and significantly sooner than when generic or biosimilar competitors can enter the market.

This provision would gut the generics industry. Generic firms face substantial upfront costs.

They recapture those investments by underpricing their wares relative to branded drugs and capturing a small margin on each sale. Patients, of course, benefit from those lower prices.

But if Washington sets a rock-bottom price on a brand-name drug, there will be no incentive for a generic manufacturer to enter the market.

That’s problematic for several reasons. For starters, the government’s mandated price may not be as low as a competitive market could generate. So, patients may end up paying more than they should.

Further, a market without

CLG NEWS UPDATES

Provided by Citizens for Legitimate Government (CLG) See legitgov.org

Trump Reveals Jan. 6 Committee Illegally Destroyed Their Records and Documents Now That He Has Full Subpoena Power

8 Aug 2023 | President Donald Trump dropped a bombshell report on his Truth Social platform that the sham committee overseeing the investigation of the January 6 Capitol riot has destroyed their documents and records illegally. On Tuesday evening, Trump wrote: “So now that I have full Subpoena Power because of the Freedom of Speech Sham Indictment by Crooked Joe Biden, Deranged Jack Smith, and the DOJ, it has just been reported that the Unselect January 6th Committee of Political Hacks and Thugs has illegally destroyed their Records and Documents. This is unthinkable, and the Fake Political Indictment against me must be immediately withdrawn. The system is Rigged & Corrupt, very much like the Presidential Election of 2020. We are a Nation in Decline!” The Gateway Pundit previously reported that Dr. Jan Halper-Hayes, during a recent interview, said that special counsel Jack Smith made a huge mistake in indicting Trump related to Jan. 6 incident because it gives him the power to subpoena people.

FBI Agent Lied Under Oath About Knowledge of Hunter Biden Laptop - Rep. Jordan

7 Aug 2023 | FBI Special Agent Elvis Chan made “false statements” under oath about the bureau’s investigation and suppression of Hunter Biden’s laptop, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) said on Monday. Mr. Chan, a member of the FBI’s Foreign Influence Task Force, was deposed in November 2022 on the FBI’s efforts to suppress news of the laptop as it spread across social media just before the 2020 election. According to a transcript of that deposition, the agent testified that he had “no internal knowledge” of the FBI’s investigation of the laptop and only became aware that the agency had the laptop in its possession “when news media outlets posted it, or published it.” ... And when asked whether he was aware of any other communications between anyone at Facebook and anyone at the FBI related to the laptop, he replied, “No.” But according to Mr. Jordan, internal documents his committee obtained from Facebook show that those statements were “completely false.”

Federal judge delivers multiple blows to DOJ special counsel in Trump classified docs case – Special Counsel Jack Smith’s use of out-of-state grand jury to continue investigating case questioned

7 Aug 2023 | The federal judge overseeing the classified documents case against former President Donald Trump delivered multiple blows to Special Counsel Jack Smith’s efforts in a brief Monday. Judge Aileen Cannon of the Southern District of Florida – who is presiding over the case that stems from a Miami grand jury’s June indictment of Trump – denied the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) request for sealed filings, striking two from the record. Cannon also requested additional information from prosecutors about the continued use of an out-of-state grand jury to investigate the case. “The Special Counsel states in conclusory terms that the supplement should be sealed from public view to comport with grand jury secrecy,” but the motion for leave and the supplement plainly fail to satisfy the burden of establishing a sufficient legal or factual basis to warrant sealing the motion and supplement,” Cannon wrote in the brief, denying the DOJ’s request.

Yet more indictments: Prosecution of 2020 alternate electors in six of seven states likely --The seven states with alternate electors were Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania

8 Aug 2023 | In Special Counsel Jack Smith’s indictment of former President Donald Trump regarding the 2020 presidential election and Jan. 6, the issue of alternate electors from seven states has become another focal point, as officials – all Democrats – from six of those states determine whether to prosecute. In the federal indictment of Trump last week, Smith charged the former president with four counts, including conspiracy to defraud, conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding, obstruction of, and attempt to obstruct an official proceeding, and conspiracy against rights. The indictment also acknowledges six unnamed co-conspirators with whom Trump allegedly did “conspire, confederate, and agree” to defraud the country. Under the first count, Smith elaborated on the alternate electors in the seven states, calling them “fake” and “fraudulent.”

Attorney Stunned After Seeing Trump Indictment, Says Records He Handed Over Are ‘Absolutely Exculpatory’

6 Aug 2023 | An attorney who was previously on former President Donald Trump’s legal team and is now representing a prominent Trump supporter says special counsel Jack Smith didn’t review important documents in the case before indicting Trump – and asked his client for them a second time on the day after Trump was indicted. According to CBS News, Timothy C. Parlatore, a former member of Trump’s defense team who is currently working as an attorney for former New York Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik, said that he submitted “absolutely exculpatory” documents to the special counsel’s office and was “stunned” by the Tuesday indictment. Kerik – who worked alongside former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani in the weeks following the 2020 election as Trump’s lawyers mounted legal challenges in several states – had testified in front of the Democrats’ January 6 committee for eight hours, according to CNN.

