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**Dixon
Independent Voice**

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**SEE
INSIDE**

**SEEING
DOUBLE**



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**BRANDING
WORKSHOP**



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Sew Much Better



Store Owner Julian Lis, Willa Sheppard, Marilyn Johnson, Emily Matthews, Colleen Erdes, and Debbie Weaver are happy staffers at the expanded Dixon sewing shop, In Stitches. Photo by Debra Dingman

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - If you are someone who likes to sew, get ready to swoon. No more driving out of town to get crisp cottons or luscious knits. Now you can just drive down A Street and head into the shopping plaza at the end of Gateway Drive where “In Stitches” has expanded four-fold into 7,000 sq. ft.

Rows upon rows you will find hundreds of bolts of fabric but better yet, you’ll find staff that thinks they are at a party. One can enjoy the laughter and bantering from owner Julian Lis, Willa Sheppard, Marilyn Johnson, Emily Matthews and Debbie Weaver. But mostly from Colleen Erdes who is one of those talkative, happy sewers who gets excited over bright colors.

She walks past giant quilting machines like Vanna White on Jeopardy proudly explaining how the company expanded into Dixon a couple years ago and noticed an uptick during the pandemic shut down most likely because people had time to rediscover their hobbies, she said.

The Dixon store was a sister to the main one, ABS Sewing and Vacuum in Vacaville, and served mostly as a small, quilters store. But then there was a burglary in the Vacaville store that did more harm to the psyche of the owner than building or inventory damage. He saw it as time for a change so Lis packed it all up and expanded into the Dixon location. It was a “great” decision, Erdes said.

The staff learned new online skills and with their excellent visibility

right off Interstate 80, it now appears they have become the fabric emporium of the area.

“Apparel sewing is gaining popularity and soft knits,” Erdes said while walking past Marilyn Johnson who was creating, then boxing, quilting kits that are sold all over the world. Those were made with pink hearts and a portion of the sales go toward breast cancer research.

“I grew up sewing with Ben Franklin and Sears stores but the new machines offer so much ease of use and better quality,” Erdes said, adding that their business now offers a full slate of sewing classes in house and video but better that you don’t have to lug your machine out there to class as you can use one they have there.

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**Janisch
Remains
Elected
City Clerk**



Kristin Janisch, Elected Dixon City Clerk.

MPG Staff

DIXON, CA (MPG) - In the “unofficial” but very near-the-end count, Kristin Janisch took 60 percent of the votes in last week’s election for Dixon City Clerk, winning over community activist Michael Ceremello who received nearly 40 percent. There was a low (18%) turnout of the 11,844 registered voters with only 2,243 citizens casting their ballots. There were 11 rejected write-ins.

“Poll workers were like the MayTag repairman,” said Loran Hoffmann, long-time Dixonite who was a first-time Dixon poll worker. Hoffmann has done polling places for several years in Vacaville and found Dixon “interesting” in that the polls were only busy in the last hour.

“We had more people come in during that hour than the whole day. Earlier in the day, there were hours we had nobody come in,” she said.

Janisch expressed gratitude for those who took the time to vote and choose her.

“I am so thankful for the opportunity to have served these past months,” Janisch wrote in a prepared statement. “It is an honor to be selected by the voters to continue serving them as their Elected City Clerk in the coming year. I am grateful for all the encouragement and support of the many people who sent messages, put up signs, offered their endorsements & spoke out/wrote letters on my behalf. It is humbling. I will continue to dedicate myself to doing all that I am able to serve the people of Dixon well as their Elected City Clerk. Thank you for this trust.”

She also expressed gratitude for her opponent, Michael Ceremello, for stepping up to run for the office.

“It is important that citizens actively engage in our community and speak up on issues of concern. I trust & appreciate that Mr. Ceremello will continue to speak up & challenge us all to make the city of Dixon the best we possibly can,” she said. ★

Veterans Wall of Appreciation

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Creating a line of art and thank you letters from 3rd through 8th grade students, a small group of teachers worked alongside American Legion Post member Wayne Holland to tape up a sweet display of appreciation for the military at Dixon’s Veterans Memorial Hall in time for Veterans Day.

“Students didn’t even know what a veteran was,” said Gretchen Higgins 5th grade teacher, Elizabeth Brown, as she taped another picture up on the wall.

It’s difficult to teach elementary school children about veterans, but even more difficult to teach about concepts of our country’s freedom to special needs students—but that wasn’t going to stop Emily Bennett, the organizer of the display. Bennett is a Gretchen Higgins Instructional Aid on her way to a teaching credential. One of her professors



Gretchen Higgins 5th Grade Teacher Elizabeth Brown places another coloring along a wall full of notes of appreciation and art work from her students and others at the Veterans Memorial Hall in honor of Veterans Day. Photo by Debra Dingman

challenged her to do a Service-Learning Project with a goal of getting young students involved in something that would affect the community. Veterans Day was coming and a handful of others wanted to help.

She has been working in Special Ed for 11 years and attributes her heart for

special needs students to her sister, a woman who was partially paralyzed and had difficulty speaking after a brain aneurysm at age 21, and who has since died. Bennet said she knew her students could learn the meaning of the special day honoring those who died serving our country.

She joined up with

4th grade teacher Katie Lavine, Tony Lucas, another Special Ed teacher, and Brown. Lucas found a couple coloring pages that showed the different military branches that the children colored while they learned the different branches of the military and which each one did.

Continued on page 2

Dixon Independent Voice - Dixon's ONLY Family Owned Newspaper For Over 25 Years



Alcoholism Destroys Families; Why Can't We Win the Battle?

By Debra Dingman

I wish I were one of those squeaky, clean people who never had a family member who struggled with alcohol but sadly, that is not the case. It was probably prevalent in the family before my father arrived on the face of the Earth but he is the first one that directly impacted me, of course.

And now I wonder—more than anything—why we haven't figured this disease out.

I attended months of an Al-Anon program years ago that helped me. I've researched studies and read tons on this subject. There is a family that lives nearby where the son is either a drug addict or an alcoholic or both. I knew him when he was a boy. I knew his parents and they were great, involved parents. I see the parents every now and then and I want to say something that I know they are experiencing trouble and I want to tell them what our family has learned over the years but there is a strong stigma that makes me keep quiet.

According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 25 percent of people ages 18 or older engaged in binge drinking in the

past month; six percent engaged in heavy alcohol use in the past month. Alcohol is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States — close to 95,000 Americans die from alcohol-related causes each year.

Important Facts about Alcohol Abuse from Valley Hope Addiction Treatment and Recovery

In order to help reduce the rate of alcohol-related deaths, it is vital to understand how dangerous drinking has evolved into a public health crisis in need of immediate understanding and action, including effective treatment of alcohol misuse:

(1) Alcohol is the most commonly used addictive substance in the United States; (2) In 2020, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation study, there was a 30% to 50% national increase in hospitalizations due to alcohol-associated liver disease, most of which is cirrhosis, meaning end-stage liver scarring; (3) The Rand Research Corporation found that Americans drank 14 percent more in 2020 — the rate for women rose by 41 percent; (4) The American Psychological Association's Stress in America poll shows one in four adults (23 percent)

reported drinking more alcohol to cope with their stress during the COVID-19 pandemic; (5) More than half of all adults have a family history of alcoholism or problem drinking, and more than 7 million children live in a household where at least one parent is dependent on or has abused alcohol; (6) Excessive alcohol use is responsible for 2.5 million years of potential life lost annually, or an average of about 30 years of potential life lost for each death (7) Approximately 17 percent of men and 8 percent of women will be dependent on alcohol in their lifetime; (8) Many more people now die from alcohol and drug overdoses each year than are killed in automobile accidents, a stunning revelation; (9) Roughly one in seven people in the United States (14.6 percent of the population) are expected to develop a substance use disorder such as alcoholism at some point in their lives.

My hubby says to mind my own business. Of course, that is good advice but what about offering help, ideas, wisdom, and support? Maybe if we all didn't just stay shut up, we might conquer this terrible battle that destroys families. ★

Dixon News Briefs



Brianna Boyd, Marketing Specialist for SBDC, talks with a woman about upcoming workshops that are free to small business owners. The next one on Wednesday, Nov. 17, will help people learn about branding their business. Photo by Debra Dingman

MPG Staff

Council on Tuesday

Get involved in your community—do not wait until something is in your backyard! At the last meeting, there were only three citizens in the audience and one of them was this newspaper's Editor! Every meeting decisions are being made that will directly or indirectly impact citizens of Dixon.

