



**UC Davis Health
Improving Eye
Care for People
with Diabetes**

PAGE 8

**This Week's
Police Log
Inside**

PAGE 2



Dixon **Independent Voice**

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Serving Dixon and Solano County since 1993

JANUARY 20, 2023

**SEE
INSIDE**

**SYMPHONY
RETURNS**



PAGE 4

**REWRITING
STATE HISTORY**



PAGE 10

**EMERGENCY
BLOOD
SHORTAGE**



PAGE 8

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Explore School Choices



Students at the Valley of the Sacred Heart, located at 105 South Second Street in Dixon, experience a variety of Montessori and classical education styles. Photo by Chris Simpson

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Parents, organizations and particularly three Dixon schools, Neighborhood Christian School, Dixon Montessori Charter School, and St. Peter's Catholic School will be marking National School Choice Week January 22-28. It's a week that reminds parents that school choice is the process of families choosing K-12 options that best fit their children.

Valley of the Sacred Heart Academy

Valley of the Sacred Heart Academy is at the Catholic Church in Dixon, 105 South Second Street and you might note the sign across the street picturing their future goal

of a school building. They offer a 2-year transitional Kindergarten program ("TK") through 12th grade with Montessori style for elementary classes.

They teach classical education for junior high and high school combined. The 70 students enrolled also do faith formation one day a week. Out of the variety of subjects taught such as history, literature, philosophy, theology, and languages, a favorite time appears in the atrium where Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is offered.

"The students love that time. It's very quiet, and is hands-on learning about scriptures and liturgy," said School Director Chris Simpson who grew up in Dixon and with

her husband, has raised their three children here. She has two teaching credentials and a Master's in Education.

The distinct approach to the religious formation of the child she speaks of was made in Italy 60 years ago and the weekly sessions for the Dixon students are twice a week for a couple hours each time, Simpson explained.

"This is where they fall in love with God," she said. "For other students, there are science programs, art, drama, and math but the integrated curriculum in science, art, and philosophy really challenges them. They are learning how to think, not just being told. It's getting them to see

Continued on page 3

CalVCB Offers Resources, for Human Trafficking Victims

CalVCB News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) is promoting national Human Trafficking Prevention Month with a social media campaign and reminders about the support available for survivors.

Three years ago, CalVCB began authorizing income loss compensation for victims of sex and labor trafficking as a result of Assembly Bill 629, which took effect on Jan. 1, 2020. In that time, CalVCB has approved 590 human trafficking claims and paid victims \$4,445,861 in lost wages.

"Sex and labor trafficking victims face many challenges as they try to rebuild their lives," said CalVCB Executive Office Lynda Gledhill. "CalVCB can help by compensating for lost income or other expenses, such as mental health counseling, caused by the trauma of being trafficked."

To help bring awareness to the problem and make victims aware of the support and resources available, CalVCB launched a social media campaign and created a media toolkit for others to use.

Human trafficking is the practice of enslaving people for labor, sexual activity, or commercial sexual exploitation. Human trafficking can occur within a country or trans-nationally and does not necessarily involve the movement of the victim from one place to another.

Human trafficking is considered the world's third-largest criminal enterprise, after drug dealing and arms trafficking. An estimated 12.8 percent of all human trafficking cases in the United States in 2021 came from California, according to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

In an effort to bring attention to this national and global problem, in 2007 the U.S. Senate designated January 11 as a National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness. In 2010, President Barack Obama proclaimed January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

In addition to income loss compensation, which covers up to \$20,000 for a two-year period, CalVCB can reimburse survivors for other expenses caused by human trafficking, including medical, dental, and mental health treatment, home security and relocation.

To learn more, visit CalVCB's human trafficking information page. ★

Community Calendar is Filling Up

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - As the New Year starts swinging, many clubs and organizations have begun to place their big events on calendars so get yours out and save these dates for the rest of winter and early spring!

January 21 - Women's Auxiliary Hobo Fundraising Dinner at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 North First Street. Dinner at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and there are big raffle opportunities.

February 4 - Dixon Conservation Club Annual Crab Feed is 6 to 10 p.m.

February 13 - The annual Dixon Women's Improvement Club Fundraising Dinner at Bud's Pub, 100 South First Street from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30 and take out is available. Big Raffle. Call Jewel at (510) 301-1887 or Debra at (707) 301-0795.

February 18-19 - Dixon Gun Show 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. See details at www.dixon-gunshow.com

February 25 - 19th annual Rotary Crab Feed with no host bar starting at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., at the Dixon



DDBA President Jill Orr addresses the Dixon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors on this year's upcoming events which will be utilizing Pardi Plaza. Both organizations try to avoid calendar conflicts. Photo by Angela Meisenheimer

May Fair at Madden Hall and featuring 'The Time Bandits.' Call Janice Beaman at (916) 240-0147.

March 4 - Dixon Montessori Charter School Annual Dragonfly Fundraising Dinner, 5 p.m. at Madden Hall at the Dixon May Fair. Tickets are \$50.

March 11 - 'Celebrate Dixon' - Dixon Citizen of the Year at Olde Vets Hall. Call the Chamber at (707) 678-2650 for info.

March 25-26 - Solano County Home & Garden

Show all day at the May Fair. Saturday is 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday is 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more info, go to www.solanohomeshow.com.

May 13 - Dixon May Fair Parade is in downtown Dixon.

April 1-2 - Annual Dog Show at the Dixon May Fair. This one is hosted by the Irish Setter Club of the Pacific. Times are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

May 11-14 - 146th Dixon May Fair is at the fairgrounds, 655 South First

Street. Entries open in March 2023.

Some future dates were announced by the Downtown Dixon Business Association (DDBA.) Those are the Wine Stroll Wine Stroll on August 19; BeerFest on October 14; Halloween Treat Trail will be Tuesday, October 31; and the Tree Lighting will be Thursday, December 7.

In addition, the Kwanon club of Dixon announced this year's Festival of Trees will be on Saturday, December 2. ★



Life's too SHORT

Lack of Sunshine

By Debra Dingman

Grumpy. Depressed. Sleepy more than usual. If you've experienced this or someone you know has been more edgy lately, it's probably caused by lack of sunlight because, as you know, there hasn't been much sun in the past couple weeks. Even when it came out for a brief moment, it was still simply too cold for a lot of people to go out.

So, what we did was clean house – the thorough version – and catch up on all kinds of trivial home improvement projects that did not require a trip to the hardware store. We also watched more television, mainly football games, and I caught up on my greeting cards and volunteer tasks. We cooked, baked goodies, and slept in. Unfortunately, that means we didn't get any sunshine.

One just never knows how important the golden rays are until you have several days without good sleep, and you're walking around complaining incessantly to your beloved that you are frozen and that you are about to take your 3rd very hot bath.

People who are sensitive to the deprivation of light are usually aware of how important the sun is to us and can brave a walk albeit cold or hot in the sunshine but what happens when there are cloudy days after cloudy days and one doesn't get a choice to walk in the sun at all?

You can have all the symptoms above, but I did not realize that it would affect my sleep. I was being so careful not to ingest real coffee and/or snack on a chocolate chip cookie, so when I still was waking up four times a night, I started my research.

I began with poor sleep and immediately

serotonin came up. In the science world, serotonin is a naturally occurring monoamine neurotransmitter that carries signals between nerve cells throughout your body. Now that I got that out of the way, listen to this: sunshine stimulates the production of serotonin in our system and helps us be happier. And it only takes about 15 minutes a day.

I had felt so good about accomplishing a long list of things to do, and that I had actually used my treadmill, that it didn't occur to me that not getting sunshine would cause me to lose sleep. I actually thought all that would bring me more rested and sound sleep.

If you are having bad nights, please read up on this. It's called irregular sleep-wake cycle or 'circadian rhythm' and it plays an important role in our health and wellness.

"Sunlight aids in the production of two hormones: serotonin and melatonin. Together, these hormones regulate our sleep-wake cycles and keep us on a consistent schedule, serotonin helping us wake up and melatonin helping us go to sleep," read one article on Carex website. "If you're lacking sunlight, sleep problems may occur."

One of my friends bought a special sunlight because she doesn't get out much, but I thought of all the office workers across the nation and realized we have a mass number of serotonin-deprived people and maybe that's why everyone seems to be edgy and in very bad moods. This could also explain why older people who don't get out much may get more grumpy.