Massive 2020 Voter Fraud Uncovered in Michigan - Police Find TENS of THOUSANDS of Fake Registrations, Bags of Pre-Paid Gift Cards, Guns With Silencers, Burner Phones, and a Democratic-Funded Organization With Multiple Temporary Facilities in Several States

8 Aug 2023 | Two election integrity activists, Phil O’Halloran and Lori Skibo, obtained a copy of the Michigan State Police report and began investigating this story in June... On October 8, 2020, only one month before the 2020 general election, Muskegon, Michigan, city clerk Ann Meisch noticed a black female (whose name was redacted from the police report) dropping off between 8,000 to 10,000 completed voter registration applications at the city clerk’s office. The Muskegon Police Department was contacted and asked to investigate. According to the Michigan State Police report, Tom Fabus, Chief of Investigations for Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel’s Office, asked for Michigan State Police assistance with a joint investigation of alleged voter fraud being conducted by the Muskegon Police Department and the AG... Police reported that hundreds of pre-paid cards from “different” companies, along with “dozens of new (burner?) phones” were found in the Southfield raid in Michigan ... During their investigation, the police also found partially completed voter registration forms and police found “pelican cases in the room with semi-automatic rifles joined with suppressors and optics and customized pistols.” The police report noted: “One case had 4 rifles and 4 pistols.” ★

competing drug makers is less resilient. If price controls result in a branded company being the only producer of a drug, then a production issue could render a drug that patients need inaccessible.

The IRA’s price controls have already led a number of pharmaceutical companies to curtail research into new drugs. In May, the CEO of Novartis announced

that the company would drop a few cancer drugs from its development pipeline. Alnylam cited the IRA when it put development of a rare eye disease drug on hiatus last fall.

How can Democrats look at this decline in drug research, and decide that more price controls are an appropriate response? Patients will pay the price for this misguided

approach.

Sally C. Pipes is President, CEO, and Thomas W. Smith Fellow in Health Care Policy at the Pacific Research Institute. Her latest book is False Promise, False Promise: The Disastrous Reality of Medicare for All (Encounter 2020). Follow her on Twitter @sallypipes. This piece originally appeared in Issues & Insights. ★



Proposed Rules For Irrigation Runoff Raise Concerns Among Winegrape Growers

Winegrape growers in Mendocino and Sonoma counties say proposed water-quality regulations for waste discharge requirements for vineyards are burdensome, costly and often duplicate work by growers participating in sustainability certification programs. Mendocino County winegrape grower Frost Pauli said vineyard farmers are concerned about proposed grower monitoring and reporting mandates being developed as part of the state's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Proposed new rules focus on nitrogen applications and removals.

Study: Production Costs Soar For Processing Tomatoes

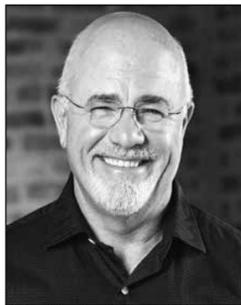
Costs to produce processing tomatoes increased substantially in the past six years, according to a study released in July by researchers at the University of California and UC Cooperative Extension farm advisors. Based on the 2023 cost analysis for growing processing tomatoes in the Sacramento Valley and northern delta, researchers found that growers face surging input costs for expenses such as water, labor, fuel and fertilizer. Rising production expenses translate to a 76% increase from 2017, the last time the UC conducted a cost analysis on farming processing tomatoes.

Quarantine Ordered In Los Angeles County After Tau Fruit Fly Discovery

The California Department of Food and Agriculture has placed a portion of Los Angeles County under quarantine for the Tau fruit fly following detection of more than 20 flies in the unincorporated area of Stevenson Ranch near the city of Santa Clarita. The fly is native to Asia and is a serious threat to agriculture and natural resources, with a very wide host range, including numerous fruits and vegetables and a select range of native plants in California. The CDFA asked residents living in the quarantine area not to move any fruits or vegetables from their property.

Cattle Ranchers, Dairies Promote Conservation Efforts

In a region dominated by vineyards, those who raise cattle for beef or milk production have looked to innovations and solutions outside the box to help keep their businesses viable. A Napa County cattle operation and a Sonoma County organic dairy shared how they do just that while also helping to preserve the land and natural resources around them. They offered an on-the-ground glimpse of their operations last week as part of an educational tour hosted by the California Farm Bureau and California Bountiful Foundation, with funding from the California Cattle Council. ★



Dave Ramsey Says

Love Them Enough to Teach Them Well

Dear Dave,

My husband and I are having arguments about money where our children are concerned. They are both 16, and I think they should have part-time jobs and be learning the value of work. He feels they're only young once and wants them to enjoy being teenagers. He also gives them money anytime they ask. I want our kids to have fun, too, but this is beginning to cause tension in our relationship. I'd love your advice.

— Kaytee

Dear Kaytee,

I understand your concern. I'm sure your husband has a good heart, but by doing this he's acting like a friend instead of a parent. In the process, he's allowing them to be nothing but

takers and consumers. He's setting them both up for lifetimes of helplessness and ridiculous expectations without realizing it.

But yes, kids should absolutely learn to work, make money and manage it wisely from an early age. My wife and I gave nice gifts to our kids from time to time, but they also worked and made money for themselves. And the nicer gifts we gave them were for special occasions. Even then we didn't go crazy with things.

Still, the biggest problem you and your husband are experiencing is a communication breakdown. Your husband should stop being so impulsive, and grow a backbone where the kids are concerned. You've recognized this—and you're right about it—so it's up to you to take the first step in finding a solution.

Try sitting down with him, just the two of you, and sincerely explaining your feelings. Let him know you love him and how generous he is. But let him know, too, you're worried this is having a

negative impact on your children and why. Talk it out, openly and honestly, and try to agree on some changes together. There's a middle ground here, but it's going to take some time and effort from both of you to reach it.

Most of all, it means you two will have to communicate with each other like mature, caring adults, and pull together for the sake of your kids. It might be difficult at first, but it'll be worth it in the long run. For you and them.

Thanks, Kaytee!