There were several issues covered at meetings: Fire, police, water, taxes, house construction, commercial buildings, landscaping, parks, taxes, streets, traffic, assessments, and more taxes! Learn where your money goes and learn who your elected District Reps are for when you have concerns or ideas.

The City Council meets on the second Tuesday of the month; next on Nov. 16, at 7 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 600 East A Street. You can also stay at home and watch it on your computer through the city's website.

The agenda is posted on the Thursday before the meetings on the city website (cityofdixon.com). Call (707) 678-7000 for information.

Metz Appreciates

Amos Metz Rentals & Sales have officially been open since last April and are hosting a Customer Appreciation Barbecue on Friday, Nov. 19 from 11 am to 1 pm. The Woodland-based company remodeled and stocked the business with all new equipment after buying out Dixon's Rental Center at 851 North First Street across from Viva Market.

They rent all kinds of heavy equipment including lifts, movers, landscape machines, trailers, and other equipment. Call them at (707) 678-3100.

Party Rentals

The party supplies are still available for rent at Amos Metz Rentals but through Dixon Party Rentals which is now located in the back part of the Metz portion of the

business. Thanksgiving will be here before you know it and if you need extra tables and chairs for family and friends, make sure to get your order before the rush. Tables, chairs, linens, umbrellas and everything you might need is available, according to Polina Farias who runs that business. You can reach her at (650) 776-1829.

Blood Drive

Now that the vampires have all that they need, why not donate your blood for those who medically need it at the next Dixon Community Blood Drive on Monday, Nov. 15 at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 North First Street in Dixon?

To schedule an appointment, call Vitalant at (877) 258-4825 and mention blood drive code SMFM014.

Branding Workshop

No need to even get in the car... A special SBDC workshop to help Solano businesses learn how to easily brand their business. The workshop will be online from 2:30 to 4:30 pm on Wednesday, Nov. 17. Join in and learn the art of branding your business, without needing any design skills.

In a world filled with big and noticeable brands, learn how to develop your small business's brand so you stand out just as easily and can compete against them better.

Participants will discover the 5-step process that will enable them to connect with clients faster, look more sophisticated, bigger, established, and memorable. Register at solanosbdc.org.

NAMI Volunteers

Sometimes holidays bring on more awareness of depression or anxiety. The Solano County Chapter of the Council on National Alliance on Mental Illness is a grassroots, self-help, support and advocacy, non-profit organization dedicated to improving and helping families and individuals affected by mental illness. They are looking for volunteers. You can reach them at (707) 438-9510 or info@NAMIsolanocounty.org. ★

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Loving Others,
Sewing Our World

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Small Groups meet throughout the week.

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

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Veterans Wall of Appreciation

Continued from page 1

The others found a video for the children to watch and another inspired thank you letters.

“We talked about what veterans did for our county and I was most surprised about how thankful the students were,” said Bennett. The students wrote out thank you cards to the veterans.

The group wanted to display the students' work and Brown had a family member involved in the Veterans Memorial Hall so arrangements were made with Bennett and last week, the teachers displayed the drawings, colorings, and thank you notes along the walls

inside the building.

“The students have an amazing sense of unity in the world,” said Bennett. The group found that a lot of students have a military member in their family but the concept that they signed up to serve the country was new to them, Bennett explained.

“The lesson resonated with each student differently as they learned the kind of impact they made,” she said. “Our military veterans have done a great service and continue to do that everyday. I was touched by what the students wrote. We hope when they see the messages, they'll feel loved.” ★

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

Busy Bee Yoga	Solano Kitten Network
Fast Eddies Diesel Engine Performance & Repair	Susan McGarry, Premier Commercial Real Estate Services
Bert & Arlene Gaulke	Walmart
Pedro's Cocina	

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

Connect • Communicate • Collaborate

Sew Much Better Seeing Double

Continued from page 1

They are an authorized dealer for Baby Lock, Janome, Juki and Pfaff as well as Miele vacuum cleaners and tout that with their 60 years of industry experience, they are qualified to effectively help anyone select the machine that best suits their life-style and budget needs.

“I go out there quite a bit,” said Dixon resident Jan Hardy. “My mother did a lot of sewing so I have my mother’s sewing stuff also. They are very friendly. I’ve gone out there a lot and when I have something I can’t use, Colleen has given me the name of somebody to connect with. I’ve bought a few pieces. They have so much traffic out there now. My daughter does quilts and the colors they have are fabulous!”

Sewers are a close group of people and they talk a lot, according to Erdes.

“We tell each other when we find great shops,” she said, before quickly pulling aside Emily Matthews to help show off a quilt being raffled off with benefits to Dixon Family Services. The tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5 and the raffle will be held on Dec. 17. There will also be two other winners drawn: one will win a \$50 gift certificate to the store and the other will receive a gift basket.

For more information, call (707) 679-3007 or visit the store at 450 Gateway Drive, Dixon. ★



Staff member Marilyn Johnson puts together quilt kits that are sold all over the world to people who love to quilt. Photo by Debra Dingman

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - When heading toward the Chamber of Commerce, you might think you’re seeing double as you pass the Dixon United Methodist Church but that’s okay, because there are now two. Although one is a Little Free Library recently installed and housed in a small replica of the actual church building.

The Church had been looking for someone to build one since 2017. Then, an Eagle Scout built a bench in 2018 and the idea was to get the LFL right next to it but then they couldn’t find anyone, and then COVID hit.

But that, apparently wasn’t all bad as Pastor Cathy Morris took communion out to various members and to a variety of neighborhoods including to Ed Wisniewski’s home in Woodland. His wife Sarah is a former Dixonite, and they had a LFL in front of their house so the connection was made. Ed designed, built, and put it into place close to the full-size church building.

“He’s a really good wood worker and volunteered. He did a fantastic job,”



Marcia and Jay Dubach with their pup checked out the new Little Free Library in front of the Dixon United Methodist Church that was built to be a miniature replica of the church. Photo by Debra Dingman

said Suzanne Galloway of DUMC. “And, we already have a couple people in the women’s group who will act as custodians. We’ve even got two carts to help roll books up and down the ramp,” she added.

LFL is the world’s largest book-sharing movement, founded as a non-profit in 2012 and strives to be a catalyst

for building community and book access through a global network of volunteers. That should make four official LFLs in Dixon with a couple of additional small, private libraries. The others are located at 680 West A Street, 695 West B Street, 395 Fitzpatrick Court, and on Bellos Drive in Valley Glen. ★

County Approves COVID-19 Vaccine for Ages 5-11

Solano County Press Release

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Solano County is expanding vaccine eligibility to individuals living or attending school in Solano County who are ages 5-11, in accordance with state and national guidance to expand eligibility to this age group.

The Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup unanimously concluded that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is safe and effective for youth ages 5-11, following the Emergency Use Authorization from the US Food and Drug Administration and the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Parents who are interested in getting their child vaccinated can access the Pfizer pediatric doses at several locations throughout the County, including pharmacies, healthcare providers and County-hosted vaccine clinic events.

“We are pleased to expand eligibility to all community members age 5 and older in Solano County,” said Bela T. Matyas, M.D., M.P.H., Solano County Health Officer. “Getting children in this age group vaccinated helps keep them at school and reduces the risk they stay home, away from school after being exposed to someone with COVID-19.”

Starting Wednesday, November 10, 2021, the mass vaccination clinic at the Solano County Fairgrounds, located at 900 Fairgrounds Drive in Vallejo, will begin administering the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine to individual age 5 and older, in addition to providing initial and additional

doses to all other eligible community members. The mass vaccination clinic operates Wednesday – Saturday from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Mass vaccination clinics are operational now through the middle of December, with a closure the week of November 24-27 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Registering for the Covid-19 Vaccine

To make an appointment at the vaccination clinic, eligible residents can sign up online for each family member at <https://bit.ly/solanomassvax>. Those requiring registration assistance can call (800) 672-0150.

COVID-19 Information:

Homebound individuals interested in requesting an in-home vaccination appointment are encouraged to call the COVID-19 vaccine line at (707) 784-8655 for scheduling assistance; **Residents without transportation** to and from vaccine sites hosted by Solano County are urged to call the COVID-19 vaccine line at (707) 784-8655 and arrange for a **free ride** through Uber; **For upcoming vaccine clinics** in Solano County, visit www.solano-county.com/covidvaccine

For vaccine clinics available throughout the State, visit <https://myturn.ca.gov> or www.vaccines.gov

For the most recent local COVID-19 health information, including the number of COVID-19 cases in Solano County as reflected on the COVID-19 dashboard, visit www.SolanoCounty.com/COVID19 and on Facebook at [@SolanoCountyPH](https://www.facebook.com/SolanoCountyPH). ★

California Farm Bureau Hails Investments in Infrastructure

California Farm Bureau News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson today applauded members of Congress for passing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, hailing its crucial benefits for California’s agricultural communities.

