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Dixon Independent Voice

VOLUME 30 • ISSUE 1 *Serving Dixon and Solano County since 1993* JANUARY 7, 2022

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Unless lawmakers intervene, the debt is set to be paid down by a tax increase for businesses that would show up on their 2022 taxes, said Barerra. Photo courtesy lmtphoto | Dreamstime.com

By Grace Gedy, [CALMatters.org](#)

Clogged supply chains. Hiring struggles. New mask rules. A virus that trampled right over return-to-work schedules. Last year was chaotic for many businesses across California.

What does 2022 hold? Layered on top of pandemic uncertainty is the question of what policymakers might do for – and to – businesses.

“2022 is going to be a very busy legislative year,” said Jennifer Barrera, CEO of the California Chamber of Commerce.

Workers were guaranteed extended sick leave for COVID-19 quarantining or vaccine side effects in spring of 2021, and then saw it run out in September. “That expired, in our

minds, at the worst possible time,” said Eduardo Martinez, legislative director of California Labor Federation, mentioning the Delta variant surge, which seemingly peaked in late August.

With the rise of the Omicron variant, Los Angeles Democrat Wendy Carrillo said she’s looking for an opportunity to bring back extended COVID-19 sick leave. Last time California had federal assistance helping cover the cost; this time it would have to go it alone, she said. Pointing to the state’s projected \$31 billion budget surplus, she said “there’s an opportunity for the governor and for the legislature to ensure that the health of the 40 million people across the state of California is prioritized.”

Also potentially on the docket: legislation to boost the share of their wages that workers receive when they take

paid family leave, according to San Jose Democrat Ash Kalra, who chairs the Assembly’s labor and employment committee. “The current (wage) replacement rate is especially inadequate for low wage workers,” said Kalra.

A rate increase was passed by the legislature last year, but was vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, who said it would create “significant new costs.” In his veto statement, Newsom said he looked forward to partnering with the legislature on the issue of family leave access.

In 2021, Oakland Democrat Buffy Wicks proposed a bill that would have required all workers to provide proof of vaccination to their employers or submit to weekly testing. Days later, with the end of the legislative session

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Lt. Tegeler Passes Unexpectedly



Lt. Mike Tegeler. Courtesy of City of Dixon

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Heartfelt condolences continued to pour into the City of Dixon social media site after the City of Dixon and the Dixon Police Department announced their sadness in the passing of Lt. Mike Tegeler. Lt. Tegeler passed away unexpectedly at his home on Dec. 18, 2021. He was commander of the Field Operations Division of the Dixon Police Department and managed all patrol teams for the city.

“Mike’s passing was a sudden shock to the entire police department,” Chief Robert Thompson said. “He was such an important part of this agency and the lives of so many of our younger officers. Mike’s commitment to his values and his family were so ingrained in his character he made the entire department better.”

Lt. Tegeler joined the Dixon Police Department in 2012 after spending 22 years with the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff. He was promoted to sergeant in 2013, and he led the Investigations Section, supervising the investigations carried out by detectives. In 2018, Mike was promoted to lieutenant and was given command of the Field Operations Division. In that capacity, Lt. Tegeler led all patrol operations for the City of Dixon.

“Make no mistake,” Thompson said, “his impact on the evolution of this organization cannot be overstated. He will forever be a part of the Dixon Police Department, and we will try and honor the promise he made of service and dedication.” Lt. Tegeler was also a proud veteran of the United States Air Force.

The Solano County Medical Examiner’s Office is conducting an inquiry into the exact cause of death.

A viewing for Lt. Tegeler will be Friday, Jan. 7, from 5-8 pm at Vaca Hills Chapel in Vacaville. Funeral services will be Saturday, Jan. 8, at 11 am at the Mission Church in Vacaville. A private burial is scheduled at the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests a contribution to Cadence International, Attn: Nafziger Ministry in memory of Mike Tegeler, [www.cadence.org/nafziger](#). ★

Cannabis Boutique has Spirit of Solano

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - When Hayley Andrew began looking for a place to plant a new cannabis business, she attended Dixon City Council meetings and Chamber of Commerce functions to get to know people and understand the community better. One of those events was the Citizen of the Year where the Chamber also recognizes the Business of the Year. She set a lofty goal that her business would be that in four years. She made it in three and thus was awarded the WestAmerica Bank and the Solano Economic Development Corporation’s ‘Spirit of Solano’ as well.

“We put a lot of dedication and time into our community making sure we give back to our community, and I think this is an expression of how much hard work we have done and what we have done for them,” she reported with all smiles as she was handed the award from Shauna Manina of the



Hayley Andrew of Dixon Wellness Collective receives the Spirit of Solano award from Debbie Friesen, Assistant Vice President and Community Relations Officer of WestAmerica Bank and Shauna Manina, Executive Director of the Dixon Chamber. Photo by Debra Dingman

Dixon Chamber.

Dixon Wellness paved the way for other businesses in the cannabis industry that broke the stigma of a “pot shop.” After growing up in Elk Grove, Andrew worked in the insurance industry before meeting up with Kimberly Cargile, the director of A Therapeutic

Alternative in Sacramento who was looking for someone like Hayley to help grow their vision for the cannabis industry. She started as a receptionist in 2012 and by 2016, Andrew had worked her way up to manager.

That was the same year that California voters approved Proposition 64

paving the way for legalized recreational cannabis and allowing more dispensaries. Dixon City Council was already looking into regulating the potential businesses and her husband, Rich Ferguson, had family ties here.

“We were drawn here because we saw a need.

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Dixon Independent Voice.com



Trash Law and Laws That Didn't Pass

By Debra Dingman

When I was researching for the story on the “secure waste” disposal site on Schroeder Road, I discovered a mountain of information about the laws that govern our waste and of course, some that change our lives in very subtle ways.

A few years ago, I remembered my son who then worked at Tractor Supply telling me about what that business had to go through to ensure they were not fined for trash. If a container of any pesticide or dog shampoo was damaged, for example, one could never just throw it in a dumpster. There are detailed lists of what can and what cannot be simply “thrown away.”

“There are no public trash receptacles,” he said. “There’s a reason you wander around for 30 minutes with your tissue looking for a receptacle. It’s because of the law. Although the law has been around for a while, the enforcement has gotten more serious.”

Walmart was the first to get heavy fines and interestingly, they are in the news again for the same kind of thing. It’s a huge store. Somehow, I have sympathy...

“We make all these laws but we don’t foresee the practical consequences,” my son said. “That’s why there is a cottage industry for this kind of disposal.” I told him about the documentary I saw about how Americans ship off broken computers and assorted electronics to some 3rd world country and showed children rummaging through the dangerous, toxic trash to see if they could salvage anything for money.

“If there was a reasonable way to get rid of hazardous waste in America, it would be done in America but there isn’t—at least not in California,” he said. “It is the reality of living in a modern world—and government—that has made it practically illegal.”

So used oil, and other things we use

in our cars and machines along with other discards will be sorted through on Schroeder Road and they will transfer via trucks to other places. This makes me happy that someone has found a way to make a business out of it but really, it makes me sad that this great country can’t figure out how to better deal with our trash.

Vetoed Laws

I thought I’d share what laws did not get passed as that is equally interesting and perhaps frustrating. I noted the law that would have stopped criminalizing jaywalking, for example, didn’t clear. So, all of us who jaywalk around downtown need to re-think. We can still get a ticket for that. Here’s five others that did not pass.

1. Massively expanding Cal Grant, the state’s chief financial aid program. Ironically, the move came a few days after Newsom approved a stack of bills he said would increase college affordability and accessibility;
2. Creating non-hospital facilities for young people insured by Medi-Cal who are experiencing mental health crises;
3. Paying people struggling with drug addiction to stay sober;
4. Permitting cannabis products to be advertised on most freeway billboards;
5. Allowing bicyclists to roll through stop signs.

Decorations Down

Since I came down with a cold and didn’t even put away my Christmas napkins, I was happy to learn that Christmas decorations in (true) honor of Christ’s birth should not be taken down until January 6. I learned that this is the feast of the Epiphany, when you can celebrate the coming of the Good News to all. Since we’re past that with this edition, take them down. Really. Take them down. ★

Dixon News Briefs



The Dixon Montessori Charter School uses a lottery system for children wanting to attend and now is the time to apply for the 2022-2023 school year. Photo by Debra Dingman

MPG Staff

Montessori Enrollment

You might not be thinking of the NEXT school year, but Dixon Montessori at 355 North Almond is already making plans. Their open enrollment is from Jan. 11 to Feb. 4 for the 2022-2023 school year.