— Dave

**Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national best-selling author, personal finance expert and host of "The Ramsey Show." He has appeared on "Good Morning America," "CBS This Morning," "Today," Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for the company Ramsey Solutions. ★*

Patriotism in Our Children

Commentary by Ashley Graning

We can all remember the stagnant atmosphere in many of our history classrooms growing up. The crusty and creaking history textbook, the history teacher's droning voice suddenly becoming a lullaby, watching lazily moving dust particles sifting through the sunshine in the window. Wishing for anything to escape the shackles of memorizing dates and reading about equally crusty and creaking people.

The older I have become and recalling my own history education, I realize the massive potholes I have in connecting the dots in history. I find myself asking more questions. Why did this event happen? What led up to it? What was learned from it? How can we relate this to today?

Even though I was an avid dust particle observer in many of my own history classrooms, I was fortunate to grow up with a father who could make history come alive for me. The dots were slowly connected as he was able to answer the questions of the backstory and create the foundation of a timeline in my head. There was so much more than just the date and spewing out a basic summarization. The love of history was instilled in me by my father and now I have the great honor of being able to pass that on to my own children. As many of us can attest to, the sad fact is that so often history education takes the back burner in classrooms as well as in the home atmosphere. History education needs to be taken seriously so we can solidify good American values in the next generation. The next generation needs to comprehend history so past mistakes can be learned from. If we don't know where we came from and what mistakes could have been prevented, our country will crumble. And our country is no exception. John Adams wrote, "Even mighty states and kingdoms are not exempted. If we look into history, we shall find some nations rising from contemptible beginnings and spreading their influence, until the whole globe is subjected to their ways. When they have reached the summit of grandeur, some minute and unsuspected cause commonly affects their ruin, and the empire of the world is transferred to some other place." Adams continues, "The only way to keep us from setting up for ourselves is to disunite us. Divide et impera. Keep us in distinct colonies, and then, some great men in each colony, desiring the monarchy of a whole, they will destroy each others' influence and keep the country in equilibrio."

We need to create more of an emphasis on why many of these past events took place. How do we do this as parents? We pay it forward. As many ancient civilizations before us, we continue to tell stories. For the benefits of ourselves and our children, we need to surround ourselves in learning about history. Read historical biographies, get out a pen and paper and write notes on what you have learned, watch history documentaries. Stretch your mind. Let your children see you learning and pass on stories of our history to them, just as my grandfather passed on the love of history to my father and then down to me. As parents we are responsible to continue passing it on. Ronald Reagan said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the

same." We must invest heavily in our children who are the future of this great country. I want my children and grandchildren to enjoy the country I love. Even though it seems simple to just pass on stories, it is something of great magnitude that is within our own reach. Share stories of real people who accomplished amazing and unimaginable things. As I read a book on Theodore Roosevelt and his expedition into the Amazon, I continued to share his experience with my children that displayed mental toughness and how when times get tough it will reveal your true character. It opens up many discussions such as, "How do you want to be remembered during the hard times? Or, "What would you have done in that difficult situation?"

What I personally love about studying history is that it is never-ending. I can always learn something new from numerous books on the same subject. It isn't a race, it is slow learning. Take time to digest it, there is no rush when you commit to becoming a lifelong learner of history. Studying history also gives you a sense of how incredibly fortunate we are and how easy we actually have it. As I read real stories about the Revolutionary War, the Donner Party, or the Dust Bowl, the hardships that people went through to get us to where we are today will never cease to amaze me. Instead of giving dry facts to memorize, give children real stories that capture what was sacrificed to gain a real appreciation of it. Read about the hard times to instill gratitude for everyone that came before us. C.S. Lewis explains, "Since it is likely that they will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage. Otherwise you are making their destiny not brighter but darker."

With history books and other literary works being "revised," our true history is slowly being covered up and we will begin to forget where we came from. Milan Kundera wrote, "The first step in liquidating a people is to erase its memory. Destroy its books, its culture, its history. Then have someone write new books, manufacture a new culture, invent a new history. Before long the nation will begin to forget what it is and what it was." History needs to be unearthed, even the shameful parts. No country is perfect. Study what was done wrong, learn from it and make changes, and go forth from there. We can't be the generation to let our children forget.

When my nine-year-old son peeks over my shoulder as I am reading "Flyboys" by James Bradley and sees that I am reading about the Doolittle Raid, he proceeded to share with me everything he knew about the Doolittle Raid, from the airplanes they flew to the pilots themselves. When my seven-year-old daughter looks up at me with bright eyes and a smile saying that history is her favorite subject I know that I am making a difference in my own small corner of the country. Planting that small seed in their minds to instill a love of learning and to always remain inquisitive are wonderful things to watch develop in my children. Not to mention all of the rich and interesting conversations that have stemmed from teaching them history. What I see in their eyes during these conversations is monumental to me, and what I see is patriotism. As Ronald Reagan said, "All great change in America begins at the dinner table."

This article was previously published in The Epoch Times. Reprinted by permission. ★

Proposals In California Legislature Would Encourage Government Secrecy



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

Bill McEwen, a columnist for San Joaquin Valley news site GV Wire, posed several of what he considered to be routine factual questions to the state Department of Public Health last week about a mysterious laboratory discovered in the small town of Reedley.

The laboratory, in an abandoned warehouse, contained mice, biological fluids and samples of dreaded diseases including HIV, malaria and COVID-19. Federal and state investigators are delving into the situation, which surfaced when a city building code inspector noticed a hose snaking out of a wall in the warehouse.

McEwen wanted to know how the department oversees laboratories, how often they are inspected and how illegal labs get discovered. But he got nowhere. Department officials refused to answer even the most basic operational questions and told McEwen to search their website to find answers.

