

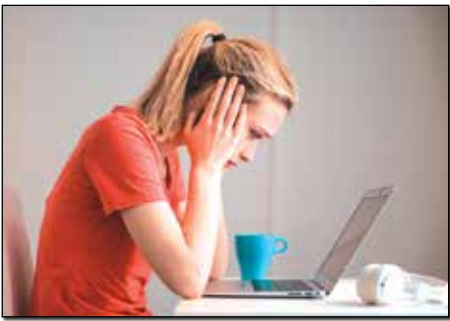


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Dixon Independent Voice

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Building Student Resilience



DUSD Mental Health Clinician Lizeth Martinez uses a cuddly purple octopus who doesn't have all of its arms, to teach Gretchen Higgins Kindergartners about it being okay to be different. Photo by Debra Dingman

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - A floppy purple octopus has the attention of 30 eager kindergartners at Gretchen Higgins Elementary School in Dixon.

"What is different about this Octopus?" Lizeth Martinez, a Mental Health Clinician asks and instantly a couple hands shoot up. Other students may be still staring at the Octopus trying to figure it out, but the little girl shouts the answer.

"It only has six legs!" Other students agree after learning that an Octopus should have eight tentacles; six legs and two arms. They are wrapping up their discussion about accepting others that are different. This touch of understanding helps them be kind to those with disabilities or special needs: to accept diversity.

When it was time to say goodbye

to the Octopus, Martinez allowed the students to hug the soft creature or simply just wave to it.

"This is how we say goodbye and show love," she tells them. These simple 20-minute lessons occur weekly as part of Dixon Unified School District's effort to teach children social and emotional intelligence or SEL, a program started about four years ago. This is something now recognized as important as academics and a skill that can be taught academically.

Teaching Emotions

Today's students are learning self-awareness, resilience, and mental strength. Some of the topics are benefits of gratitude; foundations of a relationship; embracing change; dealing with doubt and fear; healthy and unhealthy disagreements; asking for help, social awareness; decision

making; prioritizing; peer pressure; bullying; problem solving techniques; and, setting goals.

While not all schools or grades get these lessons right now, eventually all grade levels will have them.

Behavior Expectations

"We're trying to be proactive," said Adriane Laughter, Coordinator of Pupil Services, about the effort where teachers and staff built teams and created behavior expectations. These are posted around the schools telling students what behavior should happen on a playground or in a cafeteria, for example. Students were rewarded for their positive behavior. "It was an effort away from being punitive," she explained.

But when the pandemic sent students home, positive social skills normally learned in classrooms

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Chamber Forum Set for Friday

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - You will have to choose between showing your spirit for our Dixon High School football team by attending the Homecoming Game tonight (Oct. 22) or showing your concern about the Dixon City Clerk position and showing up at City Hall.

The Dixon Chamber of Commerce Business Issues and Governmental Affairs Committee announced on Monday that they will hold a Candidates Forum on Friday at 7 pm at the Dixon City Council Chambers, 600 East A Street.

"We were asked to do this and although [the timing] is way late, we asked the candidates, and this is the date they chose," said Committee Chair Herb Cross about hosting the forum on a Friday night and also the night of Dixon High Homecoming. "It's not ideal but it's better than not doing anything," he added.

Originally, the committee had not planned on a forum, he explained. There are only two candidates for a one-year spot as Elected City Clerk because it will then be put on the regular election cycle in November of 2022. The position is sought by community activist Michael Ceremello and Kristin Janisch, who has been serving in the position since last spring when she was appointed by Mayor Steve Bird to fill the position until a special election could be held.

Ceremello took advantage of the campaign statement in the ballot book mailed to every voter in Dixon with their mail-in ballot while Janisch has gone for the colorful yard signs and large signs on the main corners of Dixon. Voting Day will be Tuesday, Nov. 2 at local polling places or registered voters can mail in their ballots or drop them off at City Hall.

Friday's public forum will be held at the City Hall Council Chambers, 600 East A Street. A citizen can participate by submitting questions for the candidates via email to info@dixonchamber.org no later than 12 noon on Thursday, Oct. 21.

Or, one may choose to participate via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4331239750>. Meeting ID: 433 123 9750. Questions may be submitted via Zoom the night of the forum. For more information, call the Chamber at (707) 678-2650. ★

Trunk or Treat

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - For several years now seeing little children dressed as cartoon characters or goblins at your front door on Halloween has diminished even in the safest of well-lit neighborhoods. More often, parents are exchanging the tradition for the safety of large church parking lots filled with cars offering treats out of their car trunks or downtown parades.

Enter Brent Fisk, a Travis Credit Union Financial consultant from the Dixon Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, who came up with the idea for Chamber members to offer a Trunk or Treat; after all, the Chamber does have a spacious parking lot since it was originally built for a transportation center.

"The inspiration for the Trunk or Treat is my three children," he said. "They love Halloween and spend months in advance deciding what they want to be. As a parent, a safe and

fun environment for them to celebrate Halloween is also very inspiring. Trunk or Treats create a space for kids to be kids, and have a lot of fun, and take home a lot of Halloween candy and treats."

"The rest of the ambassador team embraced it completely," said Chamber CEO Shauna Manina, who helped start the Halloween

Stroll in downtown Vacaville so is experienced with the planning. "Fisk and Brandi Proffitt are taking the lead on it. The creativity, imagination, and willingness to work to make it happen from this entire group is amazing," she added.

Because Halloween falls on a Sunday this year, Friday, Oct. 29, was the

chosen day.

"This is an opportunity for Chamber member businesses outside of the downtown area to provide treats to the children from 4 to 7 pm after the downtown Dixon event (2 to 4 pm)," said Manina. "It also offers them the opportunity to be a part of a community event that brings together

Continued on page 3



Parents are exchanging the tradition for the safety of large church parking lots filled with cars offering treats out of their car trunks. MPG file photo



City Attorney Initiates More Litigation

By Debra Dingman

There are two things that just really make me feel angry: People who don't return calls and social injustices.

Of course, this is a tight-knit town so I have to be very careful when someone doesn't call me back. I try to remember that I have made my share of mistakes by sending emails with one wrong letter in it and leaving messages on the wrong person's phone.

But in the case where I have double-checked all of that and I should be getting through, I'm troubled. Transparency is a much better choice if they are purposely avoiding my calls. When I don't hear back, it makes one think there is something hiding.

I got a call recently from some Heritage Commons residents upset that they are not getting any of their calls returned from the Jon Stewart Company, and I explained how the term "corporate ghosting" is when no one—even in a company that employs hundreds—will return your call as their way of minimizing possible negative publicity.

What people don't realize is there is only more

negative publicity—like this column; where I will explain to people that out of at least 20 phone calls and emails, the press has clearly been ignored. I can only imagine what it feels like to the poor residents who live there, and who want answers. Legitimate concerns or not; how would that company even know if they do not investigate at least a smidgen?

As I type this, I feel the anger and frustration all the way down to my fingertips. And all that does for me is fuel me to keep pursuing answers.

As far as social injustices go, City Attorney Doug White, has new cases of litigation that he gets to charge our tax pocketbooks for—yet due to the dark cloak of "ongoing litigation," the public doesn't have a right to know—for months, even years. Several cases were on the closed session agenda this past month:

"Threat to public services or facilities" earned the top spot with a consultation with White, initiated by White, and authorized by White. Take note of the word "initiated".

Number 2 and number 3 dealt with existing

litigation but here's another whopper on the make: number 4 "Anticipated litigation".

It took more than a decade to settle a case with the former publisher of this newspaper. That is his "Method of Operation;" keep dragging it out until someone dies? Doesn't that give him years of income while cases are dragged on? Guess who gets to pay for every bit of a letter no matter how brief, a phone call, or an email with a city attorney? TAXPAYERS. This is not justice; this is social injustice!

Even though White has an obligation to represent his clients (the City Council,) he is also an officer of the court and should not be abusing his power of the court to initiate cases to the detriment of the Dixon taxpayer or to intimidate the Council to believe that is the only solution. He has an ethical responsibility to be better and he has consistently chosen not to be.