In the tradition of Maria Montessori, the school offers a pleasant and nurturing environment in which children learn at their own pace pursuing those things that interest them most. The teachers lead children to ask questions, think for themselves, explore, investigate and discover. Students learn in multi-age classes in which the younger children spontaneously learn from the older children. Visit the school office between those dates above and complete paperwork to enter their enrollment lottery or call (707) 678-8953 for more information.

Planning Commission

The next City Planning Commission Meeting is this coming Tuesday, Jan. 11 at 7 pm in the Council Chambers, 600 East A Street. Planning Commissioners are Jack Caldwell, Mark Cooley, Randy Davis, Baudelio Diaz, Lorraine Hernandez-Covello, Janet Koster and Rubi Medrano. They meet on the second Tuesday of each month. Agenda will be available online the Thursday before the meeting at cityofdixon.com

Penguin Party

The “Kids-To-Go Kit” for Jan. 12 is Every Baking Moment owner Janis Luzzo’s winter favorite: Penguin Party. Come by that day anytime between 11 am and 5 pm to pick up your kit(s) which will have everything you need to complete this project including directions. You can order and take home as many as you would like, fun for big kids like mom, dad, and grandparents too. Cost is \$12 each.

Must call or text (707) 693-0112 to sign up. Deadline to reserve kits is 5 pm, Tuesday, Jan. 11. One can simply drive up to the back door and your kit(s) will be brought safely out to your car.

Gun Show

A veteran owned business will be holding the Dixon Gun Show at the Dixon fairgrounds on Feb. 19-20 and one in Sacramento at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center Jan. 15-16. If one would like vendor space or have questions, contact owners Nicole and John Arabia via DixonGunShow@gmail.com or call (916) 542-8010.

Hoop Group

If you like to play basketball, the City of Dixon is hosting a new Hoop Group League. It will run from Jan. 15 - March 5 and is open to children ages 4 through grade 8. Registration ends January 7, so sign up today. Register online at: apm.activecommunities.com/cityofdixon/Home.

Cost is \$118 per participant ages 4 and 5. Cost is \$128 per participant for grades first through eighth. A limited number of Recreation Scholarships are available for Dixon residents who qualify. For more information regarding basketball, call (707) 678-7000 or go to https://apm.activecommunities.com/cityofdixon/Home.

Games will be on Saturdays at John Knight Middle School and possibly on Sundays if necessary.

Jobs Galore

Solano Life House, a senior community in Dixon, needs part-time and full-time workers in these four areas: housekeeping, activities, caregiving, and medications. Call Administrator Mary Felix at (707) 640-9700 or email Mary@SolanoLifeHouse.com.

ALKAR Human Resources also has a long list of positions to be filled in Solano County. They are areas of Industrial, administrative, clerical, and manufacturing. Contact (707) 421-0110 or email TeamAlkar@falkar.com or see their website, www.1alkar.com.

More than 50 jobs from entry level to skilled trades to a 65K a year Level 2 Project Manager position in Dixon are listed with Express Employment Professionals. Call their office for an immediate interview at (707) 446-2150 or email jobs.vacavilleca@expresspros.com. ★

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Tougher to Do Business

Continued from page 1

encroaching, she put the idea on hold, saying she would take time to work with colleagues and stakeholders “to make this the strongest bill possible headed into 2022.”

Since then, the Biden administration unveiled a vaccine requirement for large companies in November, which immediately drew lawsuits and is currently wending its way through the legal system, and New York City imposed a vaccine requirement for all in-person workers at private businesses.

“We cannot be a New York,” said Robert Lapsley, president of California Business Roundtable. “We need flexibility. And, so, hopefully, the governor, OSHA, et cetera, will not go down that path.”

It’s unclear if a similar proposal is in the cards for California. Wicks’ communications director, Erin Ivie, wrote that the office was “still in the process of considering what types of vaccine legislation we hope to introduce in the upcoming session.” When asked if Cal/OSHA had any plans to roll out a vaccine requirement for all workers, spokesperson Erika Monterroza said she was not aware of any such plans.

A final list of the initiatives that actually make it onto your ballot in November won’t be settled for many months. But there are already some proposals in the pipeline that could impact businesses:

Investor-turned-antipoverty-advocate Joe Sanberg has put forward a measure that would increase the minimum wage in California to \$18 per hour by 2025, with an additional year for small employers to comply;

A proposal aimed at housing affordability that would raise renters’ income tax credit and increase the amount of a property’s value that is tax exempt while raising taxes on commercial and residential properties worth more than \$4 million;

And a measure, backed by the California Chamber of Commerce and other business groups, that would repeal a law that lets employees sue employers over certain labor violations and receive monetary penalties, while requiring the legislature fund the labor rule enforcers adequately to carry out laws.

In addition to nearly \$1.2 billion federal dollars for loans potentially coming the way of California small businesses, state

lawmakers will continue to try and aid them, said Corona Democrat Sabrina Cervantes, who chairs the Assembly’s committee on jobs and economic development. She plans to continue work on a bill that would incentivize landlords to give small businesses rent relief.

The legislature may also take another look at how farmworker union elections are conducted. In 2021, Santa Cruz Democrat Mark Stone introduced a bill that would have given workers the option to fill out their ballot at home, rather than requiring they vote via an in-person election. Newsom vetoed the measure, which opponents said left workers more vulnerable to coercion, becoming the third consecutive California governor to veto such a bill. Stone will continue working on it in 2022, per his office.

Business groups plan to raise a stink about the debt that California’s unemployment insurance fund owes the federal government, which ballooned during the pandemic as more workers lost their jobs and collected benefits. Unless lawmakers intervene, the debt is set to be paid down by a tax increase for businesses that would show up on their 2022 taxes, said Barerra.

Also on the horizon is a debate about employee data privacy. Employee data was initially exempted from the data privacy law Californians voted for in 2020, but that carve-out ends on the first day of 2023, creating a deadline for the legislature to figure out what they want to do, if anything, around worker data.

Martinez, from the labor federation, says he’s increasingly hearing from unions that employers are collecting data on workers without their knowledge or consent. “There’s an opportunity to get some privacy rights for workers to curb some of the abuses,” said Martinez.

But the ongoing pandemic could disrupt even the best laid legislative plans.

“If next year is anything like the past two years,” said Martinez, “you think you know what you’re working on and then all of a sudden something happens and – nope – you’re working on something else.”

Grace covers California’s economy for CalMatters. Previously, she was an editor at the Washington Monthly. She is a graduate of Pomona College. ★

Cannabis Boutique Has Spirit of Solano

Continued from page 1

There were no dispensaries between Sacramento and Vallejo. We knew we could provide the best service,” said Andrew. “We have proved accountable and we built the [Dixon Wellness Collective] from the ground up,” she added pointing to counters her husband, Rich Ferguson, built and walls her children helped paint.

It cost about \$200,000 to open but that is equal to \$500,000 for someone to open a dispensary today, she said.

“We worked constantly—an uncountable number of hours—and wanted to open in four months. We opened in six,” she said. This was after meeting after meeting with City Council, however, where Andrew explained detailed plans and then more plans as the council issued concerns or restrictions. One example is the black fence that is placed in the front of the business at 1150 North First Street in the parking lot between Comfy Furniture and Schroeder’s Coin Laundry. The Council wanted to ensure the safety of citizens during deliveries and pickups not only of product but also of cash.

Even though

dispensaries supplying recreational or medical marijuana may be perfectly licensed and legal under state law, federal law still classifies marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug and considers marijuana businesses illegal. The banking system is regulated by federal law, so banks risk charges of aiding and abetting a federal crime or money laundering if they choose to do business with marijuana-related ventures, according to PublicFindLaw.com.

Although the SAFE Banking Act of 2021 has passed the House of Representatives in September, the hurdle is still high to finish getting everything in motion.

Thus, bereft of proper banking and financial services, cannabis-touching companies are restricted in their ability to raise capital, retain favorable loan arrangements, protect their earnings, and generally grow their businesses.

