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Dixon

# Independent Voice

VOLUME 29 • ISSUE 15

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APRIL 9, 2021

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# A Heart of Gold



**Hortencia Guerrero, the owner of Guerrero Taxes, a 31-year-old company geared toward immigration consulting, notarizing, translating and lending. Photo by Debra Dingman**

**By Debra Dingman**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - Hortencia Guerrero's heart could have grown cold after her son died but her tax clients – and her family – kept it gold.

"I got more flowers that year than I ever received over my lifetime," she said. "My clients were my therapy. It was a very emotional year." She is talking about a time that is a decade ago when a tragedy could have taken her energy away but only emboldened a spirit to help more.

The sharply-dressed woman is the owner of Guerrero Taxes, a 31-year-old company geared toward Dixon's Hispanic population. She is also an Immigration Consultant, a Notary, offers translation services, and now does home loans. Her energy, she says, stems from parents who taught her – and her eight siblings – to rise early and do their best.

"I feel that helping others that are not so fortunate or just are having a hard time or not knowing how to read a legal form in English and feeling helpless is what motivates me to help," she said. Her clients and friends pass the word that there

is someone to help. "We help out over three thousand clients," she said.

**Getting Started**

Hortencia was working at Raley's in Vacaville doing their accounting and after getting charged a large sum for her family's tax preparation years ago, she asked herself, "How hard could this be?" and promptly went back to Sacramento State to get a license to prepare taxes. She worked helping friends and family around her schedule at Raley's but this self-described "people person", soon grew out of her home office.

Encouraged by her husband, Victor, she found an alliance with friend Realtor Don Miller (since passed) and shared the office space in the older building on the corner of B and First Streets.

"But, then I had rent. I was really scared and thought, oh no, what have I done? But, Victor was always encouraging," she said. It also helped that her clients were tremendously grateful, paying her any way they



could including boxes of oranges, vegetables, and strawberries, she explained with a laugh.

When Miller was aging, he offered Hortencia the whole building. There was rent and utilities but her husband said, "I know you can do it." They spent the next several years fixing the place up but then Miller died and the children who inherited it would not sell the building to her and gave the building to the library instead even though the Guerreros offered a fair price to purchase it.

"I believe in Karma and learned never to get mad over 'why?'" she said even though she was terribly disappointed. That kind of positive attitude saw her through the great recession that began in 2008 and that building to this day, never got fully renovated.

*Continued on page 3*

**Parade  
Cancelled but  
Open House is  
Hopeful**

**By Debra Dingman**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - This year's Mayfair Parade was officially cancelled due to COVID restrictions and posted on the Chamber website and social media at the end of March but the leaders are hopeful a casual Open House at the Chamber office can happen in April.

"The parade is a Chamber event and considering everything, we did not want to risk the health and safety of the participants or the thousands of people who attend. It is better to be safe," said Chamber CEO Shauna Manina.

The post on their website read, "With Solano County being on lockdown and then in the purple tier for so long, we would not have been able to get the required permits for an event of that size. Even in the red tier, the majority of large events are heavily restricted." The Board of Directors regretted cancelling the traditional event for the second year in a row.

A smaller gathering is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 28 from 4 to 7 pm at the Chamber office, 220 North Jefferson alongside the ReMax Gold Real Estate office.

"After a year of lockdown of one kind or another, I think everybody is really ready to get together," said Manina who is coordinating the free event with food and drink and possibly music. "There has been so much isolation and so many Zoom meetings, we're going to keep it small so we can keep socially distance. By spreading out the time frame, and being outside, we hope people will feel comfortable to come and join us." The Chamber hopes to resume its monthly business mixers in May.

For further information, contact the Chamber at (707) 678-2650 or via email at [info@dixonchamber.org](mailto:info@dixonchamber.org) if you have any questions. ★

# Hall Park Equipment Gets Happier

**By Debra Dingman**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - Little Mateo Mata peered over the edge of a bright green rail at his sister Sophia as they played on the brand new playground structure under the watchful eyes of their grandparents. The two new bright green and yellow structures were installed recently at Hall Park, 100 North First Street, in the children's play area next to the covered picnic tables at the end of the park. That's some happy news but there's more.

In the near future, Hall Park will also be receiving one new shade structure and across town at Northwest Park, there will be two new playgrounds plus one new shade structure thanks to some diligent work to



**Mateo and Sophia Mata enjoyed the new playground equipment at Hall Park recently. Photo by Debra Dingman**

find grant money by City of Dixon Community Development Director Larry Burkhardt.

"The grant was one discovered available through the State of California Natural Resources Agency through Parks and Recreation so it's an allocation based on a formula and they assign a certain amount of money to a municipality,"

*Continued on page 2*







# Ingredients for a Wonderful Life

By Debra Dingman

Talking to my hubby right before our son’s wedding, who hadn’t spent one minute on his role to give an important toast at the rehearsal dinner, he said he was ready. “What are you going to say,” I asked.

“Good luck. Be nice. Communicate. Have a happy life,” he responded instantly.

I’m happy to report that he did the most amazing toast and I am so proud. He built it on the premises of creating a great marriage recipe. Since both the groom and bride love to cook, it couldn’t have been more perfect.

“The chili you make together might not turn out as you expected ... too salty or spicy, but you learn so that the next time you will make the necessary adjustments and the chili turns out great. The same goes for marriage as you two are from different backgrounds and as you create your new life together, it may get too salty due to disagreements. But remember, your spouse is not your enemy and that any disagreement can be resolved with love, understanding, and respect for each other. Just like adding a little water or a vegetable to a salty soup can make the soup taste really good. We have no doubt that together you will create a recipe for a wonderful life together and we wish you all the

happiness in the world.”

I rented a charming little house in Chico so that all the family members could have a place similar to our Dixon home to gather and despite last minute cancellations and disappointments, I remained calm and said prayers for the vision of how I wanted it to turn out. It went perfectly.

Everyone gathered and the house was filled with little ones wearing their sparkly dresses and sharp shirts with ties and bathrooms were cluttered with curling irons, hair spray, and make-up. There were grown-ups looking their best with fancy shoes and best of all: photos capturing us altogether.

Even the groom dropped by for a last minute look from mom. My Daddy, who passed several years ago, was clearly the man I saw in front of me sans blonde hair and I was so proud.

Despite two days of anti-anxiety pills, I still choked up a million times and lost control of the tear ducts repeatedly. I like what my granddaughter told me.

“I think it would be weird if you didn’t cry, Nana. He’s your last child.” The rehearsal dinner went deliciously and the gifts from the bride to her bridesmaids and to her mother and I were large, beautiful paintings by the talented bride. Mine was of magnolias – perfect for living on Magnolia Court. Devon’s

groomsmen received watches made from wood.

The rain stopped and the outdoor ceremony was stunning with strong blue skies and puffy white clouds surrounded by lush greenery. The minister –who had also provided the marriage counseling – shared about the couple before us and then went through the traditional vows before they recited their own. I’m sure there wasn’t a dry eye in the place.

We all walked to the reception across the grounds to a large, white barn filled with twinkling lights, straw floor, and old-fashioned rod-iron chairs. Caitlin’s family is heart-warming and it was joyous to blend our relatives.

There were decorated charcuterie boxes tied with sky-blue ribbon and a sprig of rosemary to pick up and deserts later that the bride, who put herself through college as a pastry chef, made. When they drove off a few hours later in the little silver car decorated with trailing ribbons and ‘Newly Wed’ paint on it, I watched the dazzling bride wave out the window.

Throughout both days, there were hand sanitation tables and masks readily available. After having such a beautiful and surely the most perfect experience in the midst of government restrictions, it shows what I’ve believed all my life: the American spirit is strong and waking up in this country is still grand! ★

# Workforce Development Board Trains 50 in Digital Marketing

By EmilyLamb, Lending Tree

**SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Nearly 50 job seekers in Solano County will gain valuable skills and steady employment over the next five months through a digital marketing training program designed by Facebook that culminates with paid summer fellowships at local businesses.

The Workforce Development Board of Solano County is partnering with Facebook to bring Career Connections to the area, leveraging the network and business support of the Solano Small Business Development Center.

Following several weeks of applicant screening, 49 job seekers have been accepted into Career Connections. They will soon begin a one-month online training with Facebook to develop and sharpen their digital marketing skills. Each fellow will be placed in a Solano County business this summer where they will use their new skills to promote these businesses on social media platforms.

Both job seekers and business owners will have access to additional trainings and resources from Facebook throughout the summer. Participating business owners will also receive a \$500 Facebook/Instagram advertising credit. The fellows will be paid with federal workforce funds and the program is at no cost to business owners.

“Many of our business owners have realized the importance of having a strong digital presence over the past year but may have struggled with how to build that presence,” said Heather Henry, executive director of the Workforce Development Board of Solano

County. “At the same time, digital marketing is a growing opportunity that can be utilized in almost any industry. This project is a valuable resource coming at a very pivotal point in the pandemic recovery.”

The demand for digital marketers has grown considerably in the last decade with the rise in social media and online advertising – 29 percent in the last five years alone. The skills gained in digital marketing can also be utilized in management, scientific, technical, or medical industries, as well as the traditional advertising and public relation fields.

