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# AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

VOLUME 18 • ISSUE 20

Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

OCTOBER 27, 2023

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## There's a New "Mayor" in Town



Katie Yount, 45th Honorary Mayor of Fair Oaks Mayor with former honorary mayors. From left to right: New Honorary Mayor Katie Yount, Rachel Griffith, Dustin Buck, Jen Rodriguez, Warren McWilliams, Keith Wright, Ray Young and Jacob Giorgi. Photo courtesy of John Oldham

**By Mary Howard,  
Fair Oaks Chamber  
President**

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - Did you hear the news? Fair Oaks has a new Honorary Mayor, who also has broken the record for the most money raised during the four-month campaign! The Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce their new Honorary Mayor of 2023/24 – Katie Yount – a local State Farm Insurance agent, who joins her place in history as becoming the



Katie and daughter Zoelle. Photo courtesy of John Oldham

45th Honorary Mayor of Fair Oaks!

The big announcement took place on Oct. 12 at

North Ridge Country Club where Katie was joined by two other candidates in the running – second place finisher Jen Rodriguez, owner of Skinned and Lashed, and third place finisher, Josh Hall, executive director for the Orangevale Fair Oaks Community Foundation. The money raised by each candidate is split 50/50 between their charity and the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce.

History was made, and all three were recognized for their outstanding

*Continued on page 3*

## Sac County Transitions to New Benefits System

**Sacramento County  
News Release**

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - On October 30, 2023, Sacramento County joins other California counties and transitions to a new public assistance benefits system, California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS).

CalSAWS replaces the existing welfare eligibility system CalWIN. With this change, MyBenefits CalWIN (myBCW) customer web portal will be replaced with a new and improved online portal, BenefitsCal that provides one unified experience for all Californians. BenefitsCal will make it easier than ever to apply for benefits online, upload documents, report changes, renew benefits, view case details, sign up for alerts, and more.

Now customers can apply for a variety of benefits on the same website: Cash assistance, Food benefits, Health Care.

To align with the adoption of the new technology, the Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance will replace the current phone numbers for customers with a toll-free 1-800 number. Effective Monday, October 30, 2023 the current phone numbers (916) 874-3100 and (209) 744-0499 will be replaced by the new 1-800-560-0976 number.

To accommodate the transition, the DHA Service Center will be closed on Friday, October 27. Customers may continue to use MyBCW until October 26, 5 p.m. The new portal BenefitsCal becomes available on Monday, October 30 at 6 a.m.. Households interested in applying for public assistance benefits during the downtime period can:

Visit [www.GetCalFresh.org](http://www.GetCalFresh.org) for CalFresh benefits or visit [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com) for Medi-Cal benefits.

Customers who may have started an application in the old system should plan to finish by Thursday, October 26, or will need to begin a new application after creating an account in BenefitsCal starting Monday, October 30, 2023. Thank you for your patience as we transition to the new systems. ★

## Winning Games and Hearts too!

**By Tim Engle**

**ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG)** - In Orangevale, football isn't just a game; it's a tradition, a celebration, and above all, a reflection of the community's spirit. On a memorable Senior Night, the Casa Roble Rams showcased not only their athletic prowess but the essence of what makes them truly special.

The energy in the stadium was palpable as the Rams took on Pioneer of Woodland, demonstrating a synergy that can only be fostered through seasons of camaraderie and teamwork. Every touchdown, every sprint, every defensive stand was a testament to their dedication. With an impressive 53-0 win, the Rams didn't just claim victory; they claimed their legacy.

Quarterback Connor Campbell's precision passes were nothing short of mesmerizing. Five touchdowns without a miss – but Connor knows where the credit lies. "It starts with everyone up front,"



Elijah Huddle (#7) of Casa delivers a solid stiff-arm, keeping the opposition at bay during the game. Photo courtesy of Tim Engle

he shared, highlighting the offensive line's immense contribution. When players like Elijah Huddle praise the line with words like "Our line's insane," you know there's a deep respect among the team.

But beyond the game's statistics, what stood out

was the overwhelming community support. The overflowing parking lot, families cheering side by side, and a buzzing post-game chatter, emphasized that this was more than just a match – it was an event.

Coach Chris Horner embodies the very spirit of

Orangevale. His passion isn't limited to the field. From leading morning yoga sessions for the team to his contribution in the classroom, Coach Horner is a pillar of the community. His dream? "To build this team up every year."

*Continued on page 2*



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# Casa Roble Rams are Winning Games and Hearts too!



Braylen Blevins (#6) slips past the defense, charging down the field with determination. Photo courtesy of Tim Engle



A determined rusher meets resistance as a host of Casa defenders come together to halt the advance. Grit meets determination in this fierce clash on the gridiron. Photo courtesy of Tim Engle



Braylen Blevins (#6) deftly maneuvers past the defense, showcasing his agility as he charges down the field with determination. Every step he takes is a testament to his skill and dedication to the game. Photo courtesy of Tim Engle

Continued from page 1

As the season culminates, there's a great sense of anticipation. Coach Horner said it perfectly, "This win sets the scene for the playoffs. We're going to keep working to

beat Dixon, grab the title, and push on to the playoffs."

Casa Roble Rams take on the Dixon Rams at Dixon on October 27. Stay tuned for updates! Go Rams! ★

# Mountain Mike's Pizza Celebrates Its Re-Grand Opening!



Mountain Mike's Pizza, located at 5267 Sunrise Blvd, Fair Oaks, is ready to serve your family and community celebrations! Photo courtesy of Ken Friedman

By Ken Friedman

**FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG)** - Mountain Mike's Pizza in the Quail Pointe Shopping Center had a well-attended Grand Reopening event. I was able to interview Pal Grewal the owner along with his wife, Soni.