But Andrew will continue to grow the business she said. From the beginning, it’s been a process of education and Andrew has invited residents/customers to learn what might work for them, slowly winning over the Dixon public.

The store itself looks similar to any boutique with the encased counters featuring 2,000 products. With the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approving several marijuana-based medications and with several undergoing clinical trials, new products are constantly being introduced.

“Cannabis in general helps a lot of people in this community,” Andrew said.

But she has done something any business owner can do in the Dixon community. She set goals, got involved, and she also encouraged her staff to also get involved.

“It wasn’t on my 5-year plan but you might say I manifested it because it’s been my goal and I set out for it,” she said. She supported local events such as the Dixon May Fair Parade, Grillin’ & Chillin’, and the Tree Lighting Festival among others, she sits on the Chamber of Commerce Board and joined two civic organizations.

“It was a lot of hard work,” said her husband, Ferguson. “It re-instills a drive in me. Winning this award is huge for us!” Due to COVID-19, the annual luncheon was foregone, and the presentation was made at the Dixon Wellness Collective. ★

Hamilton to Run for Sixth Congressional District



Tamika Hamilton for Congress

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Air Force Sergeant Tamika Hamilton

announced she is running for California’s Sixth Congressional District.

“Redistricting has drastically changed California’s political landscape and at the end of the day my goal has always been about ensuring people are properly represented,” said Hamilton. “I’ve always felt incredibly connected to the Greater Sacramento community and know that its diverse residents deserve a robust economy, secure neighborhoods, and an effective government that

puts people first.”

With her announcement, Hamilton is the leading Republican candidate for California’s sixth congressional district and has robust campaign infrastructure in place, including a team of eight dedicated campaign staffers. She has raised \$500,000 year-to-date and has \$112,000 cash-on-hand.

For more information about the Hamilton campaign, visit votetamika.org or contact Micah Grant at micah@alexipr.com. ★

Keeping Seniors Warm, Children Happy



Teri Brown of the Dixon Women’s Improvement Club helps load blankets for seniors and children’s toys collected by the club to Tina Shaw of the Dixon Community Christmas Program. Numerous club members took on the challenge of tying, quilting, sewing or purchasing the blankets to be donated to elderly shut-ins over the holidays. The Dixon United Methodist Church Women joined in the endeavor. Photos by Debra Dingman and Darla Wear

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The Dixon District Chamber of Commerce is proud to welcome the following new members

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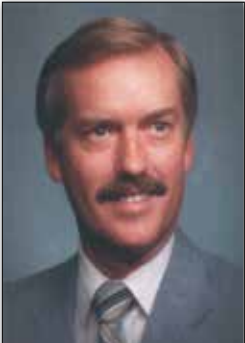
For information on how the Dixon Chamber can help your business be more successful, call 707-678-2650 or email info@dixonchamber.org.

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MEMORIAL NOTICE

Kenneth Ronald Grimm

August 19, 1939 - November 15, 2021



Kenneth Ronald Grimm passed away at home on November 15, 2021. Although having heart trouble for 30 years he died of Acute Myeloblastic Leukemia. Kenneth is the son of the late George Alvin Grimm and Virginia Mabel Grimm (Purcell). Also preceding him in death was his stepfather Austin Warren Stanley, brother George Grimm, sister-in-law Judith Grimm (Mannering) and stepson Charles Wayne O’Connor. He is survived by his wife Ellen Grimm (O’Connor), son Kenneth Warren Grimm, Daughters Virginia Lee Grimm (Duckworth) and Sandra Kathleen Grimm (Messler), Grandsons Austin Kenneth Grimm, Robert Patrick Quiett and Michael Sean Quiett, Granddaughters Jessica Lee Quiett, Danyal (Jason) Kerner, Amber Mikayla Grimm, and Kaitlyn T. Castillo, stepson Kenneth Edward Dixon (Stacey) and children: Mary Lynn Dixon (Solecki), Timothy Brandon Dixon, Jenny Nicole Dixon and Samantha Rachelle Dixon (Gavin). He is also survived by a niece, Kathy (Grimm) Simmons (David) and a nephew, Larry Grimm (Lori). Kenneth and Ellen raised 5 children, loved and enjoyed 9 grandchildren and have 13 great grandchildren.

Kenneth was born August 19, 1939 in Omaha, Nebraska. His family moved to Napa, California in 1943. He attended Grammar Schools in Nampa Idaho and Napa, California. He attended Jr. High School, High School and Jr. College in Napa California.

After high school Kenneth worked for the California Division of Forestry for one season as a temporary Firefighter in Willits, California. He then served an apprenticeship for a cabinet maker and worked as a journeyman for 10 years at Kitchen Fixtures in Napa, California. He tested for a position in the Napa Fire Department and in 1968 was

employed as Fireman. Working through the ranks he held positions as Fireman, Fireman Driver, Shift Inspector, Captain in Fire Prevention & Investigation, and Division Chief. He also taught evening Fire Science classes at Napa Jr. College Fire Academy.

He was a member of the California Fire Chiefs Association/Fire Prevention Section, Napa Fire Fighters Association, Napa County Peace Officers Association (Past President), Napa Chamber of Commerce Law/Fire Committee and Napa County Arson Task Force.

Ken was also a member of the California State Horsemen’s Association and served in Membership Recruitment for Region 3 for the Parade Committee. He was a great support for Ellen when she paraded for competition.

Ken attended the Napa Church of the Nazarene and served on the Church Board, taught sixth grade Sunday School and Junior Church. Moving to rural Dixon, he attended Rockville Bible Church and served there as a Deacon. Upon moving into the City of Dixon he attended the Dixon United Methodist Church.

In his younger years, he enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping, sailing, golf, and trips to the ocean.

Ken and Ellen would have been married 52 years on February 1, 2022.

A memorial service will be held at Dixon United Methodist Church, 209 N. Jefferson St., Dixon, CA, on Saturday, January 15, 2022 at 1 pm. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in memory to The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Northern California Region, 111 W. St. John St., San Jose, CA. 95113, or to the American Heart Association, Donation Processing Center, File 30947, P.O. Box 60000, San Francisco, CA 94160.

Congressman Mike Thompson Announces Candidacy for New District



Mike Thompson for Congress

NAPA, CA (MPG) - U.S. Rep. Mike Thompson announced he will run for re-election in the newly numbered Fourth Congressional District. The district includes all of Lake and Napa Counties and portions of Solano, Sonoma and Yolo Counties.

“I was born, grew up and have lived my entire life in the newly numbered Fourth Congressional District. The outpouring of support I’ve received is humbling and I’m looking forward to working with state and local leaders on the challenges we face,” said Rep. Mike Thompson.

Thompson has represented all of the newly drawn and numbered Fourth Congressional District in the

past. As a senior Member of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, he is well-positioned to deliver for his district. He has been endorsed by sheriffs, supervisors, mayors, councilmembers and other community leaders from all five counties in the newly numbered Fourth Congressional District.

“Excited that Congressman Mike Thompson will be representing a larger portion of Solano County again,” said Solano County Supervisor John M. Vasquez. “He has always been a friend to Solano County. He knows the issues that are unique to agriculture, transportation and our military, as Solano County is home to Travis Air Force Base. As a decorated war veteran, he certainly understands the issues of the veterans we serve here. I have worked with Mike over the years as he has represented different areas of our county as a state Senator and congressman and I am honored to be working more closely with him under the newly formed congressional boundary.”

“I have worked with Congressman Mike Thompson throughout

his time serving Solano County in the State Senate and Congress,” said Solano County Supervisor Jim Sperring. “He knows our area well and has been a fierce advocate for our issues, including being a champion for critical infrastructure projects for Solano County.”

“Mike Thompson knows Vacaville, understands our issues and has a proven track record of delivering for Solano County. He is a bipartisan problem solver, and I am glad to have him back as our representative,” said Vacaville Mayor Ron Rowlett.

“Congressman Thompson is a trusted voice in our community,” said Caitlin O’Halloran President, Dixon Unified School District Governing Board. “He supports career and technical education and is helping to make college affordable. He will continue to work hard for our students and for their future.”