The job seekers selected for the Career Connections program come from all cities in Solano County. They include recent high school graduates, college students and seasoned professionals who want to develop their digital marketing skills.

For many, Career Connections is coming at an opportune time. Approximately 40 percent of the people who have lost jobs in Solano County due to the COVID-19 pandemic were between the ages of 20 and 34.

All job seekers in Career Connections will be paired with a job placement coach from the Workforce Development Board who will assist them in finding permanent employment following their fellowship.

The Workforce Development Board of Solano County provides employment-related services for job seekers and businesses in Solano County. The WDB also serves as host to the Solano SBDC, which offers free, individualized, and confidential one-on-one advising for existing businesses and start-ups with 500 or fewer employees. ★

# Hall Park Equipment Gets Happier

*Continued from page 1*

Burkhardt said. “We applied and we got it.” The grant was for \$177,592 but also required a 20 percent match from the City.

“We have also secured a \$150,000 planning grant to address other improvements,” Burkhardt said. The existing playground structures located at Northwest Park have been in use for nearly thirty years, and are in need of replacement. Burkhardt worked with Louren Kotow, the City’s Interim Public Works Director on getting the grant application prepared with the matched funding component.

“After those projects are completed, several replacements/enhancements will occur at both Northwest and Hall,” Kotow explained. “A few drinking fountains will be replaced with new versions that have dog bowls and bottle fillers in addition to traditional spouts and there will be new barbecues which will be concrete with city logos at the two new shade structures.” If there are remaining funds, they will be spent on concrete ping pong tables, and then additional smaller concrete barbecues, she added.

“Due to the time constraints associated with the grant application, we’ll know more details at the next meeting about what will

be installed and when it will be installed,” said Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Jocie Bair who has been told there are some contractor delays.

Other Commissioners are Loraine Hernandez-Covello, Charles King, April Seto, Angelic Villalpando, Mark Cooley and Student Rep. Dyrin Chavez. The next meeting will be via Zoom on Tuesday, April 27, as it meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 pm.

In addition to Hall Park which is actually located at East Mayes and South Fifth Streets, Dixon has other parks that have children’s playground equipment: Northwest Park on West H Street and Parkgreen Drive, Cornejo Park on Gill Drive and Wiegand Way, Patwin Park at West H Street and Pheasant Run Drive, and Veteran’s Park at 1300 Valley Glen Drive. There are also two without play structures but have picnic tables or benches: the Dixon Women’s Improvement Club Park on North First and B Streets and the Linear Path that runs Regency Parkway to North Lincoln Street.

There is also a park for furry friends via the Hall Park entry at South Seventh Street. For more information, contact the City of Dixon at (707) 678-7000. ★

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# A Heart of Gold

Continued from page 1

Needing to move, the couple found a commercial space foreclosure near the Dixon Police Station. They racked up credit cards and emptied their savings because they did not qualify for a commercial loan, but they bought it.

“This is Don’s desk,” Hortencia says as she lovingly spreads her hand across the smooth wood in the office at 155 West Mayes Street.

“I was born and raised here in Dixon. My Dad and Mom were immigrants working in the fields so I’m a Migrant Camp Child,” she said so, she “knows that life and is appreciative of how hard her parents worked to give them what they needed to survive. Witnessing the racism as a young child made me stronger and eager to make a difference. I try to do just enough so they can take it on their own. It is ‘free community work’ although I do get paid. I’m rewarded in the most unique ways.”

**A Son’s Death**  
The couple dove into paying off their debt while

making improvements to the building when a tragedy struck their family in December of 2008. Their 15-year-old son, Sam, suddenly died from exposure to E. coli, a large and diverse group of bacteria. Many strains are harmless, others can make people ill, severely ill or can be life-threatening, health officials said.

The whole family was devastated and Hortencia didn’t want to come back into her office. Victor, who worked 40 years at Campbell Soup on Pedrick Road, retired. The family tried to purchase a run-down house down the street and an empty lot to establish a memorial garden close to their office but ultimately the plans were not approved.

“My clients were my salvation,” Hortencia said. “This place looked like a florist in here,” she said. Hortencia has a large picture of Sam on the wall across from her desk where all she has to do is look up and he is there--a healthy-looking and handsome young man.

**More Space**  
Time went on and ultimately another opportunity presented itself. The owner of the other unit offered to sell. That was four years ago. They now own the whole complex after “scrimping and saving and having absolutely no money for three years again,” she said.

When the pandemic struck last year, lots of friends trying to keep busy offered their time to help improve the building including new concrete in back for parking, a patio area, and concrete even in the front. They also added beautiful new wrought iron fencing. There is a gold letter “S” welded in the entry gate to memorialize Sam. They just finished turning one unit into a spacious meeting room that is available for classes, meetings, workshops, or even a church group.

“I don’t know how long we can do this but we will as long as we can and hand it down to the children so we can take off on cruises,” she said with a smile. ★

# Dixon News Briefs

MPG Staff

## Planning Commission

The City of Dixon Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, April 13 at 7 pm. This advisory body to the City Council is always on the first Tuesday of the month. This meeting is still being planned for Zoom at press time. There is a link on the city website (cityofdixon.com) or you can call (707) 678-7000 for information. You can also call in via your phone if you do not have computer access. The agenda is posted on the Thursday before the meetings.

## Garage Sales

It is now permitted for garage sales to take place. One will still need to get a permit through the City Police Department, 201 West A Street, for an “administrative processing fee” of \$7. Just remember they are not open on the weekends so you need to get down there during the weekday.

If you’re an early riser, this is an entertaining thing to do on Saturday

mornings and you never know what bargain you can find. There is always someone moving, downsizing, cleaning out, or sadly, someone dies. In any case, there are plenty of unwanted around town and these can be very helpful ways to expand your clothing budget for children who grow out of clothes phenomenally fast.

Dixon also has a couple Facebook pages for posting garage sale info. One is called Dixon Deals and the other is called Dixon Online Garage Sales.

## Crafter’s Flea Market

Our favorite scrapbooking store, It’s All About the Scrapbook, has scheduled a Crafter’s Flea Market for June 10th through 12th but one has to register if you are planning to be a vendor at it earlier. One can find the details on the store’s website, Itsallaboutthescrapbook.com and then click on the calendar.

There will be a \$10 entry fee to participate and that gives the seller a vendor number and at the end of the weekend sales, the



A customer browses through tubs of crafting supplies and bargains, at It’s All About the Scrapbook store on North Lincoln in Dixon. Crafters need to start getting their items together and registering online now. Photo by Debra Dingman

store receives 30 percent and the vendor receives back 70 percent of their sales in a gift card to the store.

If you’re not a vendor but want to come to the event, it is free to shop. But, if you want to have first options, you can pay \$10 for being an “Early Shopper”.


“There are some really good bargains,” said Yvonne Lehares, shop co-owner. The store is located at 1670 North Lincoln and their phone is (707) 676-5252. ★



*Thank* **A Veteran Today**



**MEMORIAL NOTICE**  
**Claudine Thompson**  
September 24, 1943 to April 4, 2021



Claudine Thompson (77), of Dixon, CA, passed away on April 4, 2021 in Sacramento, CA.

There will be a Celebration of Life for Claudine at the Olde Veterans Hall located at 231 N 1st Street in Downtown Dixon, CA 95620 on April 15th, 2021 from 3:00pm – 6:00pm.

Claudine was born in a small house in Dixon on September 24, 1943, to Grant Joseph and Beadie Fanning. She went to school in Dixon and was a graduate of Dixon High. She married the love of her life, James W. Thompson on June 30, 1960 in Dixon at the Community Church. She worked as a Finance Analyst and Assistant Dean for the University of California, Davis and retired after dedicating 36 years of service. She was a devoted wife and mother who loved and supported her family dearly. She had a passion for tennis and played in a USTA tournament in Dallas which was the highlight of her tennis career. Claudine loved the Lord with all her heart and her greatest desire was that her family and friends

would come to be in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Claudine departed this life on April 4, 2021. She was preceded in death by her parents. Grant and Beadie Fanning as well as numerous uncles, aunts, and cousins.

Claudine is survived by her Husband and High School sweetheart; James W. Thompson, Son and Daughter in-law; Troy and Nancy Thompson, Daughter; Stephanie Thompson, Sister and Brother in-law; Shirley and James Humphrey, Grandchildren; Christopher and wife Stephanie Thompson, Sarah and husband Luke Zimmerman, Kaitlyn Thompson, Ashley Thompson, Anthony Parra, Rebekah Parra, Great Grandchildren; Frances Thompson, Davis Thompson, Hazel Thompson, Eliza Thompson, Bristol Thompson, Dawson Thompson and Cora Lou Heithaus. She also leaves behind her sister and brother in-law, Shirley and James Humphrey, and a host of other relatives and friends. One precious day, we will see her again with the Lord.

# California Roads Rank Among the Worst in the Nation Again

By EmilyLamb, Lending Tree

**SEATTLE, WA (MPG)** - QuoteWizard®, a LendingTree company, and one of the nation’s leading online insurance marketplaces released a new report finding that the more drivers are paying for roads, the worse their roads are. With deteriorating roads and bridges costing the average driver \$556 every year.