Pal and Soni came originally from India. Pal worked as a Sales Representative for the General Motors Corp. In India and some other countries. Pal and Soni decided to move to the United States and do their life together here. Soni was the first to arrive in the U.S and handled everything that had to do with immigration. Pal came later after he had concluded his involvement in India. He tired of working for corporations and wanted to have his own business.

Pal and Soni started their Mountain Mike's franchise in September 1992. It was in the shopping center at the corner of Madison and Fair Oaks Blvd. Through the years there they made several improvements to both the facility and the way of doing business. In 2013, they decided to move to their current location. They had a Gala Grand Opening at that time with members of the Fair Oaks



Pal and Soni welcome corporate attendees and Mountain Mike's pizza employees. Photo courtesy of Ken Friedman

Chamber of Commerce, the American River Messenger and Pastor Cliff Graves from Fair Oaks Church blessing the new location.

This year Pal and Soni decided to do a total revamp of the facilities and it turned out to be a fantastic change. To kick it off, they decided to duplicate the Grand Opening in 2013. It turned out to be quite an amazing affair. The Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce was there in force as well as other representatives from the community. Pastor Cliff Graves duplicated his blessing on the facility and on Pal and Soni. There, of course, were several representatives from Mountain Mike's Corp.

Pal and Soni are amazing people and have not

only run a successful business but have participated in assisting events and organizations in the Fair Oaks community. They have been avid supporters of the Upward Basketball league at Fair Oaks Church. They sponsored the volunteers that worked at Bella Vista for the "Big Day of Service". They are also the sponsors of the Disk Golf at Miller Park.

I am very happy to have been able to know them and have them as friends. Please come by and say hi to them and check out the upgraded facility.

Pal and Soni Grewal's Mountain Mike's Pizza is located at 5267 Sunrise Blvd, Fair Oaks, CA 95628. For more information call (916) 961-4000. ★

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# There's a New "Mayor" in Town

*Continued from page 1*  
 fundraising efforts totaling more than \$62,700 (this beats the 2018 record of \$51,285). In an exciting campaign that ran from June through September, Katie ended up raising a whopping \$34,171.58 with half going to her charity of choice, the Rotary Club of Fair Oaks – Community Grants Program.

Fair Oaks doesn't have an actual mayor. So, in 1979 the chamber created the Honorary Mayor race as a non-political and fun way to raise money for the community. With this year's fundraising total, more than half a million dollars – \$562,307 has been raised through this program over the last 45 years, with half of this amount going back to into the community!

The winner's name was kept secret until the night of the unveiling. Kimberley Pitillo, the chamber's executive director, made the announcement to an excited roomful of supporters, sponsors, previous honorary mayors and candidates, and other special guests.

Shocked beyond belief, Katie, with her young daughter and biggest cheerleader by her side, thanked her campaign team and the chamber for their support. For the last several years, Katie, has given back to her community, and in 2022 was named "Citizen of the Year" by the Fair Oaks Chamber.

Jen, who ran under the tagline of "Jen Again!", and in an effort to earn a back-to-back term as honorary mayor, put her heart and soul into her campaign. A local businessperson, Jen raised \$7,423 for the Stars and Stripes Dog Rescue, a nonprofit dedicated to providing support to our nation's veterans and first responders.

Josh, who set out to "squash" the old record of most money raised, brought in \$6,853 for the Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation. A local non-profit, the foundation is committed to



From left to right: Mary Howard, FOCC President; Former HM's Rachel Griffith, Jen Rodriguez, Jacob Giorgi, Keith Wright, Ray Young, Dustin Buck, Cathy Smallhouse, Mike Maddox, Bob Clouse; Kimberley Pitillo, FOCC Executive Director. Front left to right: Former HM's Warren McWilliams, Joseph Maloney. Photo courtesy of John Oldham



From left to right: Stars and Stripes Dog Rescue Representatives: Ashleen Aimes, Susan Aimes, Jen Rodriguez, HM candidate; Fair Oaks Rotary Representative: Diana Cralle, Zoelle Flores (Katie's daughter), Katie Yount, HM Candidate; Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation Representatives: Josh Hall, HM Candidate; Jenn Gustafson and Brad Squires. Photo courtesy of John Oldham

making a difference in our community by feeding, clothing and supporting those that need a helping hand in Fair Oaks and Orangevale.

The Fair Oaks Chamber would like to thank Jen Rodriguez for wearing her sash proudly during the past year and representing the chamber at the many ribbon cuttings, luncheons, and community events.

**Do you think you have what it takes?**  
 The Fair Oaks Chamber is looking for the next candidates to take on the Honorary Mayor challenge for 2024/25! It's a great way

to help promote your business and give back to the community. The next campaign will begin in early spring and potential candidates may contact Kimberley Pitillo at [info@fairoakschamber.com](mailto:info@fairoakschamber.com). ★

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# Gala Salutes Vets Day at Aerospace Museum



A WW II P-38 Lighting is among iconic aircraft adding to a USO-style Salute to Service event at the Aerospace Museum. Photo courtesy Aerospace Museum of California.

## Staff Correspondent

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Music, fine food and one of Sacramento's biggest fireworks displays are a build up to Veterans Day at the Aerospace Museum of California. The McClellan Park facility will host a USO-style gala on Friday, November 3.

