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**Merry Christmas - Happy New Year
 May The Clouds Never Burst &
 The Son Always Find You!**

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Senior Beacon

IF YOU ARE 50 OR OLDER YOU SHOULD READ IT!!

DECEMBER, 2011 Vol. 30: No. 5 Established Aug., 1982 353 Consecutive Months!

Legal Lines: When Is Right Time To Adopt Relative?

by Sara Crocker-Communications

Question: I've been raising my grandchildren. Is it in the best interests of the children to adopt them?

Answer: The circumstances surrounding the adoption of grandchildren, or children of other family members, are different than those of adopting a non-related newborn or child through an adoption agency. There are basically two ways that grandparents, or other relatives, can adopt a child they are raising. One way is for a Human Services Department to remove the child from the home for his or her benefit and have the child placed with other relatives, including grandparents, or in foster care when relatives are not immediately available. Through foster care, children are placed on medical and other living benefits, which remain with the child through allocation of parental rights (a court hearing granting custody of the child), guardianship (the court supervises the welfare of child and the

relative's care of the child), and kinship adoption (the child becomes a legal part of the family).

The other way for a relative's child to come to live with you is on a voluntary basis, which if adoption is pursued, is a private kinship adoption. In a private kinship adoption, the child has not been taken from the home by Human Services and it has not provided any benefits for the child, unless you have personally met with Human Services to request them. There are benefits available for qualifying relatives when raising a child that is not their own. The benefits remain with the child through allocation of parental rights and guardianship. However, if the child is adopted in a private kinship adoption, the benefits that have been set up with Human Services are lost, unless the entire family can qualify for those same benefits.

A private kinship adoption is not always in the best interest of the child. Allocation of parental rights

might be a better choice for a family that cannot qualify for benefits from Human Services, or if the final family unit would have a hard time with medical, food or housing issues. Children with serious medical issues, both physical and mental, could benefit greatly if they were able to continue with Human Services benefits.

Adoption is a permanent step. Biological parents lose all of their rights to the child in an adoption. Allocation of parental rights or, possibly, the appointment of a guardian would be a better choice for a family where the parent may be able to responsibly take over raising the child at some future date. With allocation of parental rights or guardianship, the biological parent retains the option to petition the court to have their rights restored.

Adoption might be a better solution in cases where the child will be taken to other states or traveled with while under your care. You must take a look at the family unit and determine the needs and best interests of the child.

Some things to consider in your decision to adopt are:

- Health concerns and issues, both physical and mental, of the child;
- The mental, physical and financial burden that the adoption will put on the existing family;
- The stability of the family in general;
- Access of the biological par-

ent to the child; and

- The effect the adoption will have on the child.

There are many reasons that the child may have come to you to be raised, such as the parent's death, major illness, incarceration, negligence or drug abuse. How you have come to be raising the child is an important consideration in determining whether the best interest of the child is to adopt. Each child has his or her own special needs, both physically and mentally, and may be angry, hurt, mentally disabled, depressed, experience feelings of abandonment, or may adjust very well due to the circumstances involved. In a number of cases, the biological parent will have some access to the child because the care is provided by a family member. The amount of access a parent will have needs to be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the child's mental and physical health, as well as the influence the biological parent may have over the child.

All things in the lives of the child, grandparents or other relatives need to be brought into consideration in the determination of whether adoption is in the child's best interests. Adoption is not a decision to enter into lightly or swiftly. Look at the family as a whole and determine your best option.

The Colorado Bar Association welcomes your questions on subjects of general interest. The column is meant to be used as general information. Consult your own attorney for specifics. Send questions to the CBA attn: Sara Crocker, 1900 Grant St., Suite 900, Denver, CO 80203 or email scrocker@cobar.org.

About Legal Lines

Legal Lines is a question and answer column provided as a public service by the Colorado Bar Association. Attorneys answer questions of interest to members of the public for their general information.

About the Colorado Bar Association

The Colorado Bar Association is a voluntary bar association with nearly 18,000 members – almost three-quarters of all attorneys in the state – founded in 1897. The bar provides opportunities for continuing education, volunteering and networking for those in the legal profession while upholding the standards of the bar. The bar likewise works to secure the efficient administration of justice, encourage the adoption of proper legislation and perpetuate the history of the profession and the memory of its members. For more information, visit www.cobar.org.



Winter Remembrance/Mercado

El Pueblo History Museum.