It’s the opposite of “you get what you pay for.” Drivers in some states are paying over \$800 a year, and our team of analysts at QuoteWizard found that between 25 - 50% of their roads are in poor condition,” said Nick VinZant, Sr. Research Analyst and Insurance Expert with QuoteWizard.

The new study also ranks states with the worst and best roads by compiling the latest statistics from the Federal

Highway Administration and Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

California ranked #7 with 35% non-acceptable roads, 7.2% poor bridge deck (sq.miles area), and \$862 cost per motorist per year.

The full report with all 50 states is available at <https://quotewizard.com/news/posts/states-with-worst-infrastructure>

Other key findings in the report include: Over 20% of U.S. and 6.1% of bridges are in poor or “non-acceptable” condition; How much of what drivers pay for roads, actually go towards road repair; Poor road conditions cost drivers nearly \$120 billion in vehicle repair and operating costs; Full ranking of all 50 states, along with how much drivers in each state are paying.

For more information, go to [quotewizard.com](https://quotewizard.com). ★

# Best Mom’s Day Present Waiting for Her

MPG Staff

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - Dixon’s Independent Voice Newspaper and the Kiwanis Club of Dixon are looking for the next Mother of the Year. Your entry could give your mother the best Mother’s Day present ever--the recognition as Dixon’s Mother of the Year.

Enter your mother or any other Dixon mom whom you believe exemplifies the finest qualities of motherhood, including helping children develop character especially by example; promoting family values; meeting both daily and extraordinary challenges of family life; showing charity towards others; and helping to improve the community through personal action.

There are three age groups for those submitting entries: 6th Grade and under; 7th to 9th Grade, and 10th Grade to adults. Essays should be no more than 500 words and should be accompanied by a recent family photo for publication when the award is announced.

A panel of Kiwanis Club members will judge all entries. The winner and two finalists will receive floral bouquets and other gifts.

Attach one of the entry forms to an essay no more than one-page about your mother and why she is the best. All entries must have a name, grade level or age and a phone number of the person submitting the entry. Written entries should be in an envelope with the words ‘Mother of the Year Contest’ written on the outside.

They can be dropped off at the Independent Voice Newspaper office at 100 N. Adams, Suite E, or mailed to Dixon Kiwanis, P O Box 1602, Dixon or emailed to [DixonKiwanis@hotmail.com](mailto:DixonKiwanis@hotmail.com). Entry DEADLINE is 5 pm on Saturday, May 1, 2021.

For more information, call Editor Debra Dingman at (707) 678-8917 or for information about joining the Kiwanis Club of Dixon, call Patti Sousa-Liu at (707) 635-3303. ★

# Neighborhood School Slates Book/Rummage Sale

MPG Staff

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - Getting it all out there at once! Dixon’s Neighborhood Christian School will be busy on Saturday, April 17, as they host two fundraisers into one day at Dixon Community Church, 955 East A Street. They are having a Used Book and Rummage Sale on Saturday, April 17th, along with a drive-thru Tri Tip Lunch fundraiser but reservations for the Tri Tip are April 12.

You can peruse books and items at the

rummage sale from 8:30am to 1:30pm and they noted there would be hundreds of books for all ages, especially children’s picture and chapter books.

The Tri Tip Drive-Thru Lunch will be 11:30 to 1:30 pm and costs \$15. Lunch will include smoked Tri Tip, potato salad, baked beans and dessert. A gluten-free option will be available. You can also purchase a whole smoked and sliced Tri Tip if you prefer. To purchase either lunch or a whole Tri Tip, call NCS at (707) 678-9336 by April 12. ★



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# The Silver Lining of Proposition 19



Senator Ted Gaines

**Commentary  
by Ted Gaines**

Proposition 19, The Home Protection for Seniors, Severely Disabled, Families, and Victims of Wildfire or Natural Disasters Act, was passed by voters last November, enacting significant changes to California’s property tax law. One provision of the measure – that concerning “parent-child” and “grandparent-grandchild” exclusions – triggered a massive property tax increase that took effect February 16.

Unfortunately for homeowners, the statute in its current state is a confusing mess. As a State Board of Equalization Member and dedicated taxpayer advocate, I continue to work closely with state legislators and county assessors to provide clarity and answer as many questions as possible for taxpayers affected by these provisions.

While Proposition 19 has some serious shortcomings – increasing taxes on tens of thousands of California families and making it more difficult and expensive to pass on property and family farms to your children and grandchildren – it does offer noteworthy tax

benefits to homeowners who are nearing retirement, severely disabled or victims of natural disasters. Beginning April 1, 2021, qualified homeowners can transfer their low Proposition 13 tax base year value to a replacement home of any value, in any of California’s 58 counties. Homeowners who want to downsize, move closer to family, or relocate for any other reason can blend the taxable value of their old house with the purchase price of a new, and possibly more expensive home, reducing the property tax burden they would otherwise face.

When voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition 13 in 1978, it was to rein in property tax rates that had spiraled out of control as county governments routinely raised property taxes, in many cases forcing families from their homes. The landmark ballot initiative placed restrictions on how much a homeowner’s taxable value could increase every year, even if a home’s market value grew substantially.

California voters later passed Propositions 60, 90, and 110, which extended Proposition 13 protections to homeowners 55 or older and people with severe disabilities by giving them a one-time opportunity to retain their Proposition 13 tax base if they moved to a home of equal or lesser value within the same county or to one of the 10 counties with an intercounty agreement.

Proposition 19 further expands Proposition 13 benefits by allowing eligible homeowners to

transfer their base year value up to three times. It also gives property owners whose homes were damaged or destroyed by a wildfire or other natural disaster the ability to transfer their Proposition 13 base year value to a new home. These provisions of Proposition 19 take effect on April 1, 2021 and give homeowners two years to transfer their base year value to a replacement residence in any county.

I support the base year transfer provisions of Proposition 19 because they allow more homeowners to take advantage of Proposition 13 protections that continue to be widely supported by California voters. While some of Proposition 19’s provisions hurt California taxpayers at a time when they need economic security the most, it’s always nice to have a silver lining.

Visit my website at [boe.ca.gov/gaines](http://boe.ca.gov/gaines) for more information on Proposition 19. I encourage all homeowners to check with their County Assessor for specific county regulations, policies, and any paperwork associated with base year transfers.

Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.) was elected in November 2018 to represent the Board of Equalization’s First District. He is a leading taxpayer advocate and is committed to providing trustworthy and transparent representation for nearly ten million constituents in 30 counties of northern, eastern, and southern California. For more information, visit [boe.ca.gov/Gaines](http://boe.ca.gov/Gaines). ★

# Upcoming Fund Event for Dixon Family Services

**By Cookie Powell,  
Dixon Family Services**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - There is a fund raising event planned for Dixon Family Services (DFS) on Friday, May 21 in the parking lot at 155 North Second Street (corner of B and 2nd). DRIVE and DINE for DFS is the name and the plan is to have a drive-thru barbeque from 4 – 6:30 PM.

Dixon Lions Club volunteers will cook and slice mouth-watering tri-tip beef. Others are welcome to provide additional food and necessary items to round out the meals. There will be a planning meeting in April to finalize all aspects and assign volunteers to all specific tasks related to the event to assure that the event will run smoothly and be a great success. The date and time for the planning meeting has not been scheduled yet and will be made public soon through DFS social media and in a future press release.

For the second year in a row DFS could not plan a Comedy Night but we are still optimistic that there WILL be a Comedy Night 2022. So many faithful supporters of DFS love that event and we promise it will be back! In the meantime the Drive and Dine is a Covid-19 friendly event in which participants do not even have to park or get out of their cars. This event will meet Covid regulations even if, Heaven forbid, Solano County goes back into the Purple Tier as it is currently being speculated.

Dixon Family Services has been helping Covid-19 affected households each week since March 2020 with their rent, utilities, food and other essential basic needs. The Drive and Dine will generate additional funds to allow DFS to continue assisting families, children and individuals struggling right now in our community.

Making a difference in our community through DFS can be as simple as purchasing a delicious meal ticket. Tickets are a \$35 donation and each dinner ticket also comes with 10 free raffle tickets and a chance to win the door prize. You will also have the pleasure of service to your car window by smiling (behind a mask of course) volunteers on a beautiful May afternoon.

Other ways to help the event to be profitable include being a Gold (\$1,000) or Silver (\$500) sponsor, making a financial donation of any amount and/or donating raffle prizes. All are good ways to support the event and to get recognition in our social media posts and press releases leading up to the May 21 event.

We already have some great prizes to win and you can check them out on the DFS Face Book and Instagram pages. Bring an extra \$20 bill if you’d like to purchase additional raffle tickets to increase your chances to win one or more of the great prizes.

Our social media team is Mae and Kaeli of Tully Consulting Group. Mae and Kaeli put in countless volunteer hours posting important information on the Dixon Family Services Facebook and Instagram pages about DFS services as well as other human services programs we think may be of help to people in our community.

One goal of a successful event is to have no items listed in the “expenses” column of the final report. It is our hope to have all required expenses donated. For example, our tickets were designed and printed by The Printing Shop for no charge. Area newspapers Dixon Tribune, Independent Voice and Vacaville Reporter provide free press coverage. The Solano Your Town Monthly gave us a free ad in the April Edition of the Dixon/Winters magazine. KUIIC provides free PSAs for DFS all year long with a special emphasis when we are putting on a fundraising event.