It may take us years, but the media will find out who has been sued by the City of Dixon under the direction of this Council, City Manager, and this unelected City Attorney – if I can live that long. ★

Dixon News Briefs

MPG Staff



Help Wanted

Several local places are looking for workers and are willing to pay and train them, too. Your local sushi spot, The Frying Pan is one of them. They are looking for cooks, servers, and dishwashers. Please text the number (707) 761-5763. They are located at the heart of downtown on 158 North First Street.

Other places seeking WORKERS are: Tractor Supply, McDonalds, Sinclair, Taco Bell, Ramos Oil, and Walmart to name a few. Please get off your rear and get to work! Note to senior citizens – there has never been a better time for you to negotiate a part-time job.

Motorcycle Run

The 9th Annual Remember, Respect, and Honor Motorcycle Run is set for Sunday, Nov. 14.

It is in memory of Roger R. Brooks, Jr. The Buckhorn Bar and Grill with the Segovia, Melow, and Garton families are joining the RememberAVet.net's Wreath Project for the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery. The goal is for every gravesite to have a wreath for this holiday season.

Registration starts at the Buckhorn, 830 North Adams Street, Dixon. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided to start your

engines. There is a \$25 donation per rider which buys two wreaths and gets you a barbecue lunch.

Riders leave at 9 am and there will be three stops, then back to the Buckhorn for a Tri Tip lunch with all the fixings. Draw a card at each stop for a chance to win prizes. All money raised will go to the Wreath Project.

"Our vets fought for us rain or shine...we will ride rain or shine," organizers said. For questions, email vetbikerun@gmail.com.

Veterans Day Dinner

Mark your calendars for Thursday, Nov. 11, so you can join others in the annual Veterans Day Dinner at 6 pm at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 North First Street. "Honoring the War Hero" is hosted by the American Legion Post 208 and offers a turkey dinner and pie for dessert for only \$15 per person.

You can purchase tickets every Friday night at the Hall from 5 pm to 8 pm or you can email ALP208@aol.com or call (530) 304-5385. There will be a no-host bar available at 5 pm.

Tree Lighting Festival

Also mark your calendar for Thursday, Dec. 2 for the annual Downtown Dixon Business Association's annual Tree Lighting Festival. The organization is purchasing an artificial tree that is 22-feet high with a star at the top that will be set up in the Dixon Women's Improvement Club Park next to the Public Library, 230 North First Street. The former tree vendors are out of business due to the fires, and this was the DDBA's "best option," according to President Jill Orr. And, if you're wondering about the usual cramped quarters to visit Santa putting people at risk, no worries, Santa will be there just outdoors in a large tent at the park this year. ★

Dodd Responds to Ag/Commercial Wildfire Insurance Plan



Bill Dodd

From the office of
Senator Bill Dodd

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, issued the following statement regarding Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara's plan to ensure commercial and agricultural insurance coverage amid continuing wildfires.

"Commissioner Lara's multipronged approach is necessary to ensure the availability and affordability of insurance for small businesses and

farmers that have been hard hit by wildfires," said Sen. Dodd. "It will improve coverage in significant ways and affords policyholders the kind of protection they deserve. The commissioner has worked hard while in office to improve the residential property insurance market and this latest step is critical for assisting the commercial sector."

Commissioner Lara proposed his comprehensive solution for commercial insurance coverage after several destructive wildfire seasons. Working with the California Farm Bureau Federation, he is addressing growing needs for a competitive insurance market for farm owners, wineries, and other outdoor businesses. His solution involves strengthening the FAIR Plan, California's

insurance safety net, while aggressively reducing wildfire risk through a combination of insurance incentives and mitigation.

The commissioner also announced he is moving forward under his existing authority to pursue new rules, announced earlier this year, to require that insurance companies take into account fire-preparation actions by homes and businesses when they determine the risk of wildfires. This action will increase insurance availability and incentives for residents and businesses to better protect themselves.

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

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Heeney's History

**Commentary
by Ed Heeney**

Recently, I was listening to Dolly Parton sing her song ... “the coat of many colors my Momma made for me” and it brought back memories of my childhood wardrobe. I grew up on a dry-land wheat farm in Kansas, and just barely out of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl days.

We had very little cash money and most of our clothing was homemade. My mother saved all the Nutrena feed sacks throughout the year and in late summer, converted the dining room table into a tailor's work bench. These colorful feed sacks soon became shirts for the boys and dresses for the girls...all ready for school. Occasionally, she would run out of a particular pattern so she rang up the 'party line'.

telephone to see if she could find a trade with the neighbors. Usually one of the neighbors had a patterned feed sack to trade.

I always had clean, decent clothes to wear, but as a growing-up farm boy, I longed to ditch my home made 'play suit' and wear my own genuine bib overalls. All the men and most of the school boys wore bib overalls and I just felt out of place. I began lobbying my parents for overalls; I even started to not forget my chores. After much urging that I was big enough for overalls, my Dad said he would look for some on the next trip to Wichita.

My parents and my grandparents took turns taking eggs to the hatchery in South Wichita every week. This week was my parents turn and I hoped this would be the week for bib overalls for me. (They cost 75 cents

in the Sears catalogue.) As was usual, I stayed at Grandpa Heeney's while my parents made the trip in mid afternoon, I became restless and walked half way down the driveway to wait for my parent's arrival. This wasn't too bad since I could watch the cats in the cherry tree. My grandpa was tired of having the birds eat all his cherries and had constructed "cat cages," caught a barn cat for each cage, and tied a cage with a cat in each tree.

I was about to doze off when I heard the Model A Ford change gears as it turned into the driveway. By the time I got in motion, my dad had the window down and tossed me a package. I knew what it was and almost before the package hit the ground, I had it unwrapped, home-made clothes off, and genuine bib overalls on and buttoned up. I had arrived!★

Windstorms Topple Trees



At least two large trees toppling got the attention of the Dixon Police Department this month during the 2-day windstorm. This one was near the curb of the local McDonald's on Ary Lane and blocked half the street requiring two police vehicles to assist until city workers armed with quick chainsaws chop and remove it from the area. The other tree was in front of the Dixon Police Department. Photo by Darla Wear

Trunk or Treat

Continued from page 1

businesses and families in a fun and safe manner.”

Chamber participants have hinted at some immense creativity with plans to turn their cars into scenes from movies, TV shows, or books. Some will offer free glow sticks or slushies.

"If all goes as planned, the Haunted Train Tunnel (that connects the downtown core to the Chamber), will have scenes from Beetlejuice, Hocus Pocus, Stranger Things and the Adams Family. We are working closely with Starbound Theatre to provide family and

kid-friendly Halloween fun,” Manina added.

For the curmudgeon who wanted to enjoy Halloween from their front door, Manina isn't apologizing.

"The Chamber is a nonprofit that is a very important part of the Dixon community," she said. "While the Historic Plaques Project, the Trunk or Treat, and the US Capital Christmas Tree would not normally be considered "Chamber" functions, we feel very strongly that anything that enhances the quality of life in Dixon will only have a positive effect on the business climate." ★

Checking Under the Hood



Pinball mechanics Lou Perrazoli and Tim Meighan drove all the way from Seattle, Washington, and stayed the weekend boosting our economy with a hotel stay and dinners at Bud's while working at the Dixon Teen Center fundraiser: the 24th Pin-a-Go-Go at the Dixon May Fair. Their job was to uncover, dismantle, double-check, and re-wire any malfunctioning machines. Neither claimed to be a pinball mechanic but agreed they share the hobby of making pinball machines great fun for another generation. And, they really wanted the new t-shirts. Photo by Debra Dinomay

Building Student Resilience

Continued from page 1

and on campus were challenged.

“School has been a safe place for many years. They could get their meals, they could come to a place where they were not berated, and where they felt supported,” she said. “When the pandemic hit and schools closed, we took away their safe place.” Especially this year, the district wanted to target children who are struggling maybe because of a divorce, or they developed anxiety.

Wellness Centers

To address those struggles and stresses of students, and with the help of a \$500,000 grant to Solano County in 2018, the district created “Wellness Centers” on campus. These rooms are designated for quiet time with maybe music or simple, relaxing chairs so a student has a place to decompress.

If a student just needs a “reset,” Laughter

explained, there are activities that promote relaxation such as listening to soothing music, books to read on meditation or Yoga, or designs they can color. There is supposed to be an adult they can talk to if they are in a crisis.