"Administration of @GavinNewsom has zero commitment to transparency," McEwen tweeted in frustration.

It was an example of what reporters and others have increasingly experienced in recent years as they attempt to decipher what politicians and bureaucrats are doing.

It's not hyperbole to say that a wall of secrecy has been erected around the state Capitol and the surrounding complex of buildings housing state agencies.

It was beginning to happen before COVID-19 struck the state in 2020 but it worsened during the pandemic as Gov. Gavin Newsom wielded emergency powers that suspended many of the "sunshine laws" governing open meetings, open records and other forms of access.

Newsom and other officials became used to operating out of public view and even after the pandemic eased, they continued the same practices.

The post-pandemic syndrome manifests itself not only in politicians and other officials seeking to avoid the give-and-take of direct questioning by reporters, as McEwen learned, but in the proliferation of meetings that are accessible only via internet.

California's First Amendment Coalition, which attempts to preserve access to governmental records and meetings, may be fighting an uphill battle as the Legislature moves several measures that would reinforce closed door government, to wit:

•Senate Bill 544, which passed the Senate on a 26-3 vote and now pending in the Assembly, would amend the state Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, which governs state boards and commissions, by permanently allowing them to conduct meetings without in-person attendance, allowing only internet or telephonic access by the public.

•Senate Bill 537, also pending in the Assembly after 32-8 Senate approval, would amend the Ralph M. Brown

Act, which governs local governments, to similarly allow "multi-jurisdictional, cross-county local agencies with appointed members" to meet via teleconference "without posting agendas at each teleconference location, identifying each teleconference location in the notice and agenda, making each teleconference location accessible to the public, and requiring at least a quorum of the eligible legislative body to participate from within the local agency's jurisdiction..."

•Senate Bill 411, approved by the Senate on a 30-5 vote and also pending in the Assembly, would allow such teleconference meetings by "neighborhood councils" without in-person access and is specifically aimed at 99 such bodies in Los Angeles.

Ginny LaRoe, advocacy director of the First Amendment Coalition, captured the essence of these measures in her comment on SB 544: "SB 544 rewrites the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act to allow officials serving on any state body – think CPUC, POST, State Bar and many more – to never again show up in person to a physical meeting location. This is government by telephone."

The three bills have garnered a string of critical newspaper editorials – reflecting the fact that journalists are particularly affected by creeping official secrecy – but they nevertheless continue to advance.

In California, sunshine is giving way to darkness.

Dan Walters has been a journalist for more than 60 years, spending all but a few of those years working for California newspapers. ★

Bankruptcy Filings Rise 10 Percent

Report from U.S. Courts.com

Personal and business bankruptcy filings rose 10 percent in the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2023, compared with the previous year.

According to statistics released by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, annual bankruptcy filings totaled 418,724 in the year ending June 2023, compared with 380,634 cases in the previous year.

Business filings rose 23.3 percent, from 12,748 to 15,724 in the year ending June

30, 2023. Non-business bankruptcy filings rose 9.5 percent to 403,000, compared with 367,886 in the previous year.

Bankruptcy totals for the previous 12 months are reported four times annually. Filings over any 12-month period have increased only rarely since filings peaked in 2010. Bankruptcies fell sharply after the pandemic began in early 2020, despite some early COVID-related disruptions to the economy.

Find out more at <https://www.uscourts.gov/news/2023/07/31/bankruptcy-filings-rise-10-percent> ★

Next Phase of Recycled Water Begins for California

State Water Resources Control Board News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Achieving a major milestone in the state's efforts to maximize the potential of recycled water, the State Water Resources Control Board announced on July 11, 2023, proposed regulations that would allow for water systems to add wastewater that has been treated to levels meeting or exceeding all drinking water standards to their potable supplies. The process, known as direct potable reuse, will enable systems to generate a climate-resilient water source while reducing the amount of wastewater they release to rivers and the ocean.

This development advances Gov. Newsom's all-of-the-above Water Supply Strategy, which includes the goal of recycling and reusing at least 800,000 acre-feet of water per year by 2030.

This turning point in California's history with recycled water, which began in the mid-20th century with the use of recycled water for crops, comes after an expert panel of 12 scientists and engineers evaluated work by the State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water and determined that the proposed regulations are protective of public health. The regulations are the most advanced in the nation and reinforce California's position as a leader of innovative solutions to climate challenges. They are now

open for public comment and subject to revision based on that input.

"This moment has been some time in the making because we have been careful and thorough to produce regulations that ensure, down to a chemical level, that water treated to these standards will be pure and wholesome," said Darrin Polhemus, deputy director for the Division of Drinking Water. "In fact, the extensive treatment requirements we've proposed mean that direct potable reuse processes in California will produce water of higher quality and lower risk than many traditional drinking water sources."

Direct potable reuse relies entirely on immediate, multi-barrier treatment that can recycle wastewater to drinking

water standards in a matter of hours. This contrasts to the method currently being deployed in major projects launched throughout the state, called indirect potable reuse, which further improves treated wastewater over time through groundwater recharge or dilution with surface water. While no formal direct potable reuse projects can be initiated in California until the regulations are adopted, water agencies in Santa Clara, San Diego and the city of Los Angeles have launched pilot projects in recent years.

"We've seen real enthusiasm and interest from major urban water agencies, who are the ones that will take direct potable reuse forward, adding it to their water supply portfolios to increase

resiliency," added Polhemus. "California has been a leader for years in water recycling, and this last step—going directly from treatment to usage as drinking water—builds on that experience and the expertise of scientists and engineers who have worked with recycled water for many years."

The board will consider adoption of the regulations before the end of the year.