Businesses or individuals who would like to cover other event expenses, become sponsors or provide raffle prizes can call Cookie Powell at 707-678-0442, email [cookie@dixon-family-services.org](mailto:cookie@dixon-family-services.org) or call Sarah Vilcek at 707-678-5594. Cookie or Sarah can also help those who want to purchase tickets. Check out our Facebook and Instagram pages to learn more and please like us and help us spread the good word about Dixon Family Services.

As always, we are so very thankful for the support of our community. ★

# CONVERSATIONS

By Loran Hoffmann and Shirley Humphrey

## The Water Will Come

Last Year, Shirley was at a discussion group with one of the groups she belongs to. A friend said she was reading “The Water Will Come” by Jeff Goodell, which covers a touchy subject – climate change. Shirley decided to buy the book but did not get around to reading it until recently. Her biggest take-away? There are three groups of climate change groups – advocates, deniers, and those who may believe that sea levels are rising but are reluctant to admit in public. There are people who have a large stake in low-lying beach front real estate or own a stake in the fossil fuel industry which may be a contributing cause.

The real estate magnates are quietly planning to sell assets that are in the path before evidence of rates of sea level rise become stronger and property values begin to plummet. Likely the threatened coastal real estate will start losing its value as soon as extrapolated sea level rise rates put them at risk in 50 to 100 years, and not when the water is lapping at their porches. That process of quietly divesting has already started. And the economic impact will be huge when the scramble away from the coasts begins in earnest. Her personal belief is that it will be the entrepreneurs who will solve problems, rather the scientists.

The book is thought-provoking and a good read. We thought you might be interested in the following article by Kat Kerlin who has given us permission to share these TEN TIPS FOR CLIMATE ACTION with you. This article was originally published at the UC Davis Science & Climate website at: <https://climatechange.ucdavis.edu/what-can-i-do-about-climate-change/>

We are in a special moment, to say the least. Climate change is both a crisis and an opportunity. There are many ways we can collectively and individually act. Here are 10 ideas to get you started.

**1) Plant a tree.** We’ve been saying it since at least the ‘70s, and the message is equally urgent now. Trees provide not just beauty but shade, clean air, and to an extent, climate justice. Our most disadvantaged communities tend to be the most treeless, and that can mean a difference of 10 degrees extra heat in the summer for many warming cities, especially in the West.

**2) Get e-commerce savvy.** Are Amazon boxes piling up around you? Take advantage of delivery days, combine items together when you can, and only order what you need to help reduce the burden of e-commerce on the environment. This not only helps reduce emissions but also neighborhoods most impacted by delivery fleets. There are also many easy-to-find neighborhood upcycling and reuse

opportunities that may forgo the need to click that purchase button.

**3) Reduce vehicle miles traveled.** COVID-19 forced us to do this recently, with traffic slashed nearly in half during the first weeks of shelter in place. Let’s keep it up. Public transportation has taken a big hit during the pandemic, as well. We’ll need to find ways to reembrace it, as we also consider safety precautions. And go electric if you can.

**4) Eat a “balanced” diet.** The meat vs. no-meat argument can run hot and heavy, but balance is a great goal for body and environment. Without animals and the manure, they provide, there is no sustainable agriculture. The stronger need is moderation. And scientists are finding innovative ways to reduce emissions from livestock, which shrinks the hoofprint, err, footprint of the industry.

**5) Grow something.** Our homes, buildings and roads have eaten away habitat from other species. Replace some of it in your corner of the world with flowers and plants that attract bees, hummingbirds and other pollinators and critters. Gardening also can sequester carbon, help you reconnect with the earth and its natural processes, and it can do wonders for your mental health.

**6) Diversity and inclusion.** We can’t talk climate action without talking climate justice. Disadvantaged, underrepresented communities are on the frontlines of climate change – be it wildfire, extreme heat and even the pandemic. Encourage and advocate for a diversity of voices and backgrounds at the table when decisions are being made in your communities and workplaces.

**7) Check in on your neighbor.** What starts as kindness can make a real difference when a wildfire, pandemic or heat wave takes hold. Build community relationships and check up on each other for climate resilience and basic human decency.

**8) Support prescribed burns.** We have both a climate change problem and a forest management problem contributing to wildfires. One of several reasons for a lack of prescribed burns is a public distaste for them – and the smoke they intentionally create. Let your representatives know you support such measures so we can better handle the wildfires exacerbated by a hotter, drier present and future.

**9) Vote. Just vote.** If you want to see climate action, vote for people who support science and climate action.


**10) Subscribe** to season 2 of the UC Davis Unfold podcast for more inspiration and ideas for climate action at [ucdavis.edu/unfold](http://ucdavis.edu/unfold). ★



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The Lie of Georgia Voter Suppression

President Joe Biden is so committed to bipartisan cooperation and fact-based governance that he’s launched an ignorant and incendiary attack on the new Georgia voting law.

Biden says the new law is “Jim Crow in the 21st century” and “an un-American law to deny people the right to vote.”

It’s now practically mandatory for Democrats to launch such unhinged broadsides. Elizabeth Warren, accusing Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp of having stolen his 2018 election victory over Democratic activist Stacey Abrams (a poisonous myth), tweeted, “The Republican who is sitting in Stacey Abrams’ chair just signed a despicable voter suppression bill into law to take Georgia back to Jim Crow.”

Anyone making this charge in good faith either doesn’t understand the hideousness of Jim Crow or the provisions of the Georgia law.

The old Jim Crow was billy clubs and fire hoses; the alleged new Jim Crow is asking people to write a driver’s license number on their absentee ballot envelopes.

The old Jim Crow was poll taxes; the new Jim Crow is expanding weekend voting.

The old Jim Crow was disenfranchising voters en masse based on their race;

the new Jim Crow is limiting ballot drop boxes to places they can’t be tampered with.

It’s hard to believe that one real voter is going to be kept from voting by the new rules.

To better ensure the security, the law requires that voters provide a driver’s license or state ID number to apply for a ballot and one of those numbers (or the last four digits of a Social Security number) when returning the ballot.

The law narrows the window for requesting absentee ballots, although still allows plenty of time. A voter can request a ballot as early as 11 weeks prior to an election or as late as 11 days prior (any later risks the completed ballot not getting delivered in time).

Ballot drop boxes were a pandemic-era innovation in Georgia. The law keeps them, while limiting their location to early voting sites.

After getting blowback over proposed limits on weekend early voting when Black churches run their “Souls to the Polls” events, Georgia lawmakers expanded the potential for weekend voting.

The law gives the State Election Board more authority to take over local election operations, but there’s no doubt that election officials in Fulton County, where metro Atlanta is located and long lines at the polls are common, have been incompetent.

Perhaps most controversially, it bans people from distributing food or drink to voters standing in line, an effort to keep partisans from trying to sway voters near polling places. But poll

workers can provide food and drink for general use.

The deeper point is that in the contemporary United States, with such wide and ready access to the ballot, changes around the edges don’t disenfranchise people.

Georgia considered limiting no-excuse absentee voting to voters 65 and over. Even this wouldn’t have dissuaded anyone from voting. A study published by the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research found that turnout increased in 2020 just as much in states without no-excuse absentee voting as in states with it.

Strict voter ID laws have long been denounced as voter suppression. It’s not true. According to a 2019 working paper for the National Bureau of Economic Research, “strict ID laws have no significant negative effect on registration or turnout, overall or for any subgroup.”

And Democrats issued dire warnings about the effects of the Supreme Court in 2013 ending so-called preclearance that required federal approval of changes in the rules in certain jurisdictions.

This, too, was wrong. A paper by a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Oregon concludes, “The removal of preclearance requirements did not significantly reduce the relative turnout of eligible Black voters.”

None of the facts, though, can possibly overcome the attachment that Biden and other Democrats have to their emotionally resonant and politically powerful Jim Crow smear.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.  
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Disabled Americans Could Soon Face Healthcare Discrimination

Commentary by Angela F. Williams

Patients with disabilities are 11 times more likely to die from Covid-19 than their able-bodied peers. That’s a sobering statistic. And it’s why public health officials have prioritized these vulnerable patients for vaccinations.

Unfortunately, when it comes to non-Covid matters, society doesn’t always show the same concern. In fact, many states and private insurers are pushing for a “reform” that could deprive Americans living with multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy, and other disabilities of life-saving medicines.

The reform relies on a metric known as a “quality-adjusted life year.” These QALYs supposedly quantify the “cost effectiveness” of drugs by assessing the “quality” of an individual’s life. The use of QALYs should concern every American, but especially those living with disabilities or battling chronic illnesses.

When this metric is utilized, a drug that delivers one year of “perfect” health receives one QALY. A drug that provides a benefit – but doesn’t return a patient to “perfect” – receives a fraction of a QALY.

So, by design, QALYs devalue important treatments for chronically ill and disabled patients.

Since even breakthrough drugs will not restore perfect health in those patients, this puts them at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to accessing life-saving or life-improving drugs and medications. While there is no cure for blindness, MS, or cerebral palsy, new drugs can still dramatically improve patient well-being and longevity.

The British national health system regularly employs this tactic to deny coverage for advanced new therapies for chronically ill and disabled patients. Many other nations use QALY-like assessments to determine which medicines are available to patients.

