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Dixon

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A Miracle Model A

Bob Stranger Glimpses Labor of Love Thanks to Maloney's Auto



The team that diligently worked to bring new life to Bob Stranger's Model A Truck (L-R): Crystal Kindred, Jesus Garcia, Jason Reyes, Virgil Brosseau, and Justin Pendergraft. Courtesy photo

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - It was Christmas Eve when a rumbling sound was heard through the crisp winter air as two men drove up to a rural Dixon home with a unique and special surprise for Bob Stranger. His loving family turned the wheelchair so he could see it coming up the road. Then, there were no words; just a couple lines of tears running down the pale, thin skin as he went twice around the restored 1930 Model A truck – his other love of 40 years. He stopped eating after that and died peacefully New Year's Eve.

The story started about six months ago when Bob Stranger walked into Maloney's Auto Repair and Restoration Shop in Vacaville to

discuss his decades-long effort to get his old Model A pickup truck running again. At that first consultation, he told shop owners, Virgil Brosseau, Justin Pendergraft and Jason Reyes, that he'd been working on it for years and never could get it to run. There was a lot involved with the logistics to tow or pick up, they said, but they did it. They got it and within a couple weeks, they could start the engine.

"When he heard it fire up (over the phone,) he said he'd be there in 15 minutes. He drove himself here and got out of the car unassisted," said Brosseau who had added a chassis, the motor, and had assembled a plywood dashboard – but nothing was connected.

"The goal then went from getting

it running, to driving it himself," Brosseau said.

Two weeks before Thanksgiving, Bob called and had the guys meet him out in the home he was sharing with his daughter and her family and showed them the nearby property sporting a "garage." This was the only structure left standing after the LMC fires had consumed their home, cars, and all of their belongings. They had barely escaped but somehow, the garage was left unscathed and the unassembled Model A inside. Bob handed them the keys and said he wanted to see the cab on it.

"It was a garage full of parts. Everything was disconnected and spread out all over the garage. So we

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Seniors 65+ Now Eligible to Receive COVID Vaccine

By California Department of Public Health

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

- In order to increase the pace of COVID-19 vaccine distribution to those at greatest risk, the state is prioritizing individuals 65 and older to receive the vaccine as demand subsides among health care workers.

"There is no higher priority than efficiently and equitably distributing these vaccines as quickly as possible to those who face the gravest consequences," said Governor Gavin Newsom. "Individuals 65 and older are now the next group eligible to start receiving vaccines. To those not yet eligible for vaccines, your turn is coming. We are doing everything we can to bring more vaccine into the state."

Those in Phase 1A – health care workers and long-term care residents – remain the highest priority to receive vaccines. Demand for the vaccines continues to far exceed supply.

"With our hospitals crowded and ICUs full, we need to focus on vaccinating Californians who are at highest risk of becoming hospitalized to alleviate stress on our health care facilities," said Dr. Tomás Aragón, Director of the California Department of Public Health and State Public Health Officer. "Prioritizing individuals age 65 and older will reduce hospitalizations and save lives."

Following a bipartisan letter from nine governors including Governor Newsom on January 8, the CDC announced changes yesterday to its vaccine plan including making more of the coronavirus vaccine supply available to all states. Along with the increase in vaccine supply, the federal government encouraged states to expand the pool of those eligible to receive the vaccine to individuals 65 and older.

The Governor also announced a new system to let people know if they are eligible to receive a vaccine, and if not yet eligible, to register for a notification via email or text when they are eligible. That system is expected to launch next week. A second phase of that system will help counties, cities and others run mass vaccination events. This will include a way for eligible members of the public to schedule

Continued on page 2

Dixon's Small Business Awarded Grants

By MPG Staff

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Several Dixon businesses were awarded grants from the Solano Workforce Investment Board of Solano County and Solano County's Business Development Center, in partnership with Solano County, announced the recipients.

The Dixon recipients are: Central Vallejo Physical Therapy in Dixon with three employees received \$8,844. Curves/JennyCraig with one employee received \$4,753. Dentist Kristina Wiley with 12 employees received \$18,075.

"It really made us feel like the State and the Small Business Development Center were supporting us," said Curves/JennyCraig Co-Owner Dorothy Luedke. They are open for business and hoping to recover their full membership since the shutdown. "We have 70 members now but had more than 100 prior to COVID," she said.



Farm to Fork Restaurant received a grant of \$24,000 to keep business going during the pandemic shutdowns. (Courtesy photo)

Dentist Kristina Wiley with 12 employees received \$18,075 which is being used for portable chair and equipment that will be used in an isolated room for immunocompromised patients or emergency situations, Wiley explained.

"I work with a lot of special needs children and since the virus won't be gone soon and now in an emergency, I have a place to treat them. This will really help. I felt the paperwork was simple and they were very supportive," she added.

Rosemary's Farm to Fork Restaurant with 12 employees received \$24,000 and were significantly responsible for the pergola built in the back of Ferguson Alley for several restaurants to use.

"The (application) paperwork wasn't all that bad and it really helped with the whole entire year," said Rosa Barron of Rosemary's. "We worked as hard as possible but there wasn't a huge profit margin so getting that was really nice."

Ruhstaller's with 15 employees received \$5,800. The Super 8 by Wyndham with seven employees received \$7,150. And, The Frying Pan in downtown restaurant with 8 employees received \$3,807.

There were 218 small businesses selected representing every Solano County city and the unincorporated areas. Of the awardees, 94% have an employee count under 20 and 85% are minority owned. ★

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Subscribe! Before You Miss Your Morning Read

By Debra Dingman

There are still some people out there who don't know what they are missing. The new owner of the paper took over last March and for months now, we've been covering Dixon like you haven't seen in years. But there are still people surprised and didn't know until I call them for a good quote or a story idea.

If you are one of those people and just discovered us, please go to our back issues at IndependentVoice.com and check out all the wonderful stories about your friends and neighbors right here in Dixon.

Before your newspaper disappears again from your driveway, you might want to subscribe. It is the one sure way to keep the local news coming to you. We deliver about 3,800 copies of the Independent Voice free to neighborhoods all over Dixon so you'll get hooked on our great product.

But then we want to introduce new people in other neighborhoods to the paper so you will suddenly not have it. (That's when I usually get a call that someone didn't get his paper.) I always ask if they are a subscriber first...

Your something-wonderful-to-read while you drink your morning coffee or tea will be missing. Okay, I know I'm really creating a black and white scene of very old "Leave it to Beaver" days in your mind and you might be happily swiping away on your phone during your morning Dutch Bros. but some people still enjoy reading print media. And, where else are you going

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GETTING FIT

Some people have asked how my COVID weight-gain-and-loss is going. I'm happy to report that I have walked almost every night. We now carry flashlights because it is dark by the time I get home and change to tennis shoes. When it was raining, I went in circles around the dining room table while watching television. I have gotten on the bike occasionally.

I've eaten "clean" and healthier since Thanksgiving. I also have drank more water, celery juice, and lemon juice than I have ever in my life. I've eaten less of the right things than ever. I've chewed more gum than ever. I feel truly as fit as I can be.

But, the scale has never budged. Well it has maybe a couple pounds but I know from experience that could come back on me over a weekend with pizza for dinner so that smidgen of an amount doesn't count in my book.

The wedding is now four weeks away. I have shopped for Mother of the Groom in Plus size. With the right clothing, one can still look pretty... I have just begun to jog with these older legs and arch support shoes. Wish me luck. ★



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City Council Decisions: Another Million for Pardi Phase 2

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - The last couple council meetings had a series of 5-0 votes with two new councilmen, no women, and a 9-year council veteran as Mayor, but the first meeting of the new year showed an inkling of individual thinking and openness to hear from the public.

In the public hearing portion of the meeting, the first item of discussion was to establish the offices of the Elected City Clerk and the Administrative City Clerk and denote their duties brought forth by City Attorney Doug White. The job duties for each were approved unanimously.