The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations. ★

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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • INTERNATIONAL GREETINGS

CLUES

- ACROSS**
- Russian czar's edict or proclamation
 - Common stomach disorder, acr.
 - Thai currency
 - Femme fatale
 - Cow greeting?
 - High-quality black tea
 - Heretofore (2 words)
 - Used for making holes
 - Old and feeble
 - *Precedes or follows aikumin a greeting
 - *Robin Williams, ___ - "Good Morning, ___"
 - Family memb.
 - Blood fluids
 - R&R spot
 - Standout
 - All together (2 words)
 - Crafts' companion
 - Hyperbolic tangent
 - River in Paris
 - Traditions typically passed on by word of mouth
 - Home of Darfur
 - Opposite of base
 - Carthage's ancient neighbor
 - Have supper
 - Condoleezza of politics
 - Pleasantly warm
 - Type of mine passage
 - JFK's brother
 - Famous Allen Ginsberg poem
 - Band booking
 - *Hello in Normandy region
 - *Hello in Haifa
 - Letter-shaped girder
 - Female reproductive cells
 - Did like a lunatic
 - L in AWOL
 - Nada
 - Greet the day
 - *Musical" constellation
 - Precedes whiz
 - It typically has 4 doors
- DOWN**
- Stars and Stripes country
 - *Unspoken greeting in France
 - Ned Stark's youngest daughter
 - Prevents one from seeing
 - Have as logical consequence
 - Mosque prayer leader
 - *Japanese greeting move
 - To crack, as in case
 - Out of shape
 - Kindred
 - *Hello in Spain or in Mexico
 - Overwhelm like bees
 - Hymns of praise
 - Borders on
 - Choler
 - Shadow-utilizing timepiece
 - *Hi, in France
 - Prefix with type
 - Places in the heart
 - Praise

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The Florida Slavery Smear

There have been so many poisonous and stupid lies about Florida since 2020, it's almost hard to keep track, but the latest may be the most outrageous.

As you might have heard thanks to the vice president of the United States, Florida allegedly wants to teach its students that slavery benefited slaves.

In reality, the Florida curriculum on slavery is extensive and includes pretty much everything you'd want a child to know about this enormity. The occasion for the Kamala Harris smear is one line that says, "Instruction includes how slaves developed skills which, in some instances, could be applied for their personal benefit."

This is not the first thing, or even the 19th, that you'd want students to learn about slavery, but it is also indisputably true.

No one is saying the enslaved "benefited" from slavery.

It's not an endorsement of slavery to point out that slaves looked for every crack in the system to try to improve themselves and gain some autonomy – rather, it's an endorsement of the initiative and resilience of an oppressed people operating in the worst of circumstances.

We are supposed to believe that enslaved African Americans strained against their awful condition in every way – learn-

ing to read, worshipping on their own, defying their masters when they could, creating an elaborate system of escape, but they never, ever learned a skill to their own benefit.

This is, of course, nonsense. The Advanced Placement African American Studies curriculum that Florida has rejected contains almost exactly the same language about skills as the state's curriculum – without causing a firestorm of criticism.

Some of the most honored African American figures in our history took advantage of whatever ability they had, while enslaved, to improve themselves and learn. In Baltimore, Frederick Douglass famously became a ship caulker and brought in \$6 to \$9 a week, rightly resenting "the right of the robber" exercised by his owner, who took his earnings.

In his extraordinary "African Founders: How Enslaved People Expanded American Ideals," David Hackett Fischer brings to light other lesser-known examples. He notes the example of one Captain David Stodder, the leading shipbuilder in Baltimore in the late 18th century. As of 1790, about two dozen of his workers were slaves, and he freed them in his will. "Among these slaves," Fischer writes, "were some of his most highly skilled workers."

Or consider George R. Roberts, who was probably born a slave in southern Maryland. He became an experienced seaman and eventually "came home to Baltimore, bought a small house in the happy neighborhood that is still called Canton, and became prominent in the civic life of the city."

Or Robert Lemmons, born a slave in Texas. He learned from a rancher who employed him and became extremely adept at handling mustangs. Freed after the Civil War, according to Fischer, he "saved his profits, invested in land, built a holding of 1,200 acres, became a successful rancher, rented some of his land, added another business, and became a local money lender."

Was slavery good for these men? Absolutely not. The point is what they accomplished despite slavery, not because of it.

Two can play the Kamala Harris game, by the way.

In her famous 1619 Project essay, The New York Times writer Nikole Hannah-Jones writes that: "Black people were not chattel. And so the process of seasoning, instead of erasing identity, served an opposite purpose: In the void, we forged a new culture all our own."

There she goes – saying slavery served some good, that it was "seasoning."

Imagine if the Florida curriculum said that slavery gave us African American hair styles? There'd be outrage, but Hannah-Jones says it: "Today's avant-garde nature of black hairstyles and fashion displays a vibrant reflection of enslaved people's determination to feel fully human through self-expression."

The left wouldn't have to deny the historical record or tie itself into knots if it weren't so determined to lie about DeSantis, but that imperative overwhelms everything else.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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 Publish: July 28, August 4, 11, 18, 2023
 L&H 8-18-23

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 Publish: July 28, August 4, 11, 18, 2023
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 Publish: August 11, 18, 25, Sept 1, 2023
 VALLEJO 9-1-23



How Misguided Drug Pricing Policies Worsen Drug Shortages

By Dan Leonard

More than 300 medicines are in short supply across the United States.

It's no great mystery why doctors and patients face an unprecedented dearth of essential medicines, especially generics. Today's shortages were created by a faulty drug marketplace and have been exacerbated by ill-considered government policies.