“We applaud Congress for passing this critical bill,” Johansson said. “This represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make the kind of investment we need to bring our rural infrastructure into the 21st century.”

The legislation – H.R. 3684 – provides \$550 billion in new spending on physical infrastructure over the next five years. That includes investing \$110 billion in U.S. roads and bridges, \$65 billion for broadband, \$17.3 billion for ports and inland waterways and more than \$8 billion to repair and invest in water storage and conveyance projects for the drought-impacted West.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimates that California would receive more than \$45 billion in long-term funding.

“This will benefit California’s farmers and ranchers, who are counting on improvements to millions of miles of roadways and waterways to get food to America’s dinner tables and upgraded ports to ship products to international markets,” Johansson said. “Our rural communities can thrive with expanded broadband and feel protected due to investments in forests that reduce wildfire dangers.”

“And amid our searing drought, farmers can now look forward to long-needed improvements in water storage and conveyance systems. But we need to make sure those investments result in real infrastructure and are not bogged down in regulatory processes.”

The California Farm Bureau works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of nearly 32,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of nearly 5.6 million Farm Bureau members. ★

Brandon Foster Sentenced to 15 Years for Attempted Murder

Office of Solano County District Attorney

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - In Department 4 of the Solano County Superior Court, before the Honorable E. Bradley Nelson presiding, Defendant Brandon Foster, was sentenced to 15 years in state prison for attempted murder with use of a knife inflicting great bodily injury on an elderly man. Senior Deputy District Attorney Mary

Nguyen handled this case through its entirety. On January 19, 2018, the defendant committed the most horrific assault.


The victim, Bobby Watson, now 78-years-old, courageously testified about this brutal attack during the

preliminary hearing held on October 15, 2018. The attack occurred at approximately 9:50 a.m. on January 19, 2018, at Mr. Watson’s home in the unincorporated area of Fairfield. Mr. Watson testified that his electricity abruptly went off, so he went to check the breaker box. While outside, the defendant, unknown to the victim, suddenly viciously attacked Mr. Watson with a chain and machete. The defendant repeatedly struck Mr. Watson in the head with the machete. Mr. Watson ran down his driveway towards the public road. While in the driveway, he fell to his knees and the defendant chased him down and continued to strike him. A witness driving by yelled at the defendant to stop.

The defendant fled towards a field and was apprehended nearby. Mr. Watson was hospitalized for a lengthy period of time due to the substantial injuries he sustained.

This case had been scheduled to proceed to trial for the third time. There were mistrials declared at the first two jury trials due to COVID-19 and the death of Mr. Watson’s wife. Tragically, she had witnessed the brutal assault of her husband and it traumatized her for the rest of her life. Since the death of his wife, Mr. Watson has moved out of state to be closer to his family members. His need for closure was great, given the injuries he sustained, the loss of his wife, and the lengthy litigation that took place over the past 4 years regarding the level of defendant’s impairment and possible mental health issues.


Mr. Watson was present at sentencing today via zoom together with Senior Deputy District Attorney Mary Nguyen, where they listened as the defendant apologized for his horrific conduct. Mr. Watson is relieved that the case is over as it will provide some needed closure. On behalf of the District Attorney’s Office, we praise Mr. Watson for the courage, strength, and bravery he showed on the day of the assault, but also every day thereafter. We are grateful that Mr. Watson survived his horrific injuries, that his voice was heard, that the defendant was held accountable, and that justice was served. ★



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Shop Safe and Smart This Holiday Season

Check Those Smoke Alarm Batteries

**Better Business Bureau
Press Release**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The 2021 holiday shopping season promises to be an unpredictable one. The labor shortage and supply chain issues are already throwing a wrench into holiday shopping. Electronics, toys, and other products will be (or already are) in short supply, and retailers are struggling to staff up as the shopping season nears. Product shortages and increased online shopping are likely to result in even more online purchase scams this year. These scams accounted for nearly 40% of all scams reported to BBB Scam Tracker in 2020, according to the 2020 BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report. Shortages are likely to make purchase scams even more common as desperate shoppers turn to shady websites in hopes of finding this year’s must-have gift. BBB recommends the following tips

to “Shop Safe, Shop Smart” this holiday season: Research before you buy.; If the deal looks too good to be true, it probably is.; Beware of fake websites.; Professional photos do not mean it’s a real offer.; Make sure the website is secure.; Be careful purchasing sought-after products.; Beware of making quick purchases while scrolling through social media.; Look for the BBB seal.; Use secure and traceable transactions and payment methods.; Verify shipment tracking information. Count on BBB to help you “Shop Safe, Shop Smart.” More tips are available at [BBB.org/holiday-tips](https://www.bbb.org/holiday-tips). Report unsatisfactory purchase experiences to BBB. If you are unhappy with a purchase, file a complaint at [BBB.org/complaints](https://www.bbb.org/complaints). If you never got what you paid for, consider reporting it to BBB Scam Tracker to help other consumers avoid being scammed. ★

By Michele Townsend

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - It’s always surprising how many people aren’t aware of the recommended practice to change the batteries in your smoke alarm/smoke detector each time that Daylight Savings Time begins and ends. Well, it’s that time of year again. That’s right, change the batteries twice a year and test them once a month! Does that seem excessive to you? Well, think about this, nobody ever plans on their house catching on fire. According to the National Fire Protection Association, in the year 2020, an estimated 379,500 residential structure fires caused 2,630 deaths and 11,900 civilian injuries. On top of that, 3 out of 5 home fire deaths took place in homes with no smoke alarm or a failed smoke alarm. Out of those that died when there was a working smoke alarm, 22% of them had been alerted by the alarm, but did not respond and 11% did not hear the alarm. By far, the most common reason for a failed smoke alarm is failed power to the device. Smoke alarms can be hard wired only, hard wired with a battery backup or battery only. In addition, there are alarms that respond to heat, respond to smoke, or respond to both. Regardless of the type that you have, it won’t respond at all if it has no power supply. Your life, and the lives of your loved ones is why it is so important to change the batteries twice a year and check them monthly. The easiest way to remember, is to change them when you change your clocks. The only exception to this time frame is when your smoke alarm is powered by lithium batteries. Lithium batteries are known as 10-year batteries, but fire personnel suggest checking them every 6–7 years. Since having a working smoke detector more than doubles one’s chance of surviving a fire, there are a couple of other important facts you should be aware of. Smoke detectors may not work properly if they are not clean. Clean your smoke detectors? That just means to make sure that they don’t have paint in them, or sheetrock and that they are not caked with dust. In a kitchen, make sure that grease has not built up. The best way to keep them free of dust and debris is to periodically spray them with compressed air, like you would use on your computer. Another thing to be aware of is that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors have an expiration date! Yes, an expiration date! Typically, they are designed to have a 5–7-year life. To find out when the expiration date is on your alarm, when you take it down to

change the batteries, there should be a sticker with the date on it. Be sure to note if that date is the expiration or installation date. If there is not date, look up that model and figure out the expiration date, then mark the device. Home fires usually start by cooking, faulty wiring/appliances, smoking, chimney fires or something being too close to a heat source. With the holidays coming, and many people will be decorating with lights, if you plug something in and your lights flicker or dim, unplug what you plugged in and get your electrical checked by a professional. In only 3 ½ minutes, the heat from a house fire can reach over 1100 degrees Fahrenheit. In rooms that are not even on fire, the temperature can reach over 300 degrees. That is hot enough to kill the people in those rooms. In addition to the extreme heat, fire produces gases and fumes that make you sleepy, weak, and confused. You can’t smell these fumes, so if you are asleep the smell won’t wake you up, but a smoke alarm will. The smoke from a house fire can be so thick that your house can be completely dark within 4 minutes even with all of the lights on. One smoke detector in a household is not enough. It is recommended that you have one in each room, but especially right outside of each sleeping area. In addition, there should be smoke detectors on each level, and near the garage and anywhere there is a fireplace, wood stove, etc. It is highly recommended that you encourage your children to test the smoke detectors with you each month. It is very important that your child is familiar with the sound the alarm makes. In addition, make sure that your children are aware what a firefighter will look like in a fire. Explain the breathing sounds they will be making, and the equipment they will be carrying. Children often hide when hearing the smoke alarm. It is important that they know to respond to the firefighter calls. Never put your child to sleep in their day clothes. Children’s pajamas are coated with fire retardant and can make a big difference in the outcome. Sacramento Metro Fire Captain and Public Information Officer, Parker Wilbourn wants to remind the community check/change the batteries twice a year because *SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES*! If you would like further information or would like to set up a time to bring your children down to the fire station to see the equipment and learn fire safety, visit www.metrofire.ca click on community relations. ★