Needless to say, when the sun came out on Tuesday, I put on my tennis shoes and braved the cold outdoors. At least I am getting my dose of sunshine. ★

Dixon News Briefs



City Council and City Staff recently welcomed two new Dixon Police officers: Aaron Goodenough, who is a 10-year veteran of a large police department in the valley, and police recruit Jake Curry. In addition, two new community service officers, Juan Cardenas and Valerie Hogg, were also sworn in by Police Chief Robert Thompson. Photo by Jim Ward

MPG Staff

Mary's Closes

Many lunch goers and evening diners were surprised to find this sign on the door of Mary's Pizza Shack in Dixon. This is what it read: "To our guests and friends it pains us to inform you that the Dixon location is permanently closed. Unfortunately, this was a necessary action as we continue to restructure our Noni's family business amidst the challenges of rising food and labor costs that every locally owned restaurant is facing. Our Vacaville location is open and can be reached at (707) 446-7100 and is at 505 Davis Street. Thank you to our wonderful crew members and guests who have loyally supported us in this community for years." Staff at the Vacaville location said there was "zero percent chance of [Dixon] re-opening."

Parks & Rec

The next Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting will be this coming Tuesday, January 24, at 7 p.m. inside the Council Chambers at City Hall, 600 East A Street in Dixon.

Hobo Dinner

This week's Friday night dinner at the Veterans Memorial Hall will not be happening due to tomorrow night's (January 21) Hobo Dinner.

Fundraising Dinner

Mark your calendars for Monday, February 13, 2023, for the annual Dixon Women's Improvement Club Scholarships and Grants Fundraising Dinner, at Bud's Pub & Grill, 100 South First Street in downtown Dixon. Tickets are now on sale and are \$30 per person. Dinners can be eaten inside or taken home from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Call to pre-order at (707) 678-4745 after 4 p.m. on Monday, February 13 if you want to pick up.

Entrée choices are Prime Rib or Tri-tip, Chicken, Salmon, Pasta, or Vegetarian dish. They also will include dinner salad, garlic roasted red potatoes, and bread.

There will be a huge raffle drawing of all kinds of goods and services during the evening. Tickets are \$30 per person and can be purchased by any of the DWIC members or call the Dixon Independent Voice newspaper office at (707) 678-8917.

Prevent Crime

If you own a business in Dixon, you'll want to attend the free workshop on preventing crime on Thursday, February 2 at 8:30 a.m. held at The Creative Space, 160 West A Street in downtown Dixon. It is hosted by the Downtown Dixon Business Association and features Matthew Olsen, Solano County Lead Deputy District Attorney and a representative from the Dixon Police Department. Reserve your spot by calling and leaving your name/business at (707) 678-8400.

Sandbags Available

About a 50 percent chance of showers will persist through January 19. Sandbags are available at the Dixon Fire Station, 205 Ford Way, Monday through Friday 9am-5pm. Sand is available on the Northwest corner of A Street and Jackson Street. Please bring your own shovel.

For your general understanding of rain/water warnings: Flood WATCH means to be prepared that flooding is possible. Flood WARNING tells you to take action; flooding is imminent or already occurring. Flash Flood WARNING also means to take action because flash flooding is imminent or already occurring. You can sign up to receive alerts via your phone at www.AlertSolano.com.

Woodland College

Monday, January 23, marks the start of the spring semester for Woodland Community College. Only a 20 minute drive from Dixon and very affordable, this college helps students get the first two years of higher education easily and can make transferring to universities wonderfully easier. The Woodland campus is at 2300 East Gibson Road. Call (530) 661-5700 for more information or go to wcc.yccd.edu ★

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DIXON POLICE LOG

Persons listed in this log from the Dixon Police Department are considered innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. Only activities deemed significant by the Police Dept. are included.



Tuesday, January 10, 2023
1700 Hours - Two males cited for displaying BB gun in public.
0039 - Stolen vehicle hit in the 2800 block of West A Street resulted in the arrest of Jennifer Saaybe (43) of Santa Rosa for possession of a stolen vehicle. Jennifer went to county jail.

Monday, January 9, 2023
1230 Hours - Vehicle towed for expired registration in the 300 Block of North Adams
1300 Hours - Incident report taken in the 1300 Block of West H Street.
1630 Hours - Shoplifting report in the 2000 Block of North First Street. Suspects were Later located at a nearby business. Pedro Tejada (age 36) of Woodland was cited for possession of stolen property. Christopher Scheuerman (age 38) of Woodland was arrested for possession of stolen property, an outstanding misdemeanor warrant a violating his probation.
1701 Hours - Missing Person located during a traffic stop.
1958 - Traffic stop in the area of Bloom Drive and Rehrmann Drive resulted in the arrest of Harlen West (21) of Dixon for a felony warrant. He was taken to county jail.
2053 - Stolen vehicle report taken in the 700 block of Porter Road.
2350 - Welfare check requested in the 200 block of Carpenter Court resulted in the arrest of Ricco Gigliotti Jr. (45) of Dixon for felony child abuse, prohibited person in possession of a firearm, prohibited person in possession of ammunition, and possession of an assault weapon. He went to county jail.

Saturday, January 7, 2023
1916 - Theft report was taken in the 1400 block of Market Ln.
2141 - Vandalism arrest report was taken in the 900 block of Camelia Dr. Officers contacted (S) Miguel Zavala Soriano (22) Dixon. A citizen's arrest was signed and Miguel was arrested. Miguel was transported to the Solano County Jail.

Friday, January 6, 2023
0805 - A domestic violence was reported in the 900 block of North Lincoln Street. Upon completing their investigation, Officers arrested Hector Jose Rodriguez Alfaro (33) of Dixon for felony Domestic Violence and for the misdemeanor of preventing a person from calling 911. After being medically cleared, he was transported and booked into the Solano County Jail without incident.
0851 - A death investigation was conducted in the 200 block of South Lincoln Street.
1032 - Vandalism reported in the 1200 block of Stratford Avenue.
1414 - Report of vandalism in the 1600 block of Miwok Court.
2054 - A battery report was taken in the 1200 block of Stratford Ave.

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Dixon Business of the Year Sought Explore School Choices

Dixon Chamber of Commerce News Release

DIXON, CA (MPG) - The Dixon District Chamber of Commerce is now accepting nominations for its 2022 Business of the Year and 2022 Citizen of the Year awards.

All nominations must be submitted in writing via either postal mail to Dixon Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 159, Dixon, CA 95620, or hand delivered to the Chamber office at 220 N. Jefferson St. in Dixon. They may also be submitted via email to info@dixonchamber.org.

All nominations must be received at the Chamber no later than 3 pm on Thursday, February 9, 2023. The nominator's name and phone number must be included.

Criteria for the Business of the Year are: Nominee business must be a Member of the Chamber of Commerce; Nominee business must be located in Dixon; Monetary giving or volunteerism in the community; Outstanding Customer Service; Involvement in Community Events; Nominees cannot be a prior Business of the Year winner; Businesses

cannot nominate themselves.

Please note that nonprofit clubs and organizations are ineligible for this award.

Nominations for the Business of the Year will be evaluated by a panel composed of prior winners of the Business of the Year awards.

Last year's winner was Almond Tree Mortgage.

Past Businesses of the Year beginning in 1996 have been:

First Northern Bank, Hometown Market, Solano Baking Company, LaBella's Pizza, Dixon Hardware & Lumber, California Water Service, Java California, Dixon Sanitary Services, Leber Construction, California Pipe Fabricators, Dixon Embroidery Shop, Salaber & Associates, Dixon Dance Studio, Bud's Pub & Grill, Ramtown Karate, Curves of Dixon, Bryan-Braker Funeral Home, Cattlemen's Steak House, Dixon Florist & Gifts, Recology Dixon, WalMart, Travis Credit Union, Altec, Dixon Financial & Insurance Services, and Dixon Wellness Collective. ★

Continued from page 1

why and what through the lens of faith."

Interestingly, the private school also hosts a homeschool co-op all day on Fridays. That program started nine years ago and five years ago, the group pushed for a full-time school.

"That's actually how we started," Simpson said. Now, they are hoping to build the school across the street soon but need more money. "I live here and I love Dixon. There is a lot of prayer. We're fundraising hard for the school. We're submitting plans to the city. There's money out there; I just got to find it." Currently, tuition is \$4,000 a year.

Dixon Montessori Charter School

Dixon Montessori is led by Executive Director Ben Ernest who also grew up in Dixon. There is a staff of about 50 full-time and support people. There is no charge to attend this school but there is usually a waiting list.

DMCS is a tuition-free public school committed to developing socially responsible life-long learners, according to their website. They are located at 355 North Almond Street in the former Silveyville Elementary School site.

"We made the choice to go to Dixon Montessori Charter School because they offer a variety of learning styles and we felt that would be a great fit for our daughter," said Michelle Salow. "They have a more hands-on learning approach, and we thought it would get her interested in school. They can cater to the different student's learning styles." Their daughter started at DMCS in Kindergarten in 2017, and Salow became involved in the parent organization, soon serving as President.

"She'll stay through 8th grade," she said. "We love it." To reach the school, call (707) 678-8953

Grandparent of seven children attending the school, Jill Orr, also had high accolades.