Shortages tend to arise when there are few suppliers in a marketplace. Consider that, if a given product is made by multiple producers in different locations, each with its own processes and inputs, then a single event, such as a hurricane or earthquake, probably won't shut them all down.

Ironically, a root cause of the current crisis is a "shortage" of drug buyers, rather than suppliers. Just three drug purchasing intermediaries known as pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) control 80% of drug transactions, extracting enormous discounts and rebates from manufacturers. This near monopoly has distorted the generic drug market considerably.

Then there's the increasingly unworkable margins generic drugmakers face.

Together, PBMs and unrealistically tight margins are putting maximum pressure on manufacturers of generic drugs,

which make up over 90% of all prescriptions filled in the United States. Unfortunately, lawmakers have done little to address PBMs, and have adopted strict drug price controls that could make it even harder for generic drugmakers to operate.

Through mergers with one another and other companies, PBMs have amassed enormous power. For example, CVS Health Corporation owns not just a chain of drugstores but also Aetna, an insurer, and Caremark, one of the biggest PBMs, as well as Red Oak Sourcing, one of the big three wholesale distributors of generic medicines.

A system with just a few buyers picking their suppliers purely based on cost with little to no consideration of supply chain strength, manufacturing redundancies, or multi source contracts quickly becomes a race to the bottom, driving many competing suppliers away.

A manufacturer can only lose money on a product for so long before they abandon that product altogether. That can leave just a single producer of many generic drugs, with no competitors to fill the gap in the event of interruptions.

Lawmakers have made matters worse by adopting strict price controls, like those included in last

year's partisan Inflation Reduction Act. Some progressive members now want to expand the IRA's policies before they've even taken effect.

Even worse, as price controls for branded medicines take hold, some generic manufacturers could decide to leave particular therapeutic areas. Fewer suppliers would mean more single-source drugs. Patients could face new shortages, including for brand-name drugs as a result.

The first price controls will be set starting this year and take effect in 2026. But critical market entry decisions will be made well before that. Generic drugmakers are already watching their future markets dry up.

Patients are in trouble, faced with rationing doses, substituting medicines, or simply waiting for the treatments they need. Tragically, between the nefarious behavior of middlemen and the price controls coming down the pike, this crisis will get worse before it gets better.

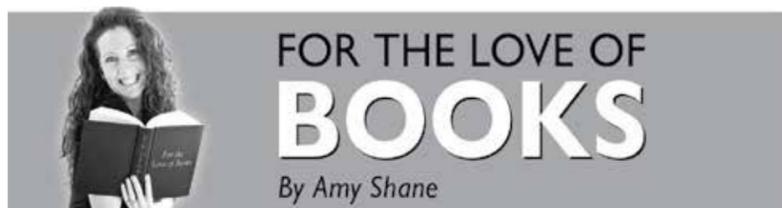
Dan Leonard is the former president and CEO of the Association for Accessible Medicines, former president and CEO of the National Pharmaceutical Council, and former executive vice president of public affairs for America's Health Insurance Plans. ★

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A Multitude of Dreams

by Mara Rutherford

It has been over a year since the bloody Mori Roja plague swept over, taking with it more than its fair share and leaving a wake of famine, devastation, and fear in its wake.

Princess Imogen and her sisters have been safely harbored within her father's castle walls. With boarded-up windows and barricaded doors, they have been safely hidden away from the plague and any wanderer who might be carrying it. But Imogen is also hiding a dark secret; she isn't the rightful princess of King Stuart; she is a mere imposter, posing as the princess in order to keep King Stuart from descending deeper into madness. However, it has been a year, food rations are finally dwindling, and the King is falling even deeper into madness. The King still insists on throwing lavish balls and parties within the castle, oblivious of the dire situation within and the death toll on the outside, forcing those within the castle to flee in order to survive.

Nico Mott once lived a life of status until the plague destroyed the life he once knew. Now, thanks to Lord Crane, Nico has safe shelter with the others taken in, but the



◆ Publisher: Ink Yard Press
 ◆ Intended Audience: Young Adult
 ◆ Rating: ★★★★★
 ◆ Release Date: August 29, 2023

price for his safety might be more than he can pay. Forced to head out into the plague-riddled world, Nico searches for other survivors to bring back to Lord Crane. However, Nico never expected to find a boarded-up castle full of survivors and one princess determined to get out.

Armed with a quick plan, Nico knows teaming up with the princess to help her escape poses more danger than either of them could have anticipated. The plague has left more than a death toll, but something else entirely, something that wants to feed on any survivor. Now Nico and Imogen

will have to band together in order to survive, but will their web of lies be their fall?

Mara Rutherford skillfully reimagines Edgar Allan Poe's Masque of the Red Death into a story of hidden identities, romance, and suspense.

Delectably dark and gothic, *A Multitude of Dreams* takes readers deep into a story of survival and the unexpected. Told in dual points of view, readers will be able to fall inside the minds of Nico and Imogen as they navigate their post-plague world and the dangers around every bend. This story takes time to build and wind its way into the reader's heart, but before they know it, Mara Rutherford has taken it by surprise, opening the door to romance and hidden monsters. Strong character building allows readers to root for some to succeed and for some to fail, but in the end, root for the main characters to get out alive. *A Multitude of Dreams* possesses everything a true adventure story should have, a castle, a strong-willed fake princess, secret entrances, a mad King, and an evil that lurks outside. ★



Riley Reviews

“BARBIE” A PINK FANTASY WORLD OF EXISTENTIAL CRISIS

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

“BARBIE” RATED PG-13

When fans of the Mattel toy franchise turn up in droves at the theater wearing different shades of pink outfits, it's undeniable that “Barbie” would take the box office by storm.

