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Bilingual Library  
Opens**

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# Dixon's **Independent Voice**

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# Breaking Fire Records



The wildfire crisis has been at the top of the state's legislative to-do list for years. Image by Skeeze from Pixabay

**By Julie Cart and Judy Lin,  
CALMATTERS**

If it seems that wildfires are burning nearly all the time these days, that there's no longer a definable fire season in California, you're right. Fourteen of the 20 most destructive fires in state history have occurred since 2007, and California has 78 more annual "fire days" now than it had 50 years ago.

2020 could break all the records, and in spectacular fashion. Jaw dropping "fire tornadoes" have spun out from the heat thrown off by monster fires in August. And a staggering sequence of more than 11,000 lightning strikes in a span of 72 hours in mid-August sparked several large

blazes, unusual in California, where more than 95% of wildfires every year are human-caused.

In a state numbed by calamity – an extreme heatwave, power cuts to millions of residents and the ever-present menace of a worldwide pandemic – the apocalyptic fire scenes just pile on the misery.

Already this summer, with the fire season just taking hold, the statistics are substantially ahead of the curve: More than 5,300 fires have started in California, from the first of the year to mid-August, compared with 3,300 in the same period last year. A worrisome 100,000 acres have already burned. Last year only 28,000 acres were lost to fire by mid-August.

When 2018 became the worst

fire year on record, we recognized a new reality: Each year could surpass the last, setting records for the size, destruction, cost and loss of life. A state-commissioned report made the harrowing projection that under current emissions trends, the average burn area in California will increase 77 percent by the end of the century.

The state has spent, conservatively, more than \$4.7 billion from its emergency fund from 2010 through 2019 to fight fires. Cal Fire, the state's firefighting agency, has been chewing through its firefighting budget only months into a year, leaving little to pay for thinning California's overgrown forests and helping rural communities protect their

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## Red Cross Mobilizes in Response to Fires

**By Steve Walsh,  
American Red Cross**

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The American Red Cross mobilized several teams in response to multiple fires throughout the California Gold Country Region. Right now, Red Cross volunteers and staff are supporting evacuees with non-congregate sheltering sites, water, snacks meals, and virtual health and mental health services.

Nearly 400 evacuees stayed in Red Cross, county, and independent shelters throughout the region. We have also assisted more than 200 individuals by placing them in local hotels.

For details on locations for shelters and temporary evacuations points, please visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

Wildfires can occur anywhere in the country and can occur at any time throughout the year. The potential is always higher during periods with little or no rainfall, which make brush, grass, and trees dry and burn more easily. High winds can also contribute to spreading a fire.

If you live in a wildfire-prone area, prepare now, and work with your neighbors to build a fire-adapted community. Understand that your planning may be different this year because of the need to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. COVID-19 impacts us all, including firefighters, and an increase in infections may compromise their ability to respond to wildfires. Now more than ever we need to prepare ourselves and our communities for wildfires while taking recommended actions to protect one another from COVID-19.

"We are in the midst of a wildfire season here in Northern California. Many members of our community are currently evacuated on both sides of the valley. This is a reminder for all of us to be prepared, should we have to leave our homes." Said Nuriddin Ziyadinov, Executive Director of Northern California Chapter of Red Cross.

"Make sure you have your emergency go-bags ready and listen to local law enforcement for potential evacuations in your area."

Be Red Cross Ready: Get a Kit: Learn the essential supplies to put in your family's survival kit; Make a Plan: Plan effectively for you and your family in case of an emergency; Be Informed: Understand which disasters are likely to occur in your area and what you must know to stay safe.

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# Dixon Mayfair Responds to Fire Evacuation Needs

**By Debra Dingman**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - Animals weren't the only ones who found a respite from the LNU Complex Fire at the Mayfair grounds. Residents who fled in RV's and trailers also shared the space and typical of Dixonites, there was plenty of help for them and their animals. The Mayfair opened as an official rescue shelter this past week during the evacuations but now has closed.

"We were left with some chickens and two goats but they are now at Solano County Fairgrounds in Vallejo," said Mayfair Exhibits Coordinator Sandy Bonsteel.

"There were 97 animals and the uniqueness of this rescue was that most of the owners stayed with their animals so when they left, the animals left," said Patricia Conklin, Chief Executive Officer of the 36th District Agricultural Association, the organization that produces the Dixon May Fair.

"What people need to



Jessica Carpenter walks her 5-year-old llama, Vickie, around the Dixon Mayfair after her family was evacuated from the burning Vacaville hills. Photo submitted by Debra Dingman

know is that all 18 of the state fair evacuation centers are coordinated through the Office of Emergency Services so there is paperwork and protocols but that's so we can get resources including animal control officers and vets," Conklin said. There are trainings and conferences regularly, so they can be prepared and

knowledgeable.

"That is so we can be the smoothest and safest operation that we can be," she said. They could not have done as well – especially overnight – without the help of a group that comes from the Sheriff's Department and one volunteer extraordinaire, Paige Gill. "We can't say enough about Paige!"

Conklin said.

"Every time we serve, we learn something new and we are committed to the health and safety of the animals. It would be great to have a core group of people we could call." Interested in assisting in the next evacuation? Call her so training can be provided. The phone is (707) 678-5529. ★

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# A Series of Curve Balls

By Debra Dingman

I should rename my column. Instead of Life’s Too Short, it should be Life Throws Curveballs. It would be more appropriate for this time in my life when I am (supposedly) more mature, have wisdom, learned how to communicate, deal with nasty Facebook people, and forgive.

Those curveballs make you reflect on your values. Like my stepdad choosing not to have surgery to prevent an overgrown aorta from dangerously pressing on his other functioning parts of his heart.

Let me back up a little. For several years, David and I enjoyed watching a British television medical comedy/drama series called Doc Martin. We inadvertently learned a lot about illnesses and their symptoms. We also learned a lot about small communities and elderly residents. Every episode there was something profound to discover and we would have conversations about it for several days or weeks afterwards.

In one, there were two elderly women who had tattooed “Do Not Resuscitate” across their chests. Although it was hilarious at the time, that was one of those episodes that we kept discussing. It helped us really look at our values –both the alike and different ones.

We also established our Health Care Directive which determines who will make decisions on our health if one or both of us cannot – like if we are both seriously injured in a car wreck, for example. We discussed, again, the plans not to resuscitate if our quality of life would be sorely dependent on care by others.

This was the decade my last biological parent died. There is a lot of growing up in those times. We were moving in and out of Dixon a lot with David’s company and established our Estate Plan. We also wrote our wills. It was a good feeling to know we had done

the best we could to make things simpler for our loved ones after we depart this Earth.

I’ll take a moment to gently admonish those who have not done this. My parents’ generation, unless you were wealthy – did not take care of these things but things are very different now and it really is helpful for your children. And, worth the \$1,200 to see the attorney. Barbara Sonin is a good one. She is a member of our Dixon Chamber, too.

Back to my stepdad (the man who raised me and provided stability to our family which included five siblings.) Knowing that he might die any day makes my heart ache. I talk to him frequently on the phone and he always provides a lot of laughter with his giant sense of humor. I talked with him about his decision and more in depth with his wife, who over the years has become a close friend.

My stepdad is a strong Christian. He feels he wants to go when God calls him—at least in the most natural state of dying as possible. Besides, he reasoned, the surgery would most likely kill him anyway as it comes with great risk with odds not at all in his favor. So we go forward, living one day at a time.

I know experts tell us this all the time but then, that means living with this constant ache that he may be gone at any moment from my life until I join him in Heaven.

While we know death is the most predictable component in our world, here comes this little tangent that is hugely difficult to deal with; another curveball.

Like the fire that gobbled up the Berryessa and Vacaville hills. It sprung up suddenly and we housed a couple of Vacaville friends who were evacuated. My son’s office was also taken over by families and with a couple blow-up mattresses, all went well and I got to meet some new folks. A good friend lost everything

and as I stood in my kitchen the next morning, I was reminded of what fires do. They leave nothing...but ashes.

The full page ad from PG&E was run in our paper and this time, I took the time to read every word. Yes, I will now pack my “Go-Bag.” I already have something similar but only because I’m a nana and often got called at last minute to care for sick grandchildren. But, after talking with the families who were evacuated, I’m updating my external hard drive and sticking it in the bag, too. I can always pull it out and update a few months at a time but my biggest fear is losing my zillion photos stuck away in my computer hard drive – especially now that my Dad needs to see them to help him fill in the blanks of his memory.

As I passed the downtown restaurants, I noticed not a single patron was dining outdoors. All this money and time used by persevering business owners dealing with the government restrictions who wouldn’t let us eat indoors so they moved everything outside and now this. All those evacuated people who need to eat a meal and the heat and smoke are terrible. My heart breaks for the loss of revenue for our local businesses. Please order out to help them.

When you’ve lost so much (or everything,) it is your personal values – the things that are important to you – that will pick you up out of those ashes and give you strength to take the next step – and hopefully the many steps forward after that. Your faith will help you keep in the game when you encounter a curveball.