The next item was a proposed Ordinance to add to the Dixon Municipal Code "another layer" of police empowerment by adding the "Obstructive Conduct in Public Places and Rights of Way" to the already existing Chapter of Public Peace, Morals and Welfare under Miscellaneous Offenses.

When a member of the public asked who brought this forward and why, it was learned that this was not because of basketball hoops in the middle of Dixon's sidewalks. This was about a giant inflatable cat that was used when Amazon was being built in Patterson in a labor union protest that blocked the sidewalk. That town is also represented by Churchwell White LLP.

Years ago while the old Dixon Fire Department was being renovated by Dr. Kristina Wiley by out of town non-union laborers but local ones she employed, that same cat was on Dixon's sidewalks and citizens going to the nearby coffee shop simply walked around it.

Councilman Scott Pederson (Dist. 1) was for "adding another layer" and there was discussion about aggressive behavior, violence, damage, cause of fear or intimidation and he asked White if he worked with the Dixon Chief of Police but White answered no.

Councilman Kevin Johnson (Dist. 3) asked about public nuisance laws already on the books and said he had a 4-part test for all laws proposed: "1. Is it easy to understand? 2. Is it enforceable? 3. Is it fairly enforced to all involved? and, 4. Will it be enforced?" He said the proposed ordinance did not pass the test.

It's getting more difficult to prosecute, explained Dixon Police Chief Robert Thompson.

"The more avenues we have, the more tools, the better." The ordinance passed 4-1 with Johnson dissenting for the first time since elected.

Under new business, City Engineer Joe Leach gave a presentation on Phase 2 of the Pardi Market site that was requested by a couple Councilmen. Plans to finish the corner at First and A Streets will cost another \$750,000 approximately for several concrete benches, a water fountain, lighting and many other beautification details.

Newly elected City Treasurer Jim Ward, who said he went "line by line through the papers," brought up concerns about a water fountain costing \$15,000 and six concrete benches at \$11,000 but those plans and the additional plans skyrocketed to nearly \$1.2 million. There is additionally \$107,750 for "contract management." The hope is to finish Phase 2 between May

Fair and Grillin' and Chillin', Leach said.

"My number one concern is can we afford this?" said Johnson. Comments from the public echoed similar concerns and one said this was not the best time due to the pandemic and its possible far reaching effects on our small businesses but the project is moving on.

The next issue offered praise and gratitude for Economic Development/Grants Manager Larry Burkhardt who secured a \$177,592 grant (with matching 20% from the city) for new playground equipment and improvements at Hall Park and Northwest Park. Burkhardt also announced \$150,000 is approved at the state level for La Esperanza Park that will be built soon.

There was a proposed resolution for compensation of the City Clerk, and increasing stipends significantly for all the advisory committees although there were no "comparisons" provided. After much discussion amongst council who most had done their own research, the motion made by Johnson was to table until further information can be collected with the exception of the part where the City Clerk gets a "temporary" stipend of \$250. Motion was made by Johnson and passed 3-2 with Mayor Steve Bird and Pederson dissenting. This was also a first.

Toward the end of the meeting, in item 12.5, there was a motion to change the employee handbook. It would eliminate the last public speaking opportunity on non-agenda items at each council meeting so it "would remove the duplicity," explained White. Currently there is opportunity for both at the beginning and the end of the meetings for council and public comments on non-agenda items. He also said the comments at the end of the meetings from the City Treasurer which were shown in their agendas was a clerical error, and are no longer in the handbook.

"You have to understand what direction you are going," said community activist Michael Ceremello. "You are stifling public input whether it be council or public."

Councilman Don Hendershot (Dist. 4) was concerned that if a citizen came into a meeting late because of traffic, he would have missed the opportunity. Councilman Jim Ernest (Dist. 2) was willing to keep the public comments but said he didn't think people should be allowed to say the same thing twice so that meetings don't drag on. Johnson wanted to see the Council "do everything we can to create more public involvement."

Mayor Bird said that considering what had been expressed by the other councilmen, there was a consensus and to leave the input at the end. "Since there hasn't been a Treasurer's comment for four years," said Pederson, "it should be kept off" despite that City Treasurer Ward was in the Zoom audience.

Pederson then made a motion that led further discussion and caused some confusion of the original motion but it ultimately passed 5-0 for only council and public to have final comments. Some citizens online felt this one decision was a symbolic move for this council to show the goal to better engage the public.

The discussion was also a clear reminder there needs to be an opportunity for Dixon's duly elected City Treasurer to have the opportunity to address the Council and constituents. ★

Seniors 65+ Now Eligible to Receive COVID Vaccine

Continued from page 1
their vaccination appointments at those events. Community vaccination events are only one way for eligible Californians to receive their vaccines. When available, the public can also go to their doctor or pharmacy to receive the vaccine.

Governor Newsom has aggressively led the state to increase the pace of vaccine administration. He laid out the goal of 1 million additional vaccines administered by the end of this week. At the direction of the Governor, the state has tackled the problem with a multi-pronged

approach, including: Increasing the number of people who can provide vaccinations by more than 100,000 health care professionals. Last Monday, added 36,000 dentists to the pool of health care providers who can administer the COVID-19 vaccines. The state has already received anecdotal reports of dentists actively administering vaccines after completing the required COVID-19 training. This expansion comes on the heels a similar waiver in late December allowing pharmacy technicians overseen by licensed pharmacists

to administer COVID-19 vaccines. There are 69,000 pharmacy technicians in California. Directing Resources, Driving Commitment. The Governor's office has convened meetings with leaders across the public and private health care system and received commitments to cooperatively accelerate the pace of vaccine administration.

For more information on the state's efforts to distribute a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine in a fair way to everyone who wants it, visit the Vaccinate All 58 webpage. www.cdph.ca.gov ★



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School Reopening Plan

By Ricardo Cano, CalMatters.org

The record \$89.5 billion education budget Gov. Gavin Newsom unveiled Friday includes \$2 billion in grants aimed at nudging schools to reopen classrooms for its youngest students by mid-February and \$4.6 billion for summer school to address students’ learning.

The governor’s push to reopen schools, though, comes as many of the state’s large, urban districts have delayed or scaled back plans for in-person learning amid the state’s worst surge in coronavirus cases since the pandemic initially closed schools almost a year ago.

School districts will also be under tight deadlines if they wish to receive the full \$450 to \$750 per student in grant funding. In order to get the full amounts, districts will have to submit to the state by Feb. 1 plans outlining the safety and testing measures for in-person learning with approval by their local employee unions, according to trailer bill language describing the program.

Schools then must offer in-person instruction to students in transitional kindergarten through second, as well as students most at risk of disengaging from school, by Feb. 16, followed by third- through sixth-graders by March 15.

Schools – and the governor – are under intense pressure from parents and communities to reopen campuses as they near the anniversary of their initial March 13 closures. In California, reopening schools has been left to local superintendents, schools boards and employee unions, resulting in a patchwork of school reopenings that’s created a divide between private and public schools.

Newsom also is putting the Legislature under a time crunch by asking lawmakers to push through his proposed school-reopening grants in the next two weeks and the \$4.6 billion learning loss plan by end of March, ahead of the traditional summer deadlines.

Aided by better-than-projected state revenues, Newsom’s budget plan pays down two-thirds of the schools’ \$11 billion in deferrals. It also marks the most significant involvement by the governor in the state’s charged school reopening debate since he introduced reopening guidelines in July that effectively kept most schools closed to start the year.

During his budget presentation Friday, Newsom affirmed his position that schools should be open for in-person instruction if



Schools must offer in-person instruction to students in transitional kindergarten through second, as well as students most at risk of disengaging from school, by Feb. 16, followed by third- through sixth-graders by March 15. MPG file photo

done safely and spoke of his youngest children’s struggle learning remotely.

“Those kids are falling through the cracks, and we have all the support in the world,” Newsom said. “I can’t imagine what’s happening for millions of other children. This is why this is so important.”