The toy line produced for worldwide consumption is so ubiquitous the dolls have been around for more than 60 years. The film pays homage to the creator with Rhea Perlman appearing as Mattel co-founder Ruth Handler giving encouragement for Barbie's liberation.

March 1959 marked the launch of eleven inches of curvaceous adult plastic, a revolution in the doll industry, which up until this time only produced baby dolls. The Barbie doll was named after Handler's own daughter, and remains the world's top-selling doll.

Check out Mattel's website and you will find a seemingly endless variety of “fashionista” Barbie dolls and a bunch of Ken dolls, even one with a prosthetic leg. Inspiring Barbies include Dr. Jane Goodall, Rosa Parks, Susan B. Anthony, and Bessie Coleman.

How did I end up at this movie, you may ask? Two daughters were persuasive that this would be a nice family outing, and who can argue with that? Yet, “Barbie” is definitely not the type of entertainment that would have pulled me into an air-conditioned theater on a hot day.

What is the fuss all about? Margo Robbie is the “Stereotypical” Barbie, and let's concede that she undeniably has the glamorous looks befitting the image of a blonde-haired and blue-eyed beauty queen.

At the film's opening, the scene is Barbie Land, where just about everything is the color pink. Every day is bright and sunny and Robbie's Barbie wakes up with a usual morning routine and waves to all the other Barbies in the neighborhood.

For some odd reason, the idealized setting of “Barbie” is reminiscent of another Warner Brothers film, “Don't Worry Darling,” where the mid-century modern architecture lends itself to a flawless world in a desert environment, except nothing was truly perfect at all.

Barbie Land, with its impeccable dream homes and tidy landscape, is the fevered dream of a pink utopia, and yet Barbie is facing an existential crisis which will lead to leaving in her pink Corvette with Ken (Ryan Gosling) to find the Real World. Barbie Land is not perfect either.

Ken, like all his male counterparts in Barbie Land, is rather dim-witted and spends his time patrolling the pristine beach which doesn't have an ocean. Water is non-existent in Barbie Land,

which one would notice when Barbie takes her so-called daily shower.

Adding some fun to the Barbie world is Michael Cera's Allan, the only non-Ken male doll, who's different than the others in a fun and charming way, and who tries to make a break in the back of Barbie's car.

There is no patriarchy in Barbie Land, which Ken knows nothing about since all the Barbies hold every position of power and prestige. A black Barbie (Issa Rae) is president. The Supreme Court is packed with all Barbies. Only a Barbie can be a doctor or lawyer.

The most fun Barbie is actually Kate McKinnon's Weird Barbie, who is definitely neither glamorous nor a prototypical beauty queen contestant. Weird Barbie is delightfully funny and off-kilter. Her punk hairstyle and marked-up face are just right for the part.

Once in contemporary Los Angeles, role reversal comes into play for Barbie and Ken. Barbie is treated to a learning sexist objectification, while Ken finds ideas of a patriarchy starting to fill his empty head with a sense of male empowerment that doesn't exist in Barbie Land.

The doll duo spend time in Venice Beach, where Ken discovers that his notion of “beach” from back home is quite different when he asks a lifeguard about getting a job.

With Ken strolling around southern California either in a fur coat or a cowboy outfit, he started to make me think of Jon Voight's character in “Midnight Cowboy,” minus the sexual perversion of a seedy New York City in the late Sixties.

Taking to heart his newfound interest in male dominance, Ken organizes Barbie Land into something unrecognizable, a world where patriarchy takes over and an alternate world of frat house sensibility rules the day.

For Barbie's sake, her new friends in the Real World include Mattel executive assistant Gloria (America Ferrera) and her surly teenage daughter Sasha (Ariana Greenblatt) who has outgrown any use for dolls. Both help steer Barbie back to her natural environment.

The most conflict Barbie faces in the human world is when she ends up at Mattel headquarters, and the smarmy CEO (Will Ferrell) wants to put her in a box package. The CEO and the all-male Board of Directors become the natural villains of the story.

To be fair, this reviewer was not the intended audience for “Barbie,” but Barbie Land's alternate reality is the best part of the film, while the venture into the Real World offers some hilarious fish-out-of-water experiences for both Barbie and Ken. ★

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The Spats



by Jeff Pickering



Amber Waves



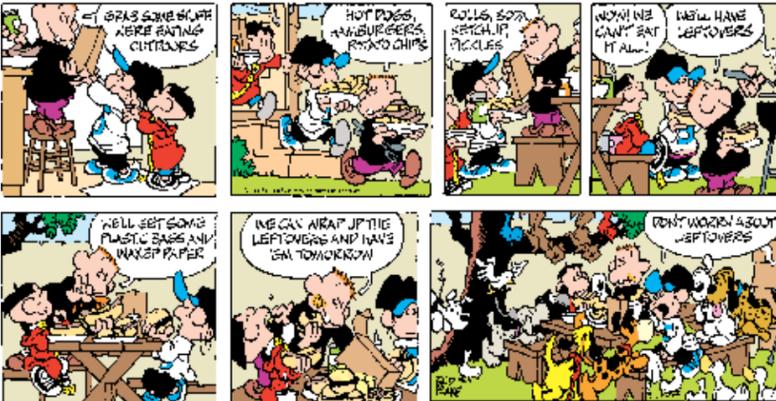
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Impressive Sacred Heart Leaders

