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**'VIVA LAS
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A Festival of Trees



Skylar Bruce, Kathy Wallace, and Sariah Garcia helped keep track of the voting for the Kiwanis Festival of Trees People's Choice Awards. Photo by Debra Dingman

MPG Staff

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Tree Decorators did some of their best work offering a wide variety of themes from elegant to whimsical at the recent Kiwanis Festival of Trees, but the visitors had no doubt of their favorites which included a tree filled with gnomes and a Christmas under the sea.

The People's Choice honor is the result of visitors voting for their favorite trees while at the event and tallied by Dixon High School Key Club students. All of the winning trees had an element of one-of-a-kind work and craftsmanship, which made the winners ultra-unique.

"We appreciate the decorators and

know that all of them put in a ton of effort – sometimes a whole year of thought and planning," said FOT Chair Debra Dingman. "We're so glad sponsors and decorators were willing to come back after last year's hiatus to help build up the community again. We commend them for their generosity knowing the proceeds from the tree auction help so many children and families locally in a variety of ways."

The People's Choice winner for the large green tree was sponsored by First Northern Bank and was named, *A Berry Merry Christmas*. It was filled with red berries among layers of a feathery snow-white garland, sparkling lights, and shimmering red

cardinal ornaments. It was decorated by Debee Lamont and Diana Davies who also won in 2019 in the medium category and who also won the honors several years in the 12-year history of the event.

There was a tie for the medium tree category. Crystal Rico Farmers Insurance Agency sponsored a tree that she also decorated with family members, Amaya, Justine, and Ingrid along with Nancy Riley. Titled *Christmas Under the Sea*, the tree was covered with sea creatures and swathed in teal blue garland. Garnering exactly the same number of votes was a tree named *I'll be Gnome for Christmas* and featured

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Collecting Toys, Coats, and Food

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Collections for Dixon's Community Christmas Program, formerly known as Dixon Toys for Tots, are in full swing for Dixon's underserved children, families, and seniors—continuing the tradition for more than 50 years. The program has been minimized to deal with COVID concerns, but Santa will still delight, and seniors will still stay warm.

"He will be present for the distribution at Cornerstone Church although it will be a drive-through like last year where Santa stood on the porch and waved as the families drove through," said program President Jack Caldwell.

"They don't get out of their cars. We don't want Santa to get COVID and there are lots of children," he said adding he was happy at least Santa will be present for the distribution. "I know him very well. I know he doesn't want to get ill," he added with a



Suzanne Galloway was one of many women who made well over 100 Christmas gifts for senior citizens in the form of soft and cozy lap blankets like the ones she's surrounded by. They will be delivered to shut-ins across our community on Christmas Eve. Photo by Debra Dingman

twinkle in his eye.

The program is separate from services offered by Dixon Family Services which focuses on food distribution but making sure the Dixon community is served is paramount for both. For the Community Christmas Program,

administrative changes after the retirement of the original, long-time Director and the installation of some new Board members made for good timing to learn official responsibilities, said one Board volunteer.

After announcements

went out to the schools, an eligibility screening was set for this past week at Cornerstone Baptist Church where identification, proof of income, and proof of residency was required along with a child's school

Continued on page 3

**Inflation
and California
Policies are
the Grinch
that stole
Christmas**



Ted Gaines

**Commentary
by Ted Gaines**

Are you ready for the most expensive holiday season in forever? Hold on to your wallets, because high inflation and wrong-headed California policies are the Grinch that stole Christmas, pressuring family budgets and diminishing our quality of life.

If you've gone to the grocery store or shopping mall, you've witnessed a spike in inflation like we haven't seen in decades. The consumer price index surged 6.2 percent from a year ago in October, the highest increase since 1990. But the story is actually worse. The October monthly increase was itself 0.9 percent, which would indicate an annualized increase of nearly 11 percent.

As famously put by Nobel Prize winning economist Milton Friedman, inflation is always a monetary phenomenon. When the federal government flooded the country with stimulus dollars without accompanying goods and services, inflation was entirely predictable.

What does this mean for the average working family? It means that every item on your holiday dinner table will cost more. Gifts for your children will cost more. Heating your house will cost more. Gas, hotel rooms, movie tickets, clothing, haircuts will all cost more. Inflation robs purchasing power from each and every dollar you make.

Workers may be seeing increased wages, but when they don't keep up with price increases, people become poorer even as they earn more.

As ugly as the picture is nationally, California is worse. Our state isn't responsible for the flood of dollars driving inflation, but it's stacking bad state policies on top of bad federal policies and making it tougher for families to make ends meet.

For example, so called "green energy" policies

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Get Involved and Help Keep Dixon a Diamond

By Debra Dingman

Whew, what a week! I went to take pictures of the volunteers and city workers getting ready for the downtown Christmas Tree Lighting and caught Susan Motley on a 15-foot ladder hanging large ornaments on the Christmas tree that would be later lit up for community fans. Greg Orr was putting together the tent and stage for Santa Claus while wifey Jill was stringing rope to create zig-zag lines for people to follow to get to Santa. Gary Erwin, sound and stage expert, was setting up speakers and running cables everywhere so we would all be able to hear the music and announcements.

I was moved by seeing mostly the same individuals for three decades now who work to put on these events. I put down my camera and reporter's tablet to give a minor hand. We are not doing enough to attract or entice new energy to dedicate to town events like these. I know we have a pandemic but we've also seen hundreds of new residents move into Dixon—time for new folks to reach out and immerse into our great little town so if you are reading this, I don't know of a single civic club, church, or non-profit not needing volunteers! The Chamber and the City have listings of almost all of them and we could use your assistance in keeping Dixon the Diamond on I-80!

So, after the Tree Lighting Festival, hubby and I enjoyed dinner at Bangkok Garden but they no longer offered the Chicken & Baby Corn Thai Pad so I had to try something new. I ordered the Crispy Chicken over rice and the spices and flavors were delicious plus the presentation was refreshing with sliced cucumbers off to the side. I had to take a picture (see above.) The chicken was

tender and flavorful, and the breeding wasn't fried but baked and crispy. Hubby also liked his new dish, too. We were both very happy and Suchada is always a delightful server.

We feel fortunate that Dixon has such a wonderful variety of really good restaurants right here. It was relaxing and warm after such a festive event.

Then it was full speed into the Kiwanis Festival of Trees and that was another busy time. But, so worth it. What a true pleasure to hear the violin group, the Dixon High School Choir and Jazz Ensemble and folksinger Hattie Craven who is only 20-years-old, and I'm sure on her way to stardom! What a voice and amazing talent! I could go on about all of the performers and the absolutely beautiful, creative trees, but it would take too much space—just know it was a huge success. I'm not being vain about our club but really, dozens of people told us that they loved it and that it was over the top.

What might have made it that way was Polina Farias who put up a 15 to 20-foot display of various Christmas scenes that were 3-dimensional and just as pretty and charming as possible. Many used them as photo backdrops and will surely grace plenty of Christmas cards this year.

Since I was asked several times about the display, I will tell you that Polina is the charge for Dixon Party Rentals in the back part of Amos Metz Equipment Rental & Sales across from Viva Market. She is an amazing visual artist. I wanted the wow factor after such a sad time in our history with the pandemic and shutdowns of schools.

As we move into the best holiday of the year, I want to encourage folks to get out—wear a mask if you want or need—but please get out into town and enjoy these organized and wonderful events! ★

Dixon News Briefs



New traffic lights were installed this week at two intersections. One is at Evans and West A Street and the other is at Pitt School Road and A Street. Be warned and exercise caution. Photo by Debra Dingman

MPG Staff

New Traffic Signals

Two new traffic signals went up last week on A Street—one on Evans Road and one on Pitt School Road. Both are at A Street intersections but are not active upon press time—although they are expected to be soon. Please be aware that while not yet working, it is a concern that motorists often no longer see the Stop sign as they are looking up at a dysfunctional light.