But the governor’s reopening plan has come under criticism both from local school leaders who say it would do little to help districts most impacted by the virus, as well as teachers unions pushing against reopening schools as cases climb.

Los Angeles Unified superintendent Austin Beutner said Monday that the governor’s plan “falls well short of what’s needed to help our schools” because it neither sets across-the-board safety standards nor sets a requirement for when schools should reopen. “It leaves the definition of a safe school environment and the standard for reopening classrooms up to the individual discretion of 1,037 school districts across the state, creating a patchwork of safety standards in the face of a statewide health crisis,” Beutner said. “And it reverses a statewide commitment to equity-based funding of schools.”

Beutner, leader of the state’s largest school district, and six other superintendents from large, urban districts raised concerns about Newsom’s reopening plan ahead of its release. The superintendents pushed back against the proposed \$2 billion coming out of the state fund earmarked for

K-12 schools and community colleges. In a Jan. 6 letter, they said the proposal shuts many of their schools and students out of grant funding because they reside in communities with some of the state’s highest case rates.

The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office also raised concerns about the reopening plan, writing that the “proposal sets unfeasible time lines” in an analysis of the governor’s budget.

Suzanne Kitchens, president of the California School Boards Association, praised Newsom’s budget plan for easing the financial strain on schools by paying down most of the deferrals, as well proposing a 3.84% cost-of-living adjustment for schools, but added that “we have work to do on both the school reopening and summer school plans.”

“While some schools will undoubtedly take advantage of the incentives to reopen schools this spring, others are not in a position to do so given community health concerns, local standards, funding, resource staffing, and capacity limitations,” Kitchens said.

Newsom’s budget does not propose extending the school funding protections that held attendance-based funding flat this school year. The proposal assumes in-person learning as the “default mode of instruction” during the 2021-22 school year for funding purposes.

As California schools begin the new

semester, most will remain learning remotely, many indefinitely. Some of the state’s districts, such as San Francisco, have yet to come to agreement with their local teachers union on how to reopen schools. Others, such as Oakland, have said they planned to reopen campuses once their counties reach the orange tier at the request of their unions – a requirement more stringent than what state public health officials allow for in-person learning.

A key distinction between Newsom’s reopening plan and legislation Democratic lawmakers introduced last month is that the governor’s effort does not establish a requirement for when schools have to reopen.

Assembly Bill 10, which legislators plan to advance this month, would require that schools offer in-person instruction starting in March once their county moves out of the state’s purple tier. The bill is in response to the fact that many school districts, primarily those in Bay Area counties, stayed closed after they had clearance from public-health authorities to reopen.

Teachers unions have pushed back against Newsom’s plan and AB 10, saying schools should not reopen without extensive health and safety measures and until after the state’s current surge.

“We are in the middle of a devastating COVID-19 surge, and any discussion of returning to in-person instruction is premature,” Jeff Freitas, president of the California Federation of Teachers, said Friday.

Other highlights from Newsom’s education budget include: \$315 million to support teacher professional development, such as social-emotional learning and implicit bias training; \$300 million in special education funding, with an emphasis on services for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, adding to the \$100 million for special-needs students passed last year; \$400 million in one-time funds toward preventative and early intervention behavioral health services for students; \$15 million to continue developing the state’s cradle-to-career longitudinal data system, an effort Newsom championed since his first year in office; A requirement that high school seniors complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA.

Ricardo Cano covers California education for CalMatters. Cano joined CalMatters in September 2018 from The Arizona Republic and azcentral.com, where he spent three years as the education reporter. ★

Fatal Hit and Run Traffic Collision

By David Harvey, California Highway Patrol

SOLANO AREA, CA (MPG) - On Friday, January 15, 2021, prior to 6:55 am, a 32-year-old male was stopped due to his Volkswagen sedan becoming disabled on Hartley Road at Robinson Road. Evidence at the scene indicates that the driver pulled over to the side of the road to resolve mechanical issues with his vehicle. After

exiting his vehicle, an unknown vehicle traveling northbound on Hartley Road, collided with the victim, causing fatal injuries. The suspect vehicle fled the crash scene in an unknown direction.

The Solano Area California Highway Patrol is investigating this collision and is seeking the public’s help in identifying the involved party. If you have any information pertaining to this collision, please contact Officer Ensley at (707) 428-2100. ★



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Ranch Image Wins Top Prize in Photo Contest

By **Dave Kranz,**
California Farm Bureau

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The wife of a fifth-generation cattle rancher from Tulare County earned the Grand Prize in the 39th annual California Farm Bureau Photo Contest. Hannah Gill of Exeter won \$1,000 for a photo of her 2-year-old daughter peering through a fence to watch her father rope cattle.

The California Farm Bureau received nearly 400 entries for the 2020 Photo Contest from amateur photographers who are members of county Farm Bureaus.

Ramiro Ruiz of Salinas garnered First Place and \$500 for his photo of a foreboding wildfire cloud over a lettuce field. Second Place and \$250 went to Maureen LaGrande, an agriculture student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, for a photo of her twin sister riding a horse at sunset. Marley Sollecito of Spreckels, also a Cal Poly agriculture student, received Third Place and \$100 for capturing an image of her dirty boots after a long day in the field.

Six photographers earned Honorable Mentions and \$50 each: Celeste Alonzo of La Quinta,

Kathy Brimmer of Smartsville, Nancy Perkins of Live Oak, Lynn Sanguinetti of Jamestown, Henry Schulte of Goleta and Andie Traphagan of Ravendale.

Winners of the Budding Artists category for photographers 13 and younger were 13-year-old Laura Campagne of Clovis and 7-year-old Natalie Webb of St. Helena. Laura earned \$250 for her close-up shot of the nose of her brother's goat, and Natalie received \$100 for her picture of a grapevine in her hometown. The prizes were presented by the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

All 12 prize-winning photos will be published this week in the weekly California Farm Bureau newspaper, *Ag Alert*®, as well as the organization's bimonthly magazine, *California Bountiful*®, and will appear on the organization's websites – www.cfbf.com, www.agalert.com and www.californiabountiful.com – and social media pages.

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



Tulare County ranch owner Hannah Gill of Exeter snapped this Grand Prize-winning photo that captures her family's ranch life. Provided by CFB



Ramiro Ruiz of Monterey County submitted the First Place photo of the plume of smoke from the River Fire over the Salinas Valley. The wildfire burned for 19 days, consuming 48,000 acres and destroying 30 structures. Provided by CFB



Nancy Perkins' image of a stray cat living out of an old rice harvester in Sutter County earned an honorable mention. Provided by CFB

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Sen. Dodd Introduces Worker Protection Bill

Bill Dodd

By **Paul Payne,**
Office of Senator Bill Dodd

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, introduced legislation to protect employees of contractors by ensuring compliance with California workers' compensation laws.

"While many do the right thing, too often we have seen contractors who do not carry workers' compensation insurance," Sen. Bill Dodd said. "My bill will eliminate barriers to coverage so we can protect those employees who might be injured on the job."

In California, there are about 230,000 licensed contractors in 44 different areas, from general building and engineering to electricians, plumbers and landscapers. About 55% claim they have no employees, making them exempt from a requirement to carry workers' compensation insurance. However, research and enforcement from the Contractors State Licensing Board suggests many of these claims are false, creating a widespread problem of leaving workers unprotected.

Sen. Dodd's bill would require all concrete, heating and air conditioning and tree service contractors to carry the insurance, regardless of whether they claim employees or not. Further, it would require that by 2025, all licensed contractors in the state carry workers' compensation insurance.

The bill is sponsored by the Contractors State License Board.

"Construction is one of the most dangerous occupations," said David De La Torre, chair of the Contractors State License Board. "And the CSLB supports this effort to ensure California's construction employers have workers' compensation insurance on file to protect employees who are injured on the job and project owners and homeowners from worker injury claims."