Its "Salute to Service" fundraiser supports the museum with a 1940s theme. Central to décor, flyable WW II aircraft – a P-38 Lighting, a Navy Corsair and a Ryan ST-A – will be eye-popping backdrops for dancing and photo-ops.

Entertainment includes a tribute show celebrating Harry James, a superstar trumpeter whose big band hits contributed to Allied morale during WWII.

American River College Professor and trumpet virtuoso Tony Marvelli will take center stage. Carmichael-based singer Susan Skinner will contribute vocals made famous by beloved 1940s chanteuse, Helen Forrest. Pianist Joe Gilman, bassist Shelley Denny and drummer Tim Metz complete the quintet known as Hey Day.



A retrospective on the music of Harry James will feature Tony Marvelli on trumpet and Susan Skinner on vocals. The show is part of a 1940s-style Salute to Service at the Aerospace Museum of California. Photo courtesy of Susan Maxwell Skinner

Hey Day offers a retrospective on James' larger-than-life career: the one-time circus musician discovered Frank Sinatra, Buddy Rich and Doris Day. He married Betty Grable and indulged a legendary Hollywood lifestyle. "With his music, we revisit a special time in American history," says museum director/curator Tom Jones. "During tumultuous times, Harry James made America dance, sing and believe in love."

The museum's massive hangar will house the celebration. Vintage dress is encouraged; Rosie the Riveter lookalikes will serve cocktails.

Following a site tour, guests will dine, dance and be treated to a massive fireworks display. One of the largest pyrotechnic

specialists in the world, Pyro Spectaculars company annually provides this blowout to honor veterans and support the museum. Anyone may view this spectacle from Freedom Park, McClellan.

Gala cost is \$150 per person; \$275 per couple. Table sponsorships are also available. Admission includes dinner, dancing, wine, beer and signature cocktails and fireworks. The Aerospace Museum of California is located at 3200 Freedom Park Drive, McClellan. For information and ticket purchases visit [www.aerospacemuseum.org](http://www.aerospacemuseum.org)

Sponsors include: Safe Credit Union, McClellan Park, Aerojet Rocketdyne, Boeing, SMUD and Lockheed Martin. ★

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# All Aboard the 45th International Railfair

By Thomas J. Sullivan

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - All Aboard the 45th Annual International Railfair (IRF), coming to Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd in Sacramento, on Veteran's Day weekend, Saturday, November 11 and Sunday, November 12. It's the first time IRF has been in Sacramento County since its earliest when it was held at Sacramento City College.

The annual International Railfair show is run by members of the Sacramento Modular Railroaders, the Sacramento chapter of the European Train Enthusiasts, Roseville Roundhouse Model Railroad Association, and the Sierra Division of the Pacific Coast Region of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), said IRF spokesperson Tom Campbell.

"We display operating model railroads to the public at the International Rail Fair and educate the public about model railroading, railroad history, and prototypical railroad operations," Campbell said.

This year, IRF guests will be able to enjoy more than 28,000 square-feet of model railroad fun, explore over 100 vendor tables, and swap goods at a TrainMart consignment store as they see over 12 operating model train layouts in action ranging from Z to G.

"The two-day show is called 'International Railfair' because one of our sponsor clubs, European Train Enthusiasts, specializes in building and operating European model railroads," Campbell said.

A children's layout returns this year where children can run a scale model locomotive and earn a Junior Engineer badge.

The popular "Square Foot Challenge" also returns this year - with a holiday theme. Attendees are invited to vote for



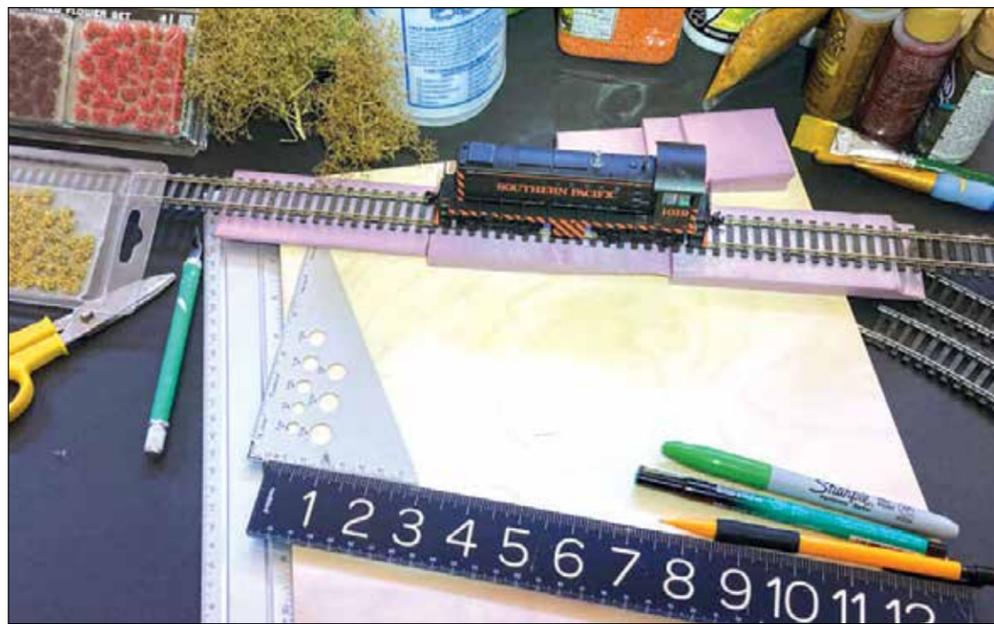
A BNSF engine model on a track. Photo courtesy International Railfair

their favorite holiday diorama with the highest number of votes named a People's Choice winner. The winning diorama builder will receive a custom trophy based on a machinist's square and a \$50 gift card to RC Country Hobbies.