Debra Dingman, journalist and author is a 27-year Dixon resident. Her columns and articles have run in Solano County for nearly 37 years in Solano County. Her book Learning A+ Living, Adventures & Rewards of a Mom Entrepreneur, is published by WestBow Press and is available on Amazon. ★

# New Little Free Bilingual Library Opens

By Debra Dingman

DIXON, CA (MPG) - Dixon is getting its first bilingual Little Free Library thanks to the Dixon Kiwanis Club and a gracious couple who reside on A Street. Descansar y Leer Pequeña Biblioteca Gratis at 680 West A Street will open this week.

“There is a huge need in the community for this,” said R.K. Van Every who with husband Greig, and Dixon Kiwanis, established the first official Little Free Library a few years ago.

Little Free Libraries started in 2009 by Todd Bol of Hudson, Wisconsin, as a tribute to his mother, a teacher who loved to read. LFL is a nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community, and sparks creativity by fostering neighborhood book exchanges around the world.

The LFLs are tiny libraries, each characterized by its uniquely decorated book receptacle belonging to the entire community and the readers maintain it by bringing a book when they take one.

These two receptacles were both donated by Dixon’s Independent Voice Newspaper and restored by District 4 Councilman Devon Minnema, also a Kiwanis member.

“I think (being bilingual) is the future for all of us,” R.K. said. “I think we should do whatever we can to improve literacy in this community.” The Van Everys believe everyone should speak their native language and one other but in the Dixon community, that should be English and Spanish.

“For this modern world we have to be able to communicate,” she said. “When we did the original one, we had so many people coming by to use it. It is refreshing to see the different generations out there. You will see the parent and the child but you’ll also see a 10-year-old on a bike or a senior citizen. They all seem to really enjoy it and they bring books to trade.” They see people of all ages and from all walks of life including a homeless man who gets a book almost every week.

“People can use any LFL anywhere. The motto is ‘Take a book, leave a



R.K. Van Every helps to open a bilingual Little Free Library by using a Dixon's Independent Voice Newspaper receptacle restored by District 4 Councilman Devon Minnema, a Kiwanis member. Photo by Debra Dingman

book.’ No library card needed,” she said. You don’t even have to return any books. If you want to keep a book, that is fine; it is merely asked that you bring a book to replace each book you take.

That helped keep up the supply when the pandemic hit and the Dixon Public Library closed. They saw an uptick in people dropping by to exchange books. But, even when the public library is open, it requires a proof of address and photo identification in order to check out books which can be difficult for migrants or homeless.

Little Free Libraries mushroomed across the nation in the past decade. Now, there are more than 70,000 LFLs in 70 countries. Dixon even added another one, the Regency Little Free Library at 395 Fitzpatrick Court.

While there may be some bilingual books in the local LFL’s inventory, this new one will be exclusively bilingual – books that will have writing in Spanish and English.

“In visiting with some of the families who come by, often we find that the parent will be learning English,” said R.K. “We want books that enable them both to be reading English and Spanish; the parent and the child will both be learning.” With Dixon’s Hispanic/Latino population at more than 40 percent according to the City of Dixon demographics, and with Dixon being home of the Migrant Camp, this is important to improve community literacy.

“When people come here from Mexico, especially if they have children in school, they learn very quickly to speak English but they can’t read or write it,” said R.K. ★

Academically, children growing up in homes without books are on average three years behind children in homes with lots of books, according to the nonprofit’s website. One of the most successful ways to improve the reading achievement of children is to increase their access to books, especially at home. But, two out of three children living in poverty have no books to call their own.

The Van Everys are starting the inventory with donated books from the Dixon Kiwanis, their personal purchases, and donated books from Kim Schroeder-Evans, a local Spanish professor.

It was R.K.’s conversations with some of the Hispanic visitors that peeked her desire to speak Spanish and take Schroeder-Evans classes.

“I definitely think it is a very good thing for our community,” said Schroeder-Evans. Now, R.K. is taking three online college courses and is nearly giddy at the prospect of having conversations with Spanish-speaking visitors.

“It’s an opportunity to converse with them and practice my own Spanish,” she said. The Spanish version also has its own ‘Rest and Read’ bench just like the other one next to it. The restored receptacle was done in complimentary colors to the original one.

To donate bilingual books, one can order from Amazon and have them delivered directly to Little Free Library at the Dixon address, but the books do not have to be new; they just have to be in good shape. If you can help, contact Dixon Kiwanis for free pick up at (707) 301-0795. ★

## Dixon Churches Invite You To Worship



Our sermon topic this week will be as follows:  
“Becoming a Peacemaker”  
Matthew 5:9

Sunday - Bible Study 9:00 am • Worship 10:30 am  
Small Groups meet throughout the week.  
Tuesday Children’s Adventure Bay - 6:30 pm

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

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Mass Schedule  
Saturday  
7:30 pm Spanish  
Sunday  
8:30 am and 10 am English  
6:30 am and 7:30 pm Spanish  
Weekday Masses  
M-T-F 8:00 am English  
TH 8:00 am and 7:30 pm Spanish  
First Saturday  
Bilingual Mass at 8:00 am

Every First Friday of the month, Adoration from 8:30 am to 6:30 pm  
and Bilingual Mass at 7:00 pm

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Religious Education  
Holy Sacraments  
Please call the office for more info.  
www.StPetersChurchDixon.com

## St. Peters Catholic Church News

“In tribulation, immediately draw near to God with trust, and you will receive strength, enlightenment and instruction. In joy and pleasures, immediately draw near to God in fear and truth, and you will be neither deceived nor involved in vanity.” (St. John of the Cross)

This is confident, reassuring advice from St. John of the Cross.

“In tribulation” - we are asked to immediately draw near to Him with trust to receive strength, enlightenment, and instruction. Notice how St. John does not write “you may receive” or “you will probably receive.” St. John writes “you WILL receive”. There is certainty. You can count on Jesus. He cares for you. He loves you. He wants to help you. Placing our trust in Jesus is an act of surrender and of obedience. We ask that His will for us be done. He may ask us to bear our suffering out of love for Him, to continue to endure the trial until He sends us consolation. Notice also how we are asked to immediately draw near to Him. Hesitation usually means that we prefer to keep our own counsel, to do things our way. St. John of the Cross advises against this, implying that He needs to be our first and only remedy, our everything. Only then are

we really trusting Him. Then, in response to humble and complete trust on our part, He will send us strength, enlightenment, and instruction. “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6)

“In joy and pleasures” - we are asked to immediately draw near to him in fear and truth. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Proverbs 9:10) The world, the flesh, and the devil are ever persistent in trying to keep us from Him. One way this happens is through excessive pleasure-seeking and making of idols. We need to draw close to Jesus and humbly ask Him to send us wisdom and understanding so that we will know how to respond to the many deceptions we encounter on our pilgrimage. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Light. Without Jesus, it’s impossible for us to enjoy the joy and pleasures He sends us as part of our journey without us falling into deception, vanity and pride. St. John’s counsel is to stay close to the Lord in fear and obedience, love and truth. Let us not lean on our own understanding, rather let Him guide us in all things.

Please check our website at stpeterschurchdixon.com for information on our mass and confession times. ★



# Breaking Fire Records

*Continued from page 1*  
infrastructure and water supplies.  
The wildfire crisis has been at the top of the state's legislative to-do list for years, galvanizing the attention of Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislators, who have been working at an accelerated pace to address the problem.  
But the response to the coronavirus, and the enormous unanticipated costs, may shuffle priorities.  
So far, their approach has been to stabilize the financial health of the state's electric utilities by creating a \$21 billion compensation fund to pay for fire victims' claims, seeded with equal contributions from the companies and their customers.  
They are also mandating more safety oversight and a requirement that the three largest utilities invest a total of \$5 billion to fireproof their equipment. Increasingly, those precautions have

included preemptively cutting the power in high-risk areas during windy, red-flag conditions — a measure that has its own downsides, as California customers quickly discovered.  
California's fires are disruptive long after they are put out, displacing homeowners and even entire communities for months or years. Even as the charred wood decays, it generates emissions that set back the state's efforts to combat climate change — only worsening the wildfires to come.  
*Julie Cart joined CalMatters as a projects and environment reporter in 2016 after a long career at the Los Angeles Times.*  
*Judy Lin is an assistant editor overseeing economy and workforce coverage for CalMatters. She serves as hub editor of the second year of the California Divide project.*  
*For more on this story and to see graphs and details go to CALMatters.org.* ★

# Mobility Programs Impacted by Potential Suspension of Uber and Lyft

**Vince Ma, Solano Transportation Authority**

**SUISUN CITY, CA (MPG)** - In response to the recent ruling by the California Superior Court, Lyft and Uber are to be suspending operations in California from Friday, August 21, 2020. The suspension of services provided by Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft will impact Solano Mobility Programs which utilize TNCs as transportation providers.  
The four Solano Mobility Programs impacted by the suspension of Uber and Lyft's operations in California are:

The Solano Older Adults Medical Trip Concierge Service, which partners with GoGo Grandparent (operated by Lyft and Uber) to provide Solano County residents aged 60 and older subsidized trips to medical appointments (hospital, dentist, chiropractor, pharmacy, etc.), within Solano County;  
The Solano Mobility First/Last Mile Commuter Program, which offers program participants with subsidized Lyft rides to and from transit hubs in Solano County;  
The Amtrak + Lyft Pilot Program, which offers program participants an opportunity to try commuting

to and from Solano County with a 10 Ride Capitol Corridor Pass and Free Lyft First/Last Mile Connections for \$20;  
The SolTrans Benicia Subsidized (Lyft) Program, which pays a portion of a qualified program participant's Lyft fare for rideshare trips that start and end within designated locations in the SolTrans service area.  
Program participants should contact the Solano Mobility Call Center at 800-535-6883 or visit [www.solanomobility.org](http://www.solanomobility.org) for the latest updates on modifications to these programs or for information about alternative programs. ★