The biggest advocate for their use stateside is the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review – or “ICER” – an influential Boston-based organization.

ICER’s evaluations impose brutally simplistic categories on complex diseases. For instance, the institute splits patients with spinal muscular atrophy that have received treatment into three rudimentary categories: mobile, requiring ventilation, and dead.



Patients with disabilities are 11 times more likely to die from Covid-19 than their able-bodied peers. Image by klimkin from Pixabay

That classification is offensively reductive. Spinal muscular atrophy is an extremely challenging condition that involves several gradients of incapacitation. Drugs can deliver significant improvements to patients’ well-being without moving them between those three categories.

Worryingly, the Institute has become very effective at getting large health insurers to utilize its metrics in their coverage decisions. And now New York health officials have begun using ICER metrics in their state-run Medicaid program, specifically to clamp down on access to advanced cystic fibrosis treatments.

ICER hasn’t been the only group working to jeopardize disabled Americans’ access to medication.

Shortly before President Trump left office, his administration announced a rule that ties the price of physician-administered drugs covered by Medicare to their cost in a select group of other developed nations. In doing so, then-President Trump imported the ruthless QALYs used abroad.

Countless Americans with disabilities rely on cutting-edge medications to live healthy, productive lives. Unfortunately, access to those drugs is now in jeopardy because of ICER and the Trump administration’s rule. As we navigate the ongoing public health crisis, we must work to ensure these individuals have the tools to thrive, not simply survive.

To truly protect the health of the one in four Americans living with disabilities today, policymakers must work to ensure that those most deserving of new medicines are able to access them.

Angela F. Williams is president and CEO of Easterseals, a leading provider of services for people with disabilities, veterans, and seniors. This piece originally ran in the Buffalo News. ★

Is California Driving Business Away?



By Dan Walters  
CALMatters

Is California killing the golden goose with taxes and regulations that drive businesses and their jobs to more hospitable states?

That question has been debated for years without a definitive answer, flaring up whenever there’s a high-profile move out of the state.

With the recent relocation of several well-known firms to Texas, along with one famous billionaire, Tesla’s Elon Musk, the question once again reverberates in political circles.

Musk first threatened to shift locales last year after his manufacturing facility in the Bay Area was hit with a pandemic shutdown order.

“Frankly, this is the final straw,” he tweeted last May. “Tesla will now move its HQ and future programs to Texas/Nevada immediately.”

“F\*ck Elon Musk,” Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, tweeted in response. Gonzalez, a San Diego Democrat and the Legislature’s most outspoken proponent of unionization, later added, “California has highly subsidized a company that has always disregarded worker safety & well-being, has engaged in union busting & bullies public servants. I

probably could’ve expressed my frustration in a less aggressive way. Of course, no one would’ve cared if I tweeted that.”

In December, Musk announced his personal move to Texas and his plans to expand activities in that state.

Last week, the Center for Jobs and the Economy, an arm of the California Business Roundtable, offered new grist for the debate by launching “CaliFormers,” a running list of companies that have relocated from California or expanded operations elsewhere.

“California policies have created the highest in the nation cost-of-living and strictest in the nation regulatory costs which have caused jobs in key sectors such as manufacturing to start-up, scale or relocate in other lower-cost states, sometimes just across the border from California,” the CaliFormers announcement declared.

“As we look to the future of our post-pandemic economy,” it added, “the shift of the tech industry and the movement of its executives and investors will significantly impact the stability and solvency of our general fund since the state’s progressive tax structure relies heavily on taxes paid by California’s highest earners.”

CaliFormers arrives on the scene not only as the perpetual debate heats up again but as the Legislature considers a new spate of bills that would impose additional costs on business and/or levy new taxes on business or wealthy individuals such as Musk.

CaliFormers gives the perpetual debate a factual underpinning, but it also falls short of a much-needed comprehensive analysis of the issue. Jerry Nickelsburg, who runs the Anderson Forecast, an economic research organization at UCLA, quickly criticized it for lacking context.

“The list does not sort by year or normalize by u-rate or employment,” Nickelsburg tweeted. “It does not track moves to CA. (e.g if a company adds 200 jobs in CA and moves 100 to TX it appears on the table as a move of jobs to TX). So, a nice graphic, but not very useful as an analysis.”

Nickelsburg makes a valid point. Obviously the issue is an important one. California depends on a vigorous private sector to provide jobs and indirectly provide revenues for the services that Gonzalez and other politicians want to expand. In fact, those one-percenters at the very top of the income ladder, such as Musk, are paying half of the state’s income taxes.

It’s so important that it deserves far more serious analysis. Gov. Gavin Newsom and the Legislature have immense research capabilities at their command and should order up a comprehensive and independent examination of whether California is becoming toxic to vital business activity. It’s time to settle the argument once and for all.

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

Search is on for Dixon's 2021 Mother of the Year

- Enter your Mother or ANY OTHER MOTHER who you believe exemplifies the finest qualities of Motherhood.
- Three age groups for those submitting entries:
  - Grade 4 and Under;
  - Grade 5 through 8;
  - and High School and Adults
- Essays should be no more than 500 words
- Please include recent photo for publication with the winning entries.
- Decisions of the judges are final.
- Essays must be submitted by 5:00 pm on Saturday, May 1st.



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Mom’s Name and Age

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Mom’s Phone

Nominator’s Name, Grade and Age (You)

Nominator’s Phone

Attach this form to an essay telling us why YOUR mom should be *Mother of the Year*. Essays should be less than 500 words. Please include a recent photo which may be published. Email, or Mail this form and the essay to:

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# Senators Dodd, McGuire to Chair Select Committee on Wine

By Paul Payne,  
Office of Senator Bill Dodd

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, and Sen. Mike McGuire, D-North Coast, have been appointed co-chairs of the Senate Select Committee on California’s Wine Industry for the 2021-22 legislative session. The pair will focus on mitigating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the wine industry.

“As we recover from the coronavirus pandemic, it is essential that California support the wine industry, which is a major economic and tourism driver for our state,” Sen. Dodd said. “Along with my partner, Sen. McGuire, the commission has made big strides in achieving competitiveness in a global market and innovations in sustainability. I look forward to taking on new challenges, building on our progress and helping to get the industry back on track.”

“These past twelve months have been among the most challenging for California’s wine industry. Through wildfires, weeks of smoke and now this pandemic, grape growers, farm workers and vintners are reeling. The work this committee does is more important than ever as the industry comes back stronger. We couldn’t be more grateful to continue our partnership with Senator Dodd and the hardworking members of the committee,” Sen. McGuire said.

The committee is made up of a bipartisan group of senators from around the state who are charged with overseeing the diverse issues affecting California’s wine industry. California makes 90 percent of all the wine produced in the United States. The California wine industry has an annual economic impact of over \$57 billion to the state and creates 325,000 jobs. The wine industry is also an essential part of California tourism, bringing in upwards of

23 million tourists annually. Wineries in the senators’ districts are a particularly integral part of local tourism, accounting for more than half of all tourist spending on wine throughout all of California.

Sen. McGuire is a third-generation Northern Californian, whose family farmed prunes and grapes in the Alexander Valley for nearly a half century. Sen. McGuire was elected to the state Senate in 2014, and is Chair of the Governance and Finance and Fisheries and Aquaculture Committees. He also serves on the Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and the Budget Subcommittee on Resources, among other committees, and serves as Assistant Majority Leader and Vice Chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus.

Sen. Dodd came to the Senate in 2016 after serving in the Assembly for one term and on the Napa County Board of Supervisors for 14 years. He chairs the Governmental Organization committee, which oversees broader alcoholic beverage issues. While in the Assembly, Sen. Dodd served as chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Wine. He has significant experience in advancing policies that preserve agriculture and open space and has served in leadership roles promoting California wines internationally.

Sen. Mike McGuire represents the 2nd Senate District, which includes all or portions of Sonoma, Marin, Lake, Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity counties. You can learn more about the district and Senator McGuire at [www.sen.ca.gov/mcguire](http://www.sen.ca.gov/mcguire).

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

# Sen. Dodd Lauds Surge in Wildfire Safety Support as Season Looms

By Paul Payne,  
Office of Senator Bill Dodd

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, issued the following statement in response to an announcement from Gov. Gavin Newsom that California would invest more than \$80 million to hire 1,400 new firefighters, bolstering fuels management and response efforts before the coming wildfire season:

“Given the wildfire devastation we’ve

experienced over the past five years, it is essential that we enhance our response capability to save lives and property,” Sen. Dodd said. “If there’s one thing we’ve learned, it’s the value of prepositioning firefighters and rapid deployment at critical times. Already we have made progress, and this investment builds on that success. Using funds previously approved by the Legislature, Gov. Newsom is expanding our ability to stop these fires quickly.” ★

# Vincent Hangman is Convicted of Domestic Violence Resulting in an Injury

Solano County District Attorney

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - On Friday, March 19, 2021, after a jury trial in Department 7 of the Solano County Superior Court, before the Honorable Tim P. Kam, the jury convicted Defendant Vincent Hangman of Domestic Violence resulting in an Injury in violation of Penal Code Section 273.5(a).