"All my grandkids go



Dixon students leave St. Peter's sanctuary for more classes at Sacred Heart Academy located at 105 South Second Street in Dixon. Photo by Chris Simpson

there, and they are great. They work with the children and make them feel comfortable – not incapable. The school builds their confidence and makes them feel capable so I cannot say

The 40-year-old school has about 110 students in prekindergarten through 8th grade. Students come from Dixon as well as the surrounding cities of Vacaville, Winters,



Dixon Montessori Charter School is a tuition-free public school which is located at 355 North Almond Street in the former Silveyville Elementary School site. Photo by Debra Dingman

enough good things about the staff, the teachers, and the parents who donate their time there," she said. For more information, call (707) 678-8953.

Neighborhood Christian School

Another private school is Neighborhood Christian School which has undergone major changes in the past couple of years not only due to the pandemic, when several long-time teachers decided to retire, but also due to the move to its new location at the former church site of Dixon Community Church, 955 East A Street. Plus, David Vidmar, long-time director also retired, and David and Eden Callison became new directors.

Woodland and even Sacramento. Unlike the Catholic school, church membership is not required.

"We are excited to speak [of] God's love to these children and their families. We are not at capacity, but classes are capped at 15 students each. In the next three years, we hope to offer high school," Eden said. "We are in a partnership with parents educating students for life. We do have a faith statement that is more about the unity of Christ and [students] are memorizing scripture."

The school is Interdenominational and is project based.

"Everything we learn we want to be able to apply in life," Eden explained. They have partnered with Sustainable Solano which helped build a large garden in the front of the church grounds and she reports they have future plans to use the kitchen to expand lessons from the produce grown. Yes, even chickens are part of those future plans. For more information, call (707) 678-9336. ★



Children enjoy recess at Neighborhood Christian School which is located at the former church site of Dixon Community Church, 955 East A Street. Photo by Debra Dingman

DUSD Superintendent's Message



By Brian Dolan

Return from the Holidays

We hope that everyone enjoyed the holiday season and the chance for an extended break from school. In our experience, students can return from the long vacation and have a difficult time settling back into the routines of school. These dark, wintry days can have an impact on how all of us are functioning – students are no different. We encourage the usual, best practices for students to help them transition back into school. These include: good sleep and diet choices, establishing schedules for addressing homework and their other interests, and limited amounts of time on social media or gaming. Most students are adjusting well, but if your child isn't, please focus on these general directions and contact their teachers if they continue to struggle.

2023-24 Calendar Proposals

We have been working

on calendar options for next school year and have reduced the number of possibilities down to two. The Governing Board will be presented both options for consideration at its meeting on January 19th. In an effort to help inform the Board's decision-making at the February 2nd Meeting, we have prepared a short survey for you to provide your input. The link is included here, and it is also available through all of our social media platforms and on our website. We welcome your input on what the 2023-24 calendar will look like, so please take the time to complete this very short survey. See the survey on the dixonusd.org site or on social media.

Kindergarten and TK Registration

For those of you with children who will be in Transitional or traditional Kindergarten next year, you should know that the registration and enrollment process opens on January 23rd. You will see widespread publicity between now and then, and strongly urge you to enroll your children early. Those interested in the Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Program operating at Gretchen Higgins should be especially attentive and participate in some of the options to learn about the program that will be provided by the site. Students from the Anderson and

Tremont attendance areas are eligible to participate in the Bilingual program – it is not limited to students from the Gretchen Higgins boundary area only. If you do not have children who will be starting school in the District next year but know families that do, please let them know to get the enrollment process started. It is very important that we have accurate information on how many students we will have in these grades so that we can hire the correct number of teachers and paraprofessionals needed. Registration packets may be picked up at each of the elementary school sites beginning on January 23rd.

Inclement Weather

It has been many years since we have experienced such a lengthy and significant period of rain and wind. We have been fortunate not to have experienced conditions that would require a closure of any or all of our schools. Nearby districts have had to take these actions due to flooding. Should we face conditions that would force us to close – which is very unlikely – we would provide notification through phone calls and email. In the meantime, please try to leave for school a little bit earlier as there are more cars dropping children off these days, creating some traffic backlogs and tardies for students. ★

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Solano Youth to Shine as Solano Symphony Orchestra Returns



Lero Wang, age 16, piano student, 10th grader at Davis Senior High School. Photo courtesy of Solano Symphony Orchestra



Sarah Son, age 16, violin student, a junior at Davis Senior High School. Photo courtesy of Solano Symphony Orchestra



Rudy Mahajan flute student, 12th grader at Davis Senior High School. Photo courtesy of Solano Symphony Orchestra

Solano Symphony Orchestra News

VACAVILLE, CA (MPG) - Maestro Semyon Lohss and the orchestra will accompany winners of the 2022 Young Artists Competition during the annual Salute to Youth concert, Sunday, February 5, 2023. All three winners are active music students at Davis Senior High School: Lero Wang performs Sergei Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.2 in C minor, Op.18, 1st movement; Sarah Son performs Ludwig van Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61, 1st movement; Rudy Mahajan performs Carl Reinecke's Flute Concerto in D major, Op. 283, 1st movement. The program will also showcase local youth

ensembles of string and wind players. These include:

The Vacaville High School Premiere Orchestra, with Music Director Melinda Ellis, joins the strings in the well-known Holberg Suite by Edvard Grieg;

The Wind Ensemble of Vanden High School, led by Music Director Troy Symington, joins the winds performing English Folk Song Suite by R. Vaughan Williams;

Finally, the full orchestra and the youth ensemble players will fill the stage to perform "Gershwin in Concert" – a medley featuring several of George Gershwin's best-known works.

The Solano Symphony's annual Salute to Youth concert is underwritten in part

by the generous support of the Margaret Beelard Community Foundation. It's an opportunity to showcase local talent and inspire young musicians to continue developing in their technique and dedication to artistic excellence.

Sunday, February 5, 2023 at 3 PM at the Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre (1010 Ulatis Drive, Vacaville). Tickets can be purchased through VPAT by phone, (707) 469-4013 or via the website: www.vpat.net

Ticket Pricing: Adults \$35; Senior (62) \$30; Military/Veteran \$15 (with ID); Student (with

High School or College ID) and Youth under 18 \$15. These prices are inclusive of a \$2

VPAT theatre preservation. ★

Sen. Dodd Responds to Gov. Newsom's 2023 Budget

Office of Sen Bill Dodd News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, issued the following statement on January 10, 2023, upon the release of Gov. Gavin Newsom's proposed 2023-24 budget, which invests heavily in essential services such as public schools and wildfire prevention while committing significant resources to affordable housing production, economic development and public safety.

"Years of responsible budgeting and building our rainy day fund will help us meet what otherwise would have been a challenging deficit," Sen. Dodd said. "Fortunately, we have the resources on hand to continue to pay for essential services such as emergency response and schools while achieving goals on housing and climate, among others. I'll be working with my colleagues in the Legislature to build upon this budget framework to invest as wisely as



Bill Dodd

possible."

Gov. Newsom's \$297 billion budget includes a \$22.5 billion shortfall caused by anticipated revenue declines. However, because of careful budgeting in previous cycles, it will include no service cuts and no new taxes. Highlights of the 2023-24 budget include:

\$35.6 billion in total reserves; \$108.8 billion for K-12 and higher education; includes record \$23,723 per-pupil investment; \$12.5 billion for

learning recovery and loss mitigation; \$1.2 billion for universal transitional kindergarten; \$15.3 billion in homelessness reduction programs; \$4 billion in higher education student housing; \$2.7 billion in wildfire prevention and forest resilience including vegetation management and science-based solutions; \$8.6 billion in water supply improvements and drought management; \$202 million in urban and Delta flood risk reduction; \$2.85 billion in affordable housing development; \$4.8 billion in universal healthcare; \$8 billion in behavioral health services; \$758 million in public safety including additional investments in border interdiction and opioid and fentanyl abuse reduction

Senator Bill Dodd represents the 3rd Senate District, which includes all or portions of Napa, Solano, Yolo, Sonoma, Contra Costa, and Sacramento counties. You can learn more about the district and Senator Dodd at www.sen.ca.gov/dodd★

Flood Awareness: Resources for Solano County

SRCD News

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Recent storm events are an unpleasant reminder that many areas of Solano County are at risk of flooding. The Solano Resource Conservation District, Solano County Water Agency and County of Solano would like to remind residents that there are a variety of flood control resources available online:

The Real-time Rainfall and Creek Levels tool allows residents to view real-time stream depth and rainfall data from gages around the County. A link to this site can be found on the Solano County Water Agency's home page: www.scwa2.com