“I consider it the honor of my life to represent our region in Congress. I will work hard to represent our district and I am honored to have the support of so many local leaders,” said Rep. Mike Thompson. ★

Heeney’s History: Barbershop Talk

Commentary by Ed Heeney

As I was staring back at the image in the bathroom mirror, I noticed that a haircut was needed by the old gentleman looking back at me. And, while I was dressing, I let my memory wander back to some barbers I had encountered in days past. You must surmise that the Pandemic has got to me if this is where my mind wanders. But on second thought, I have met some interesting characters in barber shops around the world.

First, I recall the hometown barber back in Kansas. He was a jolly, short, round man always with a cigar stub stuck out of the corner of his mouth. I don’t ever remember noticing the cigar being lit, but it was always perched there ready to fire if anyone had a match.

Even though there were two chairs, I don’t remember there being a second barber. The extra barber chair was mostly used for the first older person to come to town. Dick, the barber, had a good radio and major sports events would be broadcast for whoever showed up. Since we did not have a radio out on the farm, my Dad took me with him to the barbershop to hear the Joe Louis-Max Baer fight. I felt privileged to be allowed with the grownups. If I remember, the fight didn’t last long, but the experience was worth it. (My first haircut at Dick’s barber shop cost 15 cents.)

Another interesting barbershop experience was when we were assigned to Germany. We lived in a small town south of Rhein Mein AFB which was on the Frankfurt International Airport. Across from our house was a “mom and pop” barbershop operation. Pop cut the hair and mom swept the floor clean as a whistle. This duo, unlike most

natives, would talk German with me and help me learn the language. “Pop” the barber, was a jolly fellow and we would laugh at my feeble attempts to speak the language and talk like a German. We both liked to discuss cars and after an hour or so of mechanic talk, we probably couldn’t start either a Ford or a Mercedes. But, the haircut was good.

One day, as I was driving back from the livestock sale in Orland, I decided to stop in Willows and get a haircut. I had noticed a barbershop pole on a small building about a block south of the donut shop on my way up that morning. It was easy parking for my truck and trailer in a vacant lot across the street.

As I walked in, I was completely astonished at the colorful atmosphere. Along one wall was a plus leather sofa, along one wall were many mounted hunting trophies, and along another one were two barber chairs. The barber guy was snipping away and rambling on with a story to the amusement of a couple of cowboys lounging on the sofa. He welcomed me and never missed a beat with his story as it was my turn in the chair. By the time he had my hair cut and was ready for eyebrows, I knew the politics of Willows, heard about his heart attack, learned that he had an adopted daughter that ran the beauty parlor next door, and hoped his granddaughter would take over his shop when he retired.

I knew this was an authentic barber shop when he “straight razored” the back of my neck and wrapped the warm towel. I attempted to tip him and he said “just toss it in that bucket over there. I use it to buy candy for the kids.”

I always stopped for a haircut whenever I was in that area, and he never ran out of stories. He was a good barber and a good friend. ★

Library Literacy Volunteers Needed

Solano County Library Press Release

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Solano County Literacy Program is looking for Adult Literacy Volunteer tutors to provide tutoring in-person or online, for an adult in our community who wants to improve their reading, writing, or speaking skills.

Literacy is vital for a healthy and thriving community. More than 60,000 adults in Solano County are functionally illiterate, meaning that the reading and writing skills they have are inadequate to manage their daily living and employment tasks beyond a basic level. Children whose parents struggle with reading and writing skills are more likely to struggle in school and have low literacy skills themselves. Teaching an adult to read, write, and/or improve their English speaking skills can have far reaching effects in our community. A recent study found that

adult literacy students realize an increase of about \$10,000 dollars in their annual income after receiving 100 hours of literacy instruction.

You can help improve your community by becoming a volunteer tutor. Tutor preparation gives you all of the tools you need to help someone else reach their goal and improve their skills. Tutors don’t have to have prior experience, just your commitment of time, 3 hours a week, is needed. The next tutor orientations are in Fairfield, Wednesday, October 27th from 6-7:30 pm, or Saturday October 30th from 10 am-11:30 pm. Training sessions will be socially distanced and all current county Covid guidelines are followed.

Tutoring opportunities include meeting in person with your student, or meeting with them online. For more information, visit www.solanolibrary.com – click *Literacy* or call 1-800-450-7885 or 707-784-1526. ★



Dare to Live Without Limits

by Bryan Golden

Do You Know Who You Are?



Being in touch with who you are yields numerous benefits. You’ll have more happiness, you will make better decisions, your goals will be more meaningful, you will be more motivated, and more in touch with your emotions.

Some people innately know who they are. Others move through life without a clear understanding. If you don’t really know who you are, today is a great time to start figuring it out. The more you know about yourself, the more you’ll be able to follow the path which best suits you.

What are your likes and dislikes? This simple understanding is essential to your happiness. Doing more of what you like and less of what you dislike is a simple strategy for greater satisfaction.

The quest for financial security often leads to jobs or careers which are less than satisfying. To see where you are currently, answer this question: How would you be spending your time if you were independently wealthy and didn’t need to work?

If your current job or occupation corresponds to what you would be doing if you didn’t need the money, you are in great shape. If it’s not, getting more in touch with who you are will help you navigate a more desirable route.

Who or what inspires you? Knowing your sources of motivation helps you focus on what fits you best. People make a living doing whatever you do for fun, vacations, or as a hobby. You can support yourself doing what you love.

What are your best habits? These are the habits to cultivate and focus on. Your good habits assist you in making progress toward your goals. Good habits enable you to be effective and efficient.

What are your worst habits? These habits produce negative results and need to be purged. Replace bad habits with good habits. Self-awareness enables you to monitor your actions so that you can eliminate undesirable habits.

What are your fears? What are you afraid of? Fear is a major roadblock. Typically, you won’t do something you are afraid of. Your fears may be holding you back. Since fears exist in your mind, a change in thinking overcomes fears.

What obstacles, problems, and challenges are you facing? In order to overcome obstacles, solve problems, and move past challenges, you must first identify them. Until you do this, they will be a frustrating roadblock.

What are your strengths? Everyone has strengths. Having more strengths than you realize is common. Underutilizing one or more of your strengths is a real waste. Use your strengths to overcome challenges.

What are your weaknesses? Unfortunately, many people obsess about their weaknesses instead of tapping into their strengths. Weaknesses can be overcome by rectifying any deficiencies. Anything lacking can be enhanced.

Take advantage of your strengths while overcoming your weaknesses. Use what you have instead of lamenting that which you feel you don’t have. Make the most of all your current assets.

What are your values? It’s much more satisfying when your life lines up with your values. Acting counter to them leads to endless frustration. You don’t have to justify your values; you need to know what they are and live by them.

What’s your emotional temperament? How much patience do you have? What upsets you? What type of people do you like to associate with? How social are you? Answering these additional questions provides more insight into who you are.

Knowing who you are is a starting point. You are a work in progress. You can make any desired changes. Build on the aspects you like, while adjusting any facets you are unhappy with.

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. © 2021 Bryan Golden ★

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, December 21, 2021

1527 - Grand theft reported in the 200 block of East Dorset Drive. Ronkeisha Hurts (38) of Dixon was stopped by loss prevention and arrested for stealing over \$1,000.00 worth of merchandise. She was taken to county jail.

1919 - Vehicle theft reported in the 1500 block of Valley Glen Drive.

1925 - Theft reported in the 200 block of East Dorset Drive. Saquoia Johnson (37), of Sacramento, was arrested for Theft w/ Priors, Conspiracy, and Possession of Drug Parphernalia.

Wednesday, December 22, 2021

0717 - Vandalism report in the 1500 block of Apricot Lane.

0848 - Found property report in the 300 block of Pheasant Run Drive.

0909 - Industrial accident report in the 1400 block of Ary Lane.

1145 - Vandalism report in the 1600 block of Apricot Lane.

1353 - Officers were dispatched to a subject who was caught shoplifting in the 200 block of East Dorset Court. Upon officers’ arrival, Nathaniel Bennick (20) out of Davis was contacted.

After further investigation, Bennick was placed under arrest for shoplifting. Bennick was transported to the Dixon Police Department where he was cited and released without incident.

1628 - Theft report in the 600 block of Ferguson Court.