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. ★

Richard McCormick Receives a Life Sentence for Sexual Assaults

By **Monica Martinez,**
Solano County District Attorney's Office

SOLANO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Department 11 of the Solano County Superior Court, the Honorable William J. Pendergast III sentenced Defendant Richard McCormick to life in state prison for ten counts of sexual assault on a child. Defendant McCormick was also found to have suffered a prior felony strike conviction for Residential Burglary.

Over the course of three decades, the defendant repeatedly sexually assaulted members of his own family betraying the trust and love of two generations of the most vulnerable victims. The victims continued to live in fear for years until they eventually came forward in July 2018. All three victims, now ages 36, 11, and 10, courageously testified to the horrific abuse at trial in October 2020.

The defendant maintained that he was "the real victim" and tried to cast blame upon the victims, however, this claim was rejected by the jury. Judge Pendergast, in listening to the impact statements of family members, imposed the maximum sentence allowed under California law and noted the defendant's complete lack of remorse and the extraordinary damage he inflicted upon the victims.

The case was investigated by now-retired Fairfield Police Detective Steven Carnahan and prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Elaine Kuo. ★

A Miracle Model A

Continued from page 1
went through it all and compiled a truck full and brought it back to the shop where the team started diving in,” said Jason Reyes, another one of the several workers on the project.

After Thanksgiving, the mechanics learned Bob was not doing well and the cab wasn’t even on yet, they said and wondered, ‘How can we make this happen?’ The team threw themselves into the work. Four days before Christmas Eve, they put it on the back of a trailer fully complete but it couldn’t run. Fearing Bob might die before he saw it, they drove it out to the house.

“They had all kinds of family and we were meeting everyone but it was evident it was coming to the end for Bob,” said Reyes. “So, later (Virgil and I) are driving it back to the shop and Virgil says, ‘We gotta get it driving. I want him to see it driving.’ And, I’m thinking about how much work is left – brakes, a fuel tank, and things you can’t just pick up the phone and order the 1930 brake lines from Napa Auto Parts,” said Reyes.

Virgil never left the shop after that before midnight every night, Reyes reported adding that it was “all hands on deck.” Those hands included Crystal Kindred, Jesus Garcia, Jason Reyes, Virgil Brosseau, and Justin Pendergraft.

On Christmas Eve about 3 pm, the team put the mostly-completed vehicle on the back of a trailer and drove it to just the start of the path leading to the house, then got in it to drive it the rest of the way. The family had brought Bob out to the front yard on a guise of taking a family photo.

“It was magical,” said Brosseau about his feelings driving toward Bob. “I’ve been in this business 25 years and had some pretty rewarding experiences but never expected to have been rewarded in such a way. You

can’t put a price on anything that gratifying. The instant he saw us driving toward him, Jason and I could see him getting more energized,” he said.

Smothered in thick, warm blankets, the feeble gentleman was wheeled twice around the pick-up and didn’t say a word soaking it all in, they said, with tears down his cheeks.

“It was huge,” said Brosseau. Pictures were taken and memories made. Bob passed on New Year’s Eve. The people who made it all happen have been affected.

“We are all long-time friends and we were really blessed this year to meet Bob and his family. We got to do something that truly left an impact on the hearts of everyone in our shop. Maloney’s is named after my Grandfather who was a mechanic his whole life, having the ability to carry on his name in such an inspiring way has been a true blessing,” said Reyes.

“It is great to see the ripples of our work,” said Brosseau. “It was so emotional and we knew we’d have an effect for him but never thought it would affect us. This will stick with us for life.”

Editor’s note: The following was provided by one of Bob Stranger’s four daughters, Karstin Feinhandler: “My dad loved two things. His daughters and his cars. For well over three decades, he had been slowly working on a Model A truck. As his health was quickly deteriorating, he decided to take it to Maloney’s in Vacaville and worked with Virgil and Jason. His favorite outing, in his final condition, was going to see his car. It gave him purpose on those days. We are forever indebted to the love and dedication that was shown to our family from Maloney’s. They do not just do an amazing job restoring cars, they are restoring hope that there are truly kind and caring people in the world, with this selfless and loving act of kindness.” ★

Young Adults Living Alone Report Anxiety, Depression During Pandemic



Younger adults living alone were more likely than older adults living alone to report symptoms of both anxiety and depression. Photo courtesy Andrea Piacquadio Pexels

By U.S. Census Bureau

WASHINGTON, DC (MPG) - Younger adults living alone were more likely than older adults living alone to report symptoms of both anxiety and depression in recent weeks, according to new U.S. Census Bureau data.

The Household Pulse Survey provides insight into the mental health and well-being of adults living alone during the Coronavirus pandemic. The survey asks two questions related to symptoms of anxiety, and two questions about

symptoms of depression. Phase 3 of the survey collects data over two-week intervals, and this article relies on publicly available data collected from Oct. 28 through Nov. 9, a time period in which the Census Bureau sent invitations to 1,035,752 households and received a total of 58,729 responses.

Those between ages 18 and 29 and 30 and 44 reported higher rates of anxiety and depression. The age groups were not statistically different from each other on either measure. ★

NHTSA: Drunk Driving Deaths Reach Lowest Level Since 1982

From the California Office of Traffic Safety

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Alcohol-impaired driving deaths reached the lowest point in the U.S. since 1982, according to recently released data by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

There were 36,096 traffic deaths in 2019, down 2% from 36,935 deaths in 2018, despite an increase in vehicles miles traveled.

The annual 2019 traffic fatality data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) showed additional declines in pedestrian, bicyclist and passenger deaths.

California was part of the nationwide trend, and saw a 5% decrease in fatalities (3,606) in 2019 compared to 2018.

However, the fatality data from last year comes after reported increases in risky

driving behaviors in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent increase in the fatality rate during the first half of 2020.

According to NHTSA, 16,650 people died on roads from January through June 2020, a 2% drop from the same period in 2019, but traffic volume also dropped much more. As a result, more people died per mile traveled during the first half of 2020, 1.25 per 100 million miles, the highest rate since 2008.

“It is encouraging and promising news any time there are fewer lives lost on our roads,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “But we remain cautiously optimistic while we continue to work on moving the needle in the right direction.”

One possible cause for the spike in the fatality rate is that open roads may have tempted speeders, leading to more severe crashes, NHTSA noted.

Between Sept. 1 and Oct. 31, 2020, California Highway Patrol officers issued 4,851 citations for speeding in excess of 100 miles per hour, a 93% increase when compared to the same period last year.

NHTSA also released a special supplementary report for the first half of 2020 on monthly traffic deaths and fatality rates, which showed a projected increase in the number of deaths occurring in rural areas, among younger people 16 to 24 years old, as well as passengers in older vehicles that were at least 10 years old.

“2020 is hopefully an anomaly, but it’s important that we practice what is tried and true, embrace technology as a tool to reduce injuries and deaths, and establish a culture that values safe driving,” Director Rooney said. ★

Sonin to Speak About Legal Papers

MPG Staff

DIXON, CA (MPG) - It used to be that in the past if someone was sick and, in the hospital, when there was a need for certain paperwork or signatures urgently, one could go in the hospital and get a person to sign things. But, with the Coronavirus, one cannot go into the hospital to get those signatures.

COVID is striking out of nowhere and catching people unprepared and vulnerable.

“This is making a big mess for a lot of people” said Barbara Sonin, an attorney who handles estate planning, trusts, and probates. That’s why Kiwanis Club of Dixon has asked the expert to be their speaker at their next meeting on Monday, January 25, at 6 p.m.

The meeting will be conducted via Zoom and the public is invited. The Zoom link is available by contacting club members by

calling Patti Liu at (707) 635-3303, message on the Kiwanis of Dixon Facebook site or emailing dixonkiwanis@hotmail.com.