Up to date information on flood preparedness and statewide resources can

be found at: www.solano-county.com/stormready

Ready for the Flood: an awareness and preparation manual for Solano County residents is a useful booklet, available in both English and Spanish, that outlines the resources available in the County for those residents at risk of flooding. It has advice for preparing your home and family for emergency situations, examples of flood control projects and steps residents can take to minimize property damage. Printed manuals can be requested from the Solano Resource Conservation District, and online versions can be found in the Resources section at: www.solanorcd.org

If your property would benefit from sandbags during storm events, you can bring a shovel and find

the materials you need at a variety of locations around the County. Details can be found at: www.solano-county.com/sandbags

A great way to stay current on road closures, evacuation orders and other storm information is on the County Office of Emergency Services Facebook page: www.facebook.com/solanoocs

To receive emergency alerts from County agencies on any of your devices, sign up for the Alert Solano system: www.alertsolano.com

If your property burned in the 2020 LNU fire and you have concerns about landslides or large downed trees in waterways in the Pleasant Valley area, please contact the Solano Resource Conservation District at info@solanorcd.org ★

Convicted Murderer Touts 'Real Gangsters' during Shooting

Office Of the District Attorney County of Solano

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - In Department 11 of the Solano County Superior Court, before the Honorable Judge William Pendergast, Defendant Gage Pontarelli was convicted of First-Degree Murder for the killing of Samantha Jack, in violation of Penal Code Section 187(a) and for Personally Using a Firearm in the murder of

Ms. Jack. On July 22, 2018, at approximately 3:00 a.m., Samantha Jack, age 22, was at the residence of her then boyfriend, Gage Pontarelli. After getting into an argument, the defendant assaulted Ms. Jack, and then pulled a semi-automatic firearm on Ms. Jack. The incident was captured on the audio of a neighbor's security camera. The defendant can be heard telling Ms. Jack that he would "show her what a real gangster

is" prior to his firing a single shot into her chest. The defendant is scheduled to return to court on February 6, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. in Department 11 for Judgment and Sentencing. Sergeant Aaron Potter and retired Detective Kelli Gottlieb of the Vacaville Police Department investigated the case. The case was prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Julie Underwood. Andrea Vela provided victim advocacy on the case. ★

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Heeney's History

Landing in the Haymow

Commentary by Ed Heeney

For many years there was a 'coffee table' book on a small table in our living room. The title 'Barns of California' was pretty descriptive, and I enjoyed thumbing through the pages of those old 'friends' of yesteryear.

My childhood memories were filled with barn stories and escapades. Since us kids were involved with the care of livestock, we were allowed access to the barn and all the wonders and secrets therein. Most barns had a second story or 'hay mow' primarily to store hay for livestock feed. It made a great landing pad for jumping.

A couple of our neighbor boys had a really neat hay mow configuration. Their Dad did not run any livestock, so the boys had the whole thing to themselves. They collected all the tin cans from their Mother's kitchen and set up a general store replica in the haymow.

When other neighbor kids were invited over, they were to bring some 'groceries' too. We were encouraged to have our mothers open the bottoms of the cans so when stacked on the barn shelves they would show up like real.

In the early 30s, a tornado swept through our part of the county and several barns were demolished, even more damaged. One neighbor was so upset that he went off to Arkansas to buy lumber for a new barn. He also built the largest barn in the whole county, hoping to withstand the mighty storm force of any tornado. It was still standing when I was visiting half a dozen years ago. Boys had to be careful climbing and jumping when challenged by a jump of 50 feet. It took a lot of hay to cushion a 50-ft. space jump, but we all survived.

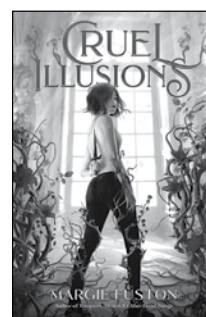
As I was walking home from my one-room school one day, I rounded a knoll and there ahead I saw a group of men tearing down MY barn. Quite upset, I ran to the house to find out what was going on. My Dad assured me that everything would be alright We are getting a new barn. It will be painted red, have a roof that doesn't leak, and won't let the cold wind in through the cracks in wintertime. Besides, it's a barn with haymow for jumping, even your city cousins can stand the new lower height, he said. Needless to say, we fell in love with the new barn and became real fans. ★



BOOK REVIEW & SPECIAL EVENTS EDITOR • ✉ amy-shane@att.net • 📷 amy_fortheloveofbooks

January Cover Love

Start the year with a look at these upcoming young adult titles that are so amazing, intriguing, or enchantingly beautiful that readers will not be able to wait to get their hands on them. While the rain continues to fall and a damp chill starts to settle, this is the perfect time to stay in and read a book.



Mysteries of Thorn Manor

by Margaret Rogerson; McElderry Books

For readers familiar with Sorcery of Thorns, this story continues with a sequel novella, just in time for the Midwinter Ball. Now that Elizabeth has accepted her life at Thorn Manor, her focus is all on Nathaniel, even though it should be on the strange happenings going on around them. The Manor is now trapping everyone who enters the estate while keeping them without outside access. No matter the reason, Elizabeth and Nathaniel must uncover the real cause and release the magical pull all before the Midwinter Ball.

The *Mysteries of Thorn Manor* is a delightful continuation of *Sorcery of Thorns*. Readers will enjoy this quick novella that delivers untold secrets, mysteries, and even a little romance. If you want more from the action-packed story or want to know what happens next, this story delivers on all fronts.

Going Dark

by Melissa De La Cruz; Union Square

#WhereIsAmeliaAshley? In a world filled with hashtags, daily posts, and social media influencers, what happens when one of them goes missing?

When Josh Reuter returns from Rome without his social media influencer girlfriend, everyone begins to point fingers. But then the narrative switches, showing a side of Amelia that people didn't see, opening the

door to even more questions. Readers will reel back and forth between who is telling the truth and if there is any truth when lives are hidden behind the filter of social media.

This mind-bending case will leave readers flying through the pages as they follow the story through social media posts, diaries, and numerous perspectives. Melissa De La Cruz also addresses many issues that must be brought to light while delivering a powerful suspenseful thriller.

Cruel Illusions

by Margie Fuston, McElderry Books

Margie Fuston delivers a powerful hypnotic world where readers will be swept within a story of magic, vampires, revenge, and betrayal.

Set on getting revenge for her mother's death, Ava is determined to hunt down the vampire who killed her. Just as she is about to lose hope, she stumbles across a hidden magic show, one she knows has supernatural powers at play. As the daughter of stage magicians, Ava knows the power of illusion runs in her blood, and when they invite her into their fold, she accepts. However, there is a catch to joining this elusive group of magicians. While they may have the power and the skills to hunt vampires, Ava still needs to prove her worth in a deadly competition. Filled with magical illusions, blood, and even romance *Cruel Illusions* is everything fans of vampires and carnivals could want. ★



Dare to Live Without Limits

by Bryan Golden

Bad Relationships



Have you ever been in or had a bad relationship? Perhaps you are involved in one now. Although a full, in-depth analysis of relationship issues is beyond the scope of this column, there are some fundamental concepts that can be addressed here.

Your relationships exist on many levels. Relationships are as unique as the people who enter into them. One person may adore you while someone else avoids you. There will be times when you can't figure out why things don't click.

One of the most common misconceptions of any relationship is that you have the ability to change the way another person thinks or acts. Too many relationships are entered into with the anticipation that the other person will change with time and understanding.

Although any person can change, you can't make them do it. Everyone has the ability to improve him or herself, if they want to. If you enter into a relationship based on what you think the other person will become, you are doomed to frustration and misery from the start.

If you are not content with who someone is, don't pursue a deeper relationship. If you are already in a relationship with a person who has not changed as anticipated, you have a couple of options. First of all, remember no one is perfect. Your

partner may also be disillusioned about you.

As with other aspects of life, every relationship has good and bad points. If the good points outweigh the bad ones, you might make a strong case for continuing in the relationship. But if you are unhappy with a relationship and the other person isn't inclined to make a mutual effort to improve it, you have to make some tough choices.

You have to balance a relationship with your happiness. If you so desire, you can choose to leave. Ending a relationship may not be easy but neither is living in misery.

Relationships with relatives pose unique challenges. You didn't select these people and you can't choose new ones. If your interaction with them is positive, great – there is no problem. But what about situations where there is friction and acrimony?

Accept your relatives for who they are because you can't change how they think and act. There's no point to arguing or fighting. For those who are particularly troublesome or distasteful, minimize the time you spend with them.

Bad relationships can also occur at work. Keep in mind that you are not an indentured servant and changing jobs is always an option. It's a false premise to believe an employer can't get along without you or that you can't

survive without them. It's much easier to resolve problems at work when you don't feel desperate.