The individual model railroad layouts which are seen at the International Railfair are modular railroads. A typical modular layout consists of transportable individual modules which are clamped together to create a single model railroad, Campbell said.

Modules are typically lightweight, and are about 30" wide and four feet long, and packed with a lot of scenic detail. Legs fold out from underneath the module and the required electrical wiring drops down at both ends of the module.

General admission, ages 13 and up, good for both days, is \$12. Admission on Sunday,



Supplies for the IRF Square Foot Challenge. Photo courtesy International Railfair

November 12 is reduced to \$10 per person. Youth admission for ages 13-17 is \$5. Children ages 12 and under are free both days.

Active and retired military members receive a \$2 discount on event admission at the gate.

For more information email

Tom Campbell at [tom.c.irf@gmail.com](mailto:tom.c.irf@gmail.com). To purchase advance tickets, visit [www.international-railfair.com](http://www.international-railfair.com). ★

## Help Us Build a More Equitable Parks System

**Sacramento County News Release**

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - In an effort to better serve all the residents in our diverse region, the Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks has put out an equity survey, and residents are encouraged to participate to let us know what we can do to make their parks experience better.

"Sacramento County is home to such a wonderful mix of people from all different backgrounds," said Liz Bellas, Director of Regional Parks. "We want to make sure that we are creating spaces and services in which people from all different backgrounds and abilities can feel welcome and safe."

The purpose of this survey is to help the department: Understand how people and communities throughout Sacramento County use, access and experience the Sacramento County Regional Parks, including identifying to the degree possible what users want in their parks; Identify, reach out to and engage people, communities and stakeholder groups

throughout the County in order to hear from diverse voices regarding Sacramento County's Regional Parks and its management; Ensure that our regional parks and park events are welcoming to people and communities of many different backgrounds, including various races, genders, ages, socio-economic status and level of ability.

You can help us improve your park experience in Sacramento County by completing this survey today! The Parks Equity Survey will be open through the end of the year. For those who participate in the survey and leave their contact information, we will be hosting monthly drawings for free annual passes. Responses without contact information will remain anonymous.

This survey is currently available in English, Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese and can be translated into additional languages upon request. To request additional languages or a paper copy of this survey, email [parkinfo@sacounty.gov](mailto:parkinfo@sacounty.gov). ★

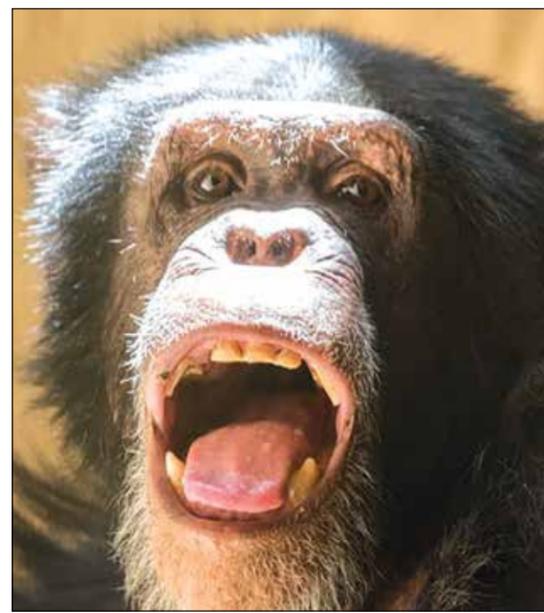
**Sacramento Zoo News Release**

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)**

- After 75 years of housing chimpanzees, The Sacramento Zoo shares that in participation with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the Chimpanzee Species Survival Plan (SSP), our four individuals have settled in wonderfully at two new homes. Dougie and Pablo have fully integrated into the troop housed at the Kansas City Zoo in Missouri. Amelia and Maria have arrived safely at an accredited zoo. In both cases, the duos have relocated to new habitats that are much larger and give them greater socialization opportunities with other chimpanzees. Current AZA standards recommend a minimum of eight chimpanzees to a troop. The chimpanzee SSP consists of 229 animals distributed among 33 AZA facilities.

"The Sacramento Zoo collaborated with colleagues throughout the AZA and specifically members of the Chimpanzee SSP to identify the best new homes for our individuals, and to work, plan for, and ensure, a safe and successful transfer," states Matt McKim, Director of Animal Care, "Although it is difficult to see these beloved animals leave the Sacramento Zoo, their new homes and troops will provide excellent well-being for many years to come."

"We are excited to welcome Pablo and Dougie to the Kansas City Zoo and our existing troop of nine



Dougie. Photo courtesy of The Sacramento Zoo

chimpanzees," said Courtney Murray, Animal Curator with the Kansas City Zoo. "Our Zoo's chimpanzee habitat is about 3 acres and encompasses a forested section with large, mature trees for climbing and plenty of territory for the troop to carry out natural behaviors and social interactions. The addition of Pablo and Dougie will be beneficial to balance out troop dynamics and increase the diversity of the troop's gene pool."

Female chimpanzees, Amelia and her daughter, Maria, have moved to another AZA-accredited zoo that has cared for chimpanzees for more than 20 years. Their new zoo home is eight times larger than Sac Zoo's, and includes a waterfall, stream, and a variety of climbing structures. The habitat also has trees and more than 40 edible plants

for foraging, as well as rocks that are cooled in the summer and warmed during the winter. The pair are currently undergoing a quarantine period while under the care of the primate and vet health teams prior to their introductions to their new troop.