1700 - Vehicle burglary report in the 1300 block of North Lincoln Street. Jose Chavez (35) out of Davis was contacted in the driver seat of the victim’s vehicle. Chavez was taken out of the vehicle and safely detained. After further investigation, Chavez was booked into the Solano County Jail for burglary and vandalism.

2015 - Armed robbery and assault with a firearm reported in the 1000 block of North First Street.

2018 - Armed robbery, vehicle burglary and assault reported in the 1000 block of North First Street.

0515 - Report of theft from a vehicle in the 1500 block of Valley Glen Drive.

Thursday, December 23, 2021

1143 - Information report in the 900 block of Silver Ridge Place.

1545 - Vandalism report in the 200 block of North Lincoln Street.

1705 - Officers were dispatched to a subject who was caught shoplifting in the 200 block of East Dorset Court. Upon officers’ arrival, Elbert McPike (41) out of Vacaville was contacted. After further investigation, McPike was placed under arrest for shoplifting. McPike was transported to the Dixon Police Department where he was cited and released without incident.

1849 - Hit and run reported in the 2500 block of North First Street.

Friday, December 24, 2021

1920 - A proactive enforcement stop in the area of Vaughn Rd and Pedrick Rd for a minor vehicle code violation resulted in the arrest of Luis Enrique Mendoza-Bonilla (27) of Dixon for being in possession of methamphetamine while armed with a firearm. He was later found to have taken narcotics into the jail, and was charged with the additional crime.

0126 - Officers responded to the 500 block of West A Street for a report of a hit and run collision. Upon arrival, officers located a wheel from the suspect’s vehicle which had broken off during the collision and remained on scene. Officers followed gouges in the roadway, which led them directly to the suspect vehicle on Mayfair at South Almond. The vehicle had a missing front passenger wheel which matched the one left at the scene of the collision. Upon locating the suspect’s vehicle, officers contacted Chase Simons (32) of Dixon, who admitted to driving the vehicle. Simons was arrested and booked into the Solano County Jail for driving under the influence, driving with a blood alcohol content above .08%, and hit and run.

Saturday, December 25, 2021

1841 - Officers were dispatched to a report of domestic violence in the 400 block of Evans Road. Officers were unable to make suspect contact, and the report was referred to the DA.

1900 - A violation of a child custody agreement was reported in the 1400 block of Ary Ln.

Sunday, December 26, 2021

1010 - Information report taken in the 1100 block of Cagle Court.

1759 - Hit and Run reported in the 300 block of East C Street.

2217 - Single vehicle traffic collision reported in the 600 block of South 1st Street.



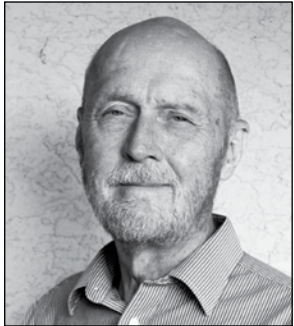
The Miracle of Bugs
“Go to the ant, thou slug-gard; consider her ways, and be wise.” Proverbs 6:6
Edward O. Wilson, the Harvard biologist who has died at age 92, is most famous for his contri-butions to evolutionary biology, but he built his career on ants.

He wrote multiple books on the insects, including a 700-page encyclopedic work in 1990 that has to count as one of the least likely winners of the Pulitzer Prize ever. Despite his agnosticism and the reductive materi-alism of his Darwinism, Wilson wrote with a real warmth and soulfulness. Amidst his storied aca-demic career and the controversies kicked up by his theories, it’s worth considering all he did to highlight the miraculous complexity and wonders of life via a lowly bug that is considered a pest when it isn’t ignored altogether. There are more than 15,000 discovered species of ant, and perhaps another 10,000 yet to be found. Wilson exulted in the dizi-zying variety -- ants that can walk under water to find dead insects, or glide from one branch of a tree to another, or create super-colonies that extend for miles. If ants are extraordinarily diverse, their social orga-nization makes East Berlin

look fun and free by com-parison. As Wilson wrote, “Karl Marx was right, socialism works, it is just that he had the wrong spe-cies.” Ants have all the regard for individual dig-nity of a Mongol chieftain and a power structure out of the Ottoman court. Pretty much every ant you see doing something is a female. The males are pitiable creatures, good for nothing except their one-time task of trying to inseminate a female. Among fire ants, would-be queens work together to try to estab-lish a new nest. As soon as they’ve given birth to worker ants, though, the game of thrones begins. The workers seek out and kill all the queens, leaving only the one that is most fecund. Ant colonies take slaves and fight wars of extinc-tion. Henry David Thoreau wrote of an ant battle he observed at Walden Pond: “They fought with more pertinacity than bulldogs. Neither manifested the least disposition to retreat. It was evident that their battle cry was ‘Conquer or die.’” The massive and intri-cate level of cooperation of an ant colony is some-thing to behold. Mark Twain spoofed an ant’s crazy struggles upon dis-covering a grasshopper leg, lugging it the oppo-site way from home before she “gets madder and mad-der, then presently hoists it into the air and goes tear-ing away in an entirely new direction.” In reality, it’s the exact opposite. After finding

food, a scout tends to return to her nest in a straight line and then summon rein-forcements that follow her path exactly. A species found in North Africa trav-els some 100 yards from its nest and then invariably finds its way back using cues from the sunlight. A species in the Kenyan rainforest uses the forest’s canopy as a map. Can ants create their own ark? Check. When water invades a nest of fire ants, the insects unite to cre-ate a living raft. They float along, carrying the queen and eggs, larvae, and pupae until they find dry land again. Can they launch irre-sistible ground offensives? Yes, of course. One species sends as many as 700,000 ants out in a fan that moves as fast as 20-yards-an-hour. It can be heard approaching and destroys and consumes all in its path on the rainfor-est floor, from other insects to scorpions and tarantulas, to lizards and birds. The effect of Wilson’s work on these lowly, yet fascinating, bugs is to cre-ate the same sense of marvel that he must have felt when he was an awk-ward boy first engaged in his amateur naturalism -- a feeling that should rightly never be exhausted. “Our sense of won-der,” Wilson wrote, “grows exponentially: The greater the knowledge, the deeper the mystery and the more we seek knowledge to cre-ate new mystery.” *Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2022 by King Features Synd., Inc.* ★

COVID Returned with the Holidays



Commentary
by bil paul

Solano County is seeing a big increase in COVID cases. The number of active reported cases TRIPLED over the past two weeks to 1,382. What is really concerning is that the per-centage of county people being tested who tested positive increased from five percent to an alarming 16 percent. Looking at Dixon only, the number of newly reported COVID cases doubled to 35. Holiday gatherings gave COVID a new foothold. Keep wear-ing those KN95 masks, get fully vaccinated, and avoid gatherings where many aren’t observing those precautions. I think you’ll agree that 2021 was defined by the pandemic. Our men-tal, physical and economic health were terrifically impacted. My nephew Dan died of it. With new variants at every turn, it showed no signs of going away. Maybe we’ll just have to co-exist with it indefinitely. The year 2021 was a turning point for me. As last year began, my health seemed very good, even at age 78. I was getting plenty of exercise and eating right. Then out of the blue, I had a diagnosis of early-stage bladder cancer, followed by a diagnosis of spreadable skin cancer on my hand.