In any relationship, if you give the impression that you will put up with anything, people will treat you accordingly. Demand respect and don't accept less. You are free to choose with whom you spend your time. Just saying no can get you out of many undesirable situations. Often, in a bad relationship, one person will blame the other for all the problems. Don't allow someone to squash your self-esteem by belittling you. Many bad relationships are due to a basic incompatibility between two people. There are people who try to elevate themselves by stepping on others.

If you want to extricate yourself from a bad relationship, you don't need to first condemn the other person. Denouncing someone will only make them defensive and bitter and is counterproductive. If you need to scale back or end a relationship, try to do so without making the other person feel bad.

NOW AVAILABLE: "Dare to Live Without Limits," the book. Visit www.BryanGolden.com or your bookstore. Bryan is a management consultant, motivational speaker, author, and adjunct professor. E-mail Bryan at bryan@columnist.com or write him c/o this paper. © 2023 Bryan Golden ★



Not All Conspiracy Theories Are Equal

The same people who pride themselves on rigorously insisting on the facts -- ideally, explained in the dulcet tones of an NPR anchor -- are happy to embrace conspiracy theories supportive of their own worldview.

This is why the idea that Russian disinformation on social media influenced or even decided the 2016 election has gained such purchase, even though a new study finds, unsurprisingly, no evidence for it.

The overwhelming focus on the Russian influence operation in the wake of 2016 was classic conspiratorial thinking -- an unusual or unwelcome event, namely Trump's shocking victory, was attributed to the machinations of a small, shadowy group of malefactors.

This fevered notion fueled Democratic 2016 election denialism; catalyzed a federal investigation into Trump that was senseless and disruptive; created a cottage industry of supposed disinformation experts; pushed social media companies into exercising rank political censorship in the name of fact-based content moderation; led to the suppression of the Hunter Biden laptop story; and distorted the work of the FBI, which made itself an adjunct of the progressive crusade against such supposedly pervasive and incredibly consequential disinformation.

The effects of all of this are still with us today. The panic over disinformation is the backdrop to many of the "Twitter Files" releases, which will be followed up with hearings by House Republicans.

It always seemed unlikely that a challenge beyond the grasp of American politicians with endless resources and extensive knowledge of our political system -- namely, swaying an election based on some random, not-very-good social media posts -- would be easily within reach of clueless Russians wielding a bunch of bots.

The new report published by Nature Communications (affiliated with the famous journal Nature) is the product of a yearslong research project led by New York University's Center for Social Media and Politics. For technical reasons, the study focuses on Twitter, although surely its findings are more generally applicable.

It found that even though the scale of the Russian efforts sounds vast (an estimated 32 million Twitter users exposed to Russia-sponsored posts -- egads!), its reach and measurable effect were negligible.

The report relied on a detailed survey of a subset of Twitter users, finding 1% of people on Twitter accounted for 70% of exposure to Russian tweets, and 10% for 98% of exposure.

In other words, this was not a widespread phenomenon. Indeed, the median exposure to Russian accounts the last month of the election was zero because overall exposure was so tiny.

As one might expect, the Russian accounts were "overshadowed" -- by at least an order of magnitude -- by content from ordinary domestic

political news media and U.S. political candidates."

Was the Russian disinformation carefully targeted for political effect? No. It turns out that the Internet Research Agency, the outfit in charge of the bots, didn't know how to target American swing voters (maybe they are better at this when trying to influence by-elections in Vladivostok).

The Russian accounts were disproportionately seen by strong Republicans. These weren't people sitting on the fence, who then saw some crude anti-Hillary meme on social media and thought, "That clinches it -- now I can't vote for the Democrat I've disdained literally for decades."

The study found, naturally, "The relationship between the number of posts from Russian foreign influence accounts that users are exposed to and voting for Donald Trump is near zero." Nor did Russian posts influence attitudes toward the issues or drive increased polarization.

It turns out that random drivel produced by foreigners and thrown into the enormous, all-consuming maw of American social media doesn't have much effect.

If the report's findings were more politically convenient, they would be spread far and wide by traditional media outlets urging everyone to accept its conclusions as "science."

In the end, it turns out, the biggest success of the Russian operation was driving a segment of American political opinion completely mad.

Rich Lowry is editor of *The National Review*. Rich Lowry is editor of *The National Review*.

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- CLUES**
- ACROSS**
- Spencer of Hollywood's Golden Age
 - Eyeball, e.g.
 - "Tosca" song, e.g.
 - Theater passage
 - Bovine call
 - ... came a spider...
 - *Univision's Grammy Awards
 - Barley bristle
 - Turning token taker
 - *President with a Grammy
 - Diabolical
 - Sold at the pump
 - Russian monarch
 - Back of a boat
 - *"Shallow," 2018 recipient from "A ___ Is Born" movie
 - *Camila Cabello and Ed Sheeran's nominated song
 - College dwelling
 - Footnote note
 - Shade of violet
 - Huron's neighbor
 - Head of the abbey
 - Done in a pot
 - City in Bolivia
 - Not manual
 - Mend, healthwise
 - Eye cover
 - Egghead
 - Four quarters
 - Dog in yoga
 - Triple ...
 - *...com Arena
 - *"Vegas" and "Woman" nominee (2 words)
 - Unit of electrical energy
 - Hoover's agency, acr.
 - Discompose
 - Shade of yellow
 - I in T.G.I.F.
 - Small, olive-gray bird
 - *"Cheers" regular
 - Inquire
 - Open up
- DOWN**
- Bath powder
 - Iranian coin
 - ... Spumante
 - Be needy
 - Gossipy ones
 - Arabian Peninsula country
 - Column's counterpart
 - Holiday surprise for employee
 - Palo ... CA
 - Agitate
 - Inwardly
 - *1970 two-time winner "The ___ of Aquarius"
 - Hindu retreat
 - Ancient Rome's neighbor
 - Nail a criminal
 - Popular newspaper name
 - *"30" performer
 - Pillage
 - Beef ___, dim sum choice
 - *"Don't Shut Me Down" group
 - Alan Alda's classic TV show
 - Type of hawk
 - Type of flu
 - Multi-colored dog coat
 - One of three square ones
 - Shower with affection
 - Human trunk
 - Sliding fastener
 - Part of "I"
 - Past-life experience? (2 words)
 - Capital of Bulgaria
 - Airbnb option
 - Chanel of fashion
 - German industrial valley
 - Big Bang's original matter
 - Disc. alt. sp.
 - Popular dieter's foe
 - Between ports
 - Chris Hemsworth's superhero
 - *Award-winning Bon Jovi's lead singer
 - *Coldplay's collaborators

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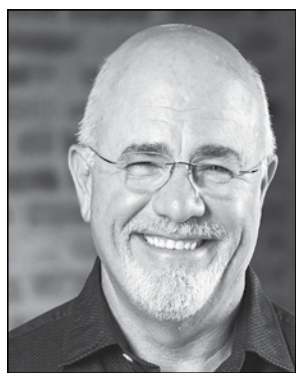
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Let's tweak that idea a little

Dear Dave,

I am on Baby Step 2, and I started a YouTube channel earlier this year that led to a new opportunity to make additional income. I try on and review clothing, and I'm paid \$30 for each clip that's anywhere from 30 seconds to two minutes long. Right now, I have about 1,000 viewers. This requires me to buy items from several brands. I usually return the items when I'm through filming, but I'm currently funding this with a credit card I only use for this project. I only pay the minimum each month until I get the refund, so at any given time there can be up to \$4,000 on the card in rotation. I make about \$86,000 at my normal job, so is this an okay way to fund my project and chalk it up as a business expense?

- Amber

Dave Ramsey Says

Dear Amber,

You're taking a risk here, from a business perspective, by playing around with \$4,000 in debt to make \$30 a pop. That's inordinate. And you shouldn't be paying for the clothes in the first place. These brands should be giving you clothes to review - that you keep - for the marketing exposure, but I'm not sure you've got enough eyeballs on you yet to justify them giving you the clothes for free.

Basically, it sounds like you're trying to put yourself in a position to be an influencer. And the way influencers get paid is by monetizing eyeballs. Obviously, YouTube and other platforms will pay you if you can get the eyeballs. But 1,000 viewers really aren't a lot these days. You're getting there, though, and I'm glad you're working at it and trying to make things happen.

You make good money, Amber. I want you to set aside \$2,000 or \$3,000 for this business, maybe out of the business income, and prime the pump one time. By that, I mean open a separate checking account that's

for your clothing exchange process only. Here's the thing, let's say you bought \$1,000 worth of stuff from one of these companies, and they suddenly decide they're not taking it back. You just ate that \$1,000. And guess what else? Now, you really have credit card debt.

There are three things you can always be sure of in business. One, it's going to cost twice as much as you think it will. Two, it's going to take twice as long as you think it will. And three, you are not the exception to these things. While we're at it, add this to the list of stuff you can always be sure of - you'll never find me advising or endorsing credit card debt!