By Debra Dingman

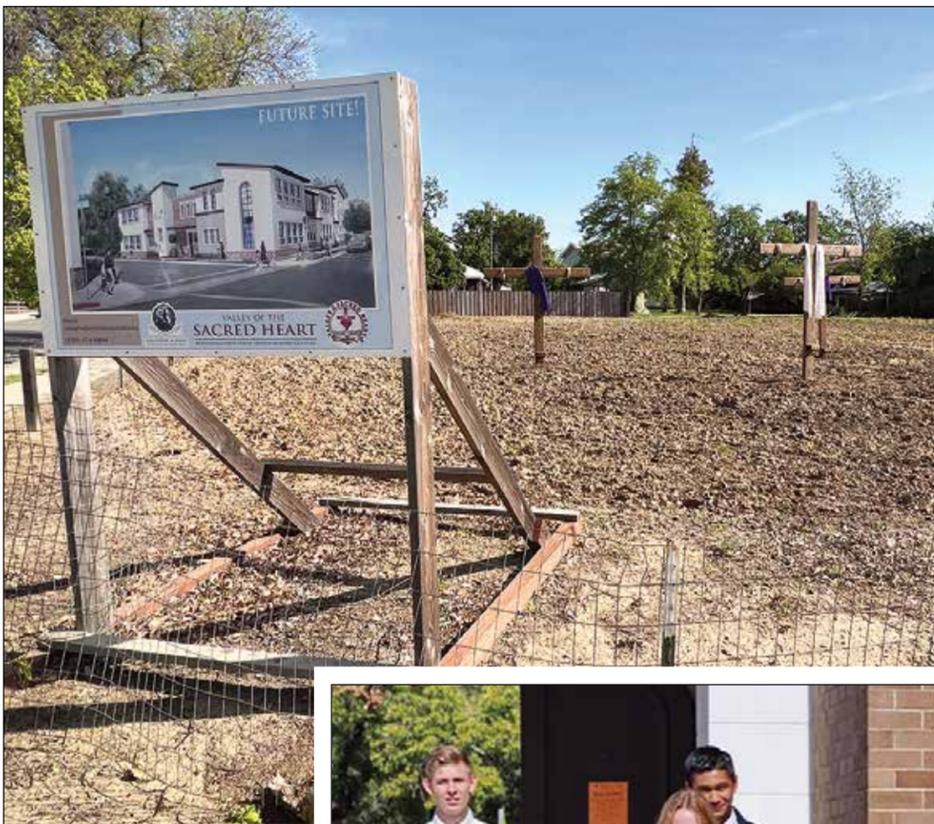
DIXON, CA (MPG) - Students of The Valley of the Sacred Heart will be returning to school on Tuesday, August 29, at St. Peter's Catholic Church so don't think that the plans for the school that are shown on a large billboard across the street mean the school isn't happening now.

The school has actually been in operation since 2017 after approved and recognized as an independent Catholic School in the Diocese of Sacramento for children ages three to 18 and is conducted in classrooms directly next to the church. The instruction is Montessori-based for the younger grades and the high school is affiliated with the Chesterton Schools Network, an internationally acclaimed network with a rigorous, integrated curriculum.

What will be built in the future is a new school building on the corner of East A and South 2nd Streets. The church and school are saving up money to pay for it with the following seven-member Board to help manage it:

Kelly Evans was born and raised a U.S. Citizen in England and studied Latin and ancient Greek at a boarding school from nine years of age, and attended a private high school run by Benedictine monks. There he was taught Latin by a monk who is the editor of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible. Kelley obtained his B.A. and M.A. from Oxford University in Ancient Classics and then received his law degree from U.C. Davis in 1990.

Father Carlos Farfan was born in Lima, Peru and joined the Pro Ecclesia Sancta, a monastery in 1994, becoming an ordained priest ten years later in Peru then came to Sacramento then to Dixon



The vacant lot across from St. Peter's Catholic Church is where the new school will be built. Photo by Debra Dingman

where he served six years. Then he went to St. Paul, Minnesota, to be a spiritual director at the Minor Seminary of St. John Maria Vianney and a Parochial Vicar at St. Mark's Parish in St. Paul. Later, he returned to California to open the P.E.S. Formation House in Vacaville and help with Sacred Heart.

For young Father Juan Carlos Villavicencio, and after graduation from college where he studied to become a system engineer, he joined his religious community Pro Ecclesia Sancta at the age of 27. He completed all his studies in Peru: three years of philosophy in Lima and four years of Theology in Arequipa, where he earned his



Students at the Chesterton Academy at Dixon's St. Peter's Catholic Church. Photo courtesy of Chris Simpson

bachelor's degree. Jason White is a husband and father of five. He was born in Connecticut and

earned his bachelor's and Ph.D. in chemical engineering before moving with his family to Dixon, CA in 2015 to accept a teaching position at the University of California, Davis in the Department of Chemical Engineering. Prior to his UC Davis position, Jason was an engineering instructor at Manchester Community College in Manchester, CT.

Norman Campiz has four children who all attend Sacred Heart. He was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Colusa County where he worked in farming. That fostered an interest in science and mathematics, so his credentials include those and a multicultural/multilingual credential from California State University, Sacramento. He was a Woodland teacher for more than 15 years but now works as a lead teacher at a private school.

Terry Heynen got her BA degree from Southern Illinois University and a Master's degree in theology at Franciscan University. Terry served as a munitions officer in the US Army from 1987 to 1991. She was a substitute teacher for Dixon Unified School District and is the mother of five children, volunteered countless times and has taught religious education for St. Peter's Church for ten years.

Chris Simpson, the school's director is known for her faith in God and love for children. She can almost single handedly be given credit for the start of the Valley of the Sacred Heart Catholic School. She earned two teaching credentials in her Master's in Education at St. Mary's College and worked 20 years in Special Education. She lives in Dixon with her husband and their three children.

For more information on the Valley of the Sacred Heart, call (530) 574-0804. ★

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