Laughter reports that many students are coming back to school with some form of "trauma."

Bullying

If a student reports to a teacher “this kid is hurting me,” they instantly talk to the students, she said, adding that a lot of students will not say anything during the day but will wait to get home and tell their mom or dad at night.

"We do our best to address the situation. If a bully doesn't respond appropriately, then there is a health team—a Level 1 and a Level 2 that identifies kids who need "support." The student has to check in and check out daily with a trusted adult on campus with a

goal of setting that student up for success,” Laughter explained. They also work with students who witnessed bullying and teach about being an “Upstander” instead of a “Bystander.”

They try to teach students who have bullied others about being less reactive and more proactive and offer smaller group lessons, bringing them together for six- to ten-week sessions with mental health clinicians, behaviorists, and school psychologists that comprise the mental health team. Although she reports the district is understaffed right now and is looking to hire three additional mental health clinicians. They also need more volunteers.

“The children are more empathetic to people with autism, special needs, people with cerebral palsy or physical disabilities,” Laughter said. “We do such a great job. We’re doing a lot of good.” ★

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Community Ofrenda for Día de Muertos



Dixon Library invites you to participate in this community ofrenda by placing photos or other offerings in the ofrenda. Photo provided by Dixon Library

Solano County Library News Release

DIXON, CA (MPG) - On Tuesday, October 26, 2021, the Dixon Library will create the second annual community altar (ofrenda) on the steps of the original Carnegie library, facing B street. We wish to honor the tradition of Día de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) and to honor the relatives and friends that our community has lost. We invite you to participate in this community ofrenda by placing photos or other offerings in the ofrenda. It will remain on the steps of the library until the morning of Wednesday, November 3, 2021. Please do not place valuable items in the ofrenda. Your items will not be returned to you.

Traditionally, Dia de Los Muertos is not a time for sadness. It is a time for celebration and remembrance of those who are no longer with us. Typical items placed on an ofrenda are: Pan de Muerto (Bread of the Dead), which is criss-cross shaped, representing bones, and signifies the generosity of the host; white

candles which represent hope and faith, or purple candles for grief; skulls representing the people who have passed (when using sugar skulls the sugar symbolizes the sweetness of life); mari-gold flowers, often referred to as “Flor de Muerto” (Flowers of the Dead), the strong scent and bright orange blooms are believed to help attract souls to the altar; Papel Picado (Perforated Paper) the delicate paper symbolizes the fragility of life and photos of loved ones who have been lost.

We hope that our community ofrenda inspires you to create a personal ofrenda of your own to create a new family tradition or continue your family tradition of honoring those who are no longer with us and their contribution to our lives and our community. Thank you for participating in whatever way you are able.

For more information about the ofrenda, please contact the Dixon Library at 1-866-572-7587.

For information about other library programs throughout Solano County, please visit solanolibrary.com. ★

Newsom, Legislature Push the State Leftward



By Dan Walters
CALMatters

Before celebrating his 54th birthday Sunday, Gov. Gavin Newsom closed out the landmark 2021 session of the California Legislature by signing the last of the 770 bills he decided should become law.

It was a remarkable session because a new wave of COVID-19 was hitting, Newsom was facing a recall election, he and legislators had many billions of dollars in federal pandemic aid and unanticipated tax revenues and, finally, because they spent much of that money on an array of new and expanded public services.

The new spending on health care, social services, public schools, early childhood education and increasing personal incomes of the poor makes California the national leader in advancing the European-style “social democracy” model that the Democrats’ left wing wants the federal government to embrace.

Before this year’s session began, for instance, 94% of Californians had some form of medical care coverage, thanks to Obamacare and a sharp expansion of the state’s Medi-Cal program for the poor to more than a third of the state’s population. This year’s additions push California very close

to universal coverage, a long-sought goal of those on the left and Newsom’s oft-expressed ambition.

The leftward tilt of the session is also evident in other ways that do not spend money, such as making ethnic studies a requirement for high school education, banning gasoline-powered lawn equipment, imposing new restrictions on guns, or compelling department stores to have gender-neutral toy and child care departments.

The Legislature and Newsom also continued to move the state’s criminal justice system leftward, reducing punishment for some crimes and cracking down on police officers who misbehave by lifting the licenses, called “certifications,” they need to be employed.

Interestingly, while Newsom endorsed 770 bills that the Legislature sent to his desk, he also vetoed 66 of them, in some cases because, he said, they went just a bit too far.

One of his more significant – and surprising – rejections was the latest of many years-long efforts by Democratic legislators to help the United Farm Workers Union expand its tiny foothold among the state’s agricultural workers.

Assembly Bill 616 would have allowed pro-union workers to sign cards rather than having an election on whether the UFW should be recognized as a contract bargaining agent. It faced stiff opposition from farmers and Newsom said in his veto message that the bill contained “various inconsistencies and procedural issues related to the collection and

review of ballot cards.”

The UFW had backed Newsom in his successful victory in a September 14 recall election, and he vetoed the union’s bill eight days later, earning a denunciation from the union’s leaders, who likened the measure to the all-mail state election process that Newsom and legislators have decreed.

AB 616 was just one of two bills on the California Chamber of Commerce “job killer” list to reach Newsom’s desk intact. While he vetoed it, he signed the other, Assembly Bill 62, also a union-sponsored measure than bans piecework pay in the garment industry.

Legislative leaders tout this year’s session as one of the most expansive in history, and they are correct. The state is now a beacon for the national progressive agenda that President Joe Biden is trying, so far unsuccessfully, to move through Congress.

There’s every reason to expect that Newsom and the Legislature will continue to paddle California’s canoe to the left. Republicans are powerless and the influence of Democratic moderates has waned. The only question is whether the economy will continue to churn out enough money to pay for the new benefits without tax increases.

calmatters.org/commentary/2021/10/newsom-legislature-push-the-state-leftward/

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



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FOR THE LOVE OF
BOOKS
By Amy Shane

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

The Woods Are Always Watching and There’s Someone Inside Your House

Recently, Netflix and Penguin teen released a book and movie double feature perfect for anyone looking to get into the spooky season. Read the book, watch the movie and then continue the frightening tempo with the second thrilling installment, *The Woods Are Always Watching*.



The Woods Are Always Watching by Stephanie Perkins

When Neela and Josie set out on a camping trip before they separated for college, they never expected it to be the defining moment that could tear them apart. A three-day camping trip in the Pisgah National Forest seemed like the perfect bonding trip. Armed with detailed maps, water filters, shovels, bear canisters, tents, and hiking gear, they were perfectly prepared for anything that would arise. What they weren’t prepared for was another type of predator in the woods. Now, Neela and Josie must face the ties of their friendship that are quickly

unraveling in order to fight for their survival.

The Woods Are Always Watching, reaffirms that terror truly does lie in the woods, lurking behind every shadow-lined tree. Stephanie Perkins takes the age-old fear of true human vulnerability and cracks it wide open, delivering a heart pounding page turner that will make readers stay up reading until the very last page. Intense raw, and terrifying, this story should be read in the safety of your home and reaffirms why camping alone can be frightening, but also the importance of always being prepared.



There’s Someone Inside Your House by Stephanie Perkins

Chilling to the bone, *There’s Someone Inside Your House* delivers a fast paced, intense horror. Shocking and horrifying from the very start, readers are thrown right into the middle of a serial killer’s killing spree, with no detail left behind. Scream for the new generation, but this time no one is hiding behind a mask.

From the author who brought you sweet, contemporary reads like *Anna and the French Kiss*, comes an entirely new type of book. Written in an authentic teenage voice, this book is structured for a teenage audience, with teenage language, feelings, emotions, and events. Better suited for a mature young adult audience, this book contains scenes and events that can be seen as unsettling but also perfectly adheres to the true genre specifics of a classic teen horror.