- Dave

Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national bestselling author, personal finance expert and host of "The Ramsey Show," heard by more than 18 million listeners. He has appeared on "Good Morning America," "CBS This Morning," "Today," Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, He also serves as CEO of Ramsey Solutions. ★



Riley Reviews

'PLANE' TAKES OFF WITH ACTION; CRIME DRAMA AND COMEDY ON TV

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

"PLANE" RATED R

The dog days of January often prove to be the dumping ground for new films, but the death-defying thrills in "Plane" serve as a reminder that Gerard Butler's action hero could be the saving grace for a rousing B-grade delight.

Working for a third-rate commercial airline, Butler's Captain Brodie Torrance is stuck with a New Year's Eve flight from Singapore to Tokyo with barely more than a dozen passengers.

The most unwilling passenger is Louis Gaspere (Mike Colter), a convicted murderer being transported by an armed FBI agent for extradition back to the United States.

More than anything, the widowed Brodie is eager to join his teenage daughter for the holiday, while his young co-pilot Samuel (Yoson An) is a family man just as anxious to get home.

The rest of the crew, except for flight attendant Bonnie (Daniella Pineda), and the passengers barely register notice. But then, there is the requisite jerk traveler who mostly complains over trifling matters.

Extremely turbulent skies and a lightning strike disable the airliner in the area of the Jolo island cluster of the Philippines, which is treacherous terrain ruled by a rogue militia of violent separatists.

After miraculously landing the plane in a deserted jungle and saving everyone who managed to keep their seatbelts firmly attached, Torrance quickly learns that surviving the landing was just the beginning of their ordeal.

The only person Torrance can count on for help is Louis, as the villainous militia leader Junmar (Evan Dane Taylor) and his thugs kidnap the rest of the crew and passengers.

Back in New York, while airline execs dither over the public relations fallout of losing a plane, corporate troubleshooter Scarsdale (Tony Goldwyn) organizes a group of mercenaries for a rescue mission.

Time is of the essence, and thus Brodie and Louis resort to guerrilla warfare of their own and serious gunplay is inevitable. The best action sequence, though, is tense hand-to-hand combat when Brodie is ambushed by a guerilla.

The virtue of "Plane" is that it revels in its B-grade action thrills, fully knowing that with Gerard Butler at the helm it delivers the goods for its intended audience. What more could you ask for during the dreary month of January?

"ALERT: MISSING PERSONS UNIT" AND "ANIMAL CONTROL" ON FOX

For the new procedural drama "Alert: Missing Persons Unit," the title says it all. Set in the Philadelphia Police Department's Missing Persons Unit, each

episode features a heart-pounding, life-or-death search for, you guessed it, a missing person.

Each episode's search runs alongside police officers Jason Grant (Scott Caan) and his ex-wife Nikki Batista (Dania Ramirez) in their series-long quest to find out the truth about their long-lost son.

Six years ago, while working overseas, Jason received a call that every parent fears. His son Keith (Graham Verchere) had gone missing. From that moment forward, the lives of Jason, Nikki and their daughter Sydney (Fivel Stewart) were turned upside down.

Throughout the search to find Keith, Jason and Nikki's marriage deteriorated and they grew apart. Jason moved into private security, while Nikki was promoted with the Philly P.D. to head of the Missing Persons Unit (MPU).

At the MPU, Nikki has been able to do for others what she wasn't able to do for herself, namely bring a loved one back home. She leads a team of skilled officers, including her current love interest Mike (Ryan Broussard), whom she met when he was assigned to oversee the search for Keith.

Another MPU member is Kemi (Adeola Role), who is proficient in many languages, highly discerning of visual clues, and uses her know-how as a shaman to take a holistic approach to her job.

Forensic anthropologist C (guest star Petey Gibson) is a master of reconstructing the faces of those who have disappeared. The MPU team works to find the missing, abducted or kidnapped, and help reunite them with their loved ones.

When Jason receives a possible proof-of-life photo that Keith is very much alive, he and Nikki will reunite personally and professionally to continue the fight for their son.

Arriving on Thursday, February 16, workplace comedy "Animal Control" stars Joel McHale ("Community") as Frank, an opinionated, eccentric Animal Control officer who may not have gone to college but is still the most well-read person in the room.

A former cop, Frank tried to expose corruption in his department, but his efforts got him fired, which may explain why he's so cynical and curmudgeonly. He has almost superhuman ability to understand animals, but humans not so much.

Frank is assigned a new partner, Fred "Shred" Taylor (Michael Rowland), an optimistic rookie Animal Control officer. They both report to their sweet-natured and endearingly awkward boss Emily Price (Vella Lovell).

Amit Patel (Ravi Patel) and Victoria Sands (Grace Palmer) are also partners, though they could not be more opposite. Templeton Dudge (Gerry Dee), an Animal Control officer from a neighboring precinct, has a real chip on his shoulder. ★

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 2023-000053
 The following persons are doing business as: Legal Docs4U, RW Doc Prep, RW Docs, All Doc Prep, All Legal Docs, 360 Arlington Circle, Fairfield, CA 94533.
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 Publish: Jan 20, 27, Feb 3, 10, 2023
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CITY OF DIXON NOTICE TO BIDDERS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the City of Dixon that submittals for a requests for qualification (RFQ) will be accepted online via Blueprint Express until Thursday, **January 26th** at 3:00 p.m., at which time all bids will be considered received and final by the City Clerk, for the following contract:

"On-Call" Backflow Prevention Assembly Testing And Repair Services

DESCRIPTION/LOCATION OF WORK: Within the City-owned water system, annual testing of approximately 425 backflow prevention assemblies, with the possibility of additional testing, service, repairs and/or device replacement.

All work is to be done in accordance with the posted RFQ and City Engineering standards and specifications. A copy of the RFQ may be obtained by logging on www.blueprintexpress.com/dixon or by calling BPXpress Reprographics at (707) 745-3593.

All questions prior to the deadline for bid submission shall be directed to the attention of Josh Hudson, Water Operations Supervisor via email at: jhudson@cityofdixon.us. The deadline for submission of questions and clarifications regarding the Contract Documents is **3:00 pm, Friday, January 20, 2023**. Only Addenda issued by the City are binding.

Dixon Independent Voice 1-13 - 1-20-2023

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Storms, snowpack spur optimism for ample water supply for farmers

A year ago, California's first snowpack survey of the year revealed deep snow measuring 160% of average. Then came the driest January, February and March in more than 100 years. This year the snowpack measured 174% of average on Jan. 3—and ensuing storms dumped another 10 feet of snow in parts of the Sierra Nevada. At last, that may presage a healthy water year for agriculture. A state climatologist says the string of atmospheric storms signals that California may be moving from a dry La Niña pattern to a wet El Niño phenomenon.

Agricultural groups say 'Waters of U.S.' law creates confusion, burdens farmers

Farm groups say they fear the Environmental Protection Agency's new "Waters of the United States" rule will create confusion and cause disruptions to routine agricultural activities. The rule expands the federal government's reach, allowing regulation of most any low spot on a farmer's field where water stands or channels. Critics say that may expose farmers to unknowing violations of the law and require permits for ordinary activities such as plowing, planting or fence building. Agricultural groups say the law could result in costly legal fees for farmers.

Farmers, ranchers challenged by rule banning older trucks

Large trucks and buses made before 2010 are now prohibited from operating in California, under a California Air Resources Board rule that took effect Jan. 1. Until this year, an agricultural exemption had allowed pre-2010 big rigs to run up to 10,000 miles a year. Now farmers and ranchers with non-compliant vehicles must abide by a 1,000-mile limit. The market is already saturated with older vehicles retaining little value, and many business owners face steep financial costs to replace them.

Researchers hail new rice-breeding effort as a breakthrough

An international team, including researchers at the University of California, Davis, has successfully propagated a commercial hybrid rice strain as a clone through seeds—with 95% efficiency. According to researchers' conclusions published in Nature Communications, the development may help lower the costs of hybrid rice seed, allowing rice farmers worldwide to obtain access to high-yielding, disease-resistant strains. Historically, rice has been costly to breed as a hybrid, with previous yield improvements of only about 10%. ★

WE SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDERS

UC Davis Health Improving Eye Care for People with Diabetes

UC Davis Health News

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Diabetes affects 34.2 million people in the United States. Diabetic retinopathy, a diabetes complication that affects blood vessels in the eye, is the leading cause of blindness in adults. Early detection and treatment are critical to prevent vision loss but fewer than 50% of the 3.2 million Californians with diabetes undergo their recommended yearly eye screening. Glenn Yiu, a professor of ophthalmology at UC Davis Health, hopes to increase that number significantly.