# State Prisons Continue Early Releases Due to COVID-19

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

**FAIRFIELD, CA (MPG)** - Due to the threat of COVID-19 (coronavirus) spreading throughout the state prison population, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) continues to release thousands of inmates prior to their expected release date. CDCR determined that inmates with one year or less remaining on their sentence were to be released, supposedly excluding those serving time for domestic violence, violent crimes, or sex offenses that require registration. In reality, inmates serving time for serious and violent offenses are being released pursuant to Government Code Section 8658 which allows

for the release of inmates in any case in which an emergency endangering the lives of inmates has occurred or is imminent.  
The expedited release of inmates has presented challenges for crime victims across the state, as there has been little or no notice to crime victims prior to release. Although CDCR has represented that victims registered through their victim services database will be notified, not all victims are registered with CDCR, and they are entitled to have their voice heard.  
We understand the importance of maintaining the health and safety of all persons including inmates across the state. We also appreciate the importance of public safety and the constitutional rights of crime victims. It is concerning that CDCRs expedited process is occurring

without sufficient notice and input from those who have been victimized by crime.  
The Solano County District Attorney's Office remains committed to notifying crime victims of any early release. Unfortunately, we are also being hampered by the short notice of release. Please contact our Victim Witness Unit at 707-784-6844 if you need assistance.  
If you have been a victim of crime that occurred in Solano County, we also encourage you to register with CDCR Victim Witness services at <https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/victim-services/>.  
CDCR's website also contains information regarding their response to COVID-19 and early releases. You can visit that information at [www.cdcr.ca.gov/covid19/frequently-asked-questions-expedited-releases](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/covid19/frequently-asked-questions-expedited-releases). ★



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# Downtown Restaurants Can't Catch a Break



**Just when all the downtown restaurants evolved into outdoor dining places due to COVID restrictions, the nearby LMU Fires filled the air with dangerous smoke and most patrons could not sit outside. The smoke lasted for days not only robbing evacuees from meal options as they struggled with potentially coming back to disintegrated homes, but also continued to hurt our local economy. The situation worsened this past week when one entire side of North First Street was blocked by orange cones and a large sign posted "Road Work Ahead." That work was on a PG&E project requiring Advantage Asphalt to repair a 5 x 6-foot chunk of the sidewalk in front of Bangkok Garden Thai Cuisine and Sushi Bar, in between Rosemary's Farm to Fork and Dawson's Grill. Pictured here is safety worker Jaime Kimbell. Photo by Debra Dingman**

# Crews Working on Street Improvements



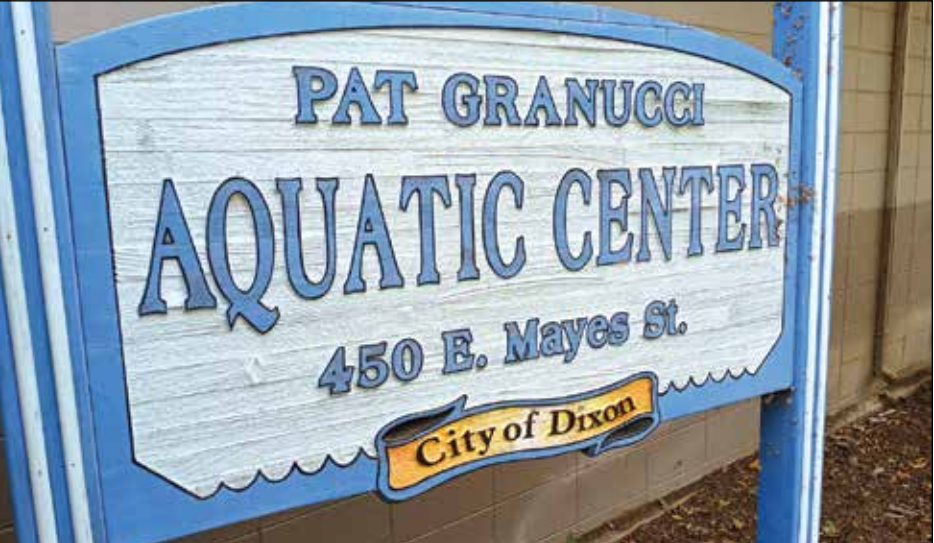
**Notices for upcoming road work will be sent to physical locations to let citizens know when to expect heavy equipment. Photo by Debra Dingman**

**MPG Staff**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - The 2020 Pavement Preservation Project has begun. Notices will continue to be delivered physically to the locations that will be upgraded to the new three-layer pavement system, as well as posted signage on location for upcoming work.  
During construction, there will be flagmen and other workers directing traffic to

ensure the safe passage of all citizens and for the safety of City workers, so please be cautious.  
Expect some delays, and choose alternate routes, if possible. The hours of construction will be from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
If you have any questions or concerns throughout the project, you are invited to contact Project Manager – Scott Youngren at (916) 291-0718 or email: [Questions@slurry.com](mailto:Questions@slurry.com). ★

# Dolphins Poised to Swim; Adult Laps Are Out



**The Pat Granucci Aquatic Center has been shut down for months during the pandemic. Photo by Debra Dingman**

**By Debra Dingman**

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - With record-breaking temperatures roasting anyone outdoors and the shutdown of most local fitness centers, we can all agree this is not a good time to keep the public pool closed. However there is hope for some students since the Dixon Dolphins are negotiating with the City of Dixon to run the pool for their swim team. Unfortunately, there is slim to none hope that lap swim for adults will resume this season.  
"It is a very large amount of money to fund the Lap Swim," said Recreation Manager Jean Houseman, who handles the business of the Pat Granucci Aquatic Center. "We discussed that with the Dixon Dolphins and they really did not want to." But, she said, they are very close to reaching an agreement and they plan to "move forward very soon" after last week's City Council meeting where there was a unanimous vote to allow the Dixon Dolphins to run their swim program at the pool.  
Originally, the Parks and Recreation Commission voted on August 5, to "Reopen the competition pool for Lap Swim run by the City and allow use by the local non-profit swim club." But, after much discussion by the City Council last week and a PowerPoint presentation by Deputy Public Works Director Lauren Kotow, the Council decided to break that recommendation into two separate issues.  
To move the plan to allow a nonprofit use

of the pool specifically in this case the Dixon Dolphins, there were COVID-related requirements that would include Porta-potties, different hours of operation, and determination of who would hire and train lifeguards.  
"Dolphins are moving forward to be able to offer our fall program to our families," said Ada Barros, Dolphins President. They will have to provide their own lifeguards so are scheduling some of the coaches to receive certification now. They will also need to get new insurance coverage for the lifeguards.  
"Because of the additional liability, we will not be offering anything above and beyond what we normally would for our fall season," she said. "In fact, we will not be conducting swim assessments which means we probably won't be able to take on new swimmers who do not have swim team experience."  
On the other issue of Lap Swim, the costs of it when run by the City of Dixon would be too much for the short hours of availability plus the fact that only a small number of people would be able to use the lanes at a time. That second item was tabled for now.  
The Dixon Dolphins will be posting on Facebook and advertise on social media when registration becomes open.  
The group normally has 75-80 participants and about 50 families have responded that they are interested this fall.  
"Depending on how COVID goes, spring might look very different from fall." Barros said. ★



# Blackouts Reveal Our Power Shortage



By Dan Walters  
CAL Matters

The prolonged heat wave of 100-degree-plus temperatures that grips California has strained the state’s electric power grid to the breaking point, resulting in rolling blackouts for the first time in nearly two decades.

California’s Independent System Operator (ISO), which manages the distribution of power for the state’s investor-owned utilities, imposed temporary outages as demands from air conditioning systems in millions of heat-stressed homes approached supply capacity.

The blackouts clearly tell us that California has a power supply problem. It’s unacceptable that a state with a world-class economy grounded in cutting edge technology has the unreliable electrical service of a third world country.

Moreover, if we lack sufficient generating capacity now, the gap between supply and demand will grow even wider as our population continues to grow and if, as we are constantly told, the climate becomes ever warmer.

Our power supply problem stems largely from political policies aimed at phasing out hydrocarbon energy, such as natural gas-powered generators, shutting down nuclear

plants and relying more on “renewables” such as solar panels and windmills.

By decree, the latter are supplying ever-increasing amounts of power, but they are much less reliable than traditional generation. Therefore, when demand climbs to near-record levels ISO must turn to natural gas-fired plants to make up the difference, particularly if it cannot acquire more juice from out-of-state generators.

ISO data reveal that when demand peaks, natural gas plants are supplying half or more of California’s power, but even so there are not enough electrons because we have discouraged construction of more gas-fired generation.

“The situation is one that could have been avoided,” Steve Berberich, ISO’s top executive, told the agency’s board on Monday during a review of weekend blackouts, adding that the supply situation “is broken and needs to be fixed.”

Berberich said the ISO has repeatedly warned the California Utilities Commission that an additional 4,700 megawatts of supply is needed but only a portion was authorized on a delayed basis, leaving a gap that couldn’t be closed when the heat wave hit.