Dodd Lauds Passage of Federal Infrastructure Bill

**From the Office
of Sen. Dodd**

SACRAMENTO, CA (M)PG) - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, issued the following statement upon congressional passage of a \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill that would improve our nation’s roads, bridges, rail and broadband systems, boosting economic recovery and creating millions of new clean-energy jobs: “Investing in our long-neglected infrastructure is critical, especially as we face the devastating effects of climate change,” Sen. Dodd said. “The passage of this key legislation

will ensure we can shore up deteriorating roads, address traffic congestion and improve internet access for everyone. I applaud members of Congress for approving a measure that will be so important for our country and the North Bay.” The federal allocation complements progress made this year on the state level, where the Legislature in partnership with Gov. Gavin Newsom made historic investments to stem the climate crisis and bridge the digital divide. Sen. Dodd secured \$8 million for improvements in key areas of his North

Bay district, including \$5 million for environmental mitigation, marsh restoration and sea-level rise protection along Highway 37. The funding is in response to the dangerous rise in tidal waters across the San Francisco Bay that is now threatening the vital commuter route. Also, he secured \$3 million for design and planning of interim improvements including adding a lane on Highway 37 between Sears Point and Vallejo to increase capacity and reduce traffic. The investment helps create a more sustainable and less congested roadway. ★



AMOS METZ has been doing business in Woodland for 76 years. We offer a wide variety of equipment rentals to both homeowners and contractors.

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FOR THE LOVE OF
BOOKS
By Amy Shane

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

A Stunning Array of New Children’s Books

It Fell From the Sky
by The Fan Brothers

All the creatures from the garden are amazed when a strange object falls from the sky, but what will they do with this strange object? The beautiful, rich, imaginary of the Fan Brothers return with a whole new story that highlights the importance of working together and the pitfalls of greed. A feast of stunning illustrations capturing insects day and night is a visual display of beauty and art.

Thankful
by Elaine Vickers and Samantha Cotterill

As the first snowflake falls, a little girl begins her thankful chain. With each strip of paper, she writes all the things she is thankful for, making the most beautiful chain, showcasing all the joys in life. A beautiful tradition is explored in this charming children’s book. With 3-D paper, cut-out image’s children will be thrilled to explore the beautiful paper-crafted scenes and eager to start their own thankful chain.

Fox A Circle of Life Story
by Isabel Thomas and Daniel Egneus

In a story of life and death, readers will follow Fox as she cares for her cubs, teaching them how to survive. Then one day, Fox dies; however, in her passing, the cubs and young readers will see how death is a beginning for new life.



Tackling the difficult issue of death, especially for animals, Fox takes the sensitive subject and delivers a clear scientific explanation of what happens next and the importance of the circle of life.

Shapes and Patterns in Nature
by Magdalena Konecna, Janan Sedlackova, Stepanka Sekaninova

A beautiful artistic display delivers a visual parade of patterns, colors, and shapes. An encyclopedia of terms accompanied by their visual counterpart is an artistic explosion of information. Readers will be able to study, identify and explore the world around them in a beautiful new way, while also being a perfect companion for any nature lover or science explorer.

Dragons Are the Worst
by Alex Willan

Gilbert knows that everyone fears dragons, but honestly, they should

really fear Goblins just like him. In a laugh-out-loud enjoyable story, readers will giggle along as Gilbert tries to be strong and terrifying, proving why goblins are scarier than dragons. With a small message in the end, this story is an enjoyable read that will be a favorite to read again and again.

With Great Power: The Marvelous Stan Lee
by Annie Hunter Eriksen, Lee Gatlin

The works of Stan Lee have shaped childhood dreams, and now readers can learn about the man behind the superheroes. Stan Lee’s story of perseverance, determination, and creativity inspires readers to follow their dreams. The comic-style illustrations and commentary bubbles will have readers jumping up with a “shazam” and a ZaaaZIP, excited to learn and discover more about the origin of their favorite superheroes. ★



Food & Farm NEWS

Water Districts Cry Foul Over Plan to Increase San Joaquin River Flows

The Newsom administration has informed regional water districts that it is moving forward with a plan to increase flows from San Joaquin River tributaries. The California Natural Resources Agency and the state Environmental Protection Agency recently informed water districts that the state was walking away from negotiations on voluntary agreements to help regulate river flows. The decision could create more water uncertainty for farmers.

Processing Options Will Help Ranchers With Direct Meat Sales

Ranchers who sell meat directly to customers continue to struggle with where to take their animals for processing, as packing plants are often booked solid. New federally inspected mobile operations are coming online to help, including one that opened in March. Starting in 2022, a new law will also allow ranchers who sell whole animals directly to customers to use mobile operations exempt from federal inspections to process animals on the farm.

Avocado harvest is close to projections, but lower than 2019-2020

California’s avocado harvest is nearly finished and appears to be meeting crop projections for the season. By late October, farmers had harvested 263.5 million pounds of avocados, on pace for their predicted output of 265 million pounds. That’s far lower than the 2019-2020 season, when the crop totaled 375.5 million pounds. Growers say they were challenged by variable weather, with below-average temperatures followed by heat waves.

USDA Offers Grants for Enhancing Specialty Crops

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is distributing \$243 million in grants to support specialty crops, including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts and nursery products. The grants will fund research, agricultural extension activities and other programs to increase demand for agricultural goods. Specialty crop initiative grants have already been awarded to University of California, Berkeley and UC Davis for research on climate-smart lettuce production. ★

My Body, My Swat

Dr. James L. Snyder

Usually, I am not easily offended, nor do I easily lose my temper. I did lose my temper when I was six years old but have not been able to find it since. Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is trying to find it but so far, she has not found it.

Don’t let this out, but the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage can get ticked off very quickly, particularly with bugs, lizards, and stuff like that, not to mention snakes.

Once when on vacation and stayed in a motel, a frog was under her pillow. I didn’t know my wife could dance and sing at the same time. I didn’t recognize the song, but I enjoyed her rendition of it.

Then the story backfired on me!

It was the season of the “Love Bugs” that happens every year.

It was love bugs, mosquitoes, and flies. I suppose they have a purpose in this world, but I have yet to discover what that purpose is.

When morning came, I went outside to get into my vehicle to go to the church office; as soon as I stepped outside, a bunch of love

bugs hit me. I don’t know what they see in me that they love so much, I wish they would drop it. I’m thinking of seeking a divorce.

I was in Publix, and as I was walking down an aisle, a mosquito landed on my nose, and without thinking, I swatted it as hard as I could. Yeah, the mosquito was dead. Yeah, my nose was bleeding.

I heard several snickers behind me, and I was afraid to turn around. I got my hanky out and wiped my nose as good as I could. When I got to the counter to pay for my product, the cashier looked at me and smiled very heartily. I just stared back at him with a grimace that I hadn’t used for a long time.

I said to him very snarly, “It’s my body, my swat.”

Several days later, I was in Publix again, and the bugs were still in operational mode. Everywhere I went, there was some bug. Walking around the store, I tried avoiding the bugs as much as possible. When finished, I went to the cashier to pay for my products.

As I was standing there, all of a sudden, somebody slapped me on the back.

I turned around, looked,

and a guy said, “I did you a favor. There was a bug crawling up your back, and I killed it for you.”

Looking at him, I said, “My body, my swat.”

Very soberly, I apologized, and I just laughed and said, “That’s okay. That’s one down and a zillion more to go.”

We both laughed a little, and I checked out and went to my car.

As I was driving home I happen to think of a verse in the Old Testament. “Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes” (Song of Solomon 2:15).

That got me thinking of those little bugs that were creating such havoc in my life. It’s the little things that you don’t think of at the time that do all the damage. My focus usually is on the “big” things in my life, which allows those “little” things to do most of the damage.

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. ★



The Life of Brandon

There’s a crisis afoot in the land – people are being rude to President Joe Biden.

The trend of anti-Biden protestors chanting or holding signs saying, “F--- Joe Biden,” or the cleaner version that has come to signify the same thing, “Let’s go Brandon,” is being portrayed as a new low in American politics.