City Planning

This coming Tuesday, Dec. 14, there will be a Planning Commission Meeting at 7 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 600 East A Street. The agenda can be found online at cityofdixon.com but not until the Thursday before the meeting around 4 pm.

Senior Club

The Dixon Senior Club is up and running again after a long COVID-19 hiatus. Call the Dixon Senior Center for upcoming events, trips, games and classes. It's time to get together again with our friends and peers to get over the cabin fever we all experienced during the pandemic.

The next Senior Club Out-to-Lunch is on Dec. 10 and the group is going to Mr. Taco. Please join them as an opportunity to see each other just before they get busy with Christmas and New Year's.

The non-profit organization recently decided that they will donate to both Dixon Family Services and the Dixon Toys for Tots Senior Visitation Program this year and plan to make it an annual thing. ★

Dixon Family Services expressed their gratitude to have another new partnership with one of Dixon's oldest clubs. This partner adds to the long list of service organizations and clubs in Dixon that support DFS on a regular basis.

The Senior Club coordinates with the City of Dixon and uses the Dixon Senior Center to schedule classes, exercise, meals, and many other activities throughout the year. The Senior Club and the Advocates for Seniors will also work together to find resources and provide links to services that are specific to senior citizens in Dixon. The Senior Resource Fair is tentatively planned for the Spring of 2022.

Car Cruises

Two cruises in one week—one was slated for Thursday, Dec. 9 for the Community Christmas Program and the other one is this Saturday for Dixon Family Services. Both have canned food and toy collections. The weekend car parade is Dec. 11 about 6 pm after lining up in Hall Part beginning at 5:30 pm. The 2nd annual event will include Dixon High School seniors, too. More information is available by calling Regina Fish at (707) 628-9771.

Holiday Mixer

The Dixon Chamber of Commerce invites members and their guests to have a "Holly-Jolly Good Time" at the annual holiday mixer. It will be Wednesday, Dec. 15, 5:30 to 7 pm at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 North First Street. Cost is \$5 at the door and the mixer combines food, drinks, and fun. For more info, call (707) 678-2650. ★

Santa's Watching for the Naughty and Nice



This Santa got hoisted to his perch on the grain silos located near the train tracks on North First Street recently. A long-armed crane was also used to place a star on top of one of the silos as a tradition by Azevedo Hay & Grain. Photo by Debra Dingman



The Dixon Chamber of Commerce wishes everyone a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season!

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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For My Life: A Christmas Story
Part 2 – Joseph Says Yes!

“Will I Obey God When It Doesn't Make Sense?”
Matthew 1:18-25

Small Groups meet throughout the week.

Frank Salamone - Pastor/Teacher
Sheila Dybdahl - Children's Minister

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Collecting Toys, Coats, and Food

Continued from page 1
identification. Once through that process, there is much help along the path to Santa.

The coat give-away will be changed to a one-on-one basis as we are still trying to keep people safe,” said American Legion Auxiliary member Leah Marlin. The group is still accepting coat donations at the Dixon Fire Department.

In addition, several toy drives have been scheduled including a drop off at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 North First Street or at Hall Park the night of the Christmas Cruise, Dec. 11 at 5:30 pm. People are asked to bring a new, unwrapped toy and/or canned food for the holiday food drive organized by volunteers of Cornerstone Baptist Church, 185 West Cherry Street.

On Christmas Eve, volunteers from the Lions Club will deliver boxes of enough food to sustain the seniors through the holidays. The Senior Program includes personal visits from volunteers who deliver new blankets—most of them sewed, hand knitted, or crocheted.

Suzanne Galloway from the Dixon United Methodist Women along with Teri Brown and Darla Wear from the Dixon Women’s Improvement Club have been busy making and collecting blankets to go with those deliveries.

“Currently, we have 75 blankets and 110 pairs of socks,” reported Galloway. We’ve been collecting them from all of our church ladies but I also put out a box at Curves-Jenny Craig and those ladies brought in a bunch. Then someone we didn’t even know brought in about 30 knitted blankets.” This Editor could not confirm with Santa, but that elf could have been Paula Meares who knitted throughout the pandemic.

“It’s truly been a community effort because all kinds of people from the community have taken part in this,” Galloway added.

“These are just some of the things that make our town so wonderful and we hold onto,” said Caldwell. For more information, email:DixonChristmasProgram@gmail.com or call Tanace at (707) 330-8626 to sign up. ★

A Festival of Trees



Dancing amidst beautifully decorated Christmas trees where visitors cast votes for their favorite tree, Dixon Dance Studio students performed for the Kiwanis Festival of Trees this past Saturday. Photo by Debra Dingman

Continued from page 1
upwards of two dozen gnomes of all shapes and sizes plus several fun board games, too. It was sponsored by the American Legion Post 208 and the gnomes were the creative effort of the Women Auxiliary.

The winner of the tabletop category was a lot larger than a table top. In fact, *Baby Yoda Shenanigans* featured the green, large-eared space elf sharing a big space orb with its colorful decorated tree. The endeavor was sponsored by Cynde’s Place Salon & Boutique and was decorated by Tonyah Everhart who is also a veteran decorator and People’s Choice winner. If you are Facebook friends with Dixon Kiwanis, you can see pictures of the other ingeniously-decorated trees on the Kiwanis of Dixon Facebook page.

The winner’s names will be engraved on the Kiwanis perpetual plaque soon and will be on display (with permission) inside the Dixon Chamber of Commerce and at Kiwanis events such as the spring’s Breakfast with the Bunny.

Winners will be invited to the January Kiwanis meeting at Bud’s Pub & Grill for recognition. They are also invited back to decorate next year!

At Sunday evening’s close, Kiwanis President thanked everyone for the sake of Dixon’s children and gifted the long-time retiring chair, Debra Dingman with more than a dozen roses. For more information on Dixon Kiwanis, call (707) 678-9198 or Membership Chair Patti Sousa at (707) 635-3303 or email dixonkiwanis@hotmail.com. ★



A Berry Merry Christmas. Photo by Debra Dingman



Christmas Under the Sea. Photo by Debra Dingman

‘Viva Las Dixon’ Show Will Feature Elvis Tribute



Rob Ely Courtesy Photo

DIXON, CA (MPG) - If you’re an Elvis fan, this show’s for you! A fundraiser for Dixon’s Teen Center on Saturday, Jan. 22, will feature top Elvis impersonator Rob Ely who will take the stage at Dixon High School’s community theatre to perform song

favorites such as Don’t Be Cruel, Blue Suede Shoes, and Can’t Help Falling in Love. The fundraiser will begin at 7 p.m and tickets are now available.

Ely has won top honors at Elvis talent competitions around the U.S. He has placed in the top three

– or in first place – at five regional Elvis contests sponsored by Elvis Presley Enterprises and was crowned “Best Overall Elvis” at Thunder Valley Casino. He won Grand Champion at the Laughlin, Nevada, Elvis Festival and performs close to 200 shows per year around the U.S.

Only 300 tickets are available for the show at the DHS theater, 555 College Way, in Dixon. Tickets may be purchased online at Eventbrite.com (search ‘Elvis Dixon’.) Tickets are \$30 each and may be purchased at the Dixon Chamber of Commerce, Dixon Florist and Grocery Outlet. Tickets would make wonderful Christmas presents, organizers said. Raffle prizes will also be offered.

Dixon’s Teen Center first opened in 2011 and the Board members look forward to continuing operations soon after a closure due to COVID-19. Contact Chair Jerry Castañon at (707) 344-3544 for more information. ★

CHP Combats Retail Theft

CHP News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - With the holiday shopping season in full swing, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is collaborating with local law enforcement agencies to aggressively investigate organized retail crimes, make arrests, and recover stolen merchandise from brick-and-mortar and online retail stores throughout the state.