In theory, massive battery banks could be constructed to store solar and wind power when it’s plentiful and supplant hydrocarbon generation altogether, but so far that’s just a theory.

Three years ago, ISO published a scenario that envisioned a massive shift from hydrocarbons to renewable electricity in homes, commercial businesses and in transportation

by 2030, all but eliminating hydrocarbon energy.

Other than laws requiring utilities to increase their use of solar, wind and other renewable sources, however, little of the ISO’s vision, which mirrors other official projections, has become reality. The COVID-19 pandemic and the severe economic recession it spawned will probably retard the conversion to an all-electric society even more.

For the foreseeable future, therefore, we will need the natural gas generators that environmental activists love to hate, along with the equally vital infrastructure of gas wells and pipelines that they also want to cancel. In fact we need even more of them as demands increase.

Minutes after Berberich’s report, Gov. Gavin Newsom took to social media to say that the blackouts are “sobering to the reality” that “more insurance” in power supply is needed and pledged to provide it.

However, he must also answer why the Public Utilities Commission, composed of governor’s appointees, has failed to heed ISO’s warnings about inadequate supply.

Newsom is fond of the word “foundational” to describe things that must be done. There’s nothing more foundational than having the lights shine when you flick the switch or air conditioning to function when the mercury soars.

*Dan Walters has been a journalist for nearly 60 years, spending all but a few of those years working for California newspapers. Respond to: dan@calmatters.org* ★

# Liberal Policies Bring Black-Outs

Commentary  
by Lou Binninger

Venezuela is known for the greatest oil reserves in the world. However, since it became socialist on February 2, 1999, what once was one of the world’s most prosperous independent nations now imports gasoline. Socialist California with world-renowned oil and other energy producing resources has also been importing fuel and power for years.

Like Venezuelans, most Californians cannot afford the state and many are leaving.

California energy policies have forced fossil fuel and nuclear utility plants to close in order to power the entire state on green energy (solar and wind). There is talk to also eliminate hydro-plants and dams to re-wild the rivers.

The interesting aspect of the current black-outs is that people are now learning that much of our energy/fuel is being imported from outside the state. The irony is that though liberal politicians are anti-fossil and hydro power they buy power from these same sources produced elsewhere.

California has always had the ability to be energy independent with phenomenal fossil fuel reserves, natural gas, geothermal and hydro power. However, liberal state policies have crippled the exploration and extraction of oil. Hydro is stymied because the state refuses to allow more dams for water storage. Nuclear is clean energy but has a stigma with liberals.

Legislators have mandated the eventual moratorium on the use of fossil fuels but they lack the know-how to switch to ‘green energy’ and not economically crash the state. The current black-outs occurred because we had a heat wave, there was no sun or wind to create electricity at night and insufficient oil and hydro-power to import.

Fossil and hydro sources produce consistent utility flows while green energy is sporadic so the utility grid buys energy from out-of state to meet routine shortages. During daytime hours on a sunny day there can be a glut of solar-produced energy but there are no battery fields large enough to store energy for the dark periods. The storage dilemma affects wind power, as well.

Energy experts say politicians can make policies but no one has an idea how going green will practically work in real life. And the truth is that renewable energy is not really renewable or green. It’s all a bit of a fraud and very expensive, but it sounds cool to liberals.

All machines require the mining and processing of millions of tons of primary materials to make and the disposal of hardware that inevitably wears out. Compared

with fossil fuels, green machines entail, on average, a 10-fold increase in the quantities of materials extracted and processed to produce the same amount of energy.

So, any significant expansion of today’s meager amount of green energy – currently less than 4% of the country’s total consumption (versus 56% from oil and gas) – will create an unprecedented increase in global mining for needed minerals, radically increase existing environmental and labor challenges in emerging markets (where many mines are located), and dramatically increase U.S. imports and the vulnerability of America’s energy supply chain.

Mark. P Mills, Energy and Tech expert at the Manhattan Institute offers some sobering facts showing California is poised for expensive energy and routine shortages.

Mills says, “Building wind turbines and solar panels to generate electricity, as well as batteries to fuel electric vehicles, requires, on average, more than 10 times the quantity of materials, compared with building machines using hydrocarbons to deliver the same amount of energy to society.”

“A single electric car contains more cobalt than 1,000 smartphone batteries; the blades on a single wind turbine have more plastic than 5 million smartphones; and a solar array that can power one data center uses more glass than 50 million phones.”

“Replacing hydrocarbons with green machines under current plans – never mind aspirations for far greater expansion – will vastly increase the mining of various critical minerals around the world. For example, a single electric car battery weighing 1,000 pounds requires extracting and processing some 500,000 pounds of materials. Averaged over a battery’s life, each mile of driving an electric car “consumes” five pounds of earth. Using an internal combustion engine consumes about 0.2 pounds of liquids per mile.”

“Oil, natural gas, and coal are needed to produce the concrete, steel, plastics, and purified minerals used to build green machines. The energy equivalent of 100 barrels of oil is used in the processes to fabricate a single battery that can store the equivalent of one barrel of oil.”

“By 2050, with current plans, the quantity of worn-out solar panels – much of it non-recyclable – will constitute double the tonnage of all today’s global plastic waste, along with over 3 million tons per year of unrecyclable plastics from worn-out wind turbine blades. By 2030, more than 10 million tons per year of batteries will become garbage.”

Are any Sacramento policymakers interested in science and facts?

*Get Lou’s podcast at “No Hostages Radio” and his articles at nohostagesradio.com* ★

# President Trump Approves Major Disaster Declaration

FEMA News Release

**WASHINGTON, DC (MPG)** - FEMA announced that federal disaster assistance has been made available to the state of California to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by wildfires from Aug. 14 and continuing.

The President’s action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in Lake, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma and Yolo counties.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

Willie G. Nunn has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area. Damage assessments are continuing in other areas, and more counties and additional forms of assistance may be designated after the assessments are fully completed.

Individuals and business owners who sustained losses in the designated area can begin applying for assistance tomorrow by registering online at [www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov) or by calling 1-800-621- 3362 or 1-800-462-7585 TTY. ★



## Farmers Work to Help Coastal Crops Weather Heat Wave

Hot weather along the California coast places a strain on cool-season crops. A University of California specialist advises farmers on the Central Coast to irrigate their vegetable crops the proper length of time to prevent heat damage. Another farm advisor reports losses to strawberries from the high temperatures. UC Cooperative Extension also says avocados require care to prevent hot weather from harming trees and fruit.

## High School, College Ag Instructors Adjust To Virtual Teaching

As schools reopen--in many cases, virtually--agricultural instructors must figure out how to provide the hands-on learning their classes require. At colleges that can combine distance and in-person learning, physical lab sessions have altered schedules or shop spaces to assure social distancing. High school agricultural instructors say they have distributed lesson kits, supplies and other materials to allow students to do projects at home.

## Virtual Classes Bring Changes to School Food Service

School districts starting the academic year with virtual classes have adjusted how they buy food. Many districts continue to offer curbside meal delivery to students and their families. As a result, they’re now buying fruits, vegetables and other foods in individual servings, rather than in bulk for display at salad bars and cafeteria lines. That has required produce packinghouses to change how they package foods sold to schools.

## Pandemic Reduces Supplies of Equipment Parts

The pandemic has complicated work for California farmers who need replacement parts for machinery. In some cases, parts have been in short supply. The Association of Equipment Manufacturers says plants in Mexico slowed parts production during the early weeks of the pandemic, making certain spare parts hard to come by. Farmers and equipment dealers say supplies have stabilized, especially for American-made parts. ★

## DIXON POLICE LOG

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

**Tuesday, August 18, 2020**

**1250** – Report of Battery in the 1000 block of North First street. During this investigation, Officers arrested Josa Anaya Jr (10/13/1987) of Dixon for misdemeanor battery.

**1837** – Vandalism reported in the 1200 block of Linford Lane.

**2208** – Threats reported in the 200 block of Archer Place.

**Wednesday, August 19, 2020**

**0816** – Sexual assault reported in the 1400 block of Ary Lane.

**1203** – Vandalism reported in the 1400 block of Beldon Court.

**Thursday, August 20, 2020**

**0801** – Traffic stop conducted in the 200 block of South Almond Street led to the arrest of Leonard Rodriguez (65) for a misdemeanor warrant. Rodriguez was also found to be driving with false registration tabs on his vehicle and a suspended driver’s license. Rodriguez was transported and booked into the Solano County Jail.

**1341** – A female was contacted in the 100 block of Dorset Drive. The female was found to be a danger to herself and was taken to a mental health facility for further evaluation.

**1533** – Traffic stop conducted in the 100 block of West B Street led to the arrest of Jonathan Golder (36) for possession of methamphetamine. Golder was transported and booked into the Solano County Jail.

**1541** – Information report taken at the 100 block of East B Street for a tree falling on a vehicle.

**2131** – A parolee was arguing with his girlfriend at a local business. Bystanders called the Police. The parolee had a warrant for his arrest and he was booked into the Solano County Jail.

**Friday, August 21, 2020**

**1453** – Alcohol and tobacco violation case were taken in the 200 block of Stratford Av. Officers contacted (S) Makala Roby (19) out of Dixon. Makala was in possession of an alcoholic beverage and tobacco. Makala was cited and released.