On December 10, 2020, at approximately 8:00 p.m., the victim, M.M., was having dinner with the defendant, his domestic partner of 13 years. The victim and the defendant had a disagreement

which enraged the defendant. The defendant immediately stood up and stood over the victim, who was seated in a wheelchair, and smashed a soup bowl over the victim’s head. The bowl broke into pieces and left lacerations on the victim’s head and hands. M.M. sought medical attention at Northbay Vaca Valley Hospital where he reported the incident to his treating nurse. The hospital contacted the Solano County Sheriff’s Office and Deputy Carter and Deputy Evanski responded to investigate the case.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Elena Ramirez. ★

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# COVID Crisis Triggers Increase in Elder Abuse and Prejudice Aimed at Seniors

By John Grimaldi,  
Assoc. of Mature American Citizens

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG) - There’s been a worrisome increase in cases of elder abuse since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, reports the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC]. The senior advocacy organization’s CEO, Rebecca Weber, says the surge is mainly due to self-isolation and other preventative measures that are in place to combat the spread of the virus.

According to the Website, PubMed.Gov, “Before the COVID-19 pandemic, elder abuse affected one in 10 American older adults annually. It has been assumed that the pandemic has brought with it a surge in elder abuse due to individuals ordered to stay at home combined with increased interpersonal stressors.”

The measures in place to deal with the pandemic can limit in-person visits by caregivers, friends and family, making it difficult for the elderly living on their own to cope with physical and mental needs, leaving them vulnerable to abuse, Weber explains. “And then there are those unpaid family caregivers who have been left with reduced incomes or no incomes at all as a result of the COVID crisis. The stress they are under can readily result in abuse.”

Nursing homes get most of the blame for elder abuse. But in too many cases, according to the National Center on Elder Abuse, the perpetrators are family members.

“Elder abuse is a widespread problem in America where 10,000 men and women celebrate their 65th birthdays each day; and where each year more people live longer than

ever before. It is no longer unusual for us to live to be as old as 80, 90 and 100 years or more these days thanks to healthier lifestyles and the miracle of modern medicine. But, with age come new vulnerabilities that can make any of us susceptible to the crimes of angry and greedy predators. And that’s why it is up to younger friends and family who truly care to keep a watchful eye open for anomalies that indicate older loved ones may be victims,” says Weber.

The Website sixtyandme reports that the most common type of abuse experienced by older Americans is neglect and that when senior citizens self-report abuse, statistics show that they are most likely to report financial abuse. “It is far more socially acceptable, at least in some people’s minds, to report that they have been scammed than to state that somebody sexually abused them.”

Meanwhile, a wave of “downright shameful intimidation” may be in store for the elderly as a result of COVID-19. The virus appears to have triggered a wave of prejudice directed at our older population, says AMAC’s Weber. Younger generations appear to be blatantly revealing ageist tendencies on social media with messages referring to the coronavirus with insulting epithets such as “boomer remover” and “coffin dodger.”

According to the medical journal, Psychiatric Times, “A Twitter analysis of 18,128 tweets between March 12 and March 21, 2020, showed that about one-quarter of all tweets [about 4,500] could be considered ageist, either because they included jokes or ridicule aimed at older adults or because their content downplayed the relevance of COVID-19 and/or implied their lives were less valuable.” ★

# Traffic Safety Partners Stress Dangers of Distracted Driving

California Highway Patrol Press Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California Highway Patrol (CHP), California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and Impact Teen Drivers (ITD) are working together this April to remind Californians of the dangers of not giving the road their full attention when behind the wheel as part of Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports 3,142 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers in 2019 nationwide. That same year in California, there were at least 18,698 crashes from distracted driving that resulted in 108 deaths and more than 13,500 injuries.

“Driving safely requires your full attention,” CHP Commissioner Amanda

Ray said. “Distractions put you and others on the road at risk. Together, with our traffic safety partners, enforcement, and the cooperation of the motor-ing public, we can save lives and eliminate this dangerous behavior on California’s roadways.”

Distractions are not limited to cellular phones. Other electronics, children, pets, and eating or drinking while driving can also divert attention and result in a crash.

Breaking distracted driving laws becomes more serious this year. Beginning July 1, a violation for using a handheld cellular phone or texting while driving will result in a fine and also add a point to the driver’s record for each violation occurring within 36 months of a prior conviction for the same offense.

“Distracted driving is a serious issue that is 100


percent preventable,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “That text, phone call, or social post is never more important than the task of driving.”

As part of Distracted Driving Awareness Month, the first week of April is California Teen Safe Driving Week. Throughout the week, CHP and ITD will place an increased emphasis on informing California’s newest drivers about the dangers and consequences of reckless and distracted driving.

“Parents, your kids have been watching you drive since they were in a forward-facing car seat,” Kelly Browning, Ph.D., executive director of ITD, said. “Your driving habits will become their driving habits – be the driver you want your kids to be.”

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





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By Amy Shane

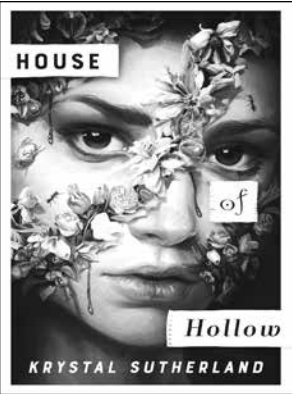
BOOK REVIEW & SPECIAL EVENTS EDITOR • ✉ amy-shane@att.net • 📷 amy\_fortheloveofbook

House Of Hollow

by Krystal Sutherland

The Hollow sisters have always been a little off. Their notable pale white hair and black eyes visually set them apart, but their intoxicating presence makes them a force to be remembered. Once known for mysteriously disappearing as children, Grey, Vivi, and Iris instantly became local legends when they returned a month later, naked, in the street, with no memory of where they had been. The only clue they brought back were the identical moon-shaped scars at the base of each of their necks.

Now, ten years later, all Iris wants to do is quietly finish high school, but with two globetrotting celebrity sisters, sinking into the shadows is not a possibility. Then Grey, Iris’s celebrity, fashion designer sister, goes missing setting the social media world on fire. Is this a repeat of ten years prior, or simply a ruse? As Isis and Vivi start their own search, a trail of mysterious clues starts to resurface, opening the door to more haunting truths than either of them are prepared to unearth. When they discover Grey’s apartment dripping with rotted green marrow



- ◆ Publisher: Putnam Books
- ◆ Hardcover, 352 pages
- ◆ Intended Audience: Young Adult
- ◆ Rating: ♥♥♥♥♥

and blooming white carnation flowers they feel as if they are in a place hovering between life and death. But when a dark figure with the head of a bull’s skull emerges from the shadows, Iris instantly becomes aware that the mystery of her past is starting to unravel, pulling them back to a place she is unsure they will be able to escape.

In a story that reads like a haunting Grimm’s fairytale, *House of Hollow* will overpower its readers with the intoxicating lure of the Hollow sisters. A story that takes its time to unfurl its tempting bloom, readers will

suddenly realize they have been trapped in a nightmare where the stench of rotting flesh rises from the ground, and dark memories chase you at every turn. Hauntingly beautiful in every way, *House of Hollow* will wind its way into the heart of its reader. The rich descriptive details will have dark visualizations leaping from the pages, allowing readers to see shapes lingering in the forefront and flowers blooming in the shadows. Krystal Sutherland has the ability to take her readers right to the edge of reality, dangling the place between life and death like a carrot on a string. Yet also delivers a powerful story of the inseparable bond of sisterhood and the lengths one will go to save their family.

Skirting on the edge of horror and fairytales, this atmospheric read will take readers deep into the place of the in-between, where once you enter, you will never be the same. Krystal Sutherland has found her calling, like a whisper from a dark shadowy place, young adult horror is a place that will welcome her with open arms. ★



Snowpack Remains Well Below Average

Hopes for a March miracle have dissipated, with the Sierra Nevada snowpack remaining at about 60% of average – the same as when the month began. The state Department of Water Resources will conduct a manual snow survey Thursday, with early April typically being the time the snowpack reaches its deepest level. Both state and federal water projects announced last week they would reduce or delay deliveries due to the dry winter and other restrictions.

Report Says U.S. Should Invest More in Agricultural Research

Public spending for agricultural research has remained flat for the past decade, and a new report says that threatens the nation’s future agricultural productivity. The study says there’s particular need for public research in crop breeding, crop protection, climate change, animal health, animal disease and foodborne illness. Although private-sector research funding has increased, the report says that tends to focus on a relatively narrow set of topics.

Barley Study Focuses on Climate Adaptation

To help learn how cereal crops adapt to different climate and weather conditions, a University of California professor and students will evaluate a collection of plant genes dating back nearly a century. UC Riverside says the study will focus on barley, comparing genes from plant collections. The work aims to help researchers understand which genes allowed barley to adapt to weather, as opposed to diseases or other pressures.

Forecast Predicts Larger Strawberry Crop

The season started slowly, but California strawberry production should ultimately be larger than last year’s, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In a new report, USDA says California farmers planted more strawberries last fall, which should lead to a bigger harvest this season. The report says Americans’ strawberry consumption has more-than-doubled since the turn of the century, with both domestic and foreign supplies rising to meet the increased demand ★

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A TV Review by Tim Riley

“NOBODY” RATED R

The feeling of getting back into a movie theater to enjoy a film on the big screen, as it is meant to be, is exciting. As entertainment venues reopen, the best advice is to jump at the chance, and take in “Nobody” for starters.