"Chimpanzees have been some of our most popular animals for generations at the Sac Zoo," states Sacramento Zoo Director Jason Jacobs. "While we will certainly miss these charismatic apes, it is important for the community to understand the context in which these decisions are made. Advances in the care of great apes in zoos clearly demonstrate that these animals thrive in social troops in larger habitats. I commend our incredible team of passionate caregivers for coordinating these transfers to new facilities." ★

## LDS Church Extends Invitation to Annual Conference

By Stacie Giles, LDS Church

**CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG)** - The Carmichael Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints invites friends and members to attend its semi-annual stake conference on October 28-29 at 4125 San Juan Ave., Fair Oaks, CA. The Saturday session for adults will be held from

6:30-8:00 p.m. with refreshments and mingling afterward. All ages are invited to the Sunday session from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Sessions of the Church's general conference which took place September 30-October 1 are available at <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/> with messages of inspiration and worship. ★

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# Out & About

with MaryAnne Povey



## Season of Giving, Coming Fast!

**ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG)** - Are you enjoying all that the fall season has to offer? If you're like me, you want to savor every bit of it as we head ever so quickly into the holiday season! This year is no exception when it comes to events and opportunities to give back to those in need. Hope this edition of "Out & About" will show you where you can help so here we go...

**The 4th Annual Turkey Bowl**, November 8th at the Grocery Outlet in Orangevale from 8 am - 9 am! This fan favorite event brings business owners and community leaders together to bowl turkeys all for fun in the spirit of raising money to feed 500 local families their holiday meal this Thanksgiving. (Yes - they really bowl frozen turkeys down the frozen food aisle). Did you know that the need for food has gone up FIVE times! Crazy, I know! Here's how you can help. Go to the link below and sponsor a turkey or two and/or put your donation towards one of the dynamic turkey bowl teams! All proceeds go 100% to the OV-FO Foodbank for their meal distribution program! Also...be sure to watch all the Turkey Bowl fun streamed on Orangevale Live Facebook or YouTube. Thanks in advance for your support! <https://give.ovfoc.org/ge/2023turkeybowl>

**3rd Annual Dignity Drive is back!** Did you know that seniors account for one third of the clientele that use the foodbank services? They not only are in need of food, but other essentials like shampoo/conditioner, adult briefs, disposable wipes, soap and laundry detergent, etc. During

the month of November you can donate to the 3rd Annual Dignity Drive which helps collect these items and distributes them to local seniors in need. The kick-off event is November 2, 2023, 2 pm - 3:30 pm at the offices of LPL Financial and Rose Senior Placement, 8856 Greenback Lane, Ste C. For more information, call Cyndi at 916.582.1654.

**The Annual PJ Collection/Drive** is in full swing through November. The OV-FO Kiwanis Club is collecting pjs in support of the About Kidz Christmas program helping local underserved children have a happy Christmas. They need pajama donations of all sizes. You can drop off NEW pjs at various locations including: The Last Tangle, OV Dairy Queen, Badfish Coffee & Tea, and Scotty's Hideaway. Or save them up, and come to the Car Show/PJ collection day at Dairy Queen in Orangevale on November 19, 10 am - noon.

**Blood Drive at Dairy Queen, December 9, 10 am!** Give the gift of life! Dairy Queen of Orangevale is hosting their first Blood Drive in conjunction with Vitalant. Rumor has it, for those who sign up, there will be a FREE ice cream treat to enjoy! To sign up, go to [donors.vitalant.org](https://donors.vitalant.org) - enter Orangevale to find the location or stop by on the day of the event. For more info, contact [ovdairyqueen@yahoo.com](mailto:ovdairyqueen@yahoo.com)

Wishing everyone a happy Fall and sending deep appreciation for supporting our community and neighbors in need during this time of year! Stay tuned for more updates of family fun coming your way! ★



# Poppoff!

With Mary Jane Popp

## BooZilla

It seems like 2023 has created a new Halloween monster called world strife. But the traditions of yesterday still hold true. Halloween comes between fall and winter with a dire meaning life and death. It combines celebration which will be curtailed this year and death which we have already experienced beyond our wildest imagination. Halloween is thought to have originated with the Celtic Festival of Samhain. People would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off roaming ghosts. That was some 2000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and Northern France. Their New Year was November 1 which marked the end of summer with a harvest and the dark cold winter, a time of the year that was associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the New Year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. That's why they celebrated Samhain on October 31. They feared the roaming ghosts would cause trouble. They also thought the presence of other worldly spirits made it easier for the Druids and Celtic priests to make predictions about the future. Since this was a culture entirely dependent upon the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort and directions during the long and dark winter. Many cultures, including the Roman Empire that conquered the majority of the Celtic territory combined the festivals of the Celts. So here we are in 2023 facing some of that volatile natural world and

feeling helpless to make things go away... at least for now. Funny how history repeats itself in such strange ways.

Anyway, Halloween came to America, but extremely limited in colonial New England by the rigid Protestants. Today's Halloween probably dates back to the early All Soul's Day parades in England when poor citizens would beg for food, and families would give them "soul cakes" in return for their promise to pray for the family's dead relatives. The soul cake was encouraged by the church as a way to replace the ancient practice of leaving wine and food for roaming spirits. Combine the different ethnic groups along with Native Americans and America developed its own Halloween. First there parties as neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell fortunes, dance and sing. Eventually, they added ghost stories and mischief making. Then, in the second half of the 19th century, America was flooded with new immigrants because of Ireland's potato famine of 1846. Now you have a combo of Irish and English traditions. So came dressing in costumes and going house to house asking for money for food. And so "trick or treat" was born. Young women believed they could divine the name of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings and mirrors.