Kiwanis was founded in 1915 in the United States and has grown to an international organization of volunteers. Members improve their communities, make lifelong friendships, and most importantly, help children thrive, prosper, and reach their full potential. It has over 537,830 members and more than 16,654 clubs in more than 85 nations and geographic areas who devote more than 18.5 million hours to service.

Pre-COVID, the local Kiwanis civic organization club meets on the fourth Thursday of each month for a no-host dinner at Bud’s Pub, 100 South First Street. During the pandemic, they have been meeting via Zoom. More information can be found on www.kiwanis.org. ★

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 2020-002093

The following persons are doing business as: : **Brigdettes Nails & Spa**
173 Leisure Way Vacaville, CA 95687
Brigdettes Wilson, 5684 Lewis Road Vacaville, CA 95687
Date Filed in Solano County: November 20, 2020
The Registrant commenced to transact business under the above business name on: N/A
This Business is Conducted by: Individual
NOTICE: In Accordance with subdivision (a) of section 17920 A Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the county clerk, except as provided in subdivision (b) of section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of registered owner. A new fictitious Business name statement must be filed before the expiration November 20, 2025. 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: January 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2021 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 2020-002179

The following persons are doing business as: : **Coopers Full-Service Cleaning**
354 Primrose Drive Vacaville, CA 95687
Cooper Established Enterprises, LLC, 354 Primrose Drive Vacaville, CA 95687
Date Filed in Solano County: December 08, 2020
The Registrant commenced to transact business under the above business name on: 1/1/2020
This Business is Conducted by: A Limited Liability Company
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 December 8, 2025. 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: January 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2021 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)

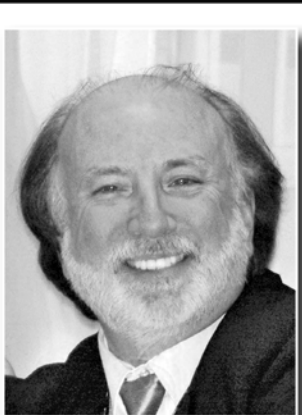
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. 2020-002143

The following persons are doing business as: : **Abautos**
1060 Grant Street #1-C Benicia, CA 94510
Marley Duewa, 3920 Oakmore Road Oakland, CA 94602
Date Filed in Solano County: December 02, 2020
The Registrant commenced to transact business under the above business name on: N/A
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 December 2, 2025. 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: January 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2021 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)


STATEMENT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM PARTNERSHIP
OPERATING UNDER FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO. 2019002339

The following person(s) has/have withdrawn as a general partner(s) from the partnership operating under the fictitious business name of: **ELYSIAN HOMES**
11 Town Square Place Ste. C Vacaville, CA 95688 Solano County
Audra Blotzer, 5324 Gramercy Circle Fairfield, CA 94533

The Fictitious Business Name was filed in Solano County on December 17, 2019
File # 2019002339
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Solano County on December 31, 2020
Publish: January 15, 22, 29 & February 5, 2021 (The DIXON INDEPENDENT VOICE)



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Serving Dixon and Solano County since 1994




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California’s Technology Woes Deepen



By Dan Walters
CALMatters

While doing his stretch in solitary confinement as lieutenant governor of California, Gavin Newsom wrote a book entitled “Citizenville: How to Take the Town Square Digital and Reinvent Government.”

In the book, published in 2013, Newsom sang the praises of digital technology and its potential for making government and its services more transparent, more efficient and more responsive.

A half-decade later, Newsom succeeded Jerry Brown in the governorship and thus management of a state government that had been struggling, with little success, to implement the technological nirvana he envisioned.

Since then, it’s become even more evident that despite being the cradle of the digital revolution that has utterly transformed how humankind lives and works, California’s government just can’t make technology work well. In fact, its tech failures have gone the other way, making services even less reliable.

We’ve seen two spectacular examples in the first two years of Newsom’s governorship, meltdowns at the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Employment Development Department. The DMV

fiasco was annoying, but the one at EDD has serious human consequences, delaying or denying cash benefits to those suddenly thrown out of work by COVID-19 shutdowns while allowing billions of dollars to be squandered on fraudulent claims.

Just this month, there was another. Software meant to hasten the distribution and application of vaccinations against COVID-19 stumbled, contributing to California’s subpar rollout of lifesaving inoculations against the dread disease and thus possibly adding to the pandemic’s already horrendous death roll.

Asked about the vaccination tech failures as he rolled out his new state budget last week, Newsom responded, rather lamely, “We have a lot of work to do in bringing California into the digital age.”

No kidding.

A day before Newsom’s budget announcement, the state auditor’s office gave California’s sorry efforts to implement technology another black mark on its most ambitious project, Financial Information System for California (FISCal), meant to become a centralized repository of financial data.

The FISCal project began 15 years go and Auditor Elaine Howle has been a frequent critic of its years of delay in implementation, ever-increasing costs and ever-changing parameters.

In her latest report, Howle says those issues are still not resolved and not having a workable financial reporting system in place threatens some adverse consequences.

“State agencies using

FISCal still struggle to complete required financial reports on time,” she told Newsom and legislative leaders. “Consequently, the state released its annual audited financial statements months late for the second year in a row. A late release of critical financial information increases the risk to the state of a lower credit rating, which could result in increased costs to taxpayers.”

Howle is especially critical of what she describes as deceptive information on what adopting FISCal will actually cost in relationship to what it will presumably accomplish when it is completed. As costs climb — the most recent estimate is \$1 billion — the tasks to be performed have shrunk in apparent hopes that a half-baked system can be declared finished.

Faced with a sorry record on tech implementation, Newsom created an Office of Digital Innovation and charged it with making his lofty visions of “digital transformation and results-oriented government” a reality.

Newsom’s new budget refers obliquely to the DMV and EDD disasters by saying, “The events of 2020 highlighted the urgent need to modernize government services in an online environment.” He proposes to spend even more money on technology in the hope that it will ultimately pay off in better services at less cost.

At the moment, however, he’s trying to make water run uphill.

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

Dixon News Briefs



City of Dixon new Community Development Director, Raffi Boloyan. Photo Courtesy of City of Dixon

DIXON, CA (MPG) -

Chase Bank Closing

If you’re upset (angry, disappointed, etc.) about the Chase Bank in the Safeway Shopping Plaza closing, you can call (800) 935-9935 or the number on the back of your debit card to file an inquiry.

Be prepared to wait on hold for a few minutes then be transferred to a supervisor. They will take your inquiry and forward to corporate, or so they say. If they get enough inquiries/complaints, they may revisit the plans and maybe change their minds.

“It’s worth a shot,” said Jim Ward who was concerned about Dixon’s economy affected by the pandemic. “I called and left my concerns as a citizen and newly elected official.” Ward is Dixon’s City Treasurer.

Community Development Director

Dixon has hired its new Community Development Director. Raffi Boloyan is overseeing the City’s Planning, Building and Economic Development functions. Boloyan comes to the City of Dixon following 25 years of professional planning experience, working for the City of San Bruno for four years in the late 1990’s and the

last 20 years for the City of San Rafael. Boloyan holds a degree in City and Regional Planning from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

“Dixon was an opportunity for a promotion and I was ready to experience something a little different in planning,” he said. “In the larger city, it’s more microscopic work and in a small town you can work the bigger picture using your professional judgment and interacting with the community.” Dixon reminds him of his hometown of American Canyon.

“I felt welcome from day one. There are lots of opportunities here with growth and I look forward to seeing the town expand,” he said noting that he has already been working on the General Plan Update hoping to give the community extra time to suggest revisions and have responses. He plans a review before the City Planning Commission on March 8, then it will go to Council.

He serves as a Board Member for the American Canyon Parks Foundation and the American Canyon High School Boosters.

His wife, Elaine, is a high school teacher and they have two teen children, a sophomore and a senior plus, two dogs “that keep us entertained,” he said. When he’s not working, he enjoys camping and fly fishing.