**Saturday, August 22, 2020**

**0155** – Hit and Run reported in the area of Wiegand Way and Jib Court. Steve Coleman (53), of Dixon, was arrested for Hit and Run with Injuries, DUI with Injuries and DUI with a BAC or .08 or Greater with Injury. Kyle Duncan (28), of Dixon, was arrested for Convicted Felon in Possession of a Firearm, Violent Convicted Felon in Possession og Body Armor, Unlawful Possession of an Assault Weapon, and Probation Violation. They were both transported to the Solano County Jail.

**1133** – Officers were dispatched to the area of Morgan Lane and Pembroke Way for a report of an assault in progress. Katherine Beauregard (40), of Dixon, was found to be the responsible. She was arrested for Assault with a Deadly Weapon and Domestic Violence. She was transported to the Solano County Jail.

**Sunday, August 23, 2020**

**1300** – Information report taken in the 400 block of West F Street.

**1830** – Pedestrian stop in the area of Wiegand Way and Jib Court resulted in the arrest of Jose Contreras (40) of Dixon for 4 outstanding misdemeanor warrants. He was taken to county jail.

**2130** – Information report taken in the 1300 block of South Lincoln Street.

**Monday, August 24, 2020**

**1014** – Theft report in the 300 block of South 8th Street.

**1100** – Report of vandalism in the 400 block of La Esperanza.

**1412** – Report of fraud in the 800 block of Bounds Drive.

**1505** – Report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Porter Road.

**1746** – Report of domestic violence in the 1300 block of Commercial Way resulted in the arrest of Carmen Clemente (36) of Vacaville for misdemeanor spousal battery. She was taken to jail.



# WEEKLY CANDIDATE FORUM

Starting this week, the INDEPENDENT VOICE is providing information on the candidates for: District 3 and 4, treasurer, and mayor. Candidates are introducing themselves to the community in this issue. Then for the next few weeks, a question will be sent to the candidates so that you will have an opportunity to get to know them and their positions on local issues. The questions were submitted to us from a cross-section of the community, education, religious, youth, citizens, researcher, activist. We hope you enjoy the articles and will learn more about the candidates.



**THOM BOGUE**  
Candidate for Dixon Mayor

I have proven mayoral history in making positive lasting impact for our community. I have always thought of myself simply as a guy who does my best for the people of Dixon, a place I am proud to call home. To those who had the faith to make me Mayor over the last four years, I thank you for the opportunity to serve your

interests. I hope that you have more reason now than you did four years ago to join me in leading Dixon as Mayor, 2020.

Moving forward as a community, together we will decide what the priorities are, after all your council represents you! I look forward to working with your new vision of representatives, tackling existing challenges while considering new opportunities that will present themselves in the future.

My primary concern is to continue with improving the appearance of our city, improve programs for our youth, protect our property rights, and address the challenge we will be facing in upcoming revenue shortfalls do to Covid-19 for our City and Local Businesses.



**STEVE BIRD**  
Candidate for Dixon Mayor

**Occupation:** Retired Police Captain/Deputy Sheriff

**Education:** BA Police Management; FBI National Academy Graduate; POST Command College Graduate

**Husband and Father:** Married to Marilee (29 years), daughter Brittany (Accountant) and son Jackson (USAF Firefighter) both DHS graduates 2010 and 2015.

I have honorably served Dixon for over 32 years as a police professional and a city council member/Vice Mayor. I have brokered positive and proactive

relationships throughout our region. As a public servant, I have earned a reputation for being quick to listen, careful to speak and calm with my responses to those served. This has been guided by my strong personal ethics and knowledge of our community and Solano County.

I am an active volunteer locally with service groups, youth sports, veterans, seniors and the farm community. I have served on boards/committees for many organizations. This has included Rotary International, League of CA Cities and a life member of Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs.

The safety, well being and future of our community are paramount. As your Mayor I will draw on my professional management experience to ensure the highest quality of reliable public services, keeping our community prosperous and vibrant.

It's my Honor to serve you.



**DEVON MINNEMA**  
Candidate for Dixon Mayor

I am running for mayor because I believe that our city can and should be better. While "serving the community" may be an abstract for many candidates, I got into public service to work against the clock. I do not have children yet, but will in the somewhat near future, and I want my children to grow up in a better Dixon than the one I grew up in.

I was born and raised here, and that gives me unique insight to see what needs to be fixed.

For the last four years, I have served on the Dixon City Council and offered up reform after reform, only to see them shot down due to petty politics. We need bold new leadership in Dixon for the journey ahead. The standby practices of judging policy by who came up with it and not on its own merit or even the hunger of the people to have it has proven ineffective. We need fiscal responsibility, a better climate for businesses both large and locally-owned, and we need a leader who understands and respects our community culture.

I hope to count on your support this November. Vote Minnema for Dixon 2020.



**TED HICKMAN**  
Candidate for Dixon Mayor

I am a veteran who truly believes in truth, justice, family values and the American Way.

We have spent the last 53 years working to make this community the best it can be.

I have headed most charities and served four (4-year) elected terms on the city council in four different decades. *I have more experience than all of the other candidates combined.*

I'm known as a straight

shooter and don't really believe in today's violation of the first amendment and "political correctness."

I strongly support the second amendment and take the oath of office "to defend constitution of the United States and the State of California *against all enemies, foreign and domestic*" ... which I will do.

I have led by example and taken stands both popular and unpopular based on what I feel is the right thing to do. My word is my bond.

I am not in favor of unlimited growth without schools, lighting and landscape districts that pay their own way. A couple of thousand houses built in fairly short order is just too much and spits in the face of "Measure B," a growth control measure passed by Dixon voters.



**JERRY CASTANON**  
District 4 Council Candidate

As a Dixon resident of 15 years, I had the honor to serve this wonderful city as a Planning Commissioner from 2010-2012, City Councilman from 2012-2016. I have 35 years experience in the Construction Industry, in which I recently retired as a Carpenter Field Representative assisting citizens placement for local jobs, receive deserved wages with benefits and supported our military Brothers and Sisters to obtain construction jobs through the "Helmets to

Hardhats" program. I have remained active with the community as a Dixon Chamber of Commerce Associate Member, Dixon Family Services Executive Board Member in helping raise awareness and funds to support Dixon families. I'm a Dixon Rotary Member that continues to promote integrity in our community, Dixon Teen Center Volunteer because our youth is a big part of our community's future, and St. Peter's Catholic Church Knights of Columbus member involved in charity; building a bridge "Back to Faith". Dixon deserves an Active, Engaged and Motivated Councilman to serve the needs of our citizens. I will help enforce financial responsibility through a continued balanced budget. I support Police and Fire for community safety. Your vote would be greatly appreciated. Your Servant, Jerry Castañon Sr.



**LOGAN LEGG**  
District 4 Council Candidate

Dixon is where I was born and raised. I've experienced everything this town has to offer, from the education system, to the local businesses, to the hospitable community. Looking at my career after graduating from UC Davis, I wanted nothing more than to give back to the community that shaped me as man. Running for

City Council became an opportunity to immerse myself in the two things that have consumed me: Community outreach and politics. The genesis of my interest comes from getting my degree in political science and other analogous prerequisites including campaigns, legislative work, non-profit engagements, diplomacy internships, and many more. My intent with being elected onto the dais is nothing more than being a transparent intermediary in which I represent the wants of my constituents with resolute devotion. I won't walk in front of, and I will not walk behind you; But rather I will walk besides you. Dixon is a phenomenal town and it's time for me to serve in a much larger capacity.



**DON HENDERSHOT**  
District 4 Council Candidate

I want to continue to play an active role in making sure that Dixon grows as a vibrant, friendly and great community. As a Planning Commissioner for over 7 years I have been able to see great projects come into our city and want to continue that trend. I want to be part of those decisions for the safety and wellbeing of Dixon.

Dixon should rely on the partnerships of citizens, staff and the city council working together. I feel that respect and transparency for all is a must to solve any problems that face the city. I am honest, transparent and have the willingness to tackle any problem. I would like to gain the trust back which has deteriorated between the citizens and city council.

I conduct myself with integrity and commitment and seek that for all I work with. I believe if a citizen has a question or idea then we need to listen.

Because of the reasons above, I care and want to make our city council reflect on these ideas. I would be honored to be selected to serve on the City Council for Dixon.



**KEVIN JOHNSON**  
District 3 Council Candidate

Kevin Johnson: Why am I running for Office? I have attended City Council Meetings for more than 15- years. I was appointed to the Planning Commission first in 2013 and re-appointed in 2018. I have been honored to be the Chairperson for the Planning Commission for the last 4+ years. I take much pride in my honest, sincere, transparent, ethical,

and respectful approach to agenda items. I listen, and genuinely take in and process what is being presented by staff and the public. I truly care about, and I'm singularly focused on, Dixon! Whatever I can bring to the City Council to help build trust, confidence and to improve unity to the decision-making process will be my focus, with an emphasis on "the most transparency" possible. This is the public's work that we are entrusted to complete. The most progressive way to inform the public will be of utmost importance. I want to be part of a City Council that can look back and say, "this was a very productive 4-years." It would be an honor to be elected to and serve on the Dixon City Council, representing District 3.



**JAMES P. WARD, JR.**  
Candidate for Treasurer

It is with great pleasure that I announce my intention to run for public office and seek the position of Dixon City Treasurer.