It's amazing how things change. This year it's not a culture but war and politics that takes the stage. Please stay safe and pray for a better Halloween for all ages!! Have some FUN 200! ★

## Social Security Matters

### Can My Wife Claim Her Benefit Now, and Switch to a Spouse Benefit from Me Later?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** Can my wife claim her benefits now (at 63, and we know about the reduction for claiming early) and then, when I retire at 66 years and 10 months of age almost 3 years from now, can she switch over to spousal benefits based on my benefit amount? She worked at a higher paying job for much of her career but is now at a much lower income and would be under the amount that would reduce her benefits further. I currently earn about nine times her annual salary so the spousal benefit for her would be an increase when I retire. **Signed: Seeking Information**

**Dear Seeking:** Yes, your wife can claim her own (reduced) Social Security retirement benefit now, and she will be automatically awarded a spousal boost when you later claim your SS retirement benefit. However, your wife's benefit when you claim will not be 50% of your full retirement age (FRA) amount because she claimed her own SS benefit early and also because her spousal boost will be awarded

prior to her FRA. Any benefit taken before FRA is reduced, including the spousal benefit.

Here's what will happen if your wife claims her own Social Security at age 63:

- Your wife's personal SS retirement benefit, when she claims, will be reduced by about 25%
- When you claim at your full retirement age, your wife will get a "spousal boost" to her own reduced benefit.
- The amount of your wife's spousal boost will be the difference between her FRA entitlement and 50% of your FRA entitlement, reduced because the spousal boost will be awarded (automatically) before she has reached her own full retirement age. FRA amounts are used to compute the spousal boost, regardless of the age at which benefits are claimed.
- When you claim your wife will not yet be her FRA, so the amount of her spousal boost (the difference between her FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement) will be reduced.
- The reduced spousal boost will be added to your wife's reduced SS retirement benefit, resulting in her total benefit payment being less than half of yours.

The only way your wife can get the full 50% of your FRA entitlement is to wait until her own FRA (67) to claim Social Security, but by doing so she also forfeits the money she would otherwise receive if she claimed her own benefit now. As long as she

won't significantly exceed the earnings limit while working before her FRA, claiming now is an acceptable strategy because it will take many years to recover the money forfeited by waiting until her FRA to claim. It's also reasonable because women statistically outlive men and your wife's benefit as your surviving spouse will be 100% of the amount you are receiving at your death, instead of the smaller spousal amount she was receiving while you were both living.

When to claim is always a personal choice, and life expectancy should always be thoughtfully considered, but the answer to your specific question is - yes, if your wife claims her own benefit at 63, she will automatically receive her spousal boost when you claim, but her payment as your spouse will be less than 50% of your FRA benefit amount.

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## Dave Ramsey Says

shows them respect and consideration.

When you buy a prepaid plan, you could be years or decades away from needing it. Plus the inflation rate on funerals is about 4%, so in essence, you'd be making 4% on your money. And, of course, you're locked into everything at that point. If you took the cost of a funeral and invested it at age 30, instead of 4% on your money, you'd get an actual investment return. By the time you're 80, you'd have about \$600,000. So prepaying in your 30s or 40s is mathematically ridiculous. Now, if you're in your 60s, like you and me, there aren't as many years for that money to grow. You wouldn't see a huge return on investment, but it would still provide for a nice service.

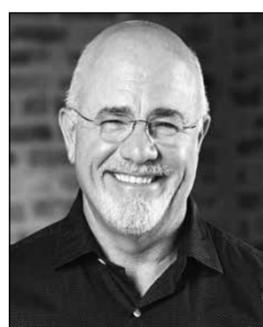
Believe it or not, it took me a while to figure out that the funeral world is an industry—an extremely profitable industry. And like with many things, when you add on stuff like financing or prepayment to a purchase,

you're adding to their profits. Most funeral providers make as much money on prepayment plans as they do in actual margin on the goods and services that go along with this kind of thing.

That being said, I've got no problem with a business or industry making money. If they treat their customers well, no one's taken advantage of, and a quality product or service is provided, it's all good. But when it comes to funerals, I tell people to preplan. Don't prepay.

— Dave

*Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national best-selling author, personal finance expert and host of "The Ramsey Show." He has appeared on "Good Morning America," "CBS This Morning," "Today," Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for the company Ramsey Solutions.* ★



When You Nickel and Dime Things, Nothing Gets Done Well

Dear Dave,

I'm 67, and I've been wondering what your position is on preplanning for a funeral versus prepaying. Is one a better idea than the other, or should you do both?

— Shannon

Dear Shannon,

This is a great question. I wish more folks would think about these kinds of things ahead of time.

Preplanning a funeral is truly a gift to your family. But if you prepay, it's a gift to the funeral home. Doing the legwork and setting things up ahead of time so your family doesn't have to make a lot of financial decisions in the middle of an emotional situation

## Tenth Annual Gala for Kids Helping Kids Sacramento

### Kids Helping Kids News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Kids Helping Kids Sacramento fights pediatric cancer by hosting its Tenth-Annual Benefit Gala at The Harris Center on Saturday, January 20th. At previous galas hosted by Kids Helping Kids, they have had amazing performances by Grammy-nominated band Switchfoot, singer-songwriter Andy Grammer, successful touring artist Ben Rector, and many more. Along with the benefit concert, the gala includes silent auction bidding on fantastic baskets and experiences you won't find anywhere else. Proceeds raised by this event will go towards improving conditions for children battling pediatric cancer, and helping out with any financial burdens that may appear during a child's treatment.