The CHP’s Organized Retail Crime Task Force (ORCTF) assists local law enforcement agencies and pursues leads, identifies suspects, and supports criminal investigations. Immediately following the high-profile burglaries in the Bay Area this weekend, the CHP contacted the local agencies investigating the crimes and offered assistance. As a result, effective immediately, the CHP is increasing patrols on the freeway corridors adjacent to major shopping centers.

Since its creation in 2019, the CHP’s ORCTF, in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies, has participated in 773 investigations, made 240 arrests, and assisted in the recovery of more than \$18.9 million in merchandise.

“The CHP remains steadfast in its efforts to help reduce organized retail theft,” CHP Commissioner Amanda Ray said. “We are collaborating with local law enforcement and district attorneys to apprehend and prosecute the criminals involved in this nefarious activity.”

As California’s state law enforcement agency, the CHP can assist local authorities with complex investigations that extend beyond their jurisdictions or as requested.

The ORCTF provides local law enforcement with logistical support and resources, including personnel and equipment. Every ORCTF team throughout the state shares information between law enforcement agencies and California’s retailers, and has committed CHP detectives to investigate these crimes and enhance the safety of the public as they shop throughout California.

According to the National Retail Federation, organized retail theft accounts for an estimated \$30 billion in economic loss each year nationwide. Organized retail theft typically involves a criminal enterprise with multiple theft rings at numerous retail stores and uses a fencing operation to sell the stolen goods. Retailers carry losses from theft on several levels and ultimately the cost is passed on to consumers through price inflation to offset the economic loss.

If you observe organized theft:

Do not attempt to intervene; Note what the people involved look like; If possible, obtain a license plate and vehicle description; Be cautious – multiple suspects can be involved in these thefts; Report all suspicious activity to the store manager or police when safe to do so; Submit pictures or video of the suspects or criminal activity to law enforcement, if you can do so safely; Report organized retail theft incidents to CHP online at: <https://www.chp.ca.gov/notify-chp/organized-retail-theft-program>.

The ORCTF’s efforts are consistent with the CHP’s mission to provide the highest level of Safety, Service, and Security to the people of California and are in line with the CHP strategic goal to protect life and property. ★



I'll be Gnome for Christmas. Photo by Debra Dingman



Baby Yoda Shenanigans. Photo by Debra Dingman



FROM



Proven to Decrease DUI Crashes, ACCESS Launches Nationwide Program

By Ryan Budmayr, ACCESS

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Honorable Richard A. Vlavianos, in front of the California state capitol and surrounded by other Public Safety and Law Enforcement Officials, announced the launch of a new, nationwide non-profit organization designed to treat high risk and repeat DUI offenders. The new non-profit, ACCESS, launches with a foundation of learnings and track record of saving lives as proven through a pilot that's been active in California since 2008.

"After nearly 15 years and more than 5,000 participants, we've seen firsthand the difference this approach can make in changing behaviors and saving lives," said Chair of ACCESS and California Superior Court Judge Richard A. Vlavianos. "Each day, roughly 28 people die in drunk driving related car crashes and it's only fitting we make this announcement today as we kick off National Impaired Driving Prevention Month."

Current DUI and Drug Courts make an undeniable impact treating a smaller, more targeted population in need of



The new non-profit, ACCESS, launches with a foundation of learnings and track record of saving lives as proven through a pilot that's been active in California since 2008. Photo courtesy Pixabay

more significant support. ACCESS extends a similar approach to the remaining 70% of repeat DUI offenders that don't qualify for traditional DUI court. A recent study of the 5,200 participants indicates the concept is significantly changing behaviors with an 80% completion rate and most encouraging, a 19% decrease in DUI crashes. The six-year longitudinal study also found that participants did not revert to the norm upon completion of the program, indicating signs of long-term behavioral change.

"Existing special courts work with high-risk offenders who have high treatment needs, while ACCESS fills the gap by

focusing on offenders who may be high risk, but don't require the same level of treatment," said Judge Vlavianos. "To make an impact, we needed to ensure the ACCESS program was scalable and affordable. I'm excited that we can provide monitoring, education and training to repeat DUI offenders at a fraction of the cost of typical treatment programs, at about \$10,000 less per participant."

Discussions with multiple state law enforcement and judicial officials interested in launching ACCESS are currently underway. Those with questions or interested in learning more are encouraged to visit choos-access.org. ★

Fly to the Slopes with SMF



Several Tahoe ski resorts opened weeks earlier than planned which could be a sign of an incredible ski season to come! Photo courtesy Pixabay

By Scott Johnston, Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento region had its first major rainstorm of 2021 in October, which brought huge amounts of snow to the Sierra. So much in fact, several Tahoe ski resorts opened weeks earlier than planned which could be a sign of an incredible ski season to come! Whether you're heading to Lake Tahoe's spectacular slopes or to the Rocky Mountains and beyond, Sacramento International Airport (SMF) can get you to the snow quickly. SMF offers direct flights and easy connections to many major ski destinations.

Locally, Lake Tahoe is home to 15 ski resorts, 477 miles of slopes, 146 lifts and views you won't find anywhere else in the world. Ski racing began in North Lake Tahoe in the 1860s, when gold miners decided to attach boards to their feet and skim down the slopes, and the first resort was built in 1924. Today, there's a resort for every kind of snow junkie – skiers, snowboarders, beginners and experts. SMF is approximately 100 miles from Tahoe and offers numerous nonstop flights from major U.S. hubs. Making both the north and south shores easily accessible.

For Northern Californians who are venturing outside of the state, flights from SMF can get you to some of the country's best ski resorts in no time.

The Rocky Mountains stretch from British Columbia south to New Mexico, with dramatic mountain vistas, breathtaking ski terrain and as much as 33-feet of snow per year. SMF has nonstop flights to Denver (DEN) on United Airlines, Southwest Airlines and Frontier Airlines, allowing you easy access to some of the Rockies' best ski resorts. Echo Mountain and Loveland Ski Area are about an hour away

from DEN, while Breckenridge and Copper Mountain are about a 90-minute drive.

Aspen is a spectacular year-round destination, but it is best known for its winter sports. Not into downhill, but still want to play in the snow? Aspen's four mountains offer cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and winter hiking trails. Off the slopes, Aspen has a vibrant dining with diverse culinary options both off and on the mountain. A bit further south, the old west vibe of downtown Telluride complements the glamour of Aspen. The rustic town has been called the #1 Ski Resort in North America. Tucked into a canyon surrounded by 14,000-foot peaks, Telluride was designated a National Historic Landmark District in 1964, preserving the feel of Colorado's 1870s silver rush-era. The town is also home to a vibrant arts district, with galleries, performance spaces and architecture.

Salt Lake City (SLC) is also a short hop from SMF on both Delta Airlines and Southwest Airlines. Mother Nature delivers an average of 500 inches of snow to Utah's mountains every year and many of the best resorts are within an hour's drive from SLC. Park City, home of the Sundance Film Festival in January, has fabulous shopping and dining options as well as snow biking, snowshoeing, tubing, ice skating and sleigh rides nearby.

Western Canada's renowned Whistler Blackcomb Resort can be accessed via several nonstop flights to Seattle (SEA) on Alaska Airlines, Southwest and Delta. Once you land, drive into beautiful British Columbia to one of the largest ski resorts in North America with a lift that can take you to an elevation of 7,350 feet.

For more information on flights, visit the SMF website. ★

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Dare to Live Without Limits

by Bryan Golden

Perspective

Is the glass half full or half empty? Does it matter? Yes! Your perspective governs your life. From getting through each day to long term strategies, how you see things has a dramatic impact on your happiness and success.

People who see the glass half full experience things differently than those that see it as half empty. The half full people are optimists, while the half empty people are pessimists.

Optimists see their world filled with joy and possibility. They don't get bogged down by obstacles because they recognize problems as being temporary in nature. They are healthier and happier than their pessimistic counterparts. Whenever they are knocked down, they get right back up and keep going.