Intense and gripping from the start, the Netflix original series keeps the book’s essence from the opening scene. Netflix doesn’t leave anything behind and will have its viewers on the edge of their seats as the slayings keep a thrilling tempo. Reminiscent of the teen slasher films of the ‘80s and ‘90s, this movie delivers a creepy and chilling sensation that tingles up your spine. However, with the intense, vivid, slasher scenes, this movie should be viewed by a mature viewing audience. You can catch the Netflix original film now.★



China’s Agricultural Tariffs Remain but Farm Interests Hope for Progress

California agricultural interests are welcoming the U.S. trade representative’s recent call for a “new approach” to the U.S.-China relationship. Ambassador Katherine Tai called for engaging China on trade while defending “American economic interests from harmful policies.” China has pledged to buy \$40 billion of U.S. food and agricultural products annually. But wide-ranging tariffs that affect California commodities remain in place.

Biden Administration to Reaffirm Biological Opinions in Water Supply Decisions

The Biden administration is looking to elevate federal biological opinions in managing water supplies from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The effort seeks to reverse Trump administration rules that downgraded the role that opinions by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies played in decisions related to California water projects. California officials sued, claiming the Trump-era rules lacked safeguards for protected species and habitat.

UC Merced gets \$10 million for ‘Climate Resilient Water Future’ Research

University of California, Merced researchers are working to generate detailed climate information to help farmers and water agencies make water-management decisions in the face of longer and more severe droughts. UC Merced received a \$10 million research grant from the USDA for a four-year effort to enhance data-driven practices to protect groundwater supplies and make agriculture and ecosystems more water resilient.

Vineyard Growers look to Remove Steel Reinforcement Without Burning

California growers are looking for new ways to remove non-productive orchards and vineyards. Starting in January, new state rules will prevent the burning of many former vineyards as part of a gradual phaseout of agricultural burning by 2025. One of the challenges for growers is removing reinforcing steel from vines. That has been separated out through burning. Enmeshed steel can’t be run through chippers, requiring more expensive machinery. ★

Green Thumb Versus Black and Blue Thumb

Dr. James L. Snyder

If you came to our parsonage, you would discover all over our property, plants and flowers. Just don’t ask me to identify what they are. I can tell a plant from a flower, but that’s as far as it goes with me.

That is not true with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She gets all the credit for all the plants and flowers on our property. She knows them all by name.

Walking up to our house, you will see right next to the door a pineapple plant. I never knew exactly what it was, but my wife kept telling me it was a pineapple. Then this year, the pineapple actually developed.

When she first planted it, she asked me, “Did you see my new plant out front?”

I did not, but I did not want to tell her that I did not.

“Yes, I saw it, and it looks wonderful.” I smiled a very gregarious smile at her.

I thought I was off the hook with that, but guess what? I was not off the hook, because then she said, “What kind of a plant is it?”

“For your information,” she said somewhat sarcastically, “it is a pineapple plant.

Why don’t you go out front and look at it?”

I went out, and she followed me to the front to look at the pineapple plant. It was a very profitable session. First, she gave me a very detailed lecture on the pineapple plant, planting it and watering it through the year. Then she told me how long it takes a pineapple to grow to the point of harvesting.

I think she is the Martha Stewart of all things growing outside in our backyard.

The one secret to her plants and flowers is that she talks to them. I didn’t know plants and flowers could hear, but obviously, they do.

Last week it hadn’t rained for days, and I heard her out on the porch saying, “Don’t worry, it will rain very soon. Be ready for it and be patient.”

Evidently, talking to the plants and flowers is very much appreciated by those plants and flowers. I’ve been tempted to go out and talk to them myself, but I was fearful that they would shrink in fear. Then guess who would be in trouble?

It’s pretty evident that I could not take care of plants and flowers as she does. Probably none of them

would survive. Those plants and flowers ought to be quite thankful that I am not the one taking care of them. They ought to be thankful for the expert with a wonderful green thumb and not the one with the black and blue thumb.

Even though I can’t take care of them, I can appreciate them. Also, I can appreciate the one who does all the work to make them look as good as they do.

Sitting on the back porch drinking some coffee and looking at the flowers, I thought of the wonderful verse in the Bible. “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Relationships are not built upon having the same qualities. Rather, it is appreciating our differences that pull us together and enable us to do what God wants us to do.

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. ★



National Divorce Is a Poisonously Stupid Idea

Divorce usually isn’t a good idea, and that’s especially true of a nearly 250-year-old continental nation.

A cadre of apocalyptic writers on the right, who believe the country is too far gone to save, has become obsessed with a Secession 2.0 that would cleave red America from blue and allow the former to escape the ever-rising tide of woke insanity.

There is no doubt the country is deeply riven along political, cultural and religious lines. Yet, a national divorce has nothing to recommend it.

The practical obstacles are insuperable, and the likely effects would be very unwelcome to its proponents. If an insufficient patriotism is one of the ills of contemporary America, then a national divorce would prescribe arsenic as a cure. It would burn down America to save America, or at least those parts of it considered salvageable.

A disaggregated United States would be instantly less powerful. Indeed, Russia and China would be delighted and presumably believe that we’d deserve to experience the equivalent of the crackup of the Soviet Union or the Qing dynasty, respectively.

The economic consequences could be severe. The United States of

America is a continentwide free trade zone, creating a vast domestic market that makes us all better off. Exchanging that for a market Balkanized by state or region would be a major loss.

Finally, the United States foundering on its domestic divisions would be a significant blow to the prestige of liberal democracy. Abraham Lincoln worried about this effect the first time around, and it might be even worse now, with a long stable republic unable to survive internal dissension.

Then, there’s the question of how this is supposed to work. Lincoln warned of the physical impossibility of secession when the Mason-Dixon Line was a more-or-less ready line of demarcation. How would it play out now, with conservatives and progressives amply represented in every state in the Union?

If there were to be sovereign pure red and blue places, this wouldn’t look like the relatively neat split of the United States into two in the 1860s, but more like post-Peace of Westphalia Europe, with hundreds of different entities.

Some proponents of national divorce say not to worry – it can all be worked out amicably. But if we are going to split up because we can’t even agree on bathroom policies or pronouns, how are we going to agree to divvy up our territory and resources?

It would matter, obviously, who gets control of the federal government, the most powerful organization on Earth. It has 1.3 million people under arms and a stockpile of 3,800

nuclear warheads. Whether it accrues to red or blue America would, to understate it, be a matter of considerable haggling.

On top of all this, red-state secession would be self-defeating. Let’s say Texas left. That’s 40 electoral votes off the national map for Republicans. In 2020, with no Texas, Trump could have won Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, and still fallen short of an electoral majority.

On the other hand, Texas isn’t quite as ruby red as it used to be. It could secede and still find itself governed by the very Democrats it hoped to leave behind.

Besides, would the rest of the country really be willing to watch a state of 29 million people that represents the ninth-largest economy in the world go its own way?

Meanwhile, red-state secession might not actually stem the cultural tide. Would the college professors in these places be less woke? Would the newsrooms be more conservative? Would people in the state stop using social media?

The real impetus for the talk of a breakup is despair. It constitutes giving up on convincing our fellow Americans, giving up on our common national project, giving up on our birthright.

This is an impulse to be resisted. Breaking up is hard to do and quitting on America is – or should be – unforgivable.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2021 by King Features Synd., Inc. ★

Grant Helps CHP Focus on Aggressive Driving Behaviors

CHP News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Excessive speed and aggressive driving are a major concern on California freeways. A federally funded grant will continue to help support the California Highway Patrol’s (CHP) life-saving grant campaign targeting dangerous driving behaviors.

The goal of the Regulate Aggressive Driving and Reduce Speed (RADARS) VI grant is to decrease traffic crashes attributed to speed and the number of people killed and injured in these crashes. In federal fiscal year 2018-2019, speed was a factor in approximately 45 percent of all fatal and injury-causing crashes in California. That year, 36,036 speed-related crashes killed 335 people and injured 53,060 others.

“Reckless driving behaviors are a significant threat to all who use California’s roadways,” said CHP Commissioner Amanda Ray. “The RADARS grant will provide for a focused education and enforcement campaign targeting speeding motorists and aggressive driving behaviors, including street racing and sideshow activities, to help prevent crashes resulting in death or injury.”