NCS Gets New Principal

Eden Callison has taken the helm of Neighborhood Christian School after long-time beloved Principal Rick Vidmar retired. Callison has an Engineering degree from UC Davis and worked for Fortune 500 companies

but is more than familiar with NCS as her and husband David’s now-grown children were all students there.

“God led me to take this on. I have an amazing love for Jesus,” she said. “We are thrilled to continue the legacy that NCS has provided for the community and I’m excited to help it continue. I’m happy that our teachers will continue to influence our students and our community.”

Preschool Changes Location

Looking to “revive” their preschool, Neighborhood Christian Preschool that has been located at Grace Fellowship Church on H Street for 30 years will be relocating to Dixon Community Church, 955 West A Street.

“We are so grateful for Grace Fellowship and especially Pastor Paul Sheldon,” said NCS Principal Eden Callison. “In February, we are looking to do a soft opening with a 3-year-old and 4-year-old program,” for parents looking for a place for their 2-year, 9-months and potty-trained child or looking for a pre-kindergarten program and are interested in hearing God’s word, they’ll be open, she said.

The maximum occupancy is 30 and they are at 50 percent right now. They are currently in the process of completing some construction for the preschool at Dixon Community Church. Neighborhood Christian School’s kindergarten through sixth grades and main office are located at the Dixon May Fair grounds. Call (707) 678-9336 for more information. ★

Republican or Democrat, Foreign Reference Pricing Kills Cures



Commentary
by Sally C. Pipes

The pharmaceutical industry is on a bit of a hot streak. Just last month, both Pfizer and Moderna received FDA approval for their COVID-19 vaccines. Millions of Americans have already received them.

And yet, Republicans and Democrats alike are sitting on proposals that would make breakthroughs like these much rarer.

Specifically, they’re moving to peg domestic drug prices to the lower prices in other developed nations, a tactic known as “reference pricing.” Doing so, they claim, would save patients and taxpayers billions of dollars.

But reference pricing is a terrible idea. It would stifle the creation of lifesaving drugs in the future and limit Americans’ ability to access medicines already in development.

In 2019, House Democrats passed H.R. 3, which would index reimbursements for prescription drugs – for both government and commercial insurance plans – to those drugs’ average prices in advanced economies.

Not content to let the Democrats have a

monopoly on bad ideas, President Trump issued an executive order in September that, if implemented, would prohibit Medicare Parts B and D from paying more for drugs than any comparable country in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, a group of 37 developed nations.

Proponents of reference pricing complain that Americans pay more for drugs than citizens of other developed nations – that they’re just trying to give Americans a fairer deal.

But drug prices are lower abroad because foreign governments forcibly cap them, which has all sorts of negative consequences for patients in those countries.

Consider Germany’s Federal Joint Committee, better known by its German abbreviation, G-BA. The G-BA allows pharmaceutical companies to charge market rates for one year, during which the board determines a drug’s clinical effectiveness. If the board decides the medicine is no more effective than existing treatments, it sets the price equal to reimbursements for those drugs already on the market.

The G-BA has a problematic track record when it comes to judging drugs’ clinical effectiveness. German officials deem about 60 percent of medicines no more effective than existing ones. Yet between 2013 and 2017, half the drugs dismissed by G-BA as “no more effective” were considered breakthroughs by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

For German patients, that means going without lifesaving drugs. Between 2011 and 2019, Americans had access to 87 percent of the 356 new medicines launched worldwide. Germans had access to fewer than two-thirds of those drugs.

Reference pricing would yield similar results here. Drug developers would delay launching their products in the United States, if the potential returns shrank drastically.

Americans would lose out on not just existing medicines but future drugs, too. Developing a new medicine costs \$2.6 billion and takes ten years, on average. Only 12 percent of drugs that enter clinical trials actually make it to market. Companies will drastically scale back R&D efforts if government price-setting renders the likelihood of securing a return on their investment slim.

Americans pay more for pharmaceuticals than the denizens of other rich countries. But the solution is to make Germany, Canada, and others pay market prices for drugs – not for the United States to adopt reference pricing that hurts present and future patients.

Sally C. Pipes is President, CEO, and Thomas W. Smith Fellow in Health Care Policy at the Pacific Research Institute. Her latest book is "False Promise, False Reality of Medicare for All" (Encounter 2020). Follow her on Twitter @sallypipes. ★

CLG NEWS UPDATES

Provided by Citizens for Legitimate Government (CLG) See legitgov.org

‘A Terrorist Is a Terrorist’: House Homeland Security Chair Wants Ted Cruz and Josh Hawley on the No-Fly List | 11 Jan 2021 | The chair of the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security wants GOP Senators Ted Cruz and Josh Hawley placed on the federal “No Fly” list due to the “actions they participated in” last Wednesday, when the attack on the U.S. Capitol occurred. Homeland Security Committee Chair Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) raised the issue during a Monday morning appearance on SiriusXM’s The Joe Madison Show. “There’s no question about it,” Thompson said in response to a question about subjecting the rioters to the infamous domestic air travel ban. “First of all, these folks, in my opinion, can be classified as domestic terrorists because of the actions they participated in on Wednesday. Now under normal circumstances international terrorists are out on no-fly lists. These are domestic terrorists-same thing. A terrorist is a terrorist, no matter who you are.”

55 People Died in US After Receiving COVID-19 Vaccines - Reporting System – In some cases, patients died within days of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. | 16 Jan 2021 | Fifty-five people in the United States have died after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, according to reports submitted to a federal system. Deaths have occurred among people receiving both the Moderna and the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines, according to the reports. The reporting system, the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), is a federal database. The system is passive, meaning reports aren’t automatically collected and must be filed. VAERS reports can be filed by anyone, including health care providers, patients, or family members.

Marjorie Taylor Greene says she will introduce impeachment articles against Biden | 13 Jan 2021 | Newly-elected Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) on Wednesday said she plans on filing articles of impeachment against President-elect [sic] Joe Biden on his first full day in office next week. During an appearance on Newsmax Wednesday evening, Greene, a vocal supporter of President Trump, said that she is planning on introducing a measure to impeach Biden on Jan. 21, one day after his inauguration. “I would like to announce on behalf of the American people, we have to make sure our leaders are held accountable, we cannot have a President of the United States who is willing to abuse the power of the office of the presidency and be easily bought off by foreign governments, foreign Chinese energy companies, Ukrainian energy companies, so on January 21, I will be filing articles of impeachment on Joe Biden,” Greene told Newsmax.

Outgoing Capitol Police chief says request for National Guard backup during siege was denied six times | 11 Jan 2021 | Outgoing U.S. Capitol Hill Police Chief Steven Sund says his requests for National Guard assistance to monitor the Trump rally last week were denied or delayed at least five times ahead of the evening riot on Wednesday. Sund, who announced his Saturday resignation last week under pressure from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, said he had asked House and Senate security officials for D.C. National Guard assistance ahead of the rally, where President Trump urged his supporters to march to the U.S. Capitol building, in anticipation of the large crowd. The first request was rejected, and in the midst of escalating violence on Capitol grounds, Sund said he asked for assistance five additional times. “If we would have had the National Guard, we could have held them at bay longer, until more officers from our partner agencies could arrive,” Sund told the Washington Post.