Pessimists are consumed with adversity and potential problems. They see each day as a minefield of things that will go wrong. They view obstacles as a way of life rather than a temporary state. Pessimists tend to be more depressed and suffer from more physical ailments than optimists.

If you focus on your strengths, solutions, and opportunities, you see the glass as half full. If you obsess over weaknesses, always find problems, and feel you are a victim, you always see a half empty glass.

Optimism and pessimism are learned behaviors. As such, pessimists can become optimists if they so desire. You can change your outlook anytime. But

it takes practice, repetition, and consistency.

An optimistic perspective becomes part of you. You take it wherever you go and can apply it as often as necessary. It provides you with a teflon coating that prevents problems from sticking.

There were two children, Jane and Alice. Jane was an eternal optimist and Alice was a perpetual pessimist. As an experiment, Alice was placed in a room full of new toys and Jane was put into a room full of manure.

Their respective reactions were quite surprising. Alice began playing with the toys but quickly became sullen and depressed. Jane, on the other hand, was observed happily searching through the manure.

When questioned about their feelings, their answers revealed their approach to life. Alice said she became sad because she was worried that her good fortune couldn't possibly last since she was certain someone would take away all of the toys, leaving her with nothing to play with.

Jane couldn't believe her good fortune. With so much manure in one room, there had to be a pony in there somewhere, she explained.

This story illustrates the effect of your perspective. No matter what good fortune may befall them, pessimists feel they are doomed and are constantly waiting for the bottom to drop out. When presented with a solution, they find the problem. Optimists

are always looking for the pony.

A constantly negative outlook creates a downward spiral. Since pessimists always find problems, they perceive circumstances as going from bad to worse. This cycle reinforces their belief that the glass is half empty.

To change your perspective, look for the pony. Act the way you want to feel. Smile to feel good rather than waiting to feel good before you smile. Monitor your feelings so you can catch yourself before they turn negative.

Describe problems in terms that make them appear temporary and solvable. For example, if you are laid off from work consider it an opportunity to find a better job or make that career change you always wanted. This will allow you to solve your problem much more readily than if you resigned yourself to being unemployed.

Adjust your perspective to give you the results you want. Successful people always see the glass as half full. Even if there are only a few drops in it, the optimist considers that a good start.

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@colum-nist.com or write him c/o this paper. © 2021 Bryan Golden ★



FOR THE LOVE OF

BOOKS

By Amy Shane

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

Holiday Young-Adult Gift Guide

Are you looking for that perfect book for the young adult reader on your list? This year Macmillan publishers have you covered with this year's top favorites.

Little Thieves by Margaret Owen

There once was a beautiful princess, a wicked maid, and an enchanted string of pearls. On one fateful day, the wicked maid steals the face of the princess, taking with it everything the princess's life as well as her betrothed. While the princess is then instantly cast out to live the life of a servant. But when the servant is finally caught, she must pay for her crimes, returning the life she stole to the rightful owner. Is this classic tale the real story? Now, it is time for the truth to finally be told.

In this stunning retelling of the Goose Girl, readers will be taken deep into an enchanted story where the wicked maid finally has a chance to have her story heard.

Me Moth by Amber McBride

After Moth loses her family in an accident, she struggles to discover her family roots, and then she meets Sani. Now, together with each other's help they will be able to navigate the ghosts of their past, as they search for answers. In a story of searching for who you are and where you are from readers will be thrown into a story that is unforgettable, power and raw.

So Many Beginnings A Little Women Remix by Bethany C. Morrow

A brilliant and beautiful reimagining of Little Women. Readers will once again fall for this beautiful story of sisterhood and love in a realistic and authentic retelling.

The Ones We're Meant To Find

Two sisters are living worlds apart. Cee has been living on an abandoned island,



with only a single memory of her sister, and it's up to her to figure out how to escape. Kasey, a STEM prodigy, lives in a world governed by science that has been the result of many man-made disasters. Now it is up to her to choose the path to help humanity.

This futuristic tale highlights and features hope for humanity in a story of haunting emotion and sisterly bonds.

These Hollow Vows Lexi Ryan

Brie has always hated the Fae, but when her sister is sold to a Fae King, she knows she will have to make a deal to get her back. However, dealing with Fae can be treacherous and dangerous, leaving her unable to decide who to trust. But things get even more complicated when Brie realizes that she is starting to fall for the prince. Then the mysterious leader Finn catches her off guard with his seductive charm, making her decision of who to trust even more dangerous.

Lexi Ryan once again captures the hearts of her readers with a whole new story of Fae magic. ★



The King of Hypocrisy

Nike's latest TV ad is another slick paean to individual empowerment and prevailing despite the naysayers.

Centered around Memphis Grizzlies star Ja Morant, the commercial features various people doubting that Morant can keep up his stellar play, to which someone always cheekily replies, "Says who?"

Yes, Nike believes anything is possible – so long as it doesn't involve doing anything to cross one of the world's most hideously repressive regimes.

The grotesque hypocrisy of the Nike-NBA industrial complex and its biggest star, LeBron James, has been underlined in recent weeks by Boston Celtics player Enes Kanter, who has been on a one-man crusade against the Chinese Communist Party and those too cowardly or greedy to call it out.

James – the owner of four NBA championship rings who has appeared in a jaw-dropping 10 NBA finals – has views on all sorts of public controversies and doesn't hesitate to air them so long as they are comfortably within the fashionable woke consensus.

On China, though, he's mute. So are his employers. They all portray themselves as champions of social justice and of courage and striving, but their commitment to these causes and values stops at the water's edge – and at their bottom line.

When a couple of years ago, the Houston Rockets general manager got thrown under the bus by the NBA for tweeting in support of pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong, King James pronounced him "not educated on the situation."

The Lakers forward affirmed a right to free speech – thanks, GOAT! – but said we have to be careful what we say. "So many people," he warned, "could have been harmed, not only financially but physically, emotionally, spiritually."

Never has so much harm been attributed to a small message of public support for plucky idealists about to be steamrolled by a totalitarian government.

During the Kyle Rittenhouse trial, by the way, James mocked Rittenhouse's tears on the stand, doubting they were real – apparently because he's an expert on what constitutes genuine signs of post-traumatic stress.

If Rittenhouse had control over whether a vast market would be open to James and the corporations he's affiliated with, the Lakers star surely would have stayed silent.

When Kanter tweeted, "Money over Morals for the 'King,'" and wore sneakers portraying James bowing down to get crowned by Chinese dictator Xi Jinping for a Celtics-Lakers game, James brushed it off. He accused Kanter of "trying to use my name to create an opportunity for himself."

Actually, Kanter's activism, calling out his league and a massively influential corporation, is what everyone says they value – a lonely,

unwelcome campaign against well-heeled interests too compromised to defy a powerful entity perpetrating rank injustices.

After Nike got blowback in China for a relatively anodyne statement expressing concern about forced labor in Xinjiang – the epicenter of the regime's repression of the Uyghurs – the company's CEO said Nike is "a brand of China and for China."

Nike lobbied Congress to weaken an anti-forced-labor bill, lest a measure aimed at crimping a vast human-rights abuse discomfit the corporate giant too greatly.

"Says who?" the new Nike ad asks. Clearly, the Chinese regime.

"You can't stop us," intoned a viral ad last year. Well, actually you can, provided you are an authoritarian bully with an enormous consumer base.

"Just do it" went the most iconic Nike ad. No, second thought, better to "Just don't" if it might anger a government that disappeared a star athlete for the offense of accusing an official of sexual assault and is preparing to invade a neighboring country.

If China were to take Taiwan, would the NBA, Nike or LeBron James do anything more than offer vague expressions of concern and piffle about how the situation is complicated?