I would like to introduce myself to you with a little history. I served in the United States (U.S.) Army and received an honorable discharge in 1982. I'm proud to say I am a U.S. Army Veteran!

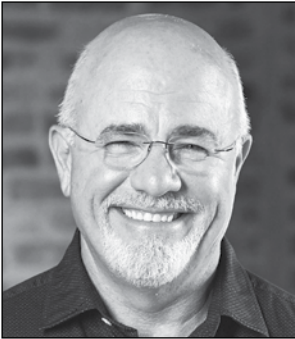
After the Army, I attended the California

Highway Patrol (CHP) Academy in October of 1983. I fully committed to the State of California and the citizens I proudly served. My passion, dedication and drive made me always ready to help make our communities better. In December 2010, I proudly retired as a sergeant from the CHP with over 27 years of public service.

My wife, Renita, and I moved to the city of Dixon 20 years ago. I am currently a proud member of the Dixon Kiwanis Club. I absolutely love this city and would appreciate the opportunity to represent you as the next City of Dixon Treasurer. Our City will prosper with an emphasis on Accountability and Transparency. I would greatly appreciate everyone's support.

Sincerely,  
James P. Ward, Jr.





Build Wealth In College?

Dear Dave,

What advice do you have for college students who want to plan for the future and start building wealth? I'll finish my master's degree in marketing in less than two years, and I've been pretty lucky so far because my parents have paid for school. I bring in about \$2,200 a month at my job, and I have \$24,000 in savings.

— Alex

Dear Alex

If I were you, I'd get really good at the whole marketing thing. At this stage of the game, you are your best investment. You're a go-getter, so just keep on going and getting it.

If you continue on this path, and by that I mean

Dave Ramsey Says Social Security Matters

What Will My Wife's Benefit Be If I Die?

working, going to school, and piling up cash, you're going to be able to put that marketing know-how to work in a big way. You'll be able to use some of the cash you've got stored away to set yourself up in your new life. What you're doing right now, in your situation, will give you a better return mathematically than a mutual fund.

Do you get what I'm saying? An education that is usable is more valuable to you at this stage of the game than investing. Now, when you finish school and start living life in your new career, good growth stock mutual funds are what I'd recommend for retirement. And at that point, if you've got an extra \$30,000 or \$40,000 sitting there, that's even better.

Great start, Alex. Well done!

— Dave

**Mandatory Withdrawal At 72?**

Dear Dave,

I'll be 72 in October, and I have a Roth IRA I haven't done anything with in a while. I've got about \$30,000 in it, and I believe I

read where the government said there will be a mandatory withdrawal at age 72. If this is true, what should I do with that money?

— Danny

Dear Danny

I'm not positive there are mandatory withdrawals on a Roth IRA. I think that applies to traditional IRAs, but double-check with your investment advisor to make sure.

If it does apply to Roths, I'd take the required minimum distribution and move that amount to other investments. Or, since it's only \$30,000, if you've got another nest egg you plan to live on, you could just have some fun with the money.

— Dave

*Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 16 million listeners each week on 600 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.* ★



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** I am 76 years old and began collecting Social Security when I retired at the age of 62. My wife also began collecting SS when she turned 62 based on my benefits. She did not work enough to qualify on her own for Social Security benefits. My question is, how much will my wife receive after my death? Will she receive what I receive now, or will it be a percentage of the total that we both receive? Or will it be based on just my benefits alone or some other formula? **Signed: An Inquisitive Senior**

**Dear Inquisitive:** Your wife's survivor benefit as your widow will be based upon your Social Security benefit alone. Usually a surviving spouse receives the same amount the deceased spouse was receiving at death, if that is more than the survivor



is already receiving, and if the survivor has reached their full retirement age. However, in your case, if you should predecease your wife there's a special rule which may benefit her because you claimed your benefit at age 62.

That rule says that because you claimed before your full retirement age (FRA), your wife's benefit as your survivor should be at least 82.5% of the benefit you were entitled to at your full retirement age (66), even though you actually claimed at age 62. And because your benefit was reduced by 25% when you took it at age 62, your wife's benefit as your widow may actually be more than you are receiving when you pass.

This special rule is known as the "widow limit," which stipulates that a surviving spouse is entitled to the greater of what the deceased was receiving while alive, or 82.5% of the deceased's "primary insurance amount" or "PIA," which is the amount

due at full retirement age.

Here's an example: If your FRA benefit amount was \$1500/month, then your age 62 amount when you claimed was \$1125. But due to the special rule, your wife would get \$1238 (82.5% of \$1500) instead of the reduced \$1125 amount. Of course, this example doesn't reflect the COLA (cost of living) increases which would have been applied to your benefit over the years, but as your widow and because you claimed before your full retirement age, your wife would be entitled to at least 82.5% of your PIA if that is more than the actual amount you were receiving when you passed.

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.* ★

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Dodd Responds to Northern California Wildfires

By Paul Payne, Office of Senator Bill Dodd

**NAPA, CA (MPG)** - Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, issued the following statement on the destructive wildfires burning in five Northern California counties, including large parts of Senate District 3, known collectively as the LNU Lightning Complex fires:

"My thoughts are with first-responders as they risk life and limb to keep our communities safe," Sen. Dodd said. "We need maximum resources to attack what has become a significant threat, leading to the evacuation of thousands of families. It is absolutely essential that people be prepared to evacuate and get out when told to do so."

To get the latest updates on the fires and to find resources and/or evacuation locations, please check the following:

Cal Fire public information line: 707-967-4207

Cal Fire on Twitter: @Cal\_Fire and @CalFireLNU

Cal Fire on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CALFIRE>

Sign up for Nixle alerts: <https://local.nixle.com/city/ca/napa/>

To learn more about wildfire preparedness visit: [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org)

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

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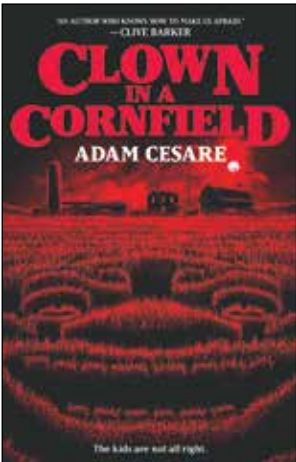
# Clown In A Cornfield

by Adam Cesare

When Quinn Maybrook looked out of her new bedroom window and saw the faded clown image, bubbled and peeling off the side of the Baypen factory, she was instantly reminded that she wasn't in Philadelphia anymore. The small town of Kettle Springs, Missouri, was everything her large city wasn't- small, old, and surrounded by cornfields, but it was her new home, and she was determined to make the best of it.

A town that was once known for the Baypen corn syrup factory, Kettle Springs was put on the map, and Frendo, the Baypen clown, quickly became the town's mascot. There wasn't a street corner that didn't bare the friendly clown image, but after the factory's closing, they just became haunting images of a city's profitable past. Now, Kettle Springs is a city divided by the adults steeped in tradition, and the teenagers who casually toss the city's history out the window, while embracing technology, smartphones, and social media.

However, everything is about to change when Quinn and her father get caught in the crosshairs.



- ◆ Publisher: Harper Teen
- ◆ Hardcover, 352 Pages
- ◆ Intended Audience: Young Adult
- ◆ Rating: ♥♥♥♥♥

Old secrets and resentments are about to resurface, and the friendly clowns that used to be a sign of profitable times quickly turn into masked homicidal figures, determined to rid the town of those who don't respect it. As Quinn fights to survive the night, she will quickly learn who to trust, who to run from, and how one small town can unearth your darkest nightmares.

In this terrifying turn on, *Children of the Corn*, it is time for the teenagers of Kettle Springs to fight for their lives. In this truly haunting masterpiece, Adam Cesare

takes his readers deep into a true classic horror story, that will once again make you leery of cornfields, while also tapping into any horror fan's healthy fear of clowns.

Unapologetic, raw, and a punch to the gut, *Clown In A Cornfield* is precisely how a great horror book should read. This story isn't just for teens, but any horror fan brave enough to venture into a cornfield at night. True to the rules of a classic slasher film, Adam Cesare lulls his readers into a false sense of security, quickly pulling the rug from underneath them when they least expect it. This book is not delicate or gentle; it is a slap in the face with horror. While others may delicately tip-toe along the edge of a pool, Adam Cesare plunges right in, cannonball and all.

The only thing that will be moving faster than runners fleeing from killer clowns will be the readers of this book as they fly through the pages, desperate to know how it all ends. A book that should be read with a flashlight in hand, and not alongside a cornfield, *Clown In A Cornfield* will force readers to stay up late while peering out the window. ★



A Film and TV  
Review by Tim Riley

# Riley Reviews

## ROAD RAGE DRIVES “UNHINGED” TO A TENSE, NASTY THRILLER

### “UNHINGED” (RATED R)

Solstice Studios, a relatively new entertainment company that produces and releases feature films, has the distinction of releasing the first film nationwide in theaters since the coronavirus shutdown.

That Russell Crowe's Tom Cooper, if that's even his name, has more anger management issues than a lifetime of therapy could cure is evident from the get-go in the appropriately titled “Unhinged.”

We first see Tom on a rainy late night parked outside a suburban home with a “for sale” sign. He takes some medication, tosses his wedding ring over his shoulder, and lights matches for a reason that will soon be apparent.