A significantly important event that is a part of El Pueblo trading post's history (1842-1854) will be highlighted at the first "Winter Remembrance" lantern lighting ceremony on December 9, Friday, beginning at 5:00 p.m. This ceremony will recognize the trading post victims and the Native Americans who died in the 1854 Christmas attack by the Muache Utes. Following the ceremony, until 8:00 p.m., the Winter Mercado will be held that teaches the lifeways of Pueblo's first settlers who traded goods during an era of political and cultural conflict.

During the Mercado program, living-history interpreters will represent Mormon emigrants and trading post residents. These interpreters will bring alive a frontier evening. It is a time to fully engage the senses as one smells cooking in the

SEE 'WINTER' PAGE 17.

Pueblo Zoo, 19th Annual ElectriCrittters

by Gloria Madrill-Pueblo Zoo

ElectriCrittters is a holiday light show, which has become a Pueblo tradition. For 23 nights, the Zoo glows with over 250,000 lights that brighten the Holiday Season. It is a perfect holiday outing for visiting family and friends.

day music adds to the ambience. Warm up in the EcoCenter, with a cup of Hot Chocolate at the Candy Cane Café, while watching the Penguins swim and play.

And if you're looking for a great last minute gifts, family memberships can be purchased for \$50 (at the Zoo or online or at www.pueblozoo.org) and unique gifts can be found in the Wild Things Gift Shop. All proceeds raised from the event, go towards the care and feeding of the Zoo's over 450 animals.

Dates: November 23, 25-27 and December 2-4, 9-11, 16-23, 26-30
 Times: 5:30pm – 8:30pm (Last visitors admitted through the gate at 8:00pm)
 New Critter for 2011: Twenty-one foot long Animated Fire-Breathing Dragon
 Prices for Advance Discount Tickets (Purchased during the day, before 4pm): Non-Member Adult \$5, Non-Member Child \$3, Member Adult \$3, Member Child \$2, and children under 3 years

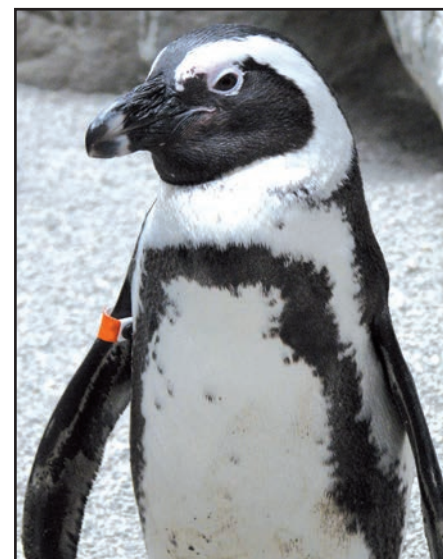


photo by Rick Avalos.

Visitors stroll through the Zoo where they encounter live animals, as well as 147 unique lighted animal sculptures (many of them animated), while holi-

old are free.

Prices for Tickets (Purchased that evening after 4pm): Non-Member Adult \$6, Non-Member Child \$4, Member Adult \$4, Member Child \$3, and children under 3 years old are free.

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The Pueblo Zoo is open from Labor Day to Memorial Day, Monday through Saturday (9am-4pm) and Sundays (12pm - 4pm). For more information, call 561-1452 or visit www.pueblozoo.org. Join us on Facebook.

Just Another Day At The Races

by James R. Grasso, Chief Cook & Bottle Washer



Observations From The Cave

Here is some info for you to cogitate on during the New Year, 2012:

- "...hedge-fund managers are paying taxes at a lower rate than teachers and firefighters. How can you defend that?".....Barack Obama
- Stephen Moore - *Wall Street Journal* - "...according to the Congressional Budget Office, middle-class families in 2007, earning between \$34,000 and \$50,000, paid an effective 14.3 percent of their income in all federal taxes. The top 5 percent of income earners paid 27.9 percent and the top 1 percent paid 29.5 percent. And what about the highest earners? Americans with annual incomes above \$2 million paid an average 32 percent of their income in federal taxes in 2005 (the most recent year the data are available)."
- Charlie Gibson, a television journalist, in 2008 asked BHO this question concerning BHO's desire to raise capital gains taxes reminding BHO of

what Clinton and Bush did on this matter: "And in each instance when the rate dropped, revenues from the tax increased: the government took in more money. And in the 1980s, when the tax was increased to 28 percent, the government revenues went down. So why raise it at all, especially given the fact that 100 million people in this country own stock and would be affected?"