We certainly know what Enes Kanter would say. Which is why he rightly deserves a Nike ad celebrating his go-it-alone truth-telling, and why, of course, he'll never get one.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Inflation and California Policies are the Grinch that stole Christmas

Continued from page 1

drive our residential electricity costs more than 50-percent higher than the national average. A California specific gasoline blend, cap-and-trade charges for transportation fuels, and the highest gas taxes in the nation add up to five-dollar gas all over the state. That spells poverty for working families, commuters, rural drivers, and energy intensive businesses.

It's no surprise that California, a state that's turned shoplifting into an unpunished hobby, pushes policies that rob families and businesses every time they turn on the heat or fill their tanks.

Inflation is a stealth tax, making every dollar worth less. California residents are punished again by a policy-driven cost

of living that strains our citizens to the brink.

Our governments should open their eyes and see the damage they cause to the very people they claim to help. This year, they are leaving a lump of poverty in working-class stockings. I hope for wiser policy in 2022, but that would indeed take a Christmas miracle.

Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.) was elected to represent the Board of Equalization's First District. He is a leading taxpayer advocate and is committed to providing trustworthy and transparent representation for nearly ten million constituents in 30 counties of northern, eastern, and southern California. For more information, visit www.boe.ca.gov/Gaines. ★

Dr. James L. Snyder

As a youngster, I often heard my father say things that later turned out not to be on the true side of the table. So I guess that is a father's prerogative, and I probably have done the same thing many times. But I don't want to research that aspect of my life right now.

One that he said quite often was, "Eating healthy is for sissies."

I had not remembered that until several weeks ago, when I had my first heart attack. Who knew I even had a heart! And, what did my heart have against me that it wanted to attack me?

My main artery was 90% clogged, and the doctors called it the "widow maker." That was something relatively new to me.

I spent about half a week in the hospital having a stent put in to help the main artery. The nurses took more blood out of me than I knew I had. Count Dracula would have been jealous.

My stay in the hospital was only three days, but felt like an eternity. Its experiences like that make you appreciate your own home and bed and lazy chair. I was so happy to

get home.

Thinking about this, I had a dire option before me.

I could take things as my father did in a very hap-hazardous way and not take my dietary routine seriously.

On the other hand, I could take my health and my eating habits seriously.

My first impression is to go along with my dad. After all, dads are never wrong, right?

As the situation is, the biggest obstacle in my decision concerning my health and eating habits is the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. For some reason, she has taken my diet quite seriously as though it was hers.

The quandary I am in is that she is the one who supervises the culinary activities in the house. I have been barred from the kitchen for years because of an incident that happened a few years back, which I am not comfortable getting into right now.

Being in a health-challenging situation right now, I do not have many choices. It's either eat what the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has produced or starve. Starving is not the particular exercise that I enjoy.

I must admit my wife is a marvelous cook and makes

very delicious meals, which I am assured, are most healthy. From my point of view, if it does not have broccoli, then it is delicious.

Her healthy array of desserts is mouthwatering.

Therefore, I can do my own thing and be in a lot of trouble or allow the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage to do her thing and be in charge of the dietary activities in our home.

In pondering this quandary that I am in, I realized a wonderful verse in the Bible. "And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God" (Ecclesiastes 3:13).

Instead of getting all caught up in some ritualistic eating habits, I believe from God's perspective he would want me to enjoy my life. But, of course, as I realize now, enjoying life means that I take care of my eating habits to the glory of God.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He lives with his wife in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com. ★


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EU Leader Calls for Throwing Out Nuremberg Code in Favor of Forced Vaccinating All Dissenters – Comments come on the heels of Austria and Germany locking down the unvaccinated | 3 Dec 2021 | On Wednesday, Ursula von der Leyen – the president of the European Union (EU) Commission – told the press that she would like to see the long-standing Nuremberg Code ignored completely in favor of allowing countries to force vaccinate anyone who is refusing to take the experimental jab. Her alarming comments come just days after Germany followed Austria's lead, mandating an authoritarian lockdown on only the unvaccinated. In addition to being in full support of the segregated lockdown, von der Leyen said it was “understandable and appropriate” for EU countries to discuss mandatory COVID vaccinations because of the new Omicron variant, which has already been detected in 12 countries in the EU. From The BBC: “European Union countries should consider mandatory vaccination to combat Covid and the Omicron variant, the head of its Commission has said.”

‘Tool to Enforce Orwellian Rules’: 80 House Republicans Help Pass Bill to Fund Federal Vaccination Database | 1 Dec 2021 | Eighty House Republicans voted with Democrats on Tuesday to pass the Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act, which if passed by the Senate and signed into law would fund a federal vaccination database. According to the bill, also called H. R. 550, the government would provide \$400 million in taxpayer dollars to fund “immunization system data modernization and expansion,” a system otherwise defined as “a confidential, population-based, computerized database that records immunization doses administered by any health care provider to persons within the geographic area covered by that database.” Rep. Mary Miller (R-IL), who was one of the 130 Republicans to vote “no,” told Breitbart News exclusively on Wednesday that the legislation would enable the federal government to “track” unvaccinated Americans who “will be targeted and forced to comply with Biden’s crazy ‘global vaccination’ vision.”

U.N. Taking Down Private Websites - Domain Level Censorship By Ice Age Farmer | Dec 2, 2021 | The U.N. Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) is now responsible for taking entire privately hosted websites offline, as they seek to take total control of the flow of information and establish their “Great Narrative.” CTED notifies domain registrars of “extremist” sites – i.e., those that promote narratives they don’t approve of -- and the sites can no longer be found. This reflects a new level of internet censorship, but it is not just publishers who are in the crosshairs...it is all of us. Christian breaks it down in this Ice Age Farmer broadcast.

Dying COVID-19 Patient Recovers After Court Orders Hospital to Administer Ivermectin | 1 Dec 2021 | An elderly COVID-19 patient [Sun Ng, 71] has recovered after a court order allowed him to be treated with ivermectin, despite objections from the hospital in which he was staying, according to the family’s attorney. After an Illinois hospital insisted on administering expensive remdesivir to the patient and the treatment failed, his life was saved after a court ordered that an outside medical doctor be allowed to use the inexpensive ivermectin to treat him, over the hospital’s strenuous objections... The judge issued a preliminary injunction that day directing the hospital to “immediately allow... temporary emergency privileges” to Ng’s physician, Dr. Alan Bain, “solely to administer Ivermectin to this patient.” The hospital resisted the order on Nov. 6 and 7, denying Bain access to his patient. The hospital claimed that it couldn’t let Bain in because he wasn’t vaccinated against COVID-19 and that its chief medical officer wasn’t available to “proctor” Bain administering ivermectin. The daughter’s attorneys filed an emergency report with the court on Nov. 8 and Fullerton heard from both sides. The judge admonished the hospital and restated that it must allow Bain inside over a period of 15 days to do his job. When the hospital filed a motion to stay the order, Fullerton denied it, again directing the facility to comply. The ivermectin appears to have worked, and Sun Ng has recovered from COVID-19. He was discharged by the hospital on Nov. 27.

Austria Now Threatening PRISON to Anyone Who Refuses Vaccine – | 1 Dec 2021 | Unjabbed Austrians who refuse to comply with the government’s draconian mandates could face prison sentences and crippling fines for non-compliance. After initially placing unjabbed citizens under lockdown, Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg announced that the jab would become compulsory from February 1 onward. Questions as to what would happen to those who refused to comply with the mandate have now been answered in the form of a draft that was leaked to the media. “Under the bill, anyone who refused to attend a scheduled vaccination appointment would receive an official summons from local authorities. If an individual failed to show up, they would then be summoned one more time within the next four weeks,” RT reports... Summit.news reports: No one will be “forcibly brought” to a vaccination center to get jabbed against their will, although rest assured, **they will be “forcibly” placed behind bars if they continue to refuse.** If it passes, the legislation will stay in place for three years, with the government deciding if having recovered from COVID is a reasonable exemption. ★



Rising Fuel, Fertilizer Costs Challenge California Farmers
Rising fuel and fertilizer costs are impacting California farmers and, over time, could create uncertainty in the food market. Just a year ago, a gallon of diesel fuel for tractors averaged \$3.25. Now it’s about \$4.50. The cost of fuel has tripled since 2020 for agricultural aircraft used for crop applications. Meanwhile, supply chain issues are spiking costs of nitrogen fertilizers. Farmers say the trend could affect supermarket produce selections if they need to alter planting decisions due to costs.