These cancers are definitely very curable when caught early, but I definitely have the feeling that now, “stuff happens.” They carve time out of your life and your doctors become your best friends. I noticed one thing during this period of COVID and cancer – I really started depending on eating tasty meals and treats to keep my morale high. Yeah, that and keep-ing my weight from ballooning! **Returning to the Pandemic:** Unvaccinated Steven Murray in South Carolina said from his hospital bed, “I thought that if I got COVID, I’d be able to fight it off like the flu.... [I had thought,] I’m tough. I’m 37 years old.... Boy, was I wrong.... The grim reaper was reaching out for me. I was scared.” [Taken from an NPR news story.] One of the unsettling developments in 2021 was the diminishing effective-ness of vaccines against the new COVID variants. Booster shots were pro-moted. Health experts had to admit that being vacci-nated, at best, would help prevent COVID from caus-ing hospitalizations and deaths. On the other hand, a pill was approved by the FDA several weeks ago (Paxlovid) that if taken at home soon after becom-ing ill, could reduce Covid’s severity. It will eventually be available by prescription. Knowing that one is ill with COVID requires test-ing. During 2021, home testing kits became avail-able. Recently, I used them twice after I came down with a nasty virus on Christmas eve, with

an endlessly runny nose, cough, and headache. The second time I took the test was on New Year’s Eve when my granddaughter was due to visit and I still had the virus. Both tests indicated, after 15 minutes, that I was COVID-free. But the at-home tests are not as reliable as the profes-sionally given PCR tests that take longer to pro-cess--Probably because children and teens haven’t been vaccinated as much as older people, there has been in increase in that age group showing up in hospi-tals with COVID. Advice: get them vaccinated. They are not immune, and they’re around a lot of oth-ers in schools. Off that subject, don’t forget the Elvis Tribute Concert Saturday, Jan. 22 at 7 pm in the Dixon High School theater. Performer Rob Ely has truly chan-neled “The King’s” voice, mannerisms and looks, and you can look forward to a very entertaining and fun evening. This is a fund-raiser for the Dixon Teen Center. Tickets are avail-able at Dixon Florist, Grocery Outlet and at the Chamber of Commerce. Visit eventbrite.com for online tickets (search “Elvis Dixon.”) Masks will be required. *bil paul did PR for the Postal Service and med-ical companies, and worked as a reporter and photographer. He’s the author of the book about Dixon’s failed movie stu-dio project (“The Train Never Stops in Dixon” – available at Amazon or the library) and has a non-fiction book coming out next year about GIs in the Aleutian Islands during WWII.* ★

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Request for Proposal to Provide Architectural and Engineering Services for Fire Station 82

January 6, 2022

The City of Dixon (City) is seeking architectural and engineering services to plan, develop and assist in the delivery of, the new fire station (Fire Station 82).

Proposals shall be submitted by firms that are capable and experienced in the type of work described in Section III, “SCOPE OF SERVICES,” of this Request for Proposal (RFP). In addition, all interested firms shall have sufficient, readily available resources in the form of trained personnel, support services, specialized consultants and financial resources to carry out the work without delay or shortcomings. The proposals shall be submitted **NO LATER THAN 3:00PM, Thursday, February 3, 2022** to:

City of Dixon
600 East A Street
Dixon, CA 95620
Attn: Andrew MacDonald, PE, Consultant Project Manager
916 562-2227
andrew.macdonald@weareharris.com

Each proposer shall submit five (5) bound copies, and an electronic version (Adobe Acrobat PDF) of the proposal in accordance with Section V, “PROPOSAL FORMAT” of the RFP. This RFP and related documents are available on the City website at <http://www.dixonplanroom.com>. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROSPECTIVE PROPOSERS TO CHECK THE CITY WEBSITE FOR ANY FUTURE ADDENDUMS TO THIS RFP.**

All questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Andrew MacDonald, PE, Consultant Project Manager via electronic mail at andrew.macdonald@weareharris.com.

Dixon Independent Voice - Jan. 7 and 14, 2022

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

FILE NO. 2021-002386

The following persons are doing business as: : **THE BUZZ BAR**
730 West D Street South Dixon, CA 95620
Kelsie Sorensen, 730 West D Street South Dixon, CA 95620
Date Filed in Solano County: December 10, 2021
The Registrant commenced to transact business under the above business name on: N/A
This Business is Conducted by: Individual
NOTICE: In Accordance with subdivision (a) of section 17920 A Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the county clerk, except as provided in subdivision (b) of section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of registered owner. A new fictitious Business name statement must be filed before the expiration November 29, 2026. The filing of this statement does not itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state or common law (see section 14411 ET SEQ., business and professions code.)
Publish: December 24, 31, 2021 January 7, and 14, 2022 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

FILE NO. 2021-002449

The following persons are doing business as: : **CROCESSORIES**
602 Humbolt Drive Suisun City, CA 94585
Shawntel Ridgle, 602 Humbolt Drive Suisun City, CA 94585
Date Filed in Solano County: December 22, 2021
The Registrant commenced to transact business under the above business name on: 8/26/2021
This Business is Conducted by: Individual
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CLUES

ACROSS
1. *Lettuce variety
5. Drive
8. *Café alternative
11. *Cantina cooker
12. *Waldorf salad ingredient
13. Animal trail
15. Radio knob
16. Hurry up, acr.
17. One who accepts the offer
18. *Anise-flavored spirit
20. "Happily ____ after"
21. Operatic solos
22. ____ Air in L.A.
23. Hairy vertebrate
26. Freed
30. In the past
31. Small type of drum
34. *Wine in Italy
35. Charleston, e.g.
37. Chow down
38. a.k.a. honey badger
39. Wet nurse
40. Hervé Villechaize on "Fantasy Island"
42. Expression of doubt
43. Founding Father
45. City in Japan
47. Shock and ____
48. Jawaharlal's last name
50. *Driest type of sherry
52. *a.k.a. black treacle
55. Softly-softly, loris' cousin
56. A Flock of Seagulls' 1982 hit (2 words)
57. *Cabbage amount
59. Alexandre Dumas' "The Black ____"
60. What seekers do
61. Consequently
62. Everything
63. Temporary craze
64. Swedish shag rugs

DOWN
1. Physique, informally
2. Pelvic bones
3. Spill the beans
4. Certain fir
5. *Fusilli or ziti
6. Same as #39 Across, pl.
7. Supreme pontiff
8. Puff
9. Field worker
10. Be off base
12. Capital of Philippines
13. Be at the helm
14. *Ballerina-inspired dessert
19. All worked up
22. *Granola serving
23. Tea Leoni's "____ Secretary"
24. Old World lizard
25. Unicellular organism
26. Stroke on a green
27. Lithograph, for short
28. Japan to U.S. in WWII
29. *Stuffed grapevine leaf
32. *Flageolet or azuki
33. *Popular breakfast cereal
36. *Type of #34 Across
38. Lion sounds
40. One little piggy?
41. Easily available (2 words)
44. One clean one?
46. *Betty Crocker fruit snack
48. Waterwheel
49. Serengeti grazer
50. Unplayable baseball
51. It will, contraction
52. Irk
53. Like a ghost
54. Long novel

55. School support org.
58. Opposite of don'ts

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By Amy Shane

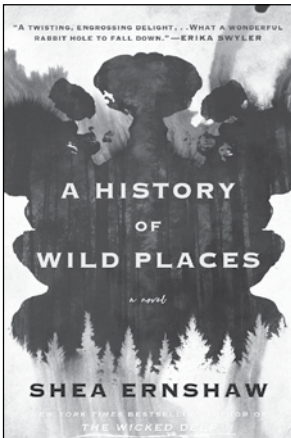
BOOK REVIEW & SPECIAL EVENTS EDITOR • ✉ amy-shane@att.net • 📷 amy_fortheloveofbook

A History of Wild Places

by Shea Ernshaw

Travis Wren has the unique ability to find people, missing people, to be exact. So, when he was hired by the family of the famous children’s author Maggie St James, he felt like this would be like any other case. Missing for five years, Maggie’s case has gone cold, but the media sensationalism about the famous author’s disappearance has not. At first, following Maggie’s trail was easy; her abandoned car was found sitting alongside a road, opening to an old barn, and a path through the woods. A path once known to lead to the mysterious settlement, Pastoral, but once he follows the trail, he too disappears.

Theo, Cassa, and Bee only know life in Pastoral, a community hidden in the woods, safe from all the danger that awaits just beyond the border. Fearful of the rot that fills the trees around their community, they know that if they dare cross the borders, they too will be infected. Nestled safely within the borders of Pastoral, the town has everything they need, and everyone does their part to make sure the community survives and



- ◆ Publisher: Atria Books
- ◆ Intended audience: Adult
- ◆ Rating: ♥♥♥♥♥
- ◆ Release Date: December 07, 2021

stays safe, while making sure no one leaves or arrives from the outside world. Yet, there is a small fracture in this carefully crafted world, and more than one person is harboring a dark secret that could threaten everyone’s safety.

When Theo discovers an abandoned truck and a single picture of a woman just outside Pastoral’s borders, he knows that he needs to learn more. He needs to know what happened to the owner and who this woman is. Yet, that knowledge can cost him his life; traveling outside the borders is punishable by death. However, Theo

knows there is more hidden behind the carefully crafted façade of this picture-perfect community, and more than one person is hiding secrets that are about to shatter the world as they know it.