- BHO's answer: "Well, Charlie. What I said is that I would look at raising capital gains for purposes of fairness."
- Sen. Barack Obama speaking on the Senate floor concerning Iranian nukes and their capabilities after our National Intelligence Agency erroneously in 2007 said that Iran was basically "frozen" in its nuclear ambitions when even the "you-and-I" public knew better: "By reporting that Iran halted its nuclear weapon development program four years ago because of international pressure, the new National Intelligence Estimate makes a compelling case for less saber-rattling and more direct diplomacy."

costs."

- On BHO blaming Republicans for the stagnate economy columnist Charles Krauthammer opines: "So what do you do when you say you can, but it turns out, you can't? Blame the other guy. Charge the Republicans with making governing impossible. Never mind that you had control of Congress for two-thirds of your current tenure. It's all the fault of Republican rejectionism."

"Hence, "We Can't Wait! (BHO's election slogan). We can't wait. Except for certain exceptions, such as the 1,700-mile trans-USA Keystone XL pipeline, carrying Alberta oil to Texas refineries, that would have created thousands of American jobs and increased our energy independence..... Why, Because the pipeline angered Obama's environmental constituency. But their complaints are risible. Global warming from the extraction of the Alberta tar sands? Canada will extract the oil anyway. If it doesn't go to us, it will go to China. Net effect on the climate if we don't take the oil? Zero!"

• Tis the season isn't it? BHO at a controversial commencement speech at the University of Notre Dame in 2009 because of his embracing state-paid abortions as recalled by Michael Gerson columnist:

"..... President Obama skillfully delayed the tension. He extended a "presumption of good faith" to his pro-life opponents..... "Let's honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion and draft a sensible conscience clause, and make sure that all of our health care policies are grounded not only in sound science, but also in clear ethics, as well as respect for the equality of women."

Things have now changed and Health and Human Services has decided to defund grants to the Conference of Catholic Bishops despite their effectiveness in programs like helping in human trafficking, and etc.

Gerson concluded, "How will the White House respond. More specifically, how will the Catholic chief of staff and America's first Catholic Vice President respond? They gave up their own adherence to Catholic teaching on abortion long ago. But are they really prepared to betray their co-religionists who still hold these beliefs?"

Stay tuned, my friends, 2012 should be a year to remember but will want to be forgotten. Godspeed!

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Day 4: After enjoying a Continental Breakfast, your adventure begins with a Guided Tour of San Antonio. The tour includes visits to San Fernando Cathedral, the King William Historical District, and El Mercado, an area patterned after an authentic Mexican market. This afternoon you will visit the Institute of Texan Cultures. The Institute is devoted to the 26 different cultures that settled Texas. After Dinner, you'll go to the famous River Walk for a scenic cruise!
Day 5: Enjoy a Continental Breakfast before departing for Fredericksburg, "Jewel of the Texas Hill Country". Start with a visit to the National Museum of the Pacific War, including the George Bush Gallery. Here, visitors become quickly engaged in the personal stories of Americans from all branches of the military involved in the Pacific theatre of World War II. Then, depart for the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park where you will go on a tour of the LBJ Ranch, and see the "Texas White House." This evening, enjoy a lovely Dinner complete with entertainment.
Day 6: Start the day with a Continental Breakfast. Afterwards, depart for a visit to the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Experience the "Queen of the Missions" - Mission San Jose, established in 1720. Later, go to the IMAX Theatre at San Antonio Rivercenter to see "ALAMO... The Price of Freedom". Then, stand where history took place when you visit the buildings and grounds of the ALAMO - "The Shrine of Liberty". This evening, you will relax and enjoy Dinner.
Day 7: Enjoy a Continental Breakfast at your hotel before leaving for the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, TX. Its interactive exhibits and artifacts bring the myth, legend and fact of the Lone Star State together under one roof. Later that day, after a relaxing Dinner, you'll check into your en route hotel.
Day 8: Today you'll go to the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City, OK. Tonight, relax in your en route hotel.
Day 9: Today, after enjoying a Continental Breakfast, you will depart for home... a perfect time to chat with your friends about all the fun things you've done, the great sights you've seen, and where your next group trip will take you!

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National Perspective: Culprits Behind Today's Polar Politics?

by David M. Shribman

If you are looking for someone to blame for the polarized nature of our politics today, here are two nominees: Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the political science establishment.

Together they set out the argument for the situation we have in Washington -- a Republican Party loaded with conservatives, a Democratic Party larded with liberals, and few in between. The result has been gridlock, rancor and a sense of despair if not hopelessness in the capital and across the country.