Mushroom Farmers Impacted By Shortage Of Wheat Straw
In California farm country, one crop’s success – or lack of it – may affect another. A case in point involves wheat and mushrooms. Mushroom growers use wheat straw for cultivation. But straw supplies are diminishing as wheat farmers cut back on planting acreage due to drought and falling wheat prices. That means less straw on the market for mushroom farmers. Mushroom growers say they’re also impacted by worker shortages and rising labor costs.

Yolo County Farmers Critical of Rural Event Center’s Impacts
A Yolo County special events center and bed-and-breakfast venue is drawing fire from local farmers concerned about traffic and crowds. The Yolo County Farm Bureau, the Farmland Protection Alliance and the Tuleyome conservation group of Woodland have challenged the 2016 use permit for the Field & Pond commercial venue near Winters. And last month, a California appellate court ruled the center needed a full environmental review on its potential impacts on protected species.

Hearst Ranch Beef Grows With Ranch-To-Customer Sales
A California beef company with a historic address is seeing increased consumer demand for home-delivered beef during the pandemic. Cattle have grazed coastal hills near Hearst Castle in San Simeon since 1865. Now Hearst Ranch Beef is capitalizing on online beef sales and a meat subscription service it provides in partnership with The Larder Meat Co. Hearst’s director of agricultural operations says demand has been “off the charts” during the pandemic. ★



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Publish: November 19, 26 & December 3, 10, 2021 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
CASE #FCS057294

1. Petitioner Rudy Brooks Sr filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

<u>Present name</u>	<u>Proposed name</u>
Rudy Brooks Sr	Rudy Robert Brooks Sr

2. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing. **December 15, 2021, 8:30 a.m. Department 12, Room 2, Superior Court of California, County of Solano, Old Solano Court House 580 Texas Street Fairfield, CA 94533**
Judge of the Superior Court: Christine A. Carringer
DATED: October 27, 2021
Publish: November 19, 26 & December 3, 10, 2021 (The Dixon Independent Voice)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 2021-002253

The following persons are doing business as: : OMBRE NAILS
613 Tennessee Street, Vallejo, CA 94590
Dan Lam, 1593 Gardner Boulevard, San Leandro, CA 94577
Date Filed in Solano County: November 15, 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 14, 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.)
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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 2021-002326

The following persons are doing business as: : TRAVEL DOG
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Tim Erskine, 1875 Margurite Drive, Dixon, CA 95620
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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 2021-002321

The following persons are doing business as: : MOM EXECUTIVES
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Katrina Garcia, 506 Gadwall Drive, Suisun City, CA 94585
Date Filed in Solano County: November 30, 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.)
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Crossword Puzzle on Page 7

M	E	C	C	A		A	C	T		C	U	B	E
O	C	E	A	N		G	A	R		T	E	P	E
P	R	I	M	A		O	B	I		A	D	O	R
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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 7

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

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CLUES

CROSS

1. Pilgrim's destination
6. Make a scene
9. Rubik's puzzle
13. Hawaii environs
14. Toothy fish
15. Cone-shaped dwelling
16. White Swan in "Swan Lake" ballerina
17. ____-Wan Kenobi
18. *Decorate with wreaths and holly, e.g.
19. *Either dessert or source of heat (2 words)
21. * ____ Day, or second day of Christmastide
23. Land parcel
24. Strauss of denim fame
25. Broadband access overseer, acr.
28. Clarified butter
30. Acute one and obtuse one
35. Southeastern Asian country
37. Joust's breastplate
39. Shrewdness
40. Caspian basin river
41. *Pasadena's Tournament of ____
43. Tel ____ , Israel
44. Native American emblem
46. "Why not?"
47. Hitchhiker's quest
48. Omits when speaking
50. Hard to find
52. Bear's winter quarters
53. Hoodwink
55. Scepter's partner
57. *Number of days in Christmastide
60. *"Ugly" holiday party garb?
64. Prepare a letter
65. "Bunger!"
67. Hinged for
68. Pass-the-baton race
69. *Cranberry sauce sometimes comes from it
70. Same as tori
71. Raise the roof
72. German river
73. Stall sound

DOWN

1. Whiny and miserable
2. Shade of beige
3. Finish a ceiling, to a plasterer
4. Marlboro alternative
5. Not digital
6. Bug-eyed
7. Not Uber
8. Social group
9. Ghana monetary unit
10. Second word of many fairytales
11. Cause of Titanic's demise
12. Poetic "even"
15. Burdensome
20. Not this or that
22. Lab eggs
24. Time off
25. *Champagne holder
26. *Wassailing composition
27. Raccoon's South American cousin
29. Feeling of superiority, pl.
31. ____ gum, food additive
32. Furiously angry
33. Exclude or omit
34. *Number of candles in kinara, Kwanzaa
36. *Troika vehicle
38. "Will be," according to Doris

42. Asian goat antelope
45. Potpourri
49. Chevy Suburban, e.g.
51. Builds
54. *Popular holiday wish
56. *Munchausen's title
57. *Bedecked arbor
58. Shakespeare, to his friends?
59. And others, for short
60. Minus
61. Tropical edible root
62. Anon's partner
63. Take a load off
64. Like some humor
66. *Traditional main holiday dish

Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 7

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13					14			15			
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63										62	63
64					65	66		67			
68						69		70			
71							72			73	

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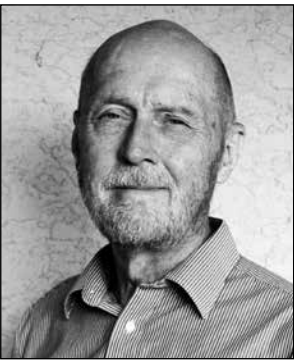
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	6	2				1		

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Solutions on Page 7

Dixon Seeing More COVID Cases Again



Commentary
by bil paul

With the holiday season in full swing, it's no surprise that COVID cases are beginning to rise again in Dixon. The number of new cases in town doubled over a week's time, and the number of new deaths in the county also doubled (to eight.) The test positivity rate also ratcheted up a notch.

The U.S. recorded an average of 1,900 COVID deaths per day (in September). Only heart disease caused more deaths.

The news this week has been the new COVID mutation labeled 'omicron.' It's spreading rapidly. Questions to be asked: does it spread faster than the current delta variant and does it lead to more (or less) hospitalizations and deaths? How effective are the current vaccines and treatments against it? Does it hit the unvaccinated harder than the delta variant has?

One of the reasons richer nations of the world need to help poorer nations with vaccinations is that the more people coming down with COVID (anywhere), the greater chance the virus has to mutate and become tougher to beat.

I have heard that one of the

reasons people don't get vaccinated is a fear of needles.

I wondered how many COVID viruses it would take to become infected. One estimate was about 300. Other viral infections require 2,000 to 3,000 viruses to be transmitted from person to person. That goes to show why COVID spreads faster than, say, the flu.

The head of the Christian prosperity-themed Daystar television network, Marcus Lamb, had been a vocal critic of vaccines and vaccine mandates. He promoted alternative treatments and offered misleading information about COVID -19. About a week before Lamb's death due to COVID, his son said in a broadcast that he believed his father's illness was "a spiritual attack from the enemy" in order to "take down" his dad.

It's unclear how well expansive vaccine mandates will be carried out. A Sacramento Bee article revealed that 70 percent of students 12 and older in the Sacramento school district who are eligible for the COVID vaccine had not reported their vaccine status by the November 30 deadline. The district's school board had required vaccination for all eligible students and staff.