Kids Helping Kids is an entirely student-run, non-profit organization made up of juniors and seniors from Del Campo High School. In 2016, Kids Helping Kids was recognized as the number-one student run non-profit in the United States, and as of this year, they have just been recognized as the number-one student run non-profit in the world according to the Students for the Advancement of Global Entrepreneurship (SAGE) competition earlier this year. They put on their Signature Gala, along with several other events, to raise money for the populations they serve. Since 2012, Kids Helping Kids has raised over \$1.4 million to give back to the underserved both locally and globally. They support children battling pediatric cancer and their families by providing financial resources during their medical

treatment. Kids Helping Kids aids families in paying for expenses which are directly caused by the massive cost of treatment for their child. Each year, they raise \$50,000 to help 100 families battling pediatric cancer, and this year they hope to generate even more so they can reach even more children.

More information to come soon about who our headline artist will be and what kind of unique baskets and experiences will be offered, which their team is currently striving to secure.

For more information on Kids Helping Kids, go to [www.kidshelpingkids.org](http://www.kidshelpingkids.org). ★

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# COMICS & PUZZLES

## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



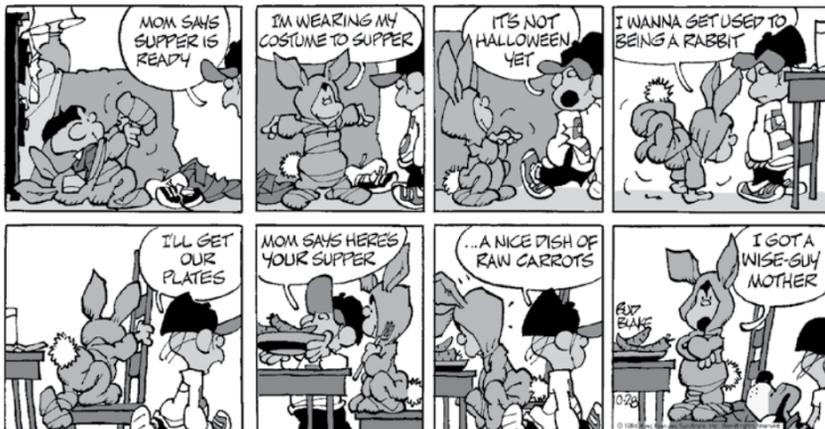
## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



## TIGER

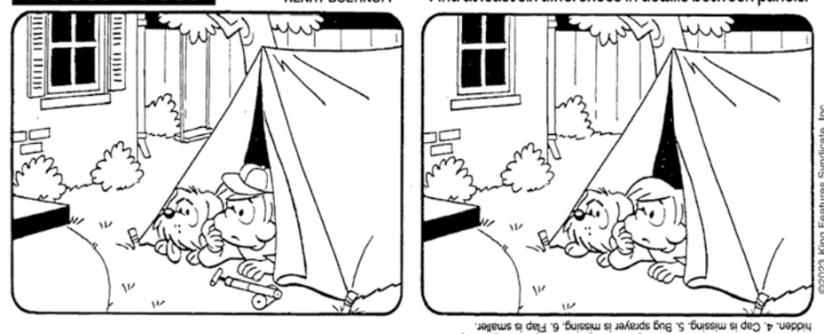
by Bud Blake



## HOCUS-FOCUS

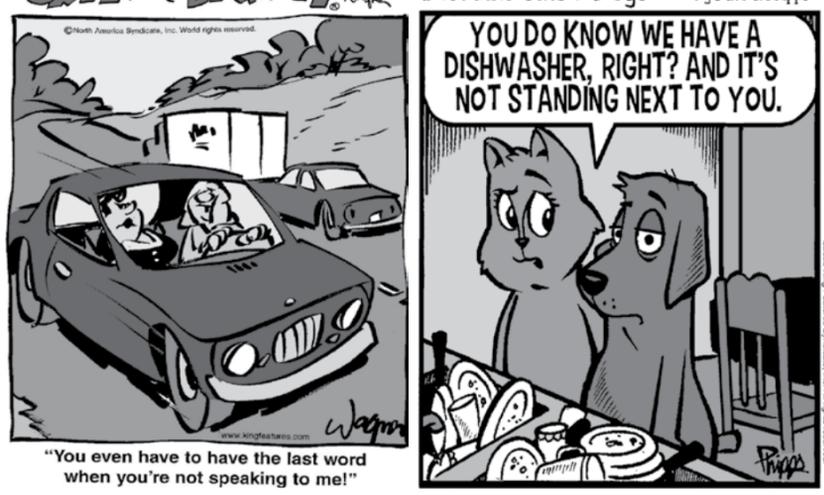
BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



## GRIN & BEAR IT

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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## STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • THE 1940s