Beautiful, lush, and poetic, *A History of Wild Places* gently takes readers to a place nestled between fairytales, reality, and the dark space in-between.

A story of a town encapsulated in time and forged in fear that will tug at your memory and rip your heartstrings. Beautifully raw, twisted, and suspenseful this mystery will leave readers grappling while also searching the recesses of their minds for answers. What happens when a community is on the edge of divide? When the threat of the unknown and the curiosity of the unknown are equal? When devotion is masked as sacrifice, allowing fear to be used as a weapon?

An author known to take her readers down a dark and twisted path of lyrical fairytales encapsulated by bread crumbs of truth, Shea Ernshaw once again delivers a story that will take her readers’ breath away. ★

Redistricting Won’t Change Democrats’ Control



By Dan Walters
CALMatters.org

Superficially, California’s politics seem poised for a big upheaval in this election year, but appearances can be deceiving.

The illusion of major change comes from the redrawing of 172 congressional and legislative districts by the state’s independent redistricting commission to reflect population shifts revealed by the 2020 census.

The boundary changes, driven by the 14-member commission’s obsession with “communities of interest” that it defined in purely subjective, ever-shifting terms, will generate a substantial turnover in the 52-member congressional delegation, the 40-member state Senate and the 80-seat state Assembly.

Much of it will be a game of musical chairs as politicians shift from one venue to another. Several senior members of the congressional delegation are calling it quits, opening up opportunities for state legislators to advance their careers. The redistricting plans also throw a few incumbents into the same districts, forcing them to alter career plans.

The 2011 California redistricting and the 2012 elections brought a bumper crop of new legislators into the Capitol who will face automatic retirement in 2024

due to the 12-year limit on legislative service, so several of them are planning bids for Congress or statewide office this year.

The commission was attempting to comply with a set of conflicting mandates, not only to equalize the populations of legislative and congressional districts, but to meet the demands of ethnic and cultural “communities of interest” for dedicated legislative seats and to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act.

The Voting Rights Act indirectly mandates creating more districts likely to elect non-white members, thus increasingly the likelihood that more of those winning legislative seats in this year’s elections will be Latino, Asian or Black.

The communities whose demands were met are overwhelmingly Democratic and even if the commission had ignored the Voting Rights Act and the “communities of interest” credo, its maps would favor Democrats because fewer than 25% of registered voters are Republicans and Democrats outnumber them almost 2-to-1.

If one defines “gerrymandering” as pre-ordaining who wins a legislative or congressional seat by drawing district lines, this was gerrymandering, albeit not for overtly partisan purposes. That said, the partisan effect will be to cement the Democratic Party’s overwhelming control of the Legislature and the congressional delegation.

The current Legislature is roughly 75% Democratic and there’s little doubt that the one elected in November

will be equally lopsided in partisan makeup. The faces may change but not the Legislature’s left-of-center tilt.

The only real mystery emanating from the new maps is whether Democrats will increase their hold on the congressional delegation. In 2018, the state’s disdain for Donald Trump manifested itself in a debacle for Republican members of Congress, cutting their ranks from a paltry 14 seats to just seven. The GOP rebounded a bit in 2020 and now holds 11 seats.

The state is losing a congressional seat due to slow population growth in the last decade, thus requiring an adjustment that wound up costing Los Angeles County one of its seats. Nevertheless, the overall thrust of the new congressional map favors Democrats and whether the party makes gains in California could play a role in which party controls the House.

Republicans need to gain just five seats to regain control and the increase in seats in fast-growing pro-GOP states such as Texas, plus Republican-friendly gerrymanders in those states and the nation’s overall political sentiment favor a shift of power.

However, if it’s closer than expected, Democratic gains in California could make the difference and a handful of tossup contests in the state’s newly reconfigured districts will draw heavy attention.

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



Riley Reviews

“NIGHTMARE ALLEY” DARK JOURNEY, THRILLERS ON LIFETIME

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

“NIGHTMARE ALLEY” RATED R

The definition of a “geek” is thought to apply to one obsessed with digital technology or a socially inept person. An older version of the term, which plays a part in “Nightmare Alley,” means a carnival or circus performer whose show consists of bizarre or grotesque acts.

The original slang term for geek has a central conceit in William Lindsey Gresham’s 1946 novel “Nightmare Alley,” which was adapted for a film starting Tyrone Power a year later, and now in the hands of director Guillermo del Toro the new version hews to the basic themes of Gresham’s work.

As a film noir and psychological thriller, “Nightmare Alley” is sufficiently disturbing and laden with the grim sense of hopelessness and despair for the Great Depression-era backwater touring carnivals.

Stumbling into the world of carnies and hucksters is Stan Carlisle (Bradley Cooper), a drifter running from his own nightmares who impresses carnival barker Clem Hoatley (William Dafoe) to land a position assisting mentalists.

While fascinated by the geek’s sad misfortune of being an alcoholic who bites the heads off chickens as a sideshow attraction, Stan is tutored by Zeena (Toni Collette) in the art of being a bogus psychic.

Adapting well to the carny lifestyle, Stan woos the mild-mannered, pretty Molly (Rooney Mara), whose talent as the “electric girl” is to dazzle audiences with an ability to withstand a powerful current.

Driven by ambition to strike out on his own, Stan leaves with Molly to take his psychic act to big city nightclub acts where the couple work in tandem to astonish sophisticated audiences.

What would film noir be without a femme fatale? That role certainly does not go to the good-hearted Molly. It falls to the sleek, elegant psychiatrist Dr. Lilith Ritter (Cate Blanchett), who first challenges Stan’s ersatz shtick before being drawn to his charms.

Working with inside knowledge of Lilith’s patients, Stan and the doctor team up to fleece wealthy tycoons like Ezra Grindle (Richard Jenkins) who are gullible victims for sham spiritualism.

Not unexpectedly, with Stan’s broken moral compass, things are bound to go horribly wrong. After all, this is film noir and there will be a reckoning that is ugly.

“Nightmare Alley” features an impressive cast, but it’s definitely a movie outside the mainstream with potentially limited commercial appeal. As an adult-skewing drama, it might get more traction if it ends up on a streaming service.

SUSPENSE MOVIES ON LIFETIME

Following a usually hectic holiday schedule, January is a slow month for new theatrical releases, but the Lifetime cable channel picks up the slack with new suspense-filled original movies.

Marking his directorial debut, Boris Kodjoe directs real-life wife Nicole Ari Parker in the home invasion thriller “Safe Room” that centers on Parker’s recently widowed Lila Jackson and her 14-year-old autistic son Ian (Nik Sanchez).

Since the death of her husband, Lila is grateful for their kind gestures of kind neighbor Neil (Boris Kodjoe). After Ian accidentally witnesses a break-in at the house across the street and records a horrific murder, the Jackson family is in peril.

Lila becomes embroiled in a deadly struggle to protect her son from intruders Dominic (Mackenzie Astin) and Rocco (Drea De Matteo), who will stop at nothing to retrieve the video of the crime.

Hiding and trapped in a makeshift panic room created by her late husband, Lila and Ian must use all of their strength and intelligence to outsmart the intruders to save themselves.

Following a week later, the chills and thrills continue in “Vanished: Searching For My Sister” with the story of a sister who poses as her missing twin, starring Tatyana Ali playing both twins.

Twins Jada and Kayla could not be more opposite. Jada being the mild-mannered sister with an office job, and Kayla the wild child recently divorced from her husband Warren (Justin Bruening).

Kayla asks Jada to watch her daughter while she sets up her new apartment. But after a few days with no word from Kayla, Jada begins to worry and reports her sister missing.

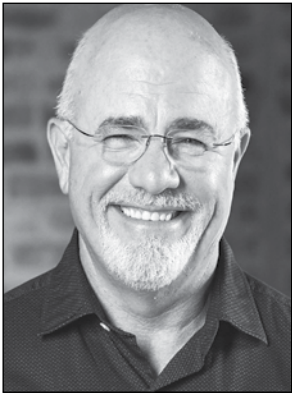
With no leads and the police investigation at a standstill, Jada takes matters into her own hands. She disguises herself as her sister and gets pulled into a world of drugs and deceit in order to learn the shocking truth about what really happened to Kayla.