Democrats Drafting Bill to Prevent Anything Being Named After President Trump | 14 Jan 2021 | As Democratic lawmakers celebrate their vote to impeach President Trump a second time, several of those lawmakers are attempting to take things one step further. Representatives Linda Sanchez (D-CA) and Joaquin Castro (D-TX) are working on a bill that would prevent the naming of anything – including schools, highways, or federal buildings – after the 45th President... “I am working on a bill that would mean that nothing-not even a bench, no airport, no highway, no school-nothing-ever bear the name of this traitor.” ★



FOR THE LOVE OF
BOOKS
By Amy Shane

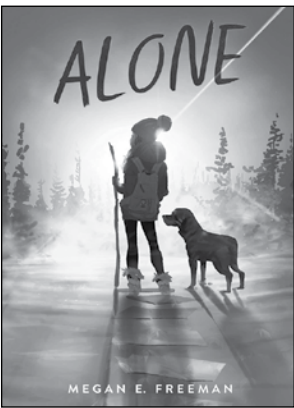
BOOK REVIEW & SPECIAL EVENTS EDITOR • ✉ amy-shane@att.net • 📷 amy_fortheloveofbook

Alone

by Megan E. Freeman

Twelve-year-old Maddie just wants a break from being pulled between two houses, two families, and two lives. She just wants a night that she can be alone with her friends without any responsibility. So, Maddie hatches the perfect plan, a secret sleepover devoid of any parents. However, her silly sleepover plan falls apart from the very beginning, and Maddie wakes up only to discover that she is completely alone. It's as if the entire town vanished overnight, doors are left unlocked, toys in the yard and pets are wandering the streets. The only companion Maddie can find is the neighbor's Rottweiler, George, who was also left behind.

Holding onto the faith that her parents will come back for her, Maddie cleans the house, watches old movies, and sleeps in her parents' bed, and then the power goes out, and no one comes. Days turn into weeks, and Maddie realizes she needs to plan for survival. Without power, running water, phone lines, or any communication, Maddie knows she will have to learn the art



- ◆ Publisher: Aladdin
- ◆ Hardcover, 400 pages;
- ◆ Intended Audience: Middle Grade
- ◆ Rating: ♥♥♥♥♥

of survival, and she will have to learn it quickly. However, it's just not food and warmth she needs to prepare for; it's the natural disaster, wild animals, dangerous looters, and the most devastatingly of all, loneliness.

While "Alone" seems to be the description for many individuals during 2020, Megan E. Freeman embraces the word and delivers a harrowing and poignant tale in her middle-grade survival story, *Alone*. Heart wrenching and raw, this captivating story of survival against the odds will leave its faint echoes of triumph and loneliness

long after finishing the last page. Told in sparse verse allows the authenticity of a twelve-year-old voice to come through while also tapping in on the loneliness and despair. With only a dog at her side and endless amounts of books, Maddie's fortitude and savviness will be an inspiration to anyone who reads her story. Readers will be left crying alongside Maddie as the fear, realization, and loneliness creeps in or scavenging for ways to help her stay warm, find food, and stay safe. Readers will cheer as Maddie makes it through her first winter, and then her next, and the next one after that. All-encompassing, Megan E. Freeman's, *Alone* hits on every aspect of being left behind, while also being the perfect book for the classroom or family discussion, touching on so many aspects of how to survive. How would you make it on your own, find food, find water, and stay warm during harsh winters? Compared to *Hatchet*, *My Side of the Mountain*, and *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, *Alone* is a must read for this generation. ★



Riley Reviews

"CALL YOUR MOTHER" AND "THE CHASE"
NEW TO ABC LINEUP

A TV Review by Tim Riley

"CALL YOUR MOTHER" ON ABC

The new ABC sitcom "Call Your Mother" stars Kyra Sedgwick as an overbearing mom so concerned on not hearing from her adult son for four days that if she were piloting a helicopter from Iowa to Los Angeles to drop in on her child it would have seemed fitting.

As a widowed single mother who raised two millennial children, Jean wonders how she ended-up alone while Freddie (Joey Bragg) and his older sister Jackie (Rachel Sennott) moved to the carefree paradise of California.

Fretting that an endless stream of phone calls to her son go answered, Jean jumps on a plane to Los Angeles and barges in on Freddie at his apartment just at the moment he's cuddling with vacuous social media influencer Celia (Emma Caymares).

That mom's unannounced visit is not greeted with enthusiasm is an understatement, even if she came bearing gifts of socks and Freddie's favorite toilet paper. If there's a joke with these presents, it fails to connect, much like misfiring punchlines.

Then there's Jackie, who not only is aghast at mom's arrival but has not been on speaking terms with her brother for reasons not immediately clear but may be related to a mother's meddling contributing to a dysfunctional family dynamic.

However, both Jackie and Freddie, though maybe not equal in the eyes of their mother, are relatively excitable persons not able to appreciate Jean's "we are a village" speech when gathered at mom's place.

As one who says her sex life has been nonexistent for years, Jean may soon find romantic comfort with her landlord Danny (Patrick Brammall), a newly-divorced therapist who may need counseling for his oversharing about his wife's infidelity.

That the lovable golden retriever Ripper, belonging to the owner of the guest house rented by Jean, proves to be the most winning character in the series does not bode well for the future of the formulaic "Call Your Mother."

After all, the cute canine does not have any lines of dialogue to spice up the mostly flat humor delivered by the two-legged actors. Maybe it's time to call in new writers if there is a chance to salvage a series that sputters right out of the gate.

To be fair, only one episode of "Call Your Mother" was available to review, but the characters need to be more than one-dimensional, though Austin Crute, as Jackie's gay roommate Lane, shines with his off-beat demeanor and wisecracks.

"THE CHASE" ON ABC

Watching an episode of the new, at least on network television, game show "The Chase" was purely accidental, and then it dawned on me that I had already seen this TV series in a foreign land.

While on the treadmill at a London hotel in 2019, I became engrossed with "The Chase," where the host was some guy they called "The Beast," and not just for his physical size but for the fact he was a quiz genius that relished pummeling the contestants.

For the episode I watched on ABC, "Jeopardy" champion Ken Jennings, the all-time greatest winner now serving in the position of the Chaser that three contestants must outperform in answering trivia questions, comes off like the irritating brainy kid in school.

Not only is Jennings going to match his British cousin as a trivia bully, two other "Jeopardy" champions, namely Brad Rutter and James Holzhauer, will alternate as Chasers.

Meanwhile, the Chasers-in-waiting sit in a lounge and occasionally lob a few snarky remarks.

The game show is gimmicky in that each contestant participates in a one-minute lightning round to bank money for their team before being positioned at the bottom of a huge angled game board where the Chaser looms above in a most intimidating manner.

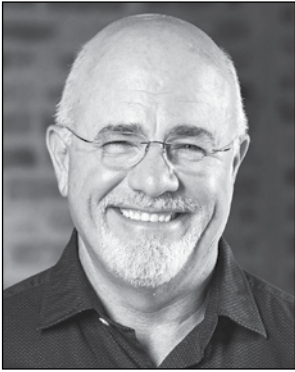
The money earned in the lightning round is placed on the game board and each contestant must answer multiple-choice questions correctly to move the money down into the bank while trying to stay ahead of the Chaser who has to answer the same questions.

If the Chaser overtakes a contestant, that player is out of the game and the only chance for the other players to have a shot of winning any money is, as expected, to beat the Chaser to the bank during their turn.

But that's not the end of the line. There's the "Final Chase" where the surviving players now act as a team to beat the Chaser in a more convoluted round that does up the ante for tension and excitement.

The fun part of game shows that test trivia knowledge was never more evident than during the reign of Alex Trebek as the genial host of "Jeopardy." Viewers at home could blurt out their own responses in the form of a question and feel like actual contestants.

Attempting to answer questions in "The Chase" offers vicarious thrills when you get something right that the host failed to do, especially if you best the smug Ken Jennings who will never be as likable as Alex Trebek, at least in my opinion. ★



Dave Ramsey Says

Let Kids Make Mistakes (and learn from them)

Dear Dave,

We just started teaching our seven-year-old about money. He's very eager to learn, and he seems to be grasping the basic ideas quickly. He's young, though, and of course he makes mistakes from time to time. Should we step in and fix things when a mistake he made means he can't do something he wanted to do?

—Ethan

Dear Ethan,

It's always hard on parents when they see their children suffer because of a choice the child made. But sometimes it's best to love them so much that you'll let them make

mistakes, and make sure they learn from them, while they're still under your protection. Reality can be a great teacher when it comes to learning how the world works, and sometimes one sting from a bad decision when you're young is all it takes to teach a kid a lesson that will last a lifetime.