A recent Washington Post report was headlined, “Biden’s Critics Hurl Increasingly Vulgar Taunts.” It stipulated presidents have always been the subject of derision and abuse, then claimed, “The current eruption of anti-Biden signs and chants, however, is on another level, far more vulgar, and widespread.”

Really? Put aside all the abuse presidents were subjected to prior to the digital age, whether John Quincy Adams (“pimp”), Andrew Jackson (“a greater tyrant than Cromwell, Cesar, or Bonaparte”), Martin van Buren (“Martin van Ruin”), Abraham Lincoln (“the original gorilla”) or Theodore Roosevelt (“that damned cowboy”). The last few years weren’t exactly a mannerly period of polite disagreement in our national life.

As Byron York of the Washington Examiner has noted, Donald Trump’s opponents gloried in the F-word, such that without it some of them would have been

rendered practically mute. When Robert De Niro introduced Bruce Springsteen at the 2018 Tony Awards, he used the opportunity to declare: “I’m gonna say one thing. F--- Trump.” Cue the standing ovation.

A Los Angeles art gallery had a “F--- Trump” exhibit, rapper Eminem led a “F--- Trump” call-and-response at a concert in England, and so on.

If lobbying this particular vulgarity is now completely out of bounds, the new progressive rule is “F--- you” for me, but not for thee.

After gaining traction with roadside demonstrators outside Biden events and with college football fans, the “F--- Joe Biden” chant took an unexpected turn last month. The NASCAR driver Brandon Brown won a race at the Talladega Superspeedway and the reporter interviewing him misstated a growing “F--- Joe Biden” chant in the background as fans saying, “Let’s go Brandon.”

The scene was like something out of the Will Ferrell comedy “Talladega Nights.” A meme was born.

The substitute version of the insult, instantly adopted by the president’s critics, is more lighthearted than the original. Fundamentally, it’s a joke. It is a gibe at Biden, of course, but also at the misreporting of the chant at the raceway, which is taken as a symbol of the media’s ridiculous protectiveness toward Biden.

The chant is also amusingly anodyne, given its provenance. Who can object to the cheering on Brandon, whoever he is?

Not everyone appreciates the humor, though. When

a Southwest Airlines pilot allegedly spoke the offending phrase over the intercom on a flight with an Associated Press reporter on board, the outrage machine kicked into gear in a particularly blatant display of humorlessness and lack of proportion.

Harvard professor and CNN commentator Juliette Kayyem posted a missive supposedly from another pilot calling for the Southwest pilot and the crew all to be fired on grounds that he must have been too mentally unbalanced to operate the plane.


Asha Rangappa, another CNN commentator and a Yale law professor, compared the pilot’s statement with saying, “Long live ISIS,” as if expressing an anti-Biden sentiment in a jokey way is the same as pledging loyalty to a terror group that would love its acolytes to crash airliners.

Of course, pilots shouldn’t make political announcements on their flights, and it’d be better if no one resorted to public obscenities when referring to Biden, Trump, or any other officeholder. But it’s one of the privileges of living in a democratic age that people can insult the head of state without fear of jail or other punishment.


Anyone who thinks deriding a U.S. president, especially an unpopular one, is breaking new, dangerous ground knows nothing of our history or what it’s like to live in a clamorous continental nation. Partisan insults, vulgar and not, come with the territory.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Don't Neglect Long-Haul Covid in the Panic Over Delta

Commentary
by Dr. Jeffrey Gold

Long Covid” is one of many scary phrases that have barged into our vocabulary since the pandemic upended global life. Those who have it are afflicted with a Covid that seems never to go away. With the present panic over the Delta variant, there's a danger that we will not accord this slow-burn condition the attention it deserves. With symptoms ranging from severe fatigue and lightheadedness to anxiety and, in some extreme cases, psychosis, these long-haul patients are begging for help. Studies indicate that as many as three out of 10 people infected with Covid-19 may experience long Covid. Yet, doctors struggle to find an explanation. Another problem is that almost all studies of long Covid focus on the unvaccinated. Little research has been done on "breakthrough infections" -- the contracting of Covid-19 after vaccination. Preliminary research suggests that symptoms can endure for up to six weeks in breakthrough cases. What makes long Covid so puzzling is the variety of possible symptoms, of which there are potentially hundreds. Patients report shortness of breath, fever, difficulty concentrating, and skin conditions. Some patients experience hearing loss. Still others report fatigue so severe that they struggle to get out of bed.

There's no diagnostic test for long Covid, and brain MRI scans and other tests fail to yield results. But this list of symptoms also gives researchers multiple vantage points from which to study the condition. Some scientists theorize that fighting Covid-19 leaves behind viral particles that trigger a generalized cycle of inflammation long after the body has defeated the pathogen itself. Others think the virus may burrow in human tissues, allowing it to surface sometime later when immunity weakens. In select cases, doctors have diagnosed patients complaining of long Covid symptoms with a rare condition known as postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS). The condition often appears suddenly following a viral infection. Any theory or link to a known condition offers hope for patients. In guidelines released mid-June, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended doctors focus their approach on patients' specific symptoms. Thus, in the fight against long Covid, doctors should target the symptoms patients are experiencing with treatments already proven to address those indications. For patients experiencing high blood pressure, for instance, doctors can prescribe beta-blockers to slow their heart rate. Those patients who feel extreme fatigue can benefit from

medicines used to treat chronic fatigue syndrome. Some patients with a POTS diagnosis see positive results from a drug called ivabradine. A number of drugs, FDA-approved for other ailments, are finding welcome additional use in the treatment of Covid. Empagliflozin, commonly used for Type-2 diabetes, promises to protect against Covid-related organ failure. Baricitinib, an anti-inflammatory drug developed for rheumatoid arthritis, has shown notable effectiveness in reducing Covid-related mortality. Patients experiencing respiratory problems may benefit from a new drug known as Tavalisse, which has FDA approval for use in patients suffering from a rare condition known as thrombocytopenia. Meanwhile, a recent study found that low-dose naltrexone -- a therapy for chronic fatigue or chronic pain -- shows potential to safely and effectively disrupt Covid-19's ability to attack the body. Curing long Covid requires dedicated research and investment. Even repurposing existing drugs requires expensive clinical trials. With tens of thousands of Americans getting infected with Covid-19 every day, the scientific community must double down on finding cures for this condition. *Dr. Jeffrey Gold, MD, is a family physician. This piece originally ran in the Boston Herald.* ★

4-H Membership Discounted from Whiting Family Donations

MPG Staff

DIXON, CA (MPG) - “Fall for 4-H” is the theme to kick off the 4-H Club’s new season. For over 100 years, California 4-H has provided ways for youth to make a positive difference in their world and Solano County 4-H clubs are now open for sign-ups. This organization provides a place where young people develop positive relationships, leadership, and skills for life. 4-H members make friends and share interests, ranging from engineering to raising rabbits, from tabletop gaming to gardening. “We are excited to offer EARLY BIRD discounted program fees for all youth & adult volunteers enrolling and completing all requirements by 10 am, Wednesday, Dec.1, of this year,” said Valerie Williams in a press statement. The discounted fees are made possible by the family & friends of Elva & Everett Whiting, who generously donated funds in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Whiting, long-time Solano County 4-H Volunteers who raised their family in Dixon. The donations will reduce the \$80 program fees for all youth by \$20. Additional financial support is available to youth who qualify. More encouragement for those who enjoy working with youth is that the Solano County 4-H Clubs are fully covering the \$30 Adult Volunteer program fees. Adult volunteers make a powerful difference in the lives of young people and make a lasting difference. 4-H Adult Volunteer applicants must be 18 years old or older. The age requirement for youth to participate is at least 5 years old, but no older than 19 years old, by December 31, 2021. Dixon 4-H Clubs celebrated 4-H Week

at Dixon’s Tractor Supply with an information booth and holding their “paper clover campaign” which raises money for scholarships to 4-H camp and conferences. “We also held our annual 4-H Achievement Night—virtually—where 4-H members in Solano County were recognized for their 4-H achievements, as well as Friends of 4-H and the Solano County Leader of the Year,” reported Sandy Means, a Community Leader of the Dixon Ridge 4-H group. The Solano County 4-H Youth Development Program serves all of Solano County through programming offered by the following local 4-H Clubs:

Dixon
Dixon Ridge 4-H Club
and Maine Prairie 4-H Club

Fairfield/Suisun
Suisun Valley 4-H Club

Rio Vista
Rio Vista 4-H Club

Elmira/Vacaville
Elmira 4-H Club,
Pleasants Valley 4-H Club
and Vaca Valley 4-H Club