It's apparent to me that even if the new COVID variant is more spreadable and we enter a new surge of cases, business and school lockdowns won't happen like a year ago. People have become COVID weary and mandate wary.

On the other hand, I see more customers wearing masks in Walmart lately. The

thin cloth ones aren't very effective. N-95 masks are preferred.

Climate Change

Switching gears, I tried counting the ways I've noticed climate change right here in Dixon.

On average, less rain. I've heard it said that the climate of southern California is moving up this way; Average temperatures increasing. Winters are warmer; More nearby forest fires due to less rain and snow; More power outages due to threat of forest fires and to increased use of air conditioners during the summer.

One of the current global worries is disappearing sea ice in arctic regions. When there's ice and snow, its whiteness reflects sunlight back into space. When ice melts away, the sunlight heats the open water, contributing to global warming.

Another worry is how global warming will affect the jet stream, which generally brings in low-pressure systems, assuring rain. If global warming moved the jet stream further north, 'blocking' high pressure systems would keep rain away, causing droughts and temperature extremes.

bil paul did PR for the Postal Service and medical companies, and worked as a reporter and photographer. He's the author of the book about Dixon's failed movie studio project ("The Train Never Stops in Dixon" – available at Amazon or the library) and has a non-fiction book coming out next year about GLs in the Aleutian Islands during WWII. ★



Riley Reviews

THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT LIVES IN MOST SEASONAL TV PROGRAMS

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

The British monarchy fascinates many and that is perhaps explained by two things. First, there is a subscription video on demand service dedicated to all things Royal, and it is called True Royalty TV.

Second, the royal-centric service is ringing in the holiday season with "A Very Royal Christmas: Sandringham Secrets," which will give viewers a look at how the Royal Family celebrates Christmas Day at the Queen's country estate.

Will Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, be a part of the holiday celebration? If one bothers to read tabloid stories about the couple's rift with the Royal Family, the invitation could be lost in the mail.

Meanwhile, Mariah Carey, who has not to anyone's knowledge married a prince, has an eponymous holiday spectacular on Apple TV+ entitled "Mariah's Christmas: The Magic Continues."

The holiday special will reveal the first and only performance of the multi-Grammy Award-winning global icon's new single, "Fall in Love at Christmas."

The singer-songwriter will be joined by Grammy-nominated worldwide artist Khalid and Grammy-winning legend Kirk Franklin, as they bring the spirit of Christmas to fans around the world.

One thing not previously known is that, according to the press release, Mariah is the "Queen of Christmas" who will also ring in the holidays with a dazzling new rendition of fan favorite, "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)."

NBC finds the Christmas spirit with Grammy and Emmy Award-winning global superstar Kelly Clarkson in her holiday special, "Kelly Clarkson Presents: When Christmas Comes Around," which has a repeat airing on Wednesday, December 15th.

Clarkson's love for the holiday season is no secret, as she celebrates it all year long with "Ambush Christmas" segments on her award-winning daytime talk show with studio viewers and guests treated to off-season snow, music and epic giveaways.

Timed to the release of her new holiday album, Clarkson's special will be filled with original new songs as well as a curated list of iconic classics, dancing, performances featuring My Band Y'all with a streamlined modern orchestra and remarkable duets.

According to Clarkson, "People celebrate the holidays in different ways and that is the inspiration behind the original songs and the curated classics that are featured in this special. No matter what your heart is feeling, I hope this hour brings you joy and happiness."

The Lifetime channel presents "My Favorite Christmas Melody," in which once promising singer-songwriter Abby (Mya) now finds herself writing uninspired jingles for commercials.

As she heads home for the holidays, Abby is enlisted by the local high school

music teacher to help save the school arts program. In the process, Abby rediscovers her voice and regains the confidence to go after her dreams.

Not all holiday programming, unless you go the Hallmark Channel's inexhaustible supply of Christmas movies, can be as uplifting or in tune with the seasonal spirit of good cheer.

While it pops into select theaters first, Amazon Prime Video's "Being the Ricardos," about Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, will drop on the streaming service close to Christmas.

Though the hit "I Love Lucy" television series was a groundbreaking sitcom, Lucille Ball (Nicole Kidman) and Desi Arnaz (Javier Bardem) battled television sponsor Philip Morris, muckraking gossip columnist Walter Winchell and each other.

"Being the Ricardos" offers an intimate glimpse into the pair's often turbulent partnership, their whirlwind courtship, their passionate love affair and the burning ambition that made them the leading innovators in the Golden Age of television.

On screen, Ball's signature screwball comic genius, supported by longtime co-stars William Frawley (J.K. Simmons) and Vivian Vance (Nina Arianda) and the show's legendary writing staff, make "I Love Lucy" an unprecedented popular success.

In the boardroom, Arnaz's visionary business acumen creates a brand-new paradigm for television production as they transform themselves from B-movie contract players into the founders of the world's top independent TV production company, Desilu Productions.

But even as their on-screen marriage and soaring success make the pair one of America's most admired couples, conflicting desires at home begin to eat away at everything Ball and Arnaz have accomplished.

Written and directed by Aaron Sorkin, the story told in "Being the Ricardos" benefits from two stellar actors tasked with revealing the couple's complex romantic and professional relationship.

It's likely a good bet that the action-adventure series "MacGyver" (the original one with Richard Dean Anderson) is better known than the cult-film "MacGruber" based on a "Saturday Night Live" parody of the aforementioned TV series.

Peacock's upcoming action-comedy series "MacGruber" serves as a sequel to the 2010 cult-favorite feature film of the same title, starring once again Will Forte as the titular character.

After rotting in prison for over a decade, America's ultimate hero and uber patriot MacGruber is finally released. His mission: to take down the mysterious villain from his past, Brigadier Commander Enos Queeth (Billy Zane).

With the entire world in his crosshairs, MacGruber must reassemble his old team, Vicki St. Elmo (Kristen Wiig) and Dixon Piper (Ryan Phillippe), in order to defeat the forces of evil. ★

California Gun Law Headed to Supreme Court?



By Dan Walters
CALMatters

California has some of the nation's tightest gun control laws and virtually no session of the Legislature ends without additional restrictions being enacted.

In polling and by their votes, Californians have heartily endorsed making gun purchases and ownership increasingly more difficult.

As California's restrictive laws proliferated, however, the state's current and would-be gun owners complained that notwithstanding their political popularity, the laws violate Californians' constitutional right to bear arms, codified in the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Those complaints are now likely to reach the U.S. Supreme Court because of Tuesday's decision by the 9th District Court of Appeals upholding two of the state's most controversial gun control laws, banning the sale and possession of magazines holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition. One was enacted by the Legislature and the other in a ballot initiative (Proposition 63) sponsored by Gavin Newsom in 2016 when he was lieutenant governor.

A federal judge in San Diego, Roger Benitez, became a hero to gun owners when he struck down Proposition 63's 10-round

magazine limit two years ago, saying that it unconstitutionally interfered with using guns for self-protection. "The statute hits at the center of the Second Amendment and its burden is severe," Benitez wrote.

Newsom had become governor when Benitez ruled and denounced the judge as a "wholly-owned subsidiary of the gun lobby and the National Rifle Association."

A three-three judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court sided with Benitez but on Tuesday, the full 11-judge court, dividing along ideological lines, ratified the magazine laws. It declared that they "reasonably supported California's effort to reduce the devastating damage wrought by mass shootings.

The majority opinion added that requiring owners of higher-capacity magazine to get rid of them is not an illegal government "taking" because "the government acquires nothing by virtue of the limitation on the capacity of magazines."

The case sparked a welter of opinions from individual members of the court both endorsing the majority opinion and dissenting.

Three judges appointed by former President Donald Trump were sharply critical of the majority, saying, "these magazines are lawfully owned by millions of people nationwide" and warning that applying California's law across America would "require confiscating half of all existing firearms magazines in this country."