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, CHP has noted a significant increase in incidents of unsafe

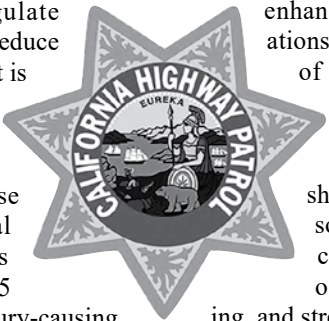
driving behaviors: motorists exceeding 100 miles per hour on state highways, illicit street racing and sideshow activities, and speed-related crashes.

Between April 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021, the CHP issued more than 44,500 citations to motorists traveling in excess of 100 MPH. To address the issue, the CHP used federal grant funding to conduct enhanced speed enforcement operations on state routes with a history of speed-related incidents, collaborated with local law enforcement agencies to create street racing and sideshow task forces, and conducted social media campaigns to educate the public about the dangers of speeding, aggressive driving, and street racing. The RADARS grant will allow the CHP to conduct a comparable campaign from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The mission of the CHP is to provide the highest level of Safety, Service, and Security.

For more information about the Regulate Aggressive Driving and Reduce Speed (RADARS) VI grant efforts in your area, please contact your local CHP Public Information Officer. ★



AMCHA Denounces Newsom’s Signing of Ethnic Studies Bill

AMCHA News Release

SANTA CRUZ, CA (MPG) - AMCHA Initiative Director, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, issued the following statement in response to Governor Gavin Newsom’s signing of AB 101, a bill to make ethnic studies courses a high school graduation requirement:

“Having closely monitored and studied the ethnic studies scene unfold on college campuses for years, particularly in California, to say we are deeply concerned is an understatement. While certainly not all in the ethnic studies field fall into this category, there is a vocal and active faction of extremists who have long been seeking to inject their antisemitic and anti-Zionist agenda into our nation’s classrooms, and today that faction succeeded. This is a dark day for Jewish students in California and the dozens of other states that historically follow California’s lead.

“The fact that no less than seven ‘guardrails’ were deemed necessary for preventing AB 101 from facilitating the widespread promotion of antisemitism is itself a stunning indictment of the bill and the dangers it poses for Jewish students and the Jewish community. And by law those so-called guardrails are purely optics. They carry zero weight when it comes to preventing school districts from bringing the rejected and blatantly antisemitic original ESMC curriculum or its far worse Liberated cousin into the classroom.

“Making matters significantly worse, California’s teachers’ unions and public universities’ ethnic studies departments proudly support those overtly antisemitic curricula. Both the original ESMC draft and Liberated’s curriculum are endorsed by California’s two largest teachers’ unions and ethnic studies departments and faculty on Cal State and University of California campuses.

“This bill could and should have been stopped at the legislative level and must not be forced on the Jewish community to fight in each of California’s 1,300 school districts. We surely hope that those who

guaranteed the guardrails would prevent antisemitic curricula from seeping into our state’s high schools stand ready to fulfill their commitment, since this enormous responsibility ought to fall squarely on their shoulders, not on parents and students.”

AMCHA has led several efforts to warn Newsom about the dire harms of the bill and urge him to veto it. In the past couple of weeks, hundreds of Holocaust survivors and their descendants, dozens of religious, civil rights and education organizations, thousands of Californians, and hundreds of California high school students and parents have urged Newsom to veto the bill. And the LA Times editorialized against AB 101, urging a veto, and citing the same concerns raised by the petitioners.

Rossman-Benjamin was the first to expose the way in which the discipline of Critical Ethnic Studies is deeply antisemitic and anti-Zionist. AMCHA has led several coalition efforts to educate officials about the dangers of a curriculum based on Critical Ethnic Studies. AMCHA’s Director, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, has testified before the California Senate Education Committee and the Assembly Education Committee against AB 101, and provided evidence that if AB 101 becomes law, most school districts will adopt some version of the rejected antisemitic first draft.

AMCHA monitors more than 450 college campuses across the U.S. for anti-Semitic activity. The organization has recorded more than 3,500 anti-Semitic incidents on college campuses since 2015. Its daily Anti-Semitism Tracker, organized by state and university, can be viewed <https://amchainitiative.org/search-by-incident#incident/search/display-by-date/>.

AMCHA Initiative is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to combating anti-Semitism at colleges and universities in the United States. For more information see amchainitiative.org/statement-ab101-10-7-21pr/ ★

Biden Administration on Parents’ Right to Engage Elected Officials

The Republican Party of Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Democrat leaders from Washington to Sacramento took a stand against a parent’s right to protect their child. First, Governor Newsom announced mandatory vaccines for school children, regardless of natural immunity, and then President Biden’s Administration weaponized the FBI and the DOJ against those who speak out against education officials engaging in indoctrination and politicized healthcare mandates.


During at-home schooling, parents saw firsthand how their kids were being taught, and now they’re engaging their elected school boards to demand change. “SacCountyGOP is on record as strongly opposing any acts of violence or intimidation to advance a political agenda, regardless of the cause,” said Sacramento County Republican Party Chair Betsy Mahan.

“This announcement by AG Merrick Garland is an attempt to discourage

parents from standing up for the most important thing in their lives - their kids. Actions being taken by politicians at the local, state and federal levels have provoked a passionate response from moms and dads from all political parties, and no one should be surprised,” said Mahan.

The Sacramento County Republican Party encourages parents to express their opinions and influence decision makers without crossing the line of violence. “Threats and intimidation will only lead to closed minds and spreading a false narrative that we are politically motivated rather than caring about our kids’ health and future,” said Mahan. “Now is not the time to be silenced, and civil discourse must continue.”


The Sacramento County Republican Party is working with parents, taxpayers, and school board members to make sure those who engage are informed and effective. More information is available on their website at SacCountyGOP.com/Schools. ★



**Publisher,
Paul V. Scholl**

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Date Filed in Solano County: September 30, 2021
The Registrant commenced to transact business under the above business name on: February 1, 2015
This Business is Conducted by: An 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 SEPTEMBER 29, 2026. The filing of this statement does not itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state or common law (see section 14411 ET SEQ., business and professions code.)

Publish: October 15, 22, 29, and November 5, 2021 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)

CITY OF DIXON
NOTICE OF NOMINEES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE
AND POLLING PLACES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following persons have been nominated for the office mentioned below to be filled at the Special Municipal Election to be held in the City of Dixon, California, on Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

For Elected City Clerk Term of One (1) Year

- Michael Ceremello
- Kristin M. Janisch

Notice of Polling Places:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following polling places will be used at the Special Municipal Election and will be open between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 2, 2021:

C. A. Jacobs Middle School, 200 N. Lincoln Street, Dixon
Dixon Senior Center, 201 S. Fifth Street, Dixon
Veterans Memorial Hall, 1305 N. First Street, Dixon
Dixon Moose Lodge, 180 West B Street, Dixon

Jim Lindley Publication Date: October 22, 2021
City Elections Official

Dixon Independent Voice 10-22-2021



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DIXON POLICE LOG

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



Friday, October 08, 2021
0745 - Vehicle theft in the 800 block of Royal Elf Court.
0837 - Vehicle theft in the 900 block Mason Court.
0935 - Commercial burglary in the 7000 block of Porter Road.
1254 - Officers were dispatched to the 2800 block of West A Street for a report of a male trying to stab himself in the neck and hitting his wife. Officers arrived on scene and located the vehicle the male was driving. A high-risk stop was conducted and the male was detained. After further investigation, the male was found to have scratch and bite marks from his wife identified as Tina Holland (52) out of Fairfield. Holland was placed under arrest for domestic violence and booked into the Solano County Jail. The male was released from the scene after the 5150 eval was unfounded.
1609 - Vehicle theft in the 500 block McKenzie Drive.
0412 - Resisting arrest report was taken in the 1400 block of N. 1st St. (S) Alejandro Padilla (31) ran from police after being pulled over during a traffic stop.
1837 - Shoplifting report was taken in the 2000 block of North 1st St.
1948 - Vehicle burglary report was taken in the 1300 block of North Lincoln St.
1950 - Warrant arrest report was taken in the 1300 block of North Lincoln St. Officers contacted (S) Jose Ortega (34) of Dixon. A records check revealed he had two outstanding misdemeanor warrants out of Tulare County. Ortega was arrested and transported to the Dixon police department. Ortega was cited and released.

Saturday, October 09, 2021
0927 - Information report in the 300 block of Ostergard Alley.
1840 - Found bike 200 block East Dorset Dr
2000 - Bike theft 200 block East Dorset Dr.