Early February brings the original thriller “Single Black Female” starring Raven Goodwin as Monica, who is reeling from the death of her beloved father and a difficult breakup.

Monica is ready to move forward with her life as she tries to land the new hosting job for an afternoon talk show. When she hires a new assistant, Simone (Amber Riley), the two quickly become close friends as Simone moves in next door.

Becoming completely immersed in Monica’s life, Simone harbors a dark secret and as time goes on cracks in her sweet exterior begin to appear.

Monica decides to sever ties once and for all with Simone, but Simone has other plans and is determined to take over Monica’s life for good. ★



There’s Going to be Sacrifice Involved

Dear Dave,

I bring home about \$2,800 a month, and our mortgage payment is \$1,100. We have been forced to take money out of our savings account occasionally over the last year or so to help pay the bills. My wife loves being a stay-at-home mom with our two preschool kids, but even she is talking about finding a daycare for the kids so she can go back to work and help out financially. How do you feel about this idea and our situation?

—Cade

Dear Cade,

I can’t blame your wife for loving the idea of staying home with your kids when they’re so young.

Dave Ramsey Says

Being a stay-at-home mom is a great thing if you can make the numbers work. Still, I’m sure it’s no picnic trying to live on \$1,700 a month with two little ones in the mix.

Let’s look at it like a math problem with three components – house payment, income and lifestyle. Forty percent of your pay is going toward your home. That’s way too much. Your mortgage payment or rent should never be more than 25 percent of your take home pay. I suppose you could look into the possibility of refinancing your home, but that’s not going to solve all your problems.

One option would be finding a way to generate some extra income, whether that means a part-time job nights or weekends, or pursuing additional education or certifications to get your income level up at work. Another is to sell the house and find a less expensive alternative, but I’m never a big fan of that idea – especially in a family situation – unless there’s absolutely

no other way to avoid bankruptcy or foreclosure.

I think you and your wife need to sit down, and spend some serious heart-to-heart time talking things over, crunching the numbers and creating a plan. There’s going to be some sacrifice involved for everyone, and only you two can decide what’s worth it and what isn’t – for you two and your kids.

God bless you and your family, Cade.

—Dave

Dave Ramsey is a seven-time #1 national best-selling author, personal finance expert, and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 18 million listeners each week. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today Show, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business, and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people regain control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions. ★



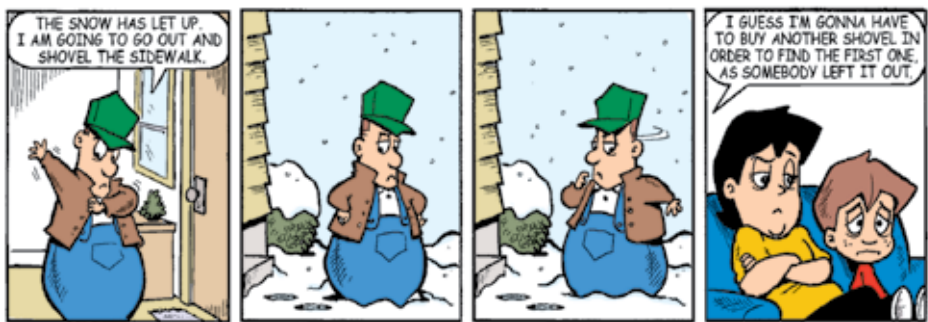
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WEEKLY COMICS

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by Dave T. Phipps



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



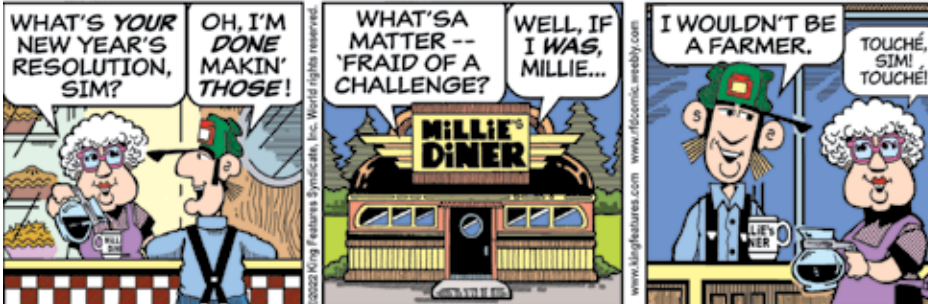
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

SIGN OF THE TIMES--IT HASN'T HAPPENED YET, BUT GIVE IT A WHILE...



BY AL SCADUTO



CRIM and BLARNEY



LAFF - A - DAY



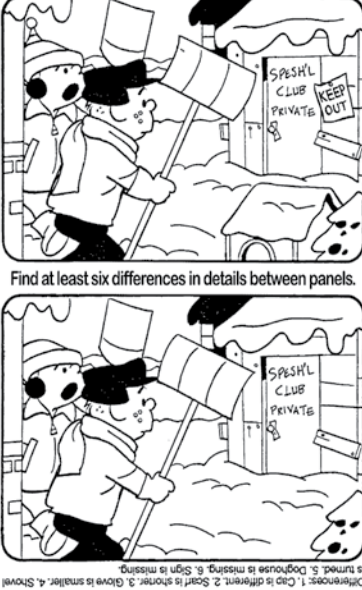
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Early Winter Storms Provide Much Needed Sierra Snowpack



Californians need to be aware that even these big storms may not refill our major reservoirs during the next few months. Photo Madscica | Dreamstime

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Department of Water Resources (DWR) conducted the first snow survey of the season at Phillips Station. Early winter storms this month provided a strong start to the season and some drought relief, but California remains in a drought.

The manual survey recorded 78.5 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 20 inches, which is 202 percent of average for this location on this date. The snow water equivalent measures the amount of water contained in the snowpack and is a key component of DWR’s water supply forecast. Statewide the snowpack is 160 percent of average for this date.

“We could not have asked for a better December in terms of Sierra snow and rain,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “But Californians need to be aware that even these

big storms may not refill our major reservoirs during the next few months. We need more storms and average temperatures this winter and spring, and we can’t be sure it’s coming. So, it’s important that we continue to do our part to keep conserving – we will need that water this summer.”

Californians only need to look to last winter and the state’s disappointing snowpack runoff due to high temperatures, dry soil and evaporation as a reminder that changes to our climate mean it will take more than an average year to recover from drought.

“California continues to experience evidence of climate change with bigger swings between wet and dry years and even extreme variability within a season. A wet start to the year doesn’t mean this year will end up above average once it’s all said and done,” said

Sean de Guzman, Manager of DWR’s Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasting Unit.

December is the first of the three typically wettest months of California’s water year. Significant January and February precipitation would be required to generate enough runoff to make up for the previous two winters that were California’s fifth - and second-driest water years on record.

California has experienced wet Decembers before only to have storms disappear for the remainder of the season. In 2013, the first snow survey provided promising results after a wet December, similar to this year. However, the following January and February were exceptionally dry, and the year ended as the driest on record, contributing to a record-breaking drought.

On average, the Sierra snowpack supplies about 30 percent of California’s water needs and the snowpack is an important factor in determining how DWR manages the state’s water resources. Its natural ability to store water is why the Sierra snowpack is often referred to as California’s “frozen reservoir.”

As spring sets in, the snowpack begins to melt. Water that is not absorbed into the ground, called “runoff,” trickles into mountain streams, which feed rivers and eventually aqueducts and reservoirs, where it can be stored for use throughout the dry season. Climate change is affecting California’s snowpack, as more precipitation falls as rain and less as snow. Excessively dry soils and dry, warm spring temperatures are also reducing yearly runoff.

Due to these climate-induced

changes, DWR is investing in partnerships and implementing emerging and proven technologies to improve forecasts of precipitation, seasonal snowpack, and runoff to support more efficient water management now and to help estimate the impacts of climate change on future flood and drought conditions. Forecast improvements and monitoring enhancements increase the reliability of data used to inform water managers about flood risks, allowing opportunities to create more storage in reservoirs ahead of big storms while also ensuring water supply reliability in periods of dry or drought conditions.

DWR conducts five media-oriented snow surveys at Phillips Station each winter near the first of each month from January through April and, if necessary, May.

★

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