Vallejo/Benicia
Sherwood Forest 4-H Club

For more information about Dixon's clubs, you can reach Means at (707) 688-9376 or the Solano County 4-H Youth Development Program at http://solano4h.ucanr.edu/Get_Involved/. You can also contact Valerie Williams, Solano County 4-H Program Representative at (707) 389-0643 or vawilliams@ucanr.edu. The California 4-H program is a part of the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR), a statewide network of the University of California. ★

Writing a Memoir Offered at Women’s Group

By Loran Hoffmann

DIXON, CA (MPG) - “Everyone has a story to tell” is the encouragement fledgling writers receive from seasoned authors. Debra Dingman, Dixon Editor of the Independent Voice Newspaper, will speak to the members of the Dixon Women’s Improvement Club at their November meeting held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 1 pm. As a seasoned journalist, Debra has worked as an editor, reporter, and feature writer for newspapers since her college days, and authored her first book, Learning A+ Living: Adventures & Rewards of a Mom Entrepreneur. Her book was published by WestBow Press and is available at Barnes & Noble and on Amazon. Debra will be offering instruction on how to write a memoir. Starting with the questions “Why are you telling the story? Why are you the best person to tell it? Why does the story matter? What do you want the reader to take away?” She will discuss the mechanics of a memoir including self-reflection, outlining ideas, and identifying “nuggets.” Once equipped with the tools, we hope many DWIC members will write and publish their own memoirs to share with family and friends, or even on Amazon! Other DWIC plans include partnering with the Women of the Dixon



Newspaper Editor Debra Dingman will teach “How to Write a Memoir” at this month's Dixon Women’s Improvement Club gathering. Courtesy Photo

Methodist Church in constructing blankets for the Senior Christmas Eve Visitation Program organized by Pam Murdock and the Dixon Christmas Program. Ladies are knitting, crocheting, quilting, and tying fleece fabric to make warm blankets for more than 100 seniors needing assistance in our community. Donations of fabric and yarn are being accepted. Contact Teri Brown at: teri0926@att.net. The group also announced their annual Scholarship Fundraising Dinner at Buds will be held on Monday, Feb. 21, 2022. Tickets will be available for purchase from DWIC members. In addition to the \$1,000 scholarships that

are raised by the annual dinner, an additional scholarship will be available in 2022. The Shirley Ann Fanning-Humphrey Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a graduate pursuing a degree in science, technology, engineering or math. (STEM.) Applications will be available at the High School Counseling office in February. Guests are welcome to attend the meeting that is held at the Fellowship Hall at Dixon United Methodist Church at 209 N. Jefferson. If you would like to attend contact membership Chair, Mary Kay Callaway at 916.541.0417. Social distancing and masks are required for all attending the meeting. ★

Joint Statement from Agencies Regarding Pfizer Vaccine for Children

CDPH Press Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly, and Director of the California Department of Public Health and State Public Health Officer Dr. Tomás J. Aragón, issued a joint statement on the Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup’s recommendation to administer Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5-11. “Vaccines are how we end this pandemic, and the ability to vaccinate more children who have remained vulnerable to COVID-19 strengthens our fight against this deadly virus. Californians ages 5-11 can now get the same robust protection that has helped save countless lives. The vaccine has been administered safely to millions of people ages 12 and up, and federal and state medical experts agree that the clinical trials have been rigorous in demonstrating that the vaccine is safe and effective for children ages 5-11. Last year’s winter surge was devastating in our state, and it is critically important that all eligible Californians supercharge their protection against COVID-19 ahead of the winter months. By getting more family members including children ages 5-11 vaccinated, we can celebrate the holidays safely and help avoid preventable hospitalizations and deaths.” www.cdph.ca.gov ★

California will begin vaccinating children ages 5-11 today with 500 organizations across the state receiving their first shipments through next Monday. The state was allocated 1.2 million pediatric doses from the federal government with adequate supply to vaccinate all newly eligible Californians becoming available in the coming weeks. The state has more than 4,000 locations ready to vaccinate children ages 5-11 as supply increases and is leveraging existing infrastructure and partnerships used to administer vaccines to teens and young adults. This includes working closely with medical providers, local health departments, schools, community partners and others to administer vaccines safely and equitably through mobile clinics and vaccine pop-ups in the hardest-hit communities across the state. Parents are encouraged to call their child’s health care provider to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. Parents can also visit MyTurn.ca.gov or call the hotline at 833-422-4255 beginning tomorrow to find a nearby vaccination site. The COVID-19 vaccine is free for all Californians regardless of insurance and immigration status. All Californians are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated or complete their vaccination series, get a booster when eligible, and get a flu vaccine, which can be administered at the same time. www.cdph.ca.gov ★

Realtors Help Stock DFS Food Pantry



Mother Nature was cooperative to allow a dry food drive last week by some of the hardworking volunteers from Coldwell Banker Kappel Gateway Realty in Dixon including real estate agents Sue Miracle, Nancy Meyer, Jackie Powell-Hogg, Melissa Maltzberger, and Terry Broadwater among others. The group was coordinated by Meyer, who organizes extra-curricular activities a few times a year. The drive was in response to the announcement by Dixon Family Services Director Cookie Powell that their Food Pantry was in need of supplies. Three car loads of food were collected by the agents and unloaded by DFS receptionist Fatima Alvarez, Case Manager Briana Alvarez and Solano College Intern Ashley Barber. “Now we can help anyone in need of food!” Powell said. Those in need should call (707) 678-0442. The non-profit organization is currently making appointments for Nov. 30 through Dec. 8 to receive holiday food baskets. Mothers or fathers with children in the home who need some extra help with groceries, can call for their appointments now. Photo by Cookie Powell

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 7

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

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

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CLUES

ACROSS

1. Repeating word on South Pacific map

5. Bro's sibling

8. Dashboard abbr.

11. Fusses

12. *Basketball slam

13. Go "Boo!"

15. Boisterous play

16. Upper hand

17. Part of mortise joint

18. *Unopposed attempt to score (2 words)

20. "The Famous Five" children's writer Blyton

21. *Basketball player Bojan Bogdanovic or Drazen Petrovic

22. *Mares eat ____ or "does eat ____," sing.

23. One who covers in silver, e.g.

26. Figure

30. Be ill

31. Part of "panther"

34. Capital of Latvia

35. Like helium

37. Quilting party

38. Analyze

39. Dehydrated

40. Litter of piglets

42. Down Under bird

43. a.k.a. aardvark

45. Provincial governor in ancient Persia

47. Argo propeller

48. Subway in Paris

50. Conclusion starter

52. *Made basket (2 words)

56. Not a soul

57. Like animal near extinction

58. Greek sandwich

59. Bandages

60. Arabian bigwig

61. Answer to "Shall we?"

62. Bar offering

63. *It ends a basketball game to overtime

64. Highland tongue

DOWN

1. Vomit

2. Sensory input

3. It wasn't built in a day

4. Characteristic to consider

5. Traditional scarf/headress

6. Brick of precious metal

7. Place at an angle

8. Indian princess

9. Circus trainer's poker

10. '80s band ____ "At Work"

12. Remove antlers

13. Titanic propeller

14. *Shaquille O'Neal and Wilt Chamberlain, e.g.

19. Halloween option

22. Not their

23. 1/100th of a rupee

24. Wrinkle-prone natural fabric

25. Warning

26. ____do-well

27. Part of a stair

28. Old World lizard

29. *Fast-break ____

32. Skier's aid

33. Part of H.M.S.

36. *Reward after missed shot

38. *Larry O'Brien NBA Championship Trophy, e.g.

40. Away's partner

41. Stable worker

44. Relieves

46. On/off type of switch

48. * ____ Hurricanes

49. Creepy

50. Work very hard

51. Use a whetstone

52. Worry without necessity

53. Deed hearing

54. A in A&E Network

55. *The Phoenix Suns did it in the 2021 NBA Finals

56. *Professional basketball league

Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 7

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10		
11					12				13	14			
15					16				17				
18					19				20				
			21						22				
23	24	25					26			27	28	29	
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	50	51				52					53	54	55
56						57				58			
59						60				61			
62						63				64			

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

Solutions on Page 7

Covid and Beyond



Commentary
by bil paul

I wasn't very close to my nephew Dan. He didn't have any easy time growing up. Part of that was the divorce of his parents early on. After that he gravitated toward his mother.

I heard that after high school he was relatively directionless, but eventually became a mechanic in Texas. Along the way he married and transitioned to long-distance truck driving (he had always loved cars and trucks). The last time my wife and I met him (in 2018), he was driving his semi through Sacramento with his wife. They seemed happy.