Sunday, October 10, 2021
1720 - Report of trespassing in the 1500 block of Arlington Court. 3 Juveniles were contacted for trespassing and released to their parents.
2026 - A vehicle vandalism report was taken from the 400 block of South Adams Street.

Monday, October 11, 2021
0840 - Theft of a wallet reported in the 100 block of North Adams Street.
0904 - Vandalism reported in the 100 block of Heritage Lane. Several windows were broken by rocks and two fire extinguishers were discharged.
0914 - Theft reported in the 2500 block of Plaza Court. A construction truck had its diesel siphoned out of the tank.
1023 - Vandalism reported in the 200 block of North Lincoln Street. More graffiti was spray painted onto CA Jacobs by the basketball court.
1400 - Information report taken in the 400 block of Georgetown Place.
1614 - Attempted catalytic converter theft in the 1100 block of Syracuse lane.

Tuesday, October 12, 2021
1445 - Information report taken in the 2100 block of Moore Drive.

Wednesday, October 13, 2021
0706 - Officers responded to a welfare check in the 1400 block of Ary Lane. Leonardo Lopez (31) out of Napa was contacted. Lopez was found to have an outstanding warrant for his arrest out of Napa County. Lopez was placed under arrest and booked into the county jail without incident.
0929 - Found property report in the 200 block of West A Street.
1937 - Missing person report was taken in the 500 block of Madden Dr. The missing person voluntarily returned home

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 7

B	I	R	D	S		D	I	S		A	T	O	M		
L	O	I	R	E		O	R	E		A	B	H	O	R	
O	W	N	E	R		O	A	T		S	E	E	P	S	
C	A	D	A	V	E	R		A	P	P	L	E	S		
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A	W	L	S			E	F	T		F	A	I	T	H	

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CLUES

ACROSS
1. *Hitchcock's 1963 movie, with The
6. Bad-mouth
9. H or O in H2O, e.g.
13. France's longest river
14. Bauxite, e.g.
15. Opposite of adore
16. Proprietor
17. Quaker Man's cereal
18. Oozes
19. *Corpse
21. *Bobbing for what?, pl.
23. One time around
24. Bébé's mother
25. General Post Office
28. Actuary's concern
30. Named, in bygone era
35. Not easy
37. Accepted behavior
39. Kitchen floor layer?
40. Northern European capital
41. *Overly consumed on Halloween?
43. Actress Spelling
44. Nature's rage
46. Bangladeshi currency
47. Colossal
48. Bowling prop
50. Famous Himalayan
52. Bugling ungulate
53. Valedictorian's spot
55. Possessive of "it"
57. *Pennywise and Joker, e.g.
60. *Traditional Halloween garb
64. Honolulu greeting
65. Costa del ____
67. Plant fungus
68. Mild and pleasant, weather-wise
69. E.T. transporter
70. Popular spring flower
71. Hole-making tools
72. Young newt
73. Country singer ____ Hill

DOWN
1. Coalition
2. Corn Belt state
3. Drink garnish
4. Cheerfulness
5. Offered on a platter
6. *Door-to-____
7. George Gershwin's brother
8. Plural of seta
9. Cain's biblical brother
10. You, in bygone era
11. Uh-oh
12. Wife's title
15. Facet
20. Actress Linda of "Dynasty" fame
22. Be nosy
24. South American wild cats
25. *Bedsheet with holes?
26. Command that follows "cut"
27. Acrylic fiber
29. Show off
31. Low-cal
32. Skip the wedding hoopla
33. State of danger
34. *As opposed to treat
36. Small town or hamlet
38. Manufacture
42 2:3, e.g.
45. Carnie's domain
49. Grandmother, for short
51. Reflexive of "it"
54. Question in dispute
56. Parallel grooves
57. *Raven's grabber

58. Take it easy
59. Electrical resistance units
60. Blood-related problem
61. Tangerine grapefruit hybrid
62. Castle protector
63. Carve, as in stone
64. Lawyers' league
66. ____ with their head!"

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 7

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

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SUDOKU

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

Solutions on Page 7

No Lack of News Involving Covid Virus



Commentary by bil paul

Here in Dixon the number of new reported cases per week fell to 19. All the covid numbers around the county improved or stayed the same. However, only 13 percent of ICU beds are available.

My wife and I attended a wedding. There was a good-sized crowd, and it was good to connect with folks we hadn't seen for years. Most of the attendees weren't wearing masks. My wife and I did as much as possible, but with wine and liquor flowing, and a buffet, the masks had to come off often. Unanswered question: Did anyone else attending have the disease?

Some people are ridiculously anti-mask. A state senator in Alaska refused to wear one on a plane (Alaska has been hard-hit with covid). As a result, she chose instead to drive the 750 miles. Then she came down with covid and was treating it with vitamins, zinc, Vicks, and Ivermectin (the med prescribed to fight parasitic worms and head lice). "Who do you think is going to win?" she bragged.

The pandemic has caused shortages of critical items, because when covid began its rampage, companies cut back production to avoid product surpluses. Also, key employees were absent. I know of a radio manufacturing company that was introducing a complicated new product that used hundreds of different parts, and the lack of only one itty-bitty part was holding up the entire show. Customers who'd pre-ordered the product were getting restless.

One of the heartrending aspects of the pandemic was hospitals' policies of not allowing healthy family members to visit parents or other relatives in ICUs. Imagine dying of the disease and not being able to say goodbye to your children or spouse, except via cell phone.

The lack of workers in certain industries in the U.S. is mystifying. According to the Associated Press, during the past year, job openings increased 62 percent, while overall hiring actually declined. The number of people leaving jobs in restaurants and hotels was partly due to the danger of catching covid, but also because higher-paying jobs were available elsewhere. Or — people found ways to live without a job by moving in with a relative, or by living in a trailer park, and aren't particularly motivated to return to the workforce.

One benefit of the worker shortage is a greater chance for ex-convicts to obtain employment.

A Washington Post article talked about the huge increase in warehouse jobs in recent years. Even Dixon will soon have a large General Electric warehouse operation. However, especially with Amazon warehouses, the attraction of a job with benefits has diminished and workers (especially younger ones) often don't stay long because of the constant pressure to perform, extra work hours, and low pay. Companies are trying to sweeten their employment deals and hope to have enough people to handle the holiday buying rush. Buy early!

Switching the subject, there's an Elvis event coming up in January. I'm associated with the Dixon Teen Center (currently scrambling to open a new location). One of the best Elvis impersonators in the country, Rob Ely, will perform at the Dixon HS auditorium as a fundraiser for the center. Ely performed to a sold-out venue in Vacaville, so he should be a popular attraction here. Long live Elvis! More details and ticket information later.

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 GIs in the Aleutian Islands during WWII. ★



Riley Reviews

SURFEIT OF HALLOWEEN PROGRAMS TO DELIGHT HORROR FANS

A Film and TV Review by Tim Riley

The Peacock channel is serious this year about celebrating Halloween for every kind of fan for the spooky season, which includes running all eight "Harry Potter" movies, though I am not sure how scary the franchise is to most viewers.

A better bet is the release of "Halloween Kills," which is probably the thirtieth or so title in the "Halloween" franchise, which stars Jamie Lee Curtis and Nick Castle reprising their respective roles of Laurie Strode and Michael Myers.

To put everything into perspective, Jamie Lee Curtis' Laurie Strode made her first appearance in "Halloween" in 1978 and was the sole survivor of Michael Myers' killing spree. "Halloween Kills" has been released in theaters and is streaming on Peacock.

Talk about an odd couple pairing, rapper Snoop Dogg and media personality Martha Stewart host the competition special "Snoop and Martha's Very Tasty Halloween" featuring talented bakers who face off in a delectable Halloween showdown.

Teams of three bakers, called "Scare Squads," are tasked with baking and building a full sensory 12x12 Halloween world that people can literally explore. The catch? Their worlds must be inspired by the concept of fear. Imagine larger-than-life chocolate spiders.

New horror films to air include "Separation" from director William Brent and "You Should Have Left," Blumhouse's psychological thriller starring Kevin Bacon and Amanda Seyfried about an isolated country home where nothing is quite as it seems.