Never would it be a logical thought that Bob Odenkirk, well-known as Jimmy McGill in “Better Call Saul,” would superbly play an action role like that of Liam Neeson or Keanu Reeves in “Taken” and “John Wick,” their respective franchise films.

In most of these action films, even going back to Charles Bronson in “Death Wish,” the premise of the genre has bad guys messing with the wrong guy. That formula works, but what if the villains mess with a normal guy who is not perceived as a threat?

Odenkirk’s Hutch Mansell is a suburban family man living a mundane life with his wife Becca (Connie Nielsen) and a teenage son and young daughter. Everyday of the week is the same boring routine for this pencil pusher at a tool and die company.

Two robbers break into the Mansell home one night, and Hutch can’t bring himself to defend his family even when his son is in danger. After suffering indignities from co-workers and an obnoxious neighbor, Hutch morphs into vigilante mode.

What turns Hutch from a meek office drone into a fighter with a skill set that could have only been acquired by a trained pro is his hot rage and burning desire to retrieve his daughter’s kitty cat bracelet.

Once he was an auditor for a three-lettered federal agency, but he had to be doing something more than crunching numbers. Riding on a bus, Hutch goes full John Wick on a bunch of nasty Russian thugs who are taunting a young female passenger.

One of the victims of Hutch’s beat-down is the brother of unhinged Russian gangster Yulian (Alexey Serebryakov), a man so ruthless and lethal that he would ordinarily be a caricature, but here he’s truly scary and dangerous.

The revenge-minded Yulian, backed by an army of violent trigger-happy henchmen, track downs Hutch’s identity from a discarded Metro card, thereby setting the stage for fireworks.

The Russians didn’t figure on their target having a lot of tricks up his sleeve, to say nothing of his nerve to show up at their nightclub with an unmistakable message not to mess with him.

It’s great to see Christopher Lloyd, as Hutch’s father living quietly in a rest home watching westerns, take up arms with his son, and joined by Hutch’s adoptive brother Harry (RZA), when the trio lure Yulian

and his thugs to a wild, brutal climactic showdown.

A barrage of fists, knifings and gunfire, “Nobody” works on the visceral thrills of witnessing truly awful human scum getting the living daylights knocked out of them by the vigilante. Now you know what to expect.

“ROBIN ROBERTS PRESENTS: MAHALIA” ON LIFETIME

Watching a biography of any famous person that is meant to be entertainment invariably raises questions about the veracity of dialogue and the events that define the life of the subject.

Lifetime Channel’s “Robin Roberts Presents: Mahalia” is no exception for New Orleans native Mahalia Jackson, widely and appropriately known as “The Queen of Gospel,” a black singer who hewed closely to her deeply-held religious beliefs.

In her own right, Danielle Brooks, Tony Award-winner for best performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in the musical “The Color Purple,” has the strong voice needed to portray Mahalia Jackson, who also had the fortitude to resist entreaties to sing the blues.

More than vocal cords tie Brooks to the gospel crooner. During the press tour, Brooks acknowledged that “Mahalia stood firm on her faith with God,” and that she felt connected to Mahalia for having to “lean on God when I felt like I couldn’t do things.”

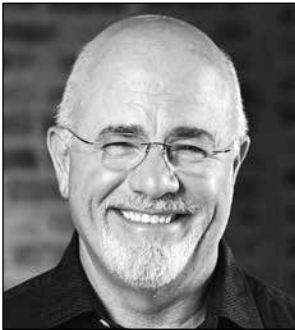
Generous of spirit and kind of heart, Mahalia’s upbringing in a childhood of dire poverty taught her to care for the needs of others. She would also barnstorm at tent revivals in the South during the Jim Crow era, showing courage to overcome racial hostilities.

Auditioning for a Chicago stage production early in her career, Mahalia encounters a young boy on the street eager to be a part of it. Mahalia takes the boy home for a meal, much to the chagrin of then-husband Isaac (Jamall Johnson).

As told in this movie, the boy named John (Benjamin Charles Watson) never returns to the streets, effectively becoming Mahalia’s adopted son or so it would seem.

However, searching for information about the putative adopted son comes up empty, leading to the possible deduction that John’s presence is a story construct to add another dimension to Mahalia’s life.

Mahalia Jackson’s story needs more time than allotted for a TV movie. From her early struggles, to a friendship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and civil rights activism, and to singing at Carnegie Hall, “Mahalia” should have been a mini-series to do justice to her life story. ★



Not Really an Emergency

Dear Dave,

My husband and I are close to having our home paid off and being completely debt-free. Can we dip into our emergency fund to pay off the house?

–Enid

Dear Enid

I’m not sure I’d recommend doing this. I might think about it if your emergency fund is way too big, plus you have a very small amount left to pay on your home. But remember, your emergency fund should be three to six months of expenses – not income. On top of that, paying off your home a few months earlier isn’t exactly an emergency.

Believe me, I understand the feelings that go along with being so close to becoming completely debt-free. It can be tempting to throw a bunch of money at your house, and get rid of the mortgage payments. Still, even as much as I hate debt, I

Dave Ramsey Says

wouldn’t put my emergency fund at risk to make it happen.

When you do things like that, Enid, you’re just begging for Murphy to come visit. The moment you write a big check and weaken your emergency fund for something that isn’t an emergency, the transmission in your car will go out or you’ll have to replace the central unit on your home. It’s not worth the risk!

–Dave

Getting Started

Dear Dave,

Should I catch up on my past due bills before saving up \$1,000 for Baby Step 1?

–Sharyn

Dear Sharyn

That’s exactly what you should do. Get current or make payment arrangements with everyone who’s willing to work with you first. In the process, make sure you’re keeping your own living necessities in mind – food, shelter, clothing, utilities, and transportation.

After you’ve done that, and saved a beginner emergency fund of \$1,000, start your debt snowball and pay off all your debts from smallest largest, except for your home. That’s Baby Step 2. In Baby Step 3, you’ll

save up and increase your emergency fund from \$1,000 to a full three to six months of expenses. Once you reach this point, you can really start looking toward the future.

In Baby Step 4, start investing 15 percent of your income into Roth IRAs and other pre-tax retirement plans. College funding for the kids, if there are any, is next in Baby Step 5.

Baby Step 6 is a big one, because this is where you pay off your home early. But Baby Step 7 is the real deal. This is when you’re completely debt-free, and you’re able to build wealth like crazy and give with outrageous generosity!

–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 16 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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**Crossword Puzzle on Page 8**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| C | R | E | D | O |   |   | H | I | L | T |   | M | A | L | I |   |   |
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**Sudoku Puzzle on Page 8**

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

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**CLUES**

ACROSS

- Type of tide
- Sin over tan
- Schooner pole
- Part of temple floor plan
- Made a basket
- \*Main artery in the body
- \* \_\_\_\_carotene
- Swear, not curse
- Reputation-damaging gossip
- \*Physicist of theory of relativity fame
- Salty drop
- Turn upside down
- Mark on Pinterest
- \*Everything around us
- Porch in ancient Greece
- Not St. or Blvd.
- Percussion instrument
- \*"Aim High... Fly-Fight-Win" org.
- Walks like Long John Silver
- \*"Dog \_\_\_\_ dog"
- Like TV or phone in 2021
- Measuring roll
- Catch in a net
- Gorilla or orangutan
- Pull-over parkas
- \*One of B-vitamins
- Anger
- Open disrespect
- Full of excitement
- \*Explanations that can be tested and verified
- Words to live by
- Sword handle
- Large West African republic
- \*"Encore!"
- Unrivaled
- From a second-hand store
- Cleopatra's necklace
- Second solfa syllable, pl.
- Makes stitches

DOWN

- Pick up a perpetrator
- Dueling weapon in "The Three Musketeers"
- \_\_\_\_ Spumante
- Treat for Dumbo
- Witches' get-together
- Egg-shaped
- Made with stitches
- \*Product of mass and velocity of an object
- \*Equals length times width
- \*Alpha Centauri A, e.g.
- Toni Morrison's "\_\_\_\_ Baby"
- Like rheumy eyes
- On the move
- Four-eyes' gear
- Short for "politician"
- Tiny European republic
- Type of flu
- Moderate, e.g.
- Toupee spot
- \*Scientist Newton
- \*Wrist bones
- More than occasional
- Department store department
- "Pow!"
- \*Mendeleev's \_\_\_\_ table
- Bake, as in eggs
- Make bigger
- Persnickety
- \*Ar, inert gas
- Bad blood
- Use a shoe polish
- \*Smallest units of life
- Jason's ship
- Wheel inside old clock
- God of thunder
- Alleviate
- Boatload
- Tom of "Tom and Jerry"
- Dog tags

**Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 8**

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 62 |    |    |    |    |    | 63 |    |    |    | 64 |    |    |