I don't think she accompanied him much. The life of a solo long-distance trucker is not idyllic, with long hours, so-so food and bathrooms, little exercise, uneven sleep, and perhaps most of all, loneliness.

Later they moved to Minnesota to help care for Dan's mother.

Dan left Minnesota late last month on a truck trip, heading for Riverside, California. When he left home, an illness was sweeping through his extended family. He hadn't felt well himself.

As he passed through the Las Vegas area, things

came to a head. He was so ill he had to be taken by ambulance to a small hospital, where he was diagnosed with COVID-19. Back home, the rest of the family had it too.

I was told he was on a ventilator, and I knew that was serious. I was the nearest relative, and I didn't want him facing COVID alone in a strange city, so I flew down to be nearby. I quickly learned that visitors weren't allowed in the hospital and that he was being given oxygen via a face mask. That's not as serious as being on a ventilator.

His wife in Minnesota was recovering from COVID, and while in Vegas I relayed to her what I heard from Dan's friendly nurses by telephone. They had him on a sedative. I also texted with Dan and at one point he wrote "I just want to get outta here, I'm so depressed." Not being able to visit him, I realized how little I knew about his state of mind.

The nurses told me his blood oxygen level was sufficient and that he was fairly stable. He was subsisting on milk and juices, but had been unable to cough up the "bad stuff" in his lungs.

I took walks in the sterile industrial area my motel was in, remembering the heartache of my younger brother Pat dying in his forties after a long, downhill progression of cancer.

Because Dan seemed stable, I returned home after four days. I could communicate just as well with the nurses and Dan while at home. Unfortunately, the day

after I left, his blood oxygen levels were declining and he was put on a ventilator, which supplied oxygen deep into his lungs. For this he was heavily sedated.

Now I lost all communications with him. After three days, things were getting serious, and his blood oxygen level had plummeted to 70, which can be fatal. His heart was stressed. I made plans to quickly return. In the early morning darkness of November 4, while I was getting ready to fly out of Sac airport, Dan's wife called to say that he had died. Driving with her son and granddaughter, she was about halfway to Vegas.

If I had been there just before he passed away, I would only have briefly seen him through a glass door.

As I was driving back to Dixon through the five a.m. darkness, I had forgotten to turn my headlights on, and while I usually drive at 70 or 75 on the freeway, I began to follow a semi going 57 m.p.h. I was in no hurry to go anywhere.

Dan was 48 when he died, and he had not been vaccinated. He had been in the hospital only 10 days.

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

"RED NOTICE" BLENDS COMEDY AND ACTION WITH A TWIST OF SNARK

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

"RED NOTICE" RATED PG-13

The challenge of coping during the pandemic has affected the entertainment business in multiple ways. One of them being how films are not only produced but released to the public.

Some films go straight to a streaming platform. Others, like the James Bond film "No Time to Die" waited for what seemed like forever for its rightful place on the big screen.

Warner Brothers, using its HBO Max streaming service, may have started the trend of releasing its films simultaneously in theaters and on its streaming platform.

Apparently that practice will change next year when Warner Brothers films assigned for theatrical release will run exclusively in cinemas for at least 45 days before hitting their paid video service.

Netflix is getting in on the action with its hybrid release of the comedy action film "Red Notice," which was released in theaters for one week prior to its debut on its streaming service.

With an all-star cast of Dwayne Johnson, Ryan Reynolds and the striking Israeli actress and model Gal Gadot ("Wonder Woman"), "Red Notice" probably benefits from the marketing tool of exposure on the big screen.

Netflix went big in other ways as well, staging a live premiere event at the L.A. Live event complex, which as recounted in "The Hollywood Reporter" trade publication "delivered a scene reminiscent of a major Hollywood award show."

"Red Notice" takes its title from an Interpol advisory to its member countries that a fugitive fleeing a country is internationally wanted for evading justice. This would apply to Ryan Reynolds' Nolan Booth, an international art thief trying to steal a historic golden egg.

As legend goes according to the film's fictional prologue, Cleopatra was gifted three Faberge-like golden eggs, of which two were discovered and the third missing one is the target of fortune hunters we've seen in films like "Indiana Jones" and "National Treasure."

A notorious criminal like Nolan Booth will spare no effort to steal a precious golden egg, and he manages to get caught after being tracked to Rome by none other than Dwight Johnson's FBI Agent John Hartley.

After Booth gets sent to an isolated Russian prison that feels like a Soviet gulag, Hartley himself ends up there as well subsequently getting framed for the heist by Gal Gadot's The Bishop, another art thief eager to piece together a three

golden egg collection for herself.

With Booth and Hartley engineering a daring prison break, it is one of the action highlights, including a wintry shootout at the prison gate as the duo hijack a helicopter that barely escapes rocket fire.

While Booth and the federal agent are forced into a tenuous partnership, intrepid Interpol inspector Urvashi Das (Ritu Arya) is hot on their trail. Hartley will need to find The Bishop to clear his name and having to rely on help from Booth is, well, kind of unsettling.

As to be expected, Booth and Hartley bicker and banter in what one calls a marriage of convenience, and at one point Booth, in his ubiquitously snarky tone, claims that he wants a divorce and is taking the children.

Another bad guy in the picture is the oddly-name Sotto Voce (Chris Diamantopoulos), a diminutive arms dealer whose fancy party is infiltrated by Booth and Hartley, and The Bishop shows up in a sleeky red dress for a choreographed fight with them.

Sotto Voce is as about a ludicrous villain as you can imagine. For no apparent reason, other than maybe emulating Vladimir Putin, he takes his shirt off to reveal his tattooed torso while threatening Booth and Hartley still chained to a post after being tortured.

One obvious point about this comedic heist caper is that despite its not-so-disguised lifting of thematic elements other action films, the stellar cast of the three leading characters are the selling point to fun adventure.

Speaking of a copycat formula, a climactic scene involves an adventure into the Argentinian jungle in search of the missing egg hidden in an underground Nazi warehouse that reminds one of "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

"Red Notice," and this is not necessarily a bad thing, is running on its star power of charismatic actors doing their usual stuff. That would mean Ryan Reynolds' comic riffs, Dwayne Johnson's stoic intensity and Gal Gadot's sexy allure and streetwise toughness.

Something endearing about "Red Notice," with all of its hijinks and caustic banter, is that in spite of its huge budget there is no pretention of artistic merit. This is not an entertainment for high-brow critics. It's nothing more than just escapist fun.

Dare to view the closing moment of "Red Notice" and not think a sequel is either already in the works or the producers await a public clamoring for the next installment. The actors are certainly charismatic enough to warrant a return engagement. ★



Dare to Live Without Limits

by Bryan Golden

Don't Take Things for Granted



Taking the good things in your life for granted is all too common. You tend to grow accustomed to expecting the things which are ever present to always be there. You don't really appreciate the amazing convenience of electricity until the power goes out. An abundant supply of water isn't given a second thought until your plumbing breaks. Being comfortable in your home during a bitter winter isn't anything special until the furnace stops. Sunny days are taken for granted until the rain seems to never stop.

It is human nature to focus on that which we don't have. It's common to want more money, less stress, a nicer home, a better job, additional free time, longer vacations, and more fun. The common aspects of your life are taken for granted.

It costs nothing to be grateful for all of the good in your life, but it can cost you everything if you don't take care of what's important to you. You must appreciate and be grateful for all of your blessings, no matter how small.

We all take some things for granted, especially those things which we have always had that seem everlasting. It all starts when we are children and the world seems infinite and permanent. We grow up expecting that certain aspects of life will always be there for us.

You have so many things which you should appreciate. Freedom, yourself, time, health, friends, loved ones, safety, security, food, and water are just some of them. Additionally, look at all the amazing miracles of nature for inspiration. Every aspect of our natural world is filled with amazement.

Live in the present. Appreciate the wonder of today. Welcome waking up each day. Each day is a fresh opportunity to follow your path. Don't waste time lamenting the past. The past is over, it can't be changed but you can learn from it. Repeat what worked, while avoiding what didn't.

Cherish all of your freedom. You are free to make whatever decisions you want. You are free to follow your own path. If you are not happy with your current circumstances, you are free to make changes. Without freedom, life becomes miserable. Freedom is an invaluable gift which must be treasured.

Appreciate yourself, your potential, and your capabilities. You are a miracle. Focus on all that you can do. Never sell yourself short. Don't make excuses for why you can't do something. Instead, find just one reason you can.