Classic monster movies are on tap. One of them being "Dracula," which we assume is the 1931 version starring Bela Lugosi as the County. The Peacock classic films to be aired, including "Frankenstein" and "The Invisible Man" all come from Universal Pictures' horror collection.

Halloween-themed episodes of favorite TV series will be shown, ranging from sitcoms like "Cheers" and "Everybody Loves Raymond" to silly gags on "Saturday Night Live" to dramas like "Law & Order" that go to serious places with their Halloween tales.

Even family-friendly thrills suitable for a younger audience are to be found with "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events" television series and the "Monster High" film series.

Starting on October 29th, TCM will deploy its extensive library of classic films to satisfy every taste in spooky, creepy, horrifying (and sometimes humorous) entertainment over the course of 48 hours of its Halloween Marathon.

The fun starts on Friday night, two days before Halloween, as Vincent Price stars in 1971's "The Abominable Dr. Phibes" as a highly creative madman mimicking the

Biblical plagues of Egypt to exact revenge on the doctors believed responsible for his wife's death.

Two great classics of the genre follow: the granddaddy of all zombie pictures, George Romero's "Night of the Living Dead" (1968) and "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" (1978). The last one is on late, but don't fall asleep — you know what can happen!

1970s scream queen Linda Blair can be seen in 1981's "Hell Night" and 1977's "Exorcist II: The Heretic," which offers the added treat of hearing the great Richard Burton utter the immortal line: "Pazuzu, king of evil spirits of the air, help me find Kokumo!"

Saturday the 30th is jam-packed with Halloween tricks and treats, including 1961's "Creature from the Haunted Sea," featuring an appearance by future Oscar-winning screenwriter Robert Towne ("Chinatown").

The most famous mad scientist/monster team of all time gets its due in three films: James Whale's original and still unsurpassed "Frankenstein" (1931), and the Hammer Films retelling in 1957's "The Curse of Frankenstein," starring Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing.

The third film of this august group has a completely different take on the zipper-necked monster. That would be Mel Brooks' hilarious spoof "Young Frankenstein" (1974), a classic film in its own right.

Speaking of British horror legends Lee and Cushing, they are the lead characters in the classic "Horror Dracula" (1958), respectively as the vampire Count Dracula and the vampire hunter Doctor Van Helsing.

Hammer, the leading British studio for shock and gore, is represented again with 1966's "The Devil's Own," released in the U.K. as "The Witches," in which Joan Fontaine seeks to outdo big sister Olivia de Havilland's forays into the genre in the 1960s.

No compendium of great movie horror would be complete without at least some of the films released at RKO under the aegis of producer Val Lewton.

Eschewing monsters, shock effects and obvious gore, Lewton was remarkable for a series of low budget pictures that were subtle in their approach to the genre; dark shadowy tales of psychological terror that also fit them perfect into TCM's Noir Alley series.

Vincent Price starred in the original version of "The Fly" (1958) and in two of the notable series of loose Edgar Allan Poe adaptations made by Roger Corman in the 1960s, "Pit and the Pendulum" (1961) and "The Tomb of Ligeia" (1964), with a screenplay by Robert Towne.

For a big screen experience, Universal Studios and Fathom Events present a double feature at local cinemas on Saturday afternoon, October 30, of "The Invisible Man" starring Claude Rains and "The Wolf Man" starring Lon Chaney. ★

Here's What "Everyday Low Prices" Can Teach Us About Health Care



Commentary by Sally C. Pipes

"Everyday low prices" are coming to health care. Walmart recently launched its own analog insulin, a synthetic form of the hormone that's genetically modified to be released rapidly or slowly, depending on a person's needs. It will be manufactured by pharmaceutical giant Novo Nordisk — but cost 75% less than brand-name analog insulin.

The deal stands out as proof that markets can deliver outcomes that work for producers and consumers alike — if we let them.

Generally speaking, the "market" for medicines is dysfunctional. It bears little resemblance to the markets for groceries or electronics, where consumers can compare prices and product reviews, shop around for the best deal, and purchase what they want.

Instead, patients typically pay for prescription drugs through their insurance plans. They may be responsible for a co-pay or

co-insurance — a set percentage of a drug's nominal price — and their insurer pays the rest.

The exact co-pays and co-insurance are determined by entities called pharmacy benefit managers — middlemen hired by insurers to administer drug plans and negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies.

Because PBMs decide which medicines are, and aren't, available through a given plan, they have immense leverage over pharmaceutical companies. Three PBMs handle more than 70 percent of prescriptions filled in the United States.

That leverage allows them to extract deep discounts from drug manufacturers. If drug makers want to have their products included on an insurer's formulary, they have to pay up. If they don't, the PBM will simply go with a drug maker that will.

In the market for insulin, PBMs routinely extract discounts exceeding 70%. They pocket some of that money and pass the bulk along to insurers.

Patients, meanwhile, pay a percentage of the insulin's full list price, which is many times higher than what the PBM negotiated with the manufacturer.

Consider the insulin made by Sanofi. From 2012 to 2019, its list price increased 140%, from

about \$150 to more than \$350 per vial. But the amount of net revenue that Sanofi received, after paying discounts to insurers and PBMs, declined 41% during that time period.

Those insurers and PBMs didn't share those rebates directly with the people buying insulin. Instead, consumers had to cover for co-pays and co-insurance based on the escalating list price.

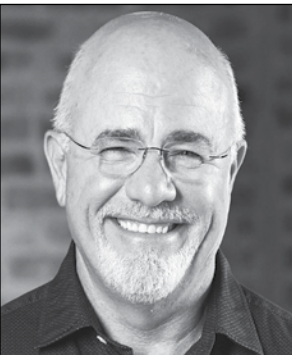
A patient with a 25% co-insurance requirement on a \$350 drug got a bill for \$87.50 at the pharmacy. That co-pay is greater than Sanofi actually received in total.

By cutting out these middlemen and selling directly to retailers like Walmart, drug makers can maintain or even increase their profit margins. The retailers charge a small mark-up, just as they do for everything they sell.

And in this case, patients save money, too.

Middlemen siphon billions of dollars out of the healthcare system each year — while providing questionable value to consumers. As the deal between Walmart and Novo Nordisk shows, market principles offer a better way.

Sally C. Pipes is President, CEO, and Thomas W. Smith Fellow in Health Care Policy at the Pacific Research Institute. Follow her on Twitter @sallypipes. ★



Let's Tweak that Idea a Little

Dear Dave,

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

Dave Ramsey Says

up as a business expense?

— Amber

Dear Amber,

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

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

You make good money, Amber. I want you to set aside \$2,000 or \$3,000 for this business, maybe out of the business income, and

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

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

— Dave

Dave Ramsey is 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. Morning, He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions. ★

WEEKLY COMICS

Amber Waves



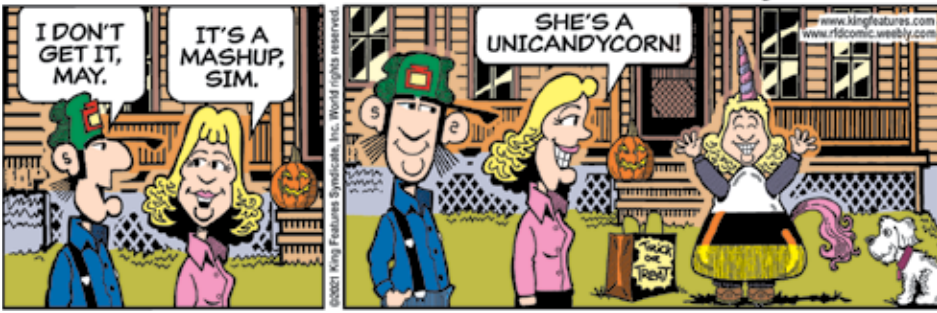
Out on a Limb



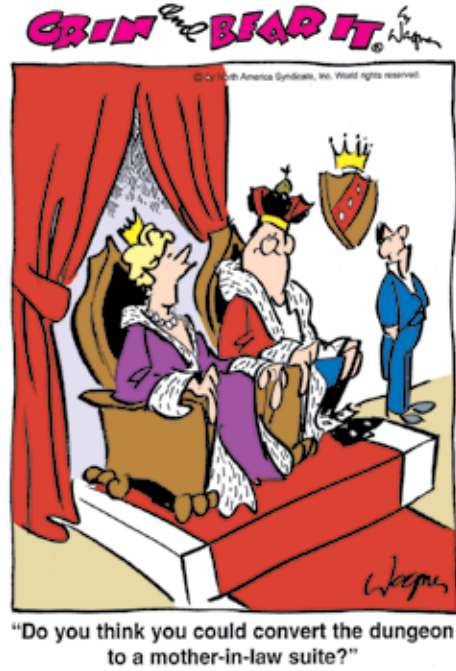
by Gary Kopervas



R.F.D.