Wielding an axe and a can of gasoline, he breaks down the front door of the house, viciously hacks up the couple inside, and sets a fire that quickly turns into an explosive conflagration.

Then the opening credits roll, consisting of grainy film clips of incidents of rage, from assaults in a courtroom and on public transportation to civil unrest and riots to freeway traffic accidents.

News reports focus on the stress amidst horrible conditions and lament that angry people can lose self-control. “Incivility is a major issue in America. Rudeness can bring more rudeness,” intones an on-air commentator.

The montage of images of anger and frustration unleashed in a barrage of newsworthy soundbites suggest that “Unhinged” just might explore the psychology behind what fuels this ostensible plague of fury and rage. This is not that movie.

Rather, it's all about Russell Crowe's character, profusely sweating, disheveled and grossly overweight, being a powder keg of foaming derangement that is hell-bent for leather to snap at the least unjustifiable provocation.

Meanwhile, Rachel (Caren Pistorius), a single mom and freelance hairdresser, struggles to get herself and her young son Kyle (Gabriel Bateman) ready for school, while trying not to be late for work.

On this particular day and already behind schedule, Rachel tries to navigate rush hour traffic without much success. Getting stuck behind a large pickup truck where the driver won't move on the green light just adds to her vexation.

Unfortunately, the driver of the truck is none other than Tom, and he does not take kindly to Rachel leaning a little too hard on the horn. Catching up to her at the next light, Tom suggests that a courtesy tap would suffice and seeks an

apology. Not in a mood when the day has already started off badly, Rachel has absolutely no desire to offer an act of contrition, at least until it dawns on her too late that it might be best to diffuse an ugly situation.

Demented as he is, Tom pursues Rachel in a street race, catching up with her eventually at a gas station where he says nothing other than to glare menacingly such that we know things are about to get much worse.

While Tom may be crazy, he's clever enough to know how to manipulate his prey with a deadly cat-and-mouse game.

Using the cell phone as a weapon, Tom taps into her contacts and targets Rachel's loved ones and colleagues.

Rachel's Volvo station wagon is no match for Tom's massive truck that he'll use as a battering ram when necessary. The physical threat, though, is at first minor when compared to the mind games that grow more harrowing.

An early scene of gruesome physical violence occurs when Tom shows up at a diner for Rachel's appointment with a lawyer friend and ends up tormenting the guy while Rachel tries vainly to offer an apology on the phone. Then the situation turns extremely ugly and brutal.

One of the better mind games happens when Tom insists in a phone conversation that no harm will come to Rachel's family if she picks someone out of her contact list to be murdered as a grim substitute for a loved one.

Does Rachel eventually figure out a way to fight back to save Kyle and any other family members not yet dispatched by the disturbed lunatic? You probably know the answer to this question if you have watched any revenge films.

Russell Crowe has developed a screen persona over the years that makes him very suitable for the role of a vengeful person of unbridled machismo. He's absolutely the right fit for a deranged psychopath, because apparently Nicolas Cage was unavailable for the part.

South African actress Caren Pistorius is obviously not as well known to American audiences, but she brings the right note to the frazzled loving mother who eventually comes to terms with fighting back against unrelenting harassment and intimidation.

“Unhinged” is a grindhouse film that might have been a low-rent Quentin Tarantino production. As it is, this is a pulpy B-movie that delivers on its premise that nasty stuff happens when road rage goes to an extreme.

With many theaters not yet open, video on demand may not be far behind in bringing opportunity to witness Russell Crowe becoming frightfully “Unhinged,” and at least you won't have to wear a mask at home. ★



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problem, had my wife and I not scheduled a Medicare consultation at the Toni Says® office I would have been totally lost applying online. ~Thanks, Nick from Tampa, FL Nick: What a great compliment! I was very glad to find out that you found your original citizenship papers and could get them to your local Social Security office after you had hidden them so well that it took you time to find them. Let’s discuss how to apply online and a few of the problems we are discovering when helping others apply for Medicare online when turning 65 by going online to [www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare). Last week, Social Security changed the process of opening a “My Social Security Account” which is a complete relief To open a “My Social Security Account,” one needs a valid driver’s license and a credit card or bank debit card that can verify its last 8 numbers. If you cannot proceed with applying for Medicare without opening a “My Social Security Account” than what? Contact your local Social Security office by phone or call 1/800-772-1213 and inform the Social Security agent that you are not able to open a Social Security account and are locked out and you need help. Information to apply only for Medicare online is below: 1)Begin with your information: Name, Social

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Post Office Paranoia

At this rate, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy will be lucky if he isn’t arrested and tried for treason before a people’s tribunal. According to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, DeJoy is a “complicit crony” aiding Trump’s efforts to sabotage American democracy. She believes the two have hatched a plot to delay mail-in voting and disenfranchise countless Americans prior to the election. In tried-and-true fashion, President Trump has stoked suspicions by saying that he opposes a \$25 billion Postal Service bailout in the latest Democratic COVID-19 relief bill. According to Trump, blocking this measure -- and \$3 billion in election aid to the states -- will prevent universal mail-in voting. But the bailout doesn’t have anything to do with mail-in voting, and given the billions of pieces of mail handled by the post office every week, it surely can handle the increased volume from mail-in voting. It is true that Postmaster General DeJoy is a major

Trump donor. He made his fortune in shipping and logistics, though, and he was selected by the Postal Service’s board of governors. Little did he know, when he took over the agency in June, that he’d soon have a starring role in the country’s latest psychodrama. Every change at the Postal Service is now seen through the prism of a belief that the agency is a tool of creeping authoritarianism. Letter collection boxes are being removed – never mind that this has been an ongoing process for years. Underutilized boxes are decommissioned or moved to higher-traffic areas. In 2009, the Washington Post reported that 200,000 boxes had been shelved over the past two decades. In 2016, the inspector general noted that another 12,000 collection boxes had been cut over the previous five years. Letter collection boxes all of a sudden have big, red locks on them – well, yeah, as an off-hours device to prevent the theft of mail, also something the Postal Service has done for years. The Postal Service is deactivating mail-sorting machines – right, and there was a plan for this prior to DeJoy becoming postmaster general, and it has long been discussed in response to the declining volume of mail. DeJoy is cutting back on

overtime – indeed he is, because artificially swollen overtime is an enormous expense that he hopes to eliminate with a more rational delivery system. Democrats and much of the media make it sound as though the post office was an efficient, smooth-running agency before DeJoy took charge. In reality, the post office has lost nearly \$80 billion since 2007, and it lost more than \$2 billion last quarter. Unless the service finds a way to innovate, it is headed for bankruptcy. This is the impetus for DeJoy’s reforms, which should be welcomed by all the people now cawing about how essential the post office is to the American way of life. DeJoy has been adamant that the Postal Service will do its job regarding mail-in ballots. The post office’s recent warnings to states that they should be mindful of how quickly ballots can be delivered were intended to avoid unrealistically late deadlines for mail-in voting that could create a train wreck in November. But in their inflamed state, Democrats want a villain. If not a foreign potentate, then the guy in charge of delivering the mail. Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2020 by King Features Synd., Inc. ★

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 8

S	T	A	R	E		E	A	T		F	A	R	O	
L	A	M	E	D		E	R	R		B	L	U	E	D
U	K	A	S	E		L	E	I		O	A	R	E	D
M	A	H	O	M	E	S		B	E	N	G	A	L	S
			W	A	X		B	E	A	N				
F	C	C		S	E	R	E		R	E	V	E	R	B
O	U	R	S		R	E	D	S		T	A	P	E	R
U	T	A	H		T	I	B	I	A		N	O	V	A
L	I	V	I	D		D	U	L	L		S	C	U	D
S	E	E	P	E	D		G	L	O	B		H	E	Y
				N	U	T	S		H	U	E			
E	N	D	Z	O	N	E		Y	A	R	D	A	G	E
M	E	R	I	T		P	E	A		R	U	M	O	R
I	R	A	T	E		E	E	R		O	C	E	A	N
T	O	G	S			E	N	D		W	E	N	D	S

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Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 8

CLUES

ACROSS

1. It may be fixed or blank

6. Sometimes appears between dogs

9. Wild West card game

13. Deprived of a limb

14. Go wrong

15. \_\_\_\_ and tattooed

16. Tsar's edict

17. Waikiki garland

18. Propelled like Argo

19. "Last year's Super Bowl MVP

21. "Recipient of this year's first pick

23. Madame Tussauds' medium

24. Jack's legume

25. Communications regulator, acr.

28. Dry as dust

30. Echo

35. Yours and mine

37. Cold War enemies, slang

39. Common candle shape

40. Home of the Utes

41. Shinbone

43. Scotia preceder

44. Furiously angry

46. Like watching paint dry

47. Gulf War missile

48. Oozed

50. Clump

52. Yo

53. Common allergens

55. Not color but \_\_\_\_

57. "The goal

61. "Primary football unit

65. Boy Scout's \_\_\_\_ badge

66. Pod dweller

68. Word of mouth

69. All worked up

70. Poetic "ever"

71. Home to largest mammal

72. Threads

73. "Defensive \_\_\_\_

74. Locomotes

DOWN

1. Millionaire's turf,

according to 2009 Oscar-winner

2. Bangladeshi currency

3. Wet nurse

4. Plant again

5. Swellings

6. Elvers

7. 're

8. Human social group

9. "Yellow and unwanted

10. Saint's "headdress"

11. Movie spool

12. "Vegas numbers

15. Laura Ingalls' hat

20. Make an effort

22. Organ of balance

24. Sleep disrupters

25. "Encroachment and false start, e.g.