Your health should never be taken for granted. Even if it's not perfect, be thankful for what is healthy. Take care

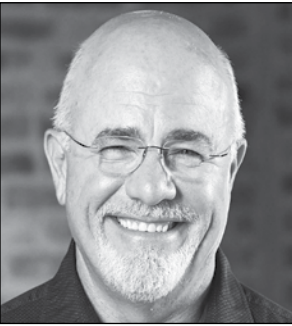
of yourself both physically and mentally. Eat well and get some exercise. Avoid burning yourself out mentally through stress and worry.

Value your friends, relatives, and loved ones. People who really care about you are precious. Show your appreciation by caring about them. Stay in touch, offer assistance without being asked, and be there in times of need. Maintaining a connection with these people is a reciprocal endeavor.

Appreciate the basics; your safety, security, shelter, food, and water. Give thanks each and every day for the comforts in your life, which you may have been taking for granted. There is no blessing in your life too small to be overlooked.

Life is more satisfying when you appreciate all of your blessings. You'll experience the joy of abundance. Your mindset will be more upbeat. You'll be much less stressed. It'll be easier to solve problems. So many benefits accrue when you are thankful for all of the good in your life.

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 ★



Dave Ramsey Says

penny in case they walk out?

– Cheyanne

Dear Cheyanne,

I'm going to tell you something that might just blow your mind: You two can pay off the debt and have some money set aside to live on in that length of time. If you do that, you'll actually be more ready for a strike than ever before. You'll both have to be on the same page financially and do things with a sense of urgency, but right now, I don't think you've got too much to worry about.

The likelihood of them going on strike is pretty low. Chances are, they're just rattling their sabers and talking big to posture for the negotiations. Most factories are behind right now, and the last thing they want is to get even further behind. Everything has been so screwed up by COVID-19 that unless the union demands some completely ridiculous stuff,

things will probably work out fine.

I think you guys are going to be fine, Cheyanne. Should you be intentional and thoughtful about the situation? Absolutely. It's always wise to look ahead and plan for the future. Getting that debt paid off and saving up a bunch of cash will give you real peace of mind.

– 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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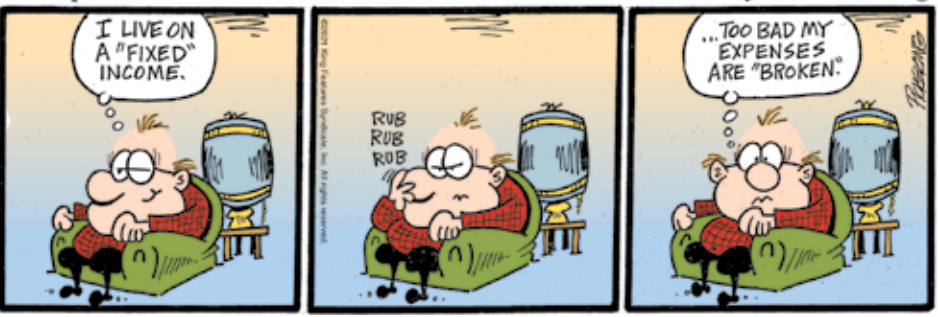
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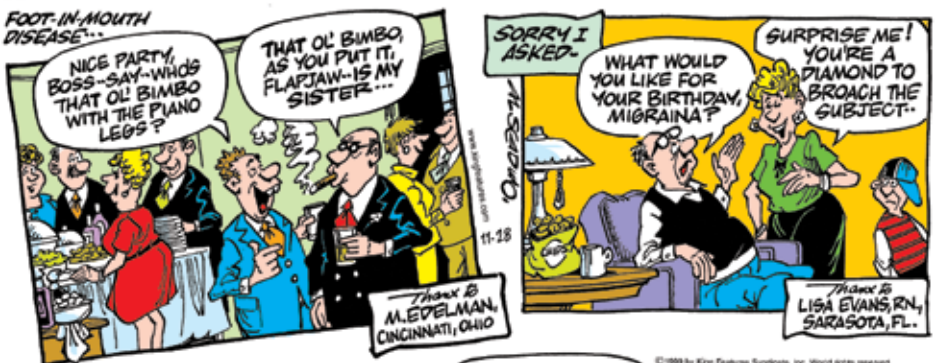
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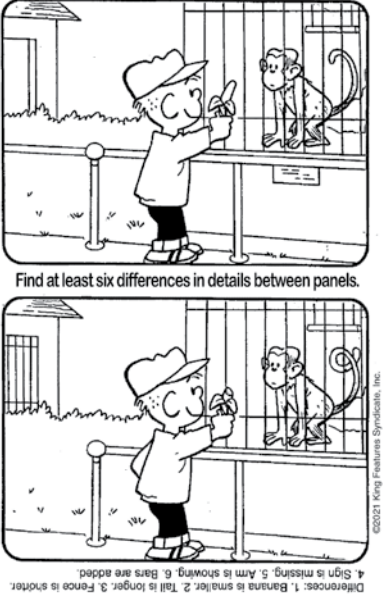
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Retirement Brings with It Extra Time

Commentary
by Patti & Milledge Hart

Singer Jim Croce longed to put time in a bottle.

Retirees aren’t always certain what it is they long to do with time, but one day they stop working and find they have a barrelful of it.

“People often are so focused on making sure they are financially ready to retire that they forget to plan for what they want to do in retirement,” says Patti Hart, co-author with her husband, Milledge, of *The Resolutionist: Welcome to the Anti-Retirement Movement*.

“And they may have more time to fill than they realize. Life expectancy has grown, and retirements that last 20 years, 30 years, or longer aren’t that unusual. So you have to start thinking, what will you do with your time? How do you envision your days playing out?”

For the Harts, the answers to those questions involve the “anti-retirement movement,” where retirement is more than a rocking chair on a front porch or endless hours of golf.

“We did leave our careers, but we would never call ourselves retired,” Milledge Hart says. “We are busier now than we’ve ever been. The difference is that we are busy doing what brings us joy rather than what advances our careers.”

But the transition isn’t always easy, which is why the Harts recommend finding efficient ways to manage that extra time the post-career years bring.

Patti Hart cautions that time management does not have to mean blocking out every minute.

“For most people, it is just setting goals and priorities, then making sure you plan for how you are going to accomplish them,” she says. “It is being productive with your time.”

To do that, the Harts suggest putting yourself into the mindset you had in your working years,



Retirees aren’t always certain what it is they long to do with time, but one day they stop working and find they have a barrelful of it. MPG File photo

such as: **Use a calendar.** People in a corporate setting rely on calendars to manage their obligations and retirees can as well. “Too often people just think they will remember that they have yoga on Tuesday and Thursday, and volunteer at the animal shelter on Wednesday,” Patti Hart says. “But then they add a lunch here or a board meeting there and pretty soon find themselves scurrying from activity to activity.” Checking a calendar each day also let’s people know they may need to pull back if they are overcommitted, or they may need to find activities to add if too many empty hours are going to waste. **Make a to-do list.** A to-do list helps ensure nothing

gets forgotten. Just be flexible, Milledge Hart says, because the list is a tool to keep you on track, not a ball and chain to imprison you. “If you’d rather do something else today, feel free to move items to another time or just skip them altogether,” he says. “It’s your list so it’s your call.” **Treat everything like a business appointment.** The calendar and the to-do list can be filled with things that would never have made a business person’s schedule – but may now be high priority for you. “You can pencil in 30 minutes for meditation or an hour to begin reading a James Patterson novel,” Patti Hart says. “Maybe you want to block out Friday afternoon to experiment

with a new recipe. These are your preferred ‘appointments’ now and are equal in importance to board meetings or conference calls.” **Adapt your system as your needs change.** Some people begin retirement doing all the things they had been putting off, such as traveling or fishing more. “But that first burst of activity usually begins to wear, and you realize you want more from this stage of life,” Milledge Hart says. “At that point it makes sense to reevaluate your resources and goals. Be aware of how you feel about certain activities and be ready to drop some and pick up others as your time and interests change.”

“In the same way that making

good financial investments provides you with additional capital, investing your time wisely provides you with more time to do things you really want to do,” Patti Hart says. “And that will make your life so much better.”

Patti and Milledge Hart, co-authors of *The Resolutionist: Welcome to the Anti-Retirement Movement*, spent more than 30 years as executive leaders in numerous technology and investment banking businesses. Today, in what they refer to as the “Resolutionist” – rather than retirement – phase of their lives, they are applying their resources and skills in new ways to advance philanthropic and corporate activities around the globe. ★

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