by Mike Marland

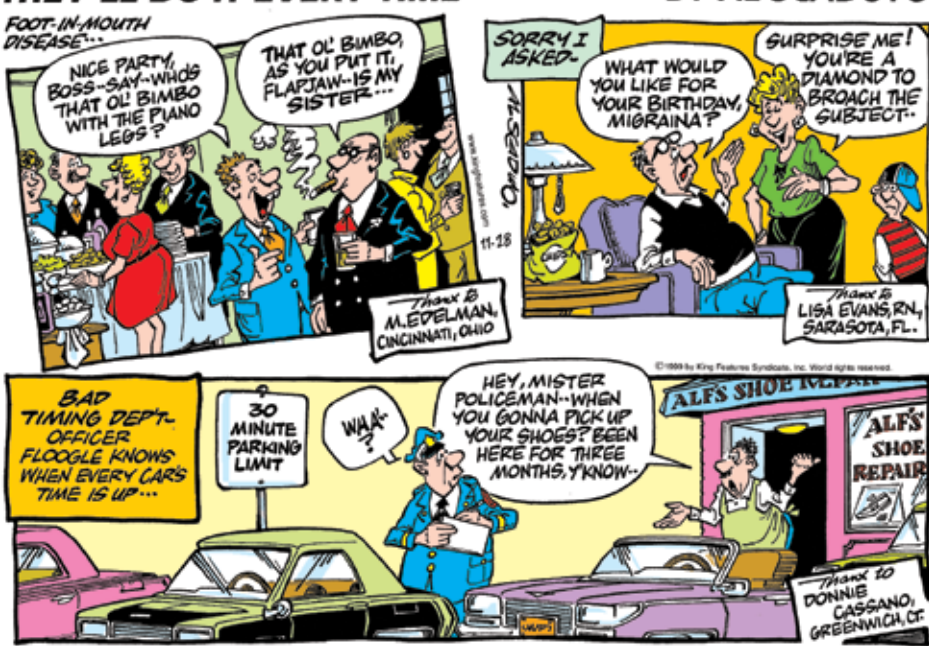


The Spats



by Jeff Pickering

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



BY AL SCADUTO

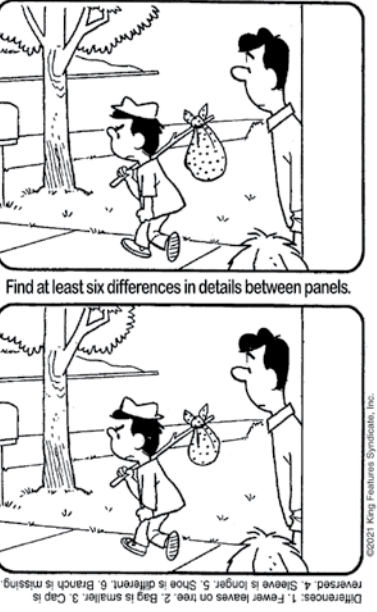
Just Like Cats & Dogs

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Beat a Cyberbully: Here’s How Parents Can Help



With just a click, cyberbullies can taunt, harass and threaten relentlessly, even reaching into the home via cellphone or computer. As a result, victims report feeling hopeless, isolated and even suicidal. Photo by Andrea Piacquadio from Pexels

By Alejandro Feria,
Jehovah’s Witnesses
Northern California

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - While remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic lowered reported instances of bullying, parents fear that, for some students, going back to school will mean going back to being bullied. “Bullying is something we worry about, especially with the beginning of each new school year,” said Zury Bourque of her family of four in Cypress, Texas. Now 15 years after the inception of National Bullying Prevention Month in October, technology’s ever-greater presence in children’s lives has given bullying a new outlet. With just a click, cyberbullies can taunt, harass and threaten relentlessly, even reaching into the home via

cellphone or computer. As a result, victims report feeling hopeless, isolated and even suicidal. What can parents do to protect their kids? Taking an interest in their children’s online world can make a difference, says the National Parent Teacher Association. This interest does not necessarily require parents to become tech experts. Instead, the federal stop-bullying.gov site advises parents to watch for subtle clues that something is wrong, such as their child becoming withdrawn, hiding their screen when others are nearby or reacting emotionally to what is happening on their device. For Zury Bourque and her husband Chris, that has meant being keenly aware of what “normal” looks like for their two boys, ages 12 and 10. “Knowing my children’s

moods is very important because I can then detect shifts or changes in their personalities that might signal something is going on,” Chris said. Talking with kids openly – and often – helps too. “The more you talk to your children about bullying, the more comfortable they will be telling you if they see or experience it,” UNICEF says in its online tips for parents. As their two daughters enter their teens, Houston parents Thiago and Auboni Cordolino have found that talking less and listening more works best. “We try to focus on being approachable and listening actively without reaction,” Thiago said. Beyond talking, listening and observing their kids, parents should not be afraid to make and enforce rules for online activities, experts say. ★

Abbi Winslow
WayBeyondMeasure.com



Parents: The Secret to Drug-Free Youth

By Abbi Winslow

On average, kids first try drugs between the ages of 13-15. Statistics like these can be terrifying to parents who are trying to keep their children drug-free in a world that glamorizes getting high. While statistics around teen drug abuse are troubling, there is one ray of hope that continues to bring adolescent drug use down: Parents. Research repeatedly shows that parents are the number one influence in their child’s life. So armed with the knowledge that you really can make a difference, let’s talk about the “how” of helping your child stay drug-free.

Set clear expectations

Help your child stay drug-free by setting clear rules and expectations. Talk to your child about family rules concerning drugs, marijuana, alcohol, inhalants, and other risky behaviors. Set clear consequences about what happens when those rules are broken. School-sponsored programs should NOT be the first time your child hears about or considers the consequences of drug use. Research shows that you should talk to your child about the harms and dangers of drugs as early as nine years old.

Come up with a plan

With your child or teen come up with a plan for when they will be confronted with the choice to participate in risky behaviors. Talk out and act out different scenarios with your child before they face these tense situations with peer pressure and emotional stress on their own. You might get some pushback from your older teens about roleplaying. Share your personal experiences or other stories that will help your teen feel empowered to say “no” in high-pressure situations. The plan to stay drug-free should also include steps for what to do if your child makes a mistake or finds themselves in a bad situation. Growing up my family had a code word that we could text to our

parents that meant “come get me right now!” When I would find myself in a tricky situation I would send off the code word in a text to my dad. Within a few seconds, my dad would call asking me to come home. That way I didn’t have to come up with excuses of why I was leaving early--I just blamed my “uncool” parents.

Show you care

Lastly, be involved in your child’s life. Every time your child or teen leaves the house you should be asking questions about who they will be with, what they are doing, and if parents will be present. When you know your child and are an active part of their life, having tough conversations becomes a lot easier. Building and maintaining trust between you and your child starts with becoming part of their world. Have fun together, talk together, and ask them questions about their day. When you show your child you care about every part of their life they are more likely to open up to you about the things that are troubling them.

Helping your child stay drug-free doesn’t have to be overly complicated. As their parent, you have the power to influence their decisions now and in the future. Don't shy away from hard conversations about family rules and expectations, but instead see it as your chance to help shape your child's future.

Abbi Winslow is a certified life coach with Way Beyond Measure, a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching children and teens positive mental health skills and character development. To learn more visit waybeyondmeasure.com.

Sources:
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www.redribbon.org
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www.therecoveryvillage.com/teen-addiction/drug/middle-school-drug-use/
www.addictioncenter.com/community/social-media-teen-drug-use/ ★

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