Newsom, of course, hailed the ruling that upheld his ballot measure, tweeting, "Weapons of war don't belong on our streets. This

is a huge victory for the health and safety of all Californians."

California being what it is, the nation's most populous state with some of the nation's tightest gun laws, the eventual outcome of the magazine capacity case could have wide effects. Blue state prosecutors filed briefs supporting California's position while those in Texas and other red states backed Benitez's ruling.

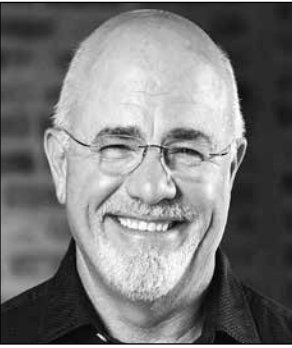
The possibility of it becoming a landmark case was enhanced when lawyers for gun owners who challenged the state's magazine limit immediately promised that they would appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

If, as Tuesday's decision indicated, judicial attitudes about gun control laws divide along ideological lines, California's limit on magazine capacity could face rough treatment from the Supreme Court's 6-3 conservative majority.

In recent decisions, the Supreme Court has become increasingly critical of restrictive gun laws and has a landmark case now pending, involving New York's ban on carrying guns outside the home.

During arguments a few weeks ago, majority justices gave every indication they would overturn the law, criticizing it for interfering with citizens' rights to self-defense. That's essentially the same line of reasoning that Judge Benitez adopted in overturning California's magazine limit.

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



Keep Things as Pleasant as Possible

Dear Dave,

I don't really see eye-to-eye with my dad and older brother on many things. This is not a new realization on my part, but over the last few years it has led to hard feelings and various arguments at family gatherings about religion, finances and other things. With Christmas coming up, I would like to avoid conflict and try to handle things a little better with them. Do you have any advice?

– Cam

Dear Cam,

It takes a strong, level-headed person with a good heart to want to approach a situation like this with

Dave Ramsey Says

maturity and love. I'm proud of you for trying to create better relationships within your family.

My initial advice would be don't take discussions too deep, and make a conscious effort to stay away from any hot button topics you know already exist. I'm no family counselor, but the chances of you changing a lifetime of differences and toxic behaviors, or bringing them around to your way of thinking, in one brief interaction are probably pretty small.

Don't tell them you think what they're doing is wrong or that you feel they're bad people if things get a little tense. My best advice is to be a model of sanity and reason if you feel a confrontation brewing. Situations like this are hard to deal with, especially when the conflict is between a father and son or two brothers. It's hard on you and them, plus it has a negative impact on

the rest of the family during what is supposed to be a joyful and loving time of year.

These are people you love and care about, even if they are hard to get along with or understand sometimes. Pray for them, Cam. And ask God to give you guidance, patience and understanding in this situation, too.

– 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. ★

WEEKLY COMICS

Amber Waves



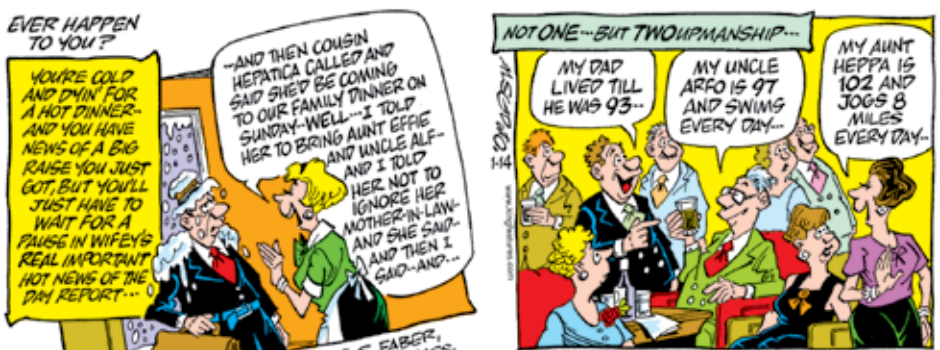
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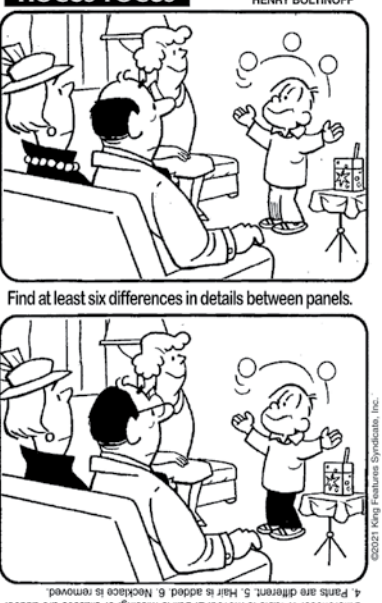
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How to Slash Americans’ Electricity Bills

Commentary
by Wayne Winegarden

Whenever you hear about America’s electricity system these days, it’s usually some big problem that has captured the public’s attention.

There are examples of energy companies operating inefficiently, such as ratepayers having to foot the bill for massive cost overruns at the Vogtle nuclear power plant in Georgia. Sometimes, as was the case in South Carolina, customers wind up paying higher rates to cover the costs of building generation resources that are never completed and generate no electricity. And we have seen outright corruption, such as the FirstEnergy scandal in Ohio that led to the largest criminal fines for bribery ever imposed by the local U.S. Attorney’s office.

What do all of these examples have in common? They involve government-mandated electricity monopolies. Residents and businesses lose out when states rely on electricity monopolies, forced to endure higher prices, reduced investment in new infrastructure, and less reliable power.

When thinking about America’s electricity future, we want a system that produces abundant and reliable energy supply to power our homes and businesses. We want to be able to keep the lights on at the most affordable price possible. And at a time when the country is increasingly concerned about global warming, we want to generate more “green energy” and lower emissions.

The key to making each of these priorities a reality is through electricity competition.

Right now, there is electricity competition at the wholesale level – or the source from which power companies acquire electricity supply to sell to local customers – for most of the country outside the Southeast, Southwest, and Northwest.



When thinking about America’s electricity future, we want a system that produces abundant and reliable energy supply to power our homes and businesses. We want to be able to keep the lights on at the most affordable price possible. Photo by Pok Rie from Pexels

In addition, 13 states and the District of Columbia have retail competition, where individual customers can choose a power company that best meets their requirements, such as lower prices or more power being generated by green sources.

As I document in the new Pacific Research Institute study “Affordable and Reliable,” if every state switched to a competitive electricity market, it would be a win-win for customers, the economy, and the environment.

The latest data shows that competition lowers prices for consumers. Prices in competitive wholesale markets were trending downward and were at or near 6-year lows in 2020. States with competitive retail markets saw prices drop 0.3% between 2008 and 2020 – compared to a 20.7% price increase in monopoly states.

Competition also ensures that power interruptions are rarer and brief. Because competitive wholesale markets are regional and encompass a larger geographic area, they have more diverse energy generation options when supplies are tight. A key measurement found that the frequency of sustained power interruptions was 10.4% lower in competitive states compared to monopoly states.

As America transitions to a clean energy future, competition ensures that we will make additional progress in lowering emissions. Looking at the latest figures from between 2008 and 2018, state emission levels dropped on average 12.1% in competitive states, compared to 7.3% in monopoly states.

The research makes it clear – if we want to lower costs for consumers, make our economy more competitive for investment and job creation at a time of uncertainty, ensure that we have a reliable electricity supply to power our homes and businesses, and boost our progress in lowering emissions, then policymakers in states with government-mandated electricity monopolies should pass reforms establishing competitive electricity markets.

Dr. Wayne Winegarden is senior fellow in business and economics at the Pacific Research Institute, and author of the new study “Affordable and Reliable.” Download a copy at www.pacificresearch.org. ★

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