**CLUES**

**ACROSS**

- Sylvester Stallone's "\_\_\_ King"
- And so forth, abbr.
- Mongolian desert
- Uiate church member
- Additionally
- Modified "will"
- Heart surgery prop
- Remains container
- Follow
- \*Thor Heyerdahl's raft
- \*Jackie Robinson's new team, 1947
- \*Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr., born in 1942
- Animal prod
- Give a nickname
- Dwarf buffalo
- Edible corn part
- Functions
- \*\_\_\_ Strip on Mediterranean Sea, 1948
- Roman goddess, patroness of hunters
- \*Moscow \_\_\_ cocktail, created in 1940s
- Beach souvenir
- Inspiring horror
- Not long
- Home to Bryce Canyon
- Smoothie bowl flavor
- Become available (2 words)
- Links hazard
- Mozart's "L\_\_\_ del Cairo"
53. Back of the neck
- Transgression
- \*Carmen of "The Gang's All Here"
- \*United \_\_\_ established 1945
65. Popeye's sweetie
- \*The BAA and NBL merged, forming this ball org., 1949
- Battle royal
- Denigrating statement
70. What divots and divas have in common
71. Audience's approval
72. Lad's counterpart
73. Number on a birthday cake
74. Not 'o'er

**DOWN**

- Poacher's trophy
- "Do \_\_\_ others..."
- Bank claim
- \*1947's "Here Comes Claus"
- King of the Huns
- Purse for the red carpet
- High craggy hill
- Type of dwelling
- "The \_\_\_ Show" (1976-1980)
- Yorkshire river
- Hangover memory?
- 15th of March
- Tied the knot
- \*Leopold III of Belgium and Christian X of Denmark, e.g.
22. Acorn producer
- Common newspaper name
25. "When I See an Elephant Fly" elephant, 1941
26. Steal a throne
27. Misrepresent
- \*Pearl Harbor location
31. Capital of Latvia
32. Narcotics agent
- \*Considered first general-purpose computer, acr.
34. a.k.a. vampire
36. Espied
38. a.k.a. Daminozide
42. \_\_\_ Apso
45. Tornado visual
49. Helicopter landing
51. Coal miners
54. Bear of bamboo forest
56. Brother's daughter
57. Gangster's gal
58. Hip bones
59. Barbecued anatomy
60. Birds
61. Part of cathedral
62. Cantina cooker
63. Sans mixers
64. Comedian Meyers
67. "The \_\_\_ Sleep," 1946

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# Not Your Grandparents' Food Closet

## Food Ministry Adapts to Seniors, Organic Waste Mandate and More

By Elise Spleiss

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Sunrise Christian Food Ministry at Advent Lutheran Church on San Juan Road is run like a huge, well-oiled machine with a lot of moving parts. Today, it takes much more time, money, resources and manpower to put that bag of food and other products in the client's car.

To help the process run more smoothly and serve clientele better, a new senior hour has been implemented to help those 60 and over have a shorter wait time in the heat.

Registration begins at 11:00 am, the parking lot opens at 11:30 while food donations are being processed.

After a short wait, cars work their way up the hill to the drive-thru area where volunteers fill their cars with donated perishable and non-perishable food, and items such as cakes, cookies, pies and other specialty items. Donating stores include Costco, Walmart, Sam's Club, Safeway, McClellan commissary and many more. Some restaurants such as Olive Garden donate. Costco also provides non-food items returned which cannot be resold such as sunglasses, clothing and adult products on a table at registration.

About 130 cars and up to 600 seniors and their drivers pass through the three rows set up with colorful barriers beginning at 11:00. Following the seniors, the waiting area begins to fill up with



**Food locker volunteer Greg Imlay of Ascension Lutheran Church helps maintain products stocked for homeless and those experiencing food insecurity.** Photo by Elise Spleiss

others and the homeless who arrive until 2 p.m. by bike or on foot.

A lot has gone on long before even one bag of food and other products reach the client. The food has gone through three to four hours of processing and is handled up to seven times. From the grocery store or restaurant donating it, to the volunteers delivering it, every single perishable item at the center is being weighed, entered into a database and repackaged. If not donated, the items must be reweighed and repackaged.

Sunrise Christian Food Ministry Director April Jacek is quick to point out that the food closet program has strict guidelines on food safety that take time and energy to fill.

According to Jacek, the Sunrise Food Closet has become much more than a charitable food organization.

It's become not only an organic waste re-distribution facility, but



**Sunrise Christian Food Ministry Director April Jacek (center) is helping the charity meet the high standards required of the food handling industry. In the image: Heather Pardee (volunteer), April Jacek (Director of Operations) and Bernie Smith, Ascension Lutheran Church volunteer.** Photo by Elise Spleiss

also a new social experience for many. Newly immigrated neighbors struggling with food issues

are supporting each other in a way new to this country. They travel to

the food closet together, arriving in different sized family groups, using wait time to socialize. Adult children

are driving their parents for some time to spend together.

Jacek describes their products, "We are fresh, sustainable, and most times organic. Whatever you find in stores and feed your own family is what [we] handout. It is a bounty we hand out to our clients which we would eat ourselves."

Younger volunteers in their service capacity at the closet are being taught through social skill building skills in high school and college classes, how to interact with co-workers and clients in a more personal way, seeing the person, not just the job they are doing.

The goal at the end of the day is to bring in their donations with nothing left at the end of the day. When the perishables they received are no longer viable, the first stop is not the landfill. This is the last-ditch effort.

To minimize the amount of perishable food in landfills, due to the new organic waste laws, the closet works with a local goat farmer, pig farmer and even a chicken farmer who picks up the waste for their farms. Following that, Jacek says there are many other places they can donate.

Hopefully the perception of today's food closet is changing. According to Jacek, it is not just for the needy. Anyone needing food assistance is welcome, no judgment.

To volunteer contact AARP, Hands on Sacramento or Just Serve. ★

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