The UC Office of the President announced Yiu received a \$2 million grant to lead an interdisciplinary program, the Collaborative UC Teleophthalmology Initiative, or CUTI. The project, part of UCOP Multicampus Research Programs & Initiatives, is in partnership with medical centers at UC San Diego, UC San Francisco and UC Los Angeles. CUTI builds on a screening program Yiu launched at UC Davis Health in 2018. The goal is to expand eye care access for diabetics, particularly for underserved populations. The project will utilize digital medical equipment for teleophthalmology or “remote” ophthalmology.

How Teleophthalmology can be used for Screenings

A key feature of the CUTI program is integrating digital eye screenings into routine care at primary care facilities or clinics for patients with diabetes. The screening is simple and just requires the patient to look into a special camera. Known as a fundus camera or retinal camera, the machine takes high-resolution images of the interior of the eye. The images can detect changes that may signal diabetic retinopathy and other eye conditions. After the digital image is

taken at the primary care office or clinic, the results are sent to an off-site eye care provider for evaluation and diagnosis.

“Teleophthalmology pro-

will work with community clinics and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to reach underserved members of the community.

community clinics, such as Clinica Tepati and Paul Hom Asian Clinic, that provide care in Sacramento’s inner-city neighborhoods. UC Davis

awareness and acceptance of telehealth. He thinks this technology can reduce in-person health visits and improve access and adherence to preventative eye care.

The interdisciplinary CUTI team includes members from the four different UC campuses with expertise in public health, clinical informatics, and health economics who can address obstacles in clinical workflow, technology integration, and financial sustainability.

The retinal images taken during the four-year study will be collected in a centralized repository for research using artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence may be able to identify eye diseases and predict the risk of cardiovascular events and strokes simply from images of the eye’s interior.

“The introduction of artificial intelligence is another exciting development in teleophthalmology,” Yiu said. “The incorporation of AI for automated image interpretation allows for faster and more sensitive diagnosis of early eye disease.”

Remote diabetic eye screening is already available at UC Davis primary clinics in Midtown, Folsom, Elk Grove, and the Lawrence E. Ellison Ambulatory Care Center. Yiu and his team believe that remote eye imaging may be used in the future to screen for other eye conditions such as glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Over the four-year program, they hope to spread the word to improve awareness about preventative eye care.

“We are excited to start this project and hope to find a way to scale it up for all of California. Our long-term goal is to make it easy for people with diabetes to get their annual eye screening, so we can help people avoid preventable blindness.” ★



The UC Office of the President announced Yiu received a \$2 million grant to lead an interdisciplinary program, the Collaborative UC Teleophthalmology Initiative, or CUTI. Image by David Mark from Pixabay

vides a convenient way to get your eyes screened for diabetic retinopathy and other ocular disorders during a routine visit to the primary care physician,” Yiu said. “It also enhances eye care access for those who do not live near an ophthalmologist.”

Since launching a separate pilot teleophthalmology program at UC Davis in 2018, Yiu has improved diabetic eye screening rates by more than 15%, helping to make UC Davis Health one of the top performers in the country.

Screening for Underserved Patients

In addition to eye screenings at primary care facilities at UC health systems, the program

“Teleophthalmology provides a convenient way to get your eyes screened for diabetic retinopathy and other ocular disorders during a routine visit to the primary care physician.”

GLENN YIU, A PROFESSOR OF OPHTHALMOLOGY AT UC DAVIS HEALTH

In the Sacramento area, this includes student-run free

Health is also working with Communicare Health Care Centers, a FQHC, to provide remote diabetic eye screening to rural areas of California’s Central Valley. The region has limited eye care access. UC San Diego and UC San Francisco will also be engaging with community clinics in addition to primary care centers.

Training and Identifying Barriers

Because eye screenings are not a routine part of primary care, the program will train health care providers and identify the barriers that prevent the widespread adoption of remote eye screening. Yiu noted that the COVID-19 pandemic increased

\$200K in PG&E Scholarships Available; Deadline is Feb. 24

PG&E News Release

OAKLAND, CA (MPG) - Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) announced that scholarship applications are now being accepted for college-bound high schoolers as well as current college and continuing education students with a primary residence in Northern and Central California.

More than 150 awards totaling more than \$200,000 are being made available through scholarships created by PG&E’s 11 employee resource groups (ERG) and two engineering network groups (ENG). These groups support and advance diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging within PG&E and the hometowns it serves.

These scholarships are awarded annually to help offset the cost of higher education. ERG and ENG scholarship winners will receive awards ranging from \$500 to \$6,000 for exemplary scholastic achievement and community leadership.

PG&E ERG and ENG scholarship information, including criteria and applications, is available on PG&E’s website. To be considered for a scholarship, all applications must be submitted by Feb. 24, 2023.

“Many recipients of our ERG and ENG scholarships are the first in their families to attend college. These awards help develop our future leaders and breakthrough thinkers and are part of how we’re living our purpose at PG&E—delivering for our hometowns, serving our planet, and leading with love,” said Marie Waugh, PG&E Vice President, Chief Talent, Culture and Inclusion Officer.

“I do not have enough words to express

my gratitude for the award, especially as a first-generation college student. I’m excited to see where my future education and experiences will take me. I couldn’t be more thankful for your kindness in supporting my future,” said Alexis Renihan, a 2022 Women’s Network ERG scholarship recipient, who’s majoring in dietetics at Point Loma Nazarene University.

Since 1989, PG&E’s ERGs and ENG have awarded more than \$5 million in scholarships to thousands of recipients. The funds are raised totally through employee donations, employee fundraising events and Campaign for the Community, the company’s employee giving program.

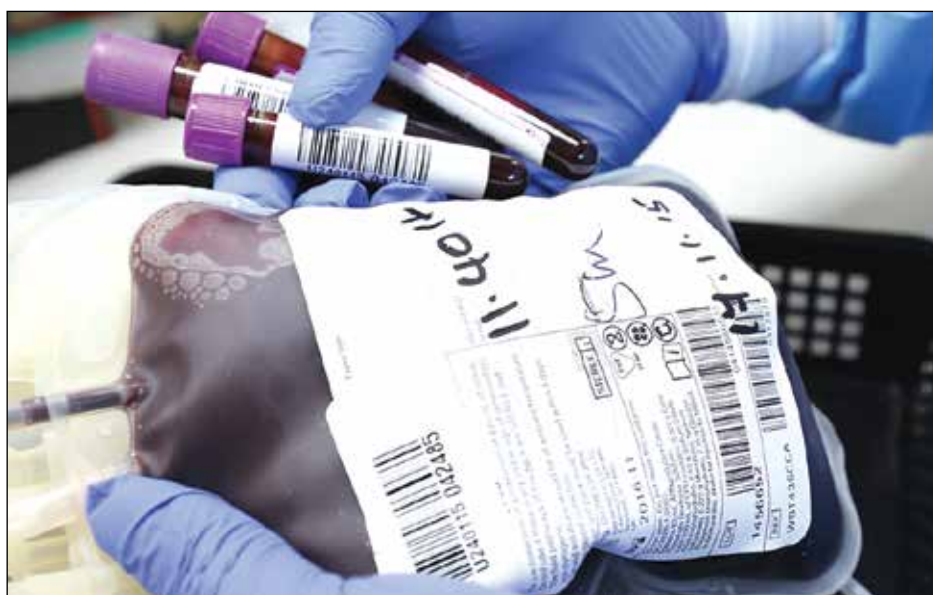
More than 10,000 PG&E coworkers belong to ERGs and ENG. Each group helps further the company’s commitment to serving its hometowns and growing coworker engagement.

PG&E’s ERG and ENG scholarships are available through these 13 groups:

Access Network (individuals with disabilities), Asian, Black, Latino, Legacy (tenured coworkers), MEENA (Middle East, Europe, and North Africa), National Society of Black Engineers (STEM career coworkers), NuEnergy (newer coworkers), PrideNetwork (LGBTQ+ coworkers), Samahan (Filipino), Society for Hispanic Professional Engineers (STEM career coworkers), Veterans, Women’s Network.

In addition to the PG&E scholarships, the Pacific Service Employees Association (PSEA), a nonprofit mutual benefit organization serving PG&E coworkers and retirees, also provides scholarships for dependents of company coworkers. ★

Blood Supply Sinks to Lowest Level in a Year



Blood supply sinks to lowest level in a year: national nonprofit vitalant declares emergency blood shortage. Image by Ahmad Ardity from Pixabay

Vitalant News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The blood supply for about 900 hospitals nationwide recently dipped to its lowest level in a year at Vitalant, triggering a blood emergency for the nonprofit blood services provider. Eligible donors of all blood types, especially type O, are needed now to schedule an appointment and donate in the days and weeks ahead to prevent delays for patients who need transfusions.