As a parent, you're always looking for teachable moments. First, make sure you're giving him a chance to earn some money. That means work, no allowances. We're talking about kid-sized, age-appropriate tasks. There's a ton of value and self-esteem that go hand-in-hand with being paid for a job well done. Once you pay him for the work he does, then you have chances for more teachable moments about saving, spending, and giving – and the importance of each.


If I were you, I wouldn't run in and fix things. By this, I mean I wouldn't just hand him money he didn't earn so he can still get or do what he had in mind. But don't fuss at

him or brush it off, either. Gently explain why things didn't work out the way he hoped. Then, talk through what he might have done differently to help make the situation better next time.


Kids are smarter and often have more understanding and comprehension skills than we give them credit for. My guess, Ethan, is you won't need to have this kind of conversation more than once or twice!

—Dave

Dave Ramsey is a seven-time #1 national best-selling author, personal finance expert, and host of The Dave 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

S	W	I	S	H		S	H	H		A	L	P	S	
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S	E	R	B			W	A	G		S	H	E	E	T

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • THE GRAMMY AWARDS

CLUES

ACROSS
1. Nothing-but-net in basketball
6. "Zip it!"
9. The _____ in Switzerland
13. Ann Patchett's novel "Bel _____"
14. "Mele Kalikimaka" wreath
15. Ten million, in India
16. Fire in one's soul
17. Crematorium jar
18. Trail follower
19. "Artist with most 2021 Grammy nominations"
21. "Powerhouse Award 2020 winner with six 2021 nominations"
23. * _____ Sayer's "You Make Me Feel Like Dancing"
24. Pettifoggery
25. Lending letters
28. "Through" in text
30. Butcher's discards
35. Fortune-telling coffee remnant
37. Crew equipment
39. Asian goat antelope
40. "Polar Express" roof rider
41. Toughness
43. *Two-time Grammy winner Kelly
44. Watch word?
46. *Best New Artist nominee Cyrus
47. "Clueless" catch phrase
48. "Black Pumas" nominated record
50. Hand-me-down
52. NYC time zone
53. * _____ Loaf, winner of one Grammy
55. Nirvana's "Come as You _____"
57. *Post Malone's twice-nominated work
61. *Venue of 2021 Grammy Awards
65. Dig, so to speak
66. Reunion bunch
68. Silk-patterned fabric
69. On Elsa of Arendelle's head
70. Historical period
71. Join the cast of, two words
72. Balkan native
73. Dog's greeting
74. Bed cover

DOWN
1. Union foe
2. Stuff for sale, sing.
3. Capital of Indiana, for short
4. Counter seat
5. "The Green _____"
6. Swerve
7. "I Can't Breathe" artist
8. Delhi language
9. Seed coat
10. Trickster in Norse mythology
11. Like "Dead Poets Society" school
12. Blood fluids
15. Winnowing remains, pl.
20. Salmon variety, pl.
22. Flying saucer acronym
24. Event attendance
25. Kind of committee, two words
26. Movie trailer, e.g.
27. He had no cause?
29. "_____ on Me" by Lady Gaga and Ariana Grande
31. Cheese on Peloponnese
32. "...when out on the lawn there _____ such a clatter..."
33. Large-eyed lemur
34. "Folklore" nominee and recipient of 10 Grammys
36. Nancy Sinatra's boots
38. Sinbad's seven
42. Semolina source
45. Cloth armband
49. Get the picture
51. Movie genre, pl.
54. Off kilter
56. Longer than #70 Across
57. A and B, e.g.
58. Doing nothing
59. "Katy Perry's 2013 Grammy-nominated song"
60. Stewie Griffin's bed
61. Unforeseen obstacle
62. Low-cal
63. One of Great Lakes
64. Email folder
67. Composer Gershwin

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 8

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

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Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13					14			15				
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69					70				71			
72					73				74			

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	1	3	7		8			
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Solutions on Page 8

WEEKLY COMICS

Amber Waves



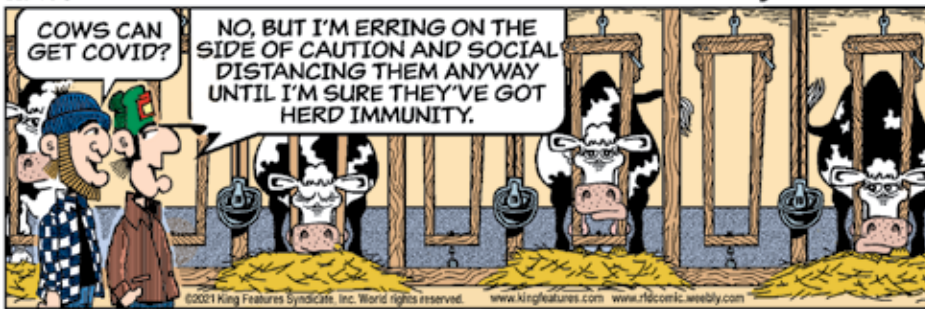
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



R.F.D.

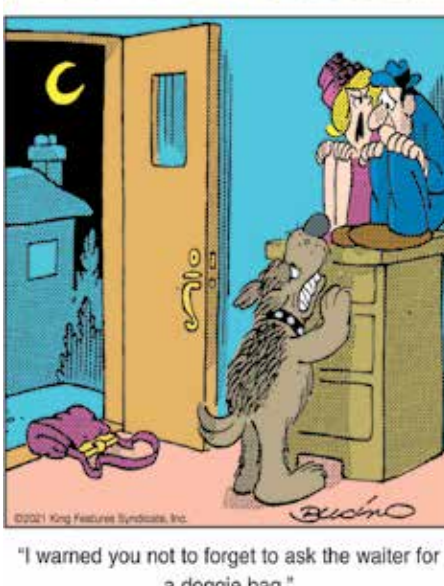
by Mike Marland



CRIN to BEAR IT



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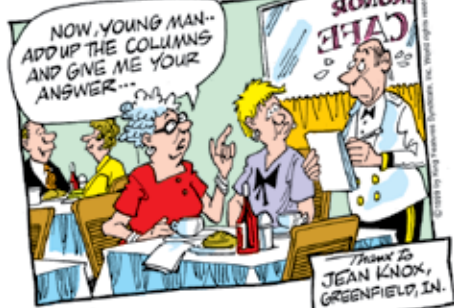


The Spats



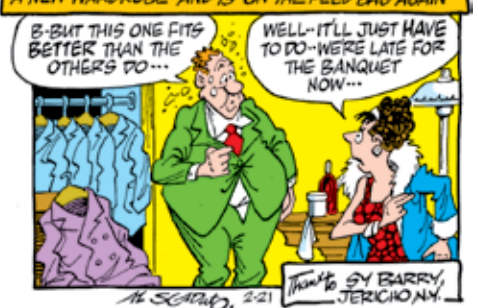
THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

ONCE A TEACHER ALWAYS A TEACHER DEPT...



BY AL SCADUTO

PUZZLE PIC-FIND THE GUY WHO LOST 45 LBS.-BOUGHT A NEW WARDROBE-AND IS ON THE FEED BAG AGAIN--



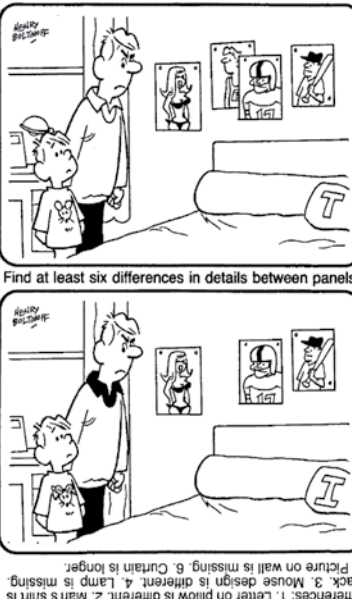
Just Like Cats & Dogs

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HOCUS-FOCUS

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