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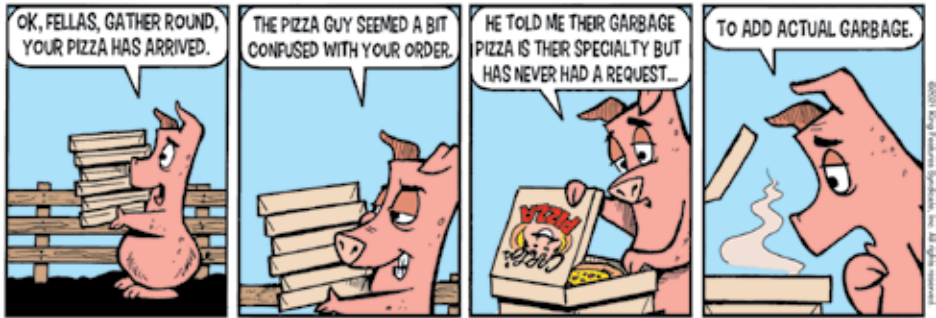
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**Solutions on Page 8**



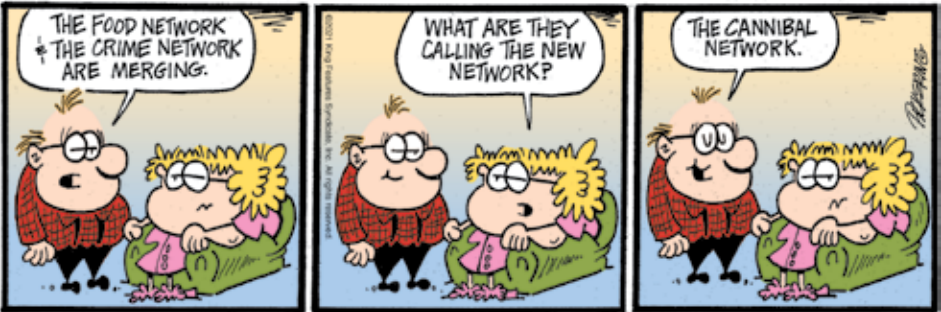
WEEKLY COMICS

Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps

The Spats



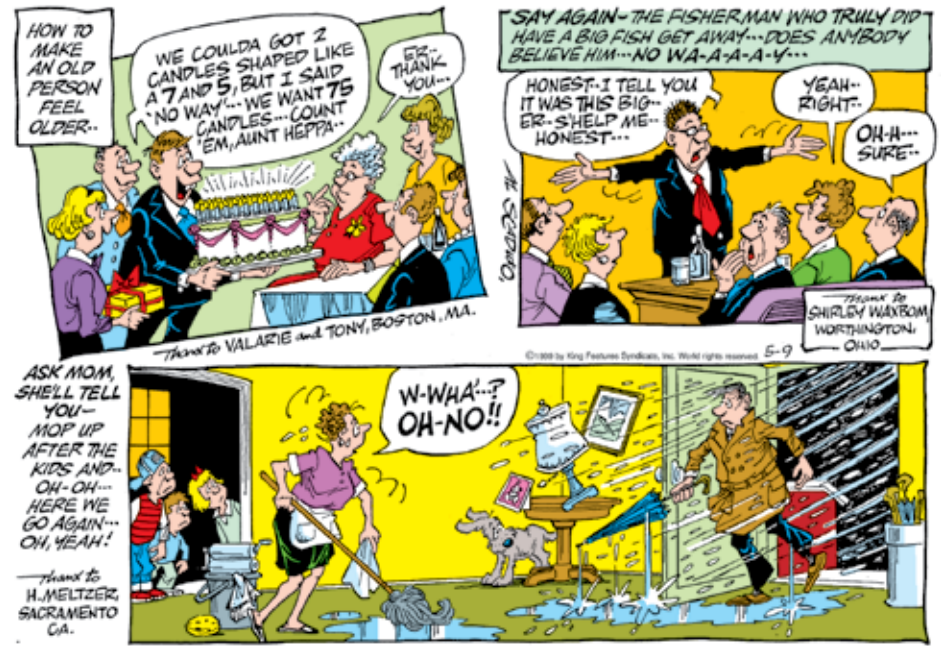
by Jeff Pickering

Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



BY AL SCADUTO

R.F.D.



by Mike Marland



Just Like Cats & Dogs

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# UC Davis Researchers Targeting Yellow Fever Mosquito

By Kathy Keatley Garvey, UC Davis

**DAVIS, CA (MPG)** - One reason for the successful spread of the yellow fever mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, to at least 17 California counties since 2013--from the Mexican border to Shasta County--may be linked to its resistance to pyrethroids, according to newly published UC Davis research examining genetic markers of resistance at five state locations.

The work, published in the current edition of *Parasites & Vectors*, a BioMed Central open-access medical journal, focuses on “determining how informative well-established genetic markers of resistance to pyrethroids are in predicting the resistance phenotype of individual mosquitoes of *Aedes aegypti* within a population,” said lead author Geoffrey Attardo, medical entomologist-geneticist in the UC Davis Department of Entomology and Nematology.

“Specifically, we generated mosquito colonies from invasive *A. aegypti* populations from four locations in the Central Valley (Dinuba, Clovis, Sanger and Kingsburg) and from collections in the Greater Los Angeles Area,” he said. “Mosquitoes from these populations have all demonstrated resistance to pyrethroid-type insecticides and we think this may be part of the reason why these mosquitoes have been so successful in spreading throughout California.”

*A. aegypti* transmits such viruses as dengue, Zika, chikungunya, and yellow fever. Despite California's aggressive surveillance and treatment efforts, this species presents a “significant challenge to local control agencies,” the nine-member team wrote in their research paper, “Frequency of Sodium Channel Genotypes and Association with Pyrethrum Knockdown Time in Populations of Californian *Aedes aegypti*.”

The paper is online and publicly accessible at <https://bit.ly/3vmUxXR>.

“What was interesting was that while all the mosquitoes from California show resistance to pyrethroids, there is a lot of variability from one individual to the next in terms of the level of resistance, even when they are carrying genetically identical resistance mutations,” Attardo said. “In



Yellow fever mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*. Photo courtesy UC Davis

particular, there seem to be two levels of resistance in these populations. The two levels seem to represent a resistant group and a super resistant group. However, the proportions of resistant/super-resistant differ in the sampled mosquitoes from population to population.”

Of particular interest was that mosquitoes carrying the resistance mutations at all five genetic locations were very resistant, he said. “However, there was also a large amount of unexplained variability in terms of the knockdown phenotypes demonstrated by mosquitoes of the same age and rearing conditions. We compared the knockdown times of mosquitoes positive for all five resistance mutations from different populations and found that these mutations account for only a proportion of the observed level of resistance. We believe that the unexplained variability is likely being mediated by the presence or absence of an undefined resistance mechanism.”

The next step? “Trying to understand what other resistance mechanisms might be present, to identify them, and see if they can be used to develop new methods to monitor pyrethroid resistance levels with a higher degree of accuracy,” Attardo said, adding that “This is especially important as

the frequency of the para gene mutations in the populations has increased yearly and will eventually become fixed if this trend continues. This will make them non-informative for use in detection of resistance. If we can develop a more accurate method to measure resistance in mosquito populations, it will be beneficial to vector control agencies/districts for development of pyrethroid resistance management strategies.”

In launching the project, the researchers designed an assay “to test for the presence of mutations in the gene coding for the pyrethroid target protein, the voltage gated sodium channel (the para gene),” Attardo explained. “Detection of these mutations is used to monitor the level or resistance in populations. However, the actual link between the effect the genotype has on the phenotype of individual mosquitoes has not been looked at in detail. “

The scientists identified mutations from genetic sequences of Californian mosquitoes provided by co-author Yoosook Lee, a former UC Davis mosquito researcher now at the University of Florida-Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory, Vero Beach.

The authors also include research entomologist Anthony Cornel and staff research associate Katherine Brisco of the Mosquito

Control Research Laboratory, Kearney Agriculture and Extension Center and UC Davis Department of Entomology and Nematology; and Lindsey Mack, Erin Taylor Kelly, Katherine Brisco, Kaiyuan Victoria Shen, Aamina Zahid, and Tess van Schoor, all with the UC Davis Department of Entomology and Nematology.

First, they tested the individual resistance phenotype of mosquitoes by placing them into bottles coated with the pyrethroid insecticide permethrin, and observed them to determine how long it takes for them to respond to the insecticide. Said Attardo: “This is a modified version of the assay used by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to evaluate phenotypic resistance in groups of mosquitoes.”

Then they isolated the DNA from and performed a high-throughput genetic analysis on each individual to determine the composition of the five mutations in each individual. Next they looked at the resulting data to see how well knockdown time correlates with individual genotypes of mosquitoes.

Although *A. aegypti* was first detected in California in 2013, researchers believe that its arrival involved multiple introductions. Populations in Southern California are thought to have crossed the border from Mexico, while Central Valley populations may have been introduced, in part, from the southeastern United States.

“Upon detection in 2013, the Consolidated Mosquito Abatement District implemented an integrated vector control management strategy which involved extensive public education, thorough property inspections, sanitation, insecticide treatment at larval sources and residual barrier spraying with pyrethroids,” the authors wrote. Despite their efforts, the species successfully overwintered and continued to spread, implicating that it arrived in California with genetic mutations “conferring resistance to the type I pyrethroid insecticides applied for vector control in California.”

The project drew financial support from the Pacific Southwest Regional Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Diseases, funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ★

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