Changes in the way people work, live, and play since the start of the pandemic created lasting challenges to maintaining an adequate blood supply. As many people continue to work remotely, blood donations at business-hosted blood drives are down by 50% in 2022 from 2019, a decline of 90,000 donations. Overall, the number of people donating with Vitalant has dropped about 20% in the last three years, while patients’ needs remain strong.

Mitzy Edgcomb, Vitalant’s west division vice president, reports, “The frequency of emergency blood shortages is a grave concern for all of us. Because blood is perishable with no artificial substitute, the blood supply must be constantly replenished. Despite extraordinary outreach efforts in the last few months, blood

inventory continues to be dangerously low.”

Vitalant notes that new donors and those who haven’t donated recently are critical to end blood shortages and help our blood supply return to more stable, pre-pandemic levels.

In addition to societal shifts, recent blood drive cancellations forced by severe winter weather and illnesses have compounded the shortage. Blizzards, rain/wind/flooding and extreme cold caused more than 2,000 donations to go uncollected in December and early January.

Donors of every blood type are critical to ending this shortage and maintaining an adequate supply. The need is most acute for type O blood and platelets. Type O-positive is the most transfused blood type while O-negative can help patients of any blood type. Donated platelets, which often help cancer patients, must be used within a week.

Learn more about hosting blood drives, donating blood and make an appointment to give at vitalant.org, download and use the Vitalant app or call 877-25-VITAL (877-258-4825). During January, National Blood Donor Month, all those who come to give blood through Jan. 20 will be automatically entered to win tickets, travel and more in the Big Trip to the Big Game Giveaway. Learn more at vitalant.org/biggame. ★

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Newsom Rewrites State History

Newsom blames GOP and Right for issues plaguing state, ignoring complete Democrat control



Governor Newsom's second inauguration, January 6, 2023 in Sacramento. Photo: gov.ca.gov

By Katy Grimes,
CaliforniaGlobe.com

California Governor Gavin Newsom was sworn in Friday (January 6, 2023) for a second term.

With the state suffering under a plague of hundreds of thousands of homeless drug addicts living on the streets, a serious spike in violent crime and theft, highest-in-the-nation taxes and cost of living, failing public schools, a state-created water shortage, and hundreds of thousands of California businesses and residents fleeing to friendlier states, Newsom made his second inaugural speech all about him – and he attacked the toothless GOP in this Democrat one-party state.

“Time has done its usual trick on me,” Newsom said.

“It says it has been four years since I stood in the shadow of this Capitol and delivered my first inaugural address.”

“Four years, disaster and plague, they bend the clock in strange ways,” Newsom said. (*doesn't he know that he was governor these past 4 years during disaster and plague?*)

“In nearly 30 years in politics, I have had the opportunity to see this process firsthand, learning as we go, and etching these learnings on the consciousness of a country that perhaps hasn't yet caught up,” Newsom said. “When we started issuing same-sex marriage licenses in San Francisco in 2004, it felt as if history moved at light-speed, in the right direction, decades of advocacy culminating in that beautiful Winter of Love.”

(*Newsom started issuing same-sex marriage licenses as Mayor of San Francisco in violation of state law. A few months later, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Mayor Newsom, and the City and County of San Francisco had exceeded its authority and violated state law by issuing the marriage*

licenses.)

Newsom played a victim of the Covid time period, in denial of his decisions to lock down school children and businesses, force vaccines on millions of Californians, and mask the population indoors and outdoors, while he went about his life unmasked, attending events and parties, and while his children attended private school:

“It feels like both a flash, and an eternity.

“In the longest hours of my first term, trying to plot a course through pandemic, wildfire, mass shootings, and social unrest ... I found myself looking backward, as much as I was looking forward.

Newsom took us on a journey back in time to his childhood, omitting the omnipotent presence of the Getty family in his life, while lamenting victimhood because of his divorced parents:

“I recalled the late-1970s, when I was 10 or 11 years old, a child of divorce and dyslexia, trying to find my bearings.”

“I was a kid, traveling back and forth across the Golden Gate Bridge, between the two very different lives of my mother and father.”

“I couldn't read, and was looking for any way to ditch classes. I'd fake stomach aches and dizziness. I'd bite down on the thermometer in the nurse's office trying to make the temperature rise past 100.”

He also perpetuated the gross fabrication of a January 6th “insurrection” on the U.S. Capitol two years ago:

“...there are still forces in America that want to take the nation backward. We saw that two years ago, on this day, when the unthinkable happened at a place most Americans assumed was invincible,” Newsom said. “An insurrectionist mob ransacking a sacred pillar of our democracy, violently clashing with sworn officers upholding the rule of law. Just like the brave men

and women whose heroism we inscribe, here on our own Peace Officers' Memorial.”

“Since that terrible day, we've wrestled with what those events say about us as a country. The ugliness that overflowed on January 6th, 2021, was in fact decades in the making. Fomented by people who have a very different vision of America's future. Red state politicians, and the media empire behind them, selling regression as progress, oppression as freedom. And as we know too well, there is nothing original about their demagoguery. All across the nation, anxiety about social change has awakened long-dormant authoritarian impulses. Calling into question what America is to become, freer and fairer ... or reverting to a darker past.”

Newsom callously laid-out California's cruel, evil history, full of bigotry, genocide, discrimination, and homophobia, omitting a few crucial details:

“California's statehood, after all, was also sealed with a brutal genocide against native people.” (*Newsom is cherry-picking history to serve his own political positions. The Spanish colonization of the Americas began in 1493. The Spanish Empire expanded across the Caribbean Islands, South America, most of Central America and much of North America, but was not confined to California.*)

“Let's not forget, the Chinatown I visited as a boy is a remnant of the bigotry of agitator Denis Kearney, and the Chinese Exclusion Act of the 1880s.” (*Newsom omitted that Kearney was anti-capitalist, and was elected president of the Workingmen's labor Union. Kearney was arrested twice for using incendiary language and inciting a riot.*)

“Tens of thousands of Japanese Americans were interned right here during World War II.” (*Newsom omitted that the Japanese*

internment took place after an executive order by Democrat President Franklin Roosevelt.)

What a contrast of Gov. Newsom's speech to his nemesis Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who wowed the people of the Sunshine State with his praise, accolades and appreciation:

“Freedom lives here, in our great Sunshine State of Florida!” DeSantis said.

“It lives in the courage of those who patrol the streets and keep our communities safe, it lives in the industry of those who work long hours to earn a living and raise their families, it lives in the dedication of those who teach our children, it lives in the determination of those who grow our food, it lives in the wisdom of our senior citizens, it lives in the dreams of the historic number of families who have moved from thousands of miles away because they saw Florida as the land of liberty and the land of sanity.”

While Gov. Newsom wagged his finger at oppressive California and its residents, Gov. DeSantis uplifted his people, thanking them while recognizing that “Florida has led the way in preserving what the father of our country called the ‘sacred fire of liberty.’”

Liberty is something we are in short supply of in California under Gov. Newsom and the Democrat supermajority.

The rest of Gov. Newsom's speech was directed to a wider audience – the nation, as he pretends he's not running for President in 2024:

Newsom played the game of “I know you are, but what am I?” described by the Urban Dictionary as, “quite simply the most retarded comeback someone makes when they've completely lost the argument. This statement signifies that the argument has gone to a completely immature level.”

He continued attacking the right, GOP, and red states:

“They silence speech, fire

teachers, kidnap migrants, subjugate women, attack the Special Olympics, and even demonize Mickey Mouse.”

“All camouflaged under a hijacking of the word ‘freedom.’”

“But what they really want is more control – intrusive government, command over your most intimate decisions – when to have a family, how you raise your kids, how you love.”

That last statement is really rich coming from the Governor who still clings to his Covid State of Emergency powers three years after the order, and ruling by fiat, locked down 40 million people during Covid, issued more than 70 executive orders containing 561 provisions, and killed off half of the businesses in the state.

Evan Symon with the Globe spoke with Washington-based analyst and speechwriter Craig Haddock after Newsom's inauguration speech on Friday who said:

“I mean, let's begin with the whole tone of the speech. Usually what people go for, especially in reelection speeches, is to promote unity and working together. Governor Newsom just destroyed any hope of bipartisanship by going after the GOP. If he is looking at a presidential run in the future, these are just further nails in that coffin. Any good leader will at least throw out a few brownie points at the other party. I mean, even [Florida Governor] Ron DeSantis has. Newsom just didn't.”

“Even worse, he kind of praised the division between the two parties over and over again, and made the whole situation black and white. He lumped pretty much everyone against him with extremists and those that broke into the Capitol on January 6th. I mean, it's no coincidence of the inauguration speech date. He wanted that and pretty much said “Democrats good, Republicans bad.” ★

For more on Newsom see CaliforniaGlobe.com