26. Type of mandarin

27. Have a hankering

29. "2020 Super Bowl winning coach

31. VSCO girl's favorite shoe brand

32. Geologic period

33. Variety show

34. "Patriot no more

36. Pinto or Santa Maria, e.g.

38. Perfect houseplant spot

42. \* \_\_\_\_ Bowl, college game 1982-2000

45. Indicate

49. What Dundee and Dunedin have in common

51. "Last year's Heisman winner

54. Conical dwelling

56. Draw a conclusion

57. Do like exhaust pipe

58. Evil Roman emperor

59. What oxen do to plows

60. Acne symptoms

61. "One of ten needed for first down

62. Church echo

63. Provoke or annoy

64. European sea eagles

67. Poetic "even"

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Solutions on Page 8

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Sudoku Puzzle on Page 8

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

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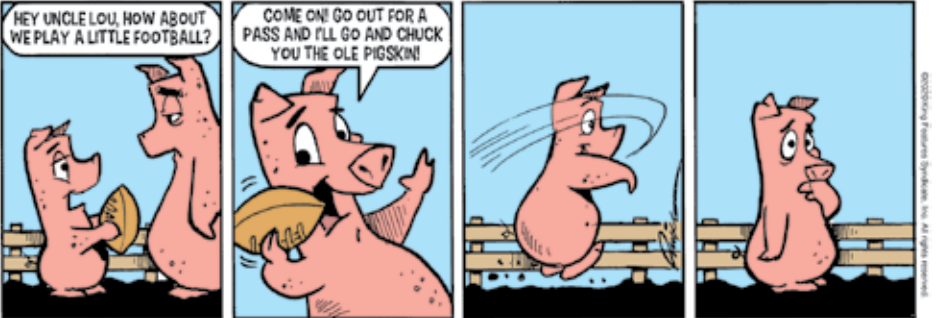
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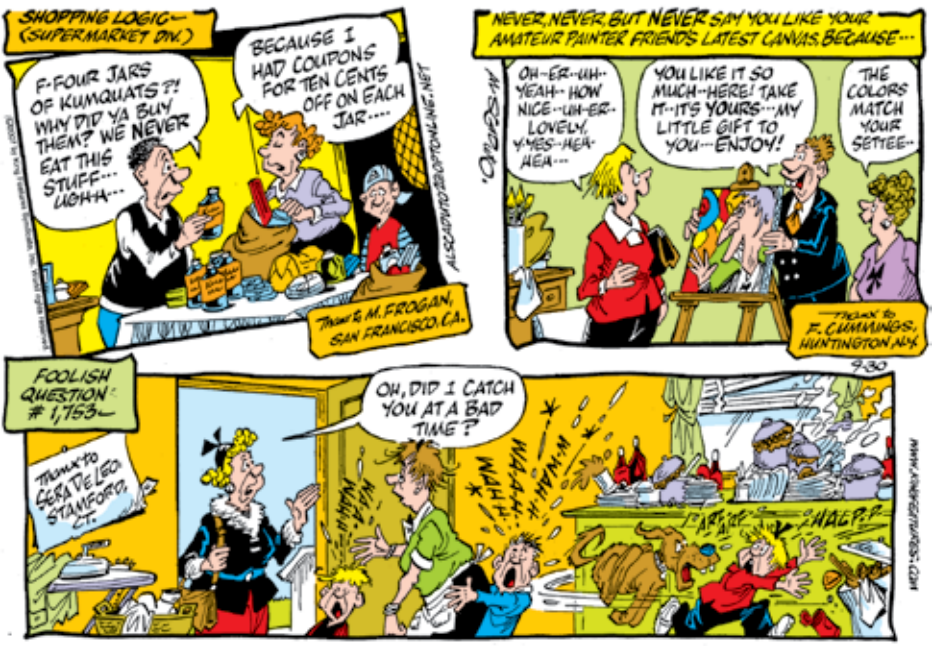
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New Recipe for Salmon

Study Brings out Five Worries with California's Economy



A UC Davis student helping with the project is seining the rice field to gather young salmon. Seining is essentially using a net to catch fish. Photo provided by Jim Morris, California Rice Commission, Communications Manager

By Paul Buttner, California Rice Commission

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The second year of our Pilot Salmon Project fieldwork has yielded some exciting results and should pave the way for the Rice Commission and our fish conservation partners to develop methods to utilize winter-flooded rice fields to help struggling salmon populations.

In late-March, we released nearly 350 baby salmon that were raised in rice fields. Later, we released a set of control groups that were reared and released using more traditional approaches. Fish in both of these groups were fitted with a very sophisticated tag, allowing us to track their travels through the watershed and out to the ocean. Our hope was to demonstrate rice field-reared fish might survive their journey out to the ocean better than those that are raised in hatcheries. We hypothesized this possible outcome based on previous studies showing that salmon

grow very fast in rice fields because of the abundance of their natural food sources in these fields. I'm happy to say that our 2020 graduating class of our young salmon did not let us down!

Before getting to the results, it's probably best to understand what reasonably expected salmon survival rates are from year-to-year. In extremely high-water years, it is possible to get to as high as 15 to 20 percent survival. However, those years are quite rare. In drought years, similar to the 2019/20 season, expected survival is typically around zero to 3 percent and is often close to zero.

The outmigration survival rate of our 2020 rice field-reared salmon was nearly 4.5 percent. This was nearly 4.5 times higher than our control groups and substantially higher than other similar tagging study during this period. We could not be happier with these results and they will now serve as the basis for further work by CRC and its fish conservation partners to continue efforts to

develop a larger-scale strategy to use our fields to help salmon just as we have used them to help birds for decades now.

We want to thank UC Davis and CalTrout for their extraordinary work in the field over these past two years. And, of course, this project could not be possible without the help of our funding partners and participating growers. Special thanks to the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Syngenta for their major contributions and our long list of supporting partners including S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation, GrowWest, Corteva, Valent, Almond Board of California, NovaSource, Conaway Ranch and River Garden Farms. We also want to specially recognize both U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife for supplying us with hatchery fish to support this important work and for technical expertise on key aspects of the work.

Paul Buttner is Manager of Environmental Affairs for the California Rice Commission. ★

**NFIB Press Release**

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - A study released by the nation's leading small-business association revealed five issues in particular that were more problematic for Main Street entrepreneurs in California to deal with than they were for their counterparts across the nation.

Every four years since 1982, NFIB has published its Small Business Problems & Priorities report listing 75 concerns small-business owners have with their abilities to keep their doors open and people employed. For only the second time, California was segmented out from the national readings (New York, Texas, and Ohio were the only other states), and while some issues ranked parallel to, or didn't vary widely from, the national readings (cost of health care, federal taxes, property taxes, to name a few), five issues did show a double-digit disparity between how small-business owners across the nation ranked them as problems in comparison to California's Main Street entrepreneurs:

(1) Environmental regulations ranked 38th nationally, 15th in California for a 23-placement difference; (2) Cost of government required equipment/procedures came in 39th nationally, 19th in California for 20-placement difference; (3) Hiring/firing/employment regulations ranked 43rd nationally, 23rd in California for another 20-placement difference; (4) Obtaining licenses, permits, etc. came in 45th nationally and 29th in California for 16-rank difference; (5) Minimum wage/living wage ranked 34th nationally, 20th in California for a 14-placement difference.

"There were some issues that were of less concern to California small-business owners than they were to others across the nation," said John Kabateck, California state director for NFIB, "but for five of the 75 issues, there was an alarming variance it would behoove state policymakers to give serious consideration to ameliorating. With only a few weeks left in the 2020 session, it's probably too late now, but that leaves four whole months to start laying the groundwork for some 2021 action. In the meantime, voters can do their part by electing more pro-small-business candidates to office."

The 2020 edition of the Small Business Problems & Priorities report also divided the 75 issues, nationally, by: Number of employees (Page 39); Industry (Page 48); Population density (Page 68); Years of ownership (Page 71); Gender (Page 74); Legal form of business, such as partnership, sub-chapter S, LLC, etc. (Page 78)

The California-specific rankings begin on Page 82.

Visit [www.nfib.com/](http://www.nfib.com/) to read NFIB's national news release on the Small Business Problems & Priorities report.

For more than 77 years, NFIB has been advocating on behalf of America's small and independent business owners, both in Washington, D.C., and in all 50 state capitals. For more information, please visit [nfib.com](http://nfib.com). ★

## Red Cross Mobilizes in Response to Fires

*Continued from page 1*

Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19:

In public, cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering and practice physical distancing by keeping 6 feet between yourself and others. Don't use cloth face coverings on children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unable to remove it without help. Avoid close contact with people who do not share your home;

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water are always preferable, but if they are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol;

Always cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow;

Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items daily, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, remote controls, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks;

If you are at higher risk for serious COVID-19 illness, continue to avoid all non-essential outings and gatherings. It is ok to go outside to exercise, walk pets, visit medical professionals, and leave during an emergency or if advised to evacuate during a wildfire. ★

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