We have a political landscape where it is possible to argue that the most conservative Democrats in Congress today are more liberal than the most liberal Republicans. There is virtually no overlap, no real party dissenters of the sort who were unacceptable to FDR, who wanted a party of ideological purity, and who were inexplicable to political scientists, who looked longingly at the ideologically disciplined parties

in Europe and wondered why American parties so defied logic.

But today, FDR and the political science establishment having had their way, the United States has its most ideologically aligned party system in modern history -- and perhaps the biggest political crisis in modern history.

Party caucuses always have reinforced party discipline, but for the first time both caucuses are enforcing ideological discipline as well. In the course of their work, lawmakers almost never encounter views that depart from their own, almost never form friendships with their political adversaries. If they don't practice ideological compromise inside their own parties, they are less likely -- less able -- to practice it on the floor of both houses of Congress.

"We finally got ideological purity, and it's a disaster for the country," says former Gov. Angus King of Maine, an independent. "We have ideological gridlock. You can't solve problems this

way."

Indeed, the lack of a middle in the American political class is the American problem. The irony is that the American problem repeatedly has been held up as the American solution.

The most prominent advocate for ideologically aligned parties was Roosevelt, who once told Sam Rosenman, a White House speechwriter and the first White House counsel, "We ought to have two real parties -- one liberal and the other conservative."

FDR set out to create just that with his effort to purge conservatives and New Deal foes from the Democratic Party. He singled out, among others, Walter F. George of Georgia, Ellison D. "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina and Millard Tydings of Maryland, all of whom prevailed against the onslaught of White House opprobrium.

Susan Dunn, a Williams College historian who has written the definitive account of the Roosevelt of-

fensive, said the president's biggest blunder "was to undertake the purge in the absence of impressive challengers to conservative incumbents."

That very likely is true. For whatever reason, the mushy party system prevailed -- and had unforeseen consequences even for Roosevelt. Many of the most ardent opponents of the New Deal turned out to be the most ardent supporters of the president's initiatives in foreign affairs, supporting Roosevelt on Lend-Lease, so much so that party alignment was doomed as World War II approached.

It gained new life a dozen years later, however, when the American Political Science Review published a landmark article called "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System," which argued that American parties needed "sufficient internal cohesion" and a "degree of unity within the parties" that they lacked at mid-century.

SEE "NATIONAL" PAGE 19.

If Not Romney, Who? If Not Now, When?

by Ann Coulter

So now, apparently, we have to go through the cycle of the media pushing Newt Gingrich. This is going to be fantastic.

In addition to having an affair in the middle of Clinton's impeachment; apologizing to Jesse Jackson on behalf of J.C. Watts -- one of two black Republicans then in Congress -- for having criticized "poverty pimps," and then inviting Jackson to a State of the Union address; cutting a global warming commercial with Nancy Pelosi; supporting George Soros' candidate Dede Scozzafava in a congressional special election; appearing in public with the Rev. Al Sharpton to promote nonspecific education reform; and calling Paul Ryan's plan to save Social Security "right-wing

social engineering," we found out this week that Gingrich was a recipient of Freddie Mac political money.

(Even I will admit, however, that Newt was great when he was chairman of GOPAC back in the '90s with Gay Gaines at the helm.)

Although Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac -- the institutions most responsible for the nation's current financial crisis -- were almost entirely Democratic cash cows, they managed to dirty up enough Republicans to make it seem like bipartisan corruption.

Democrats sucked hundreds of millions of dollars out of these institutions: Franklin Raines, \$90 million; Jamie Gorelick, \$26.4 million; Jim Johnson, \$20 million.

By contrast, Republicans came

cheap. For the amazingly good price of only \$300,000 apiece, Fannie and Freddie bought the good will of former Reps. Vin Weber, R-Minn., Susan Molinari, R-N.Y., and Newt Gingrich, R-Ga. Former Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y., was even cheaper at \$240,000.

(Correction: After Gingrich admitted last week to receiving \$300,000 from Freddie, we found out this week that it was actually closer to \$1.6 million.)

So now conservatives shy away from denouncing these crooked organizations for fear of running into Vin Weber at a cocktail party.

Sorry, guys -- on the plus side, you're millionaires, but on the downside, you've earned the contempt of your fellow man.

The mainstream media keep pushing alternatives to Mitt Romney not only because they are terrified of running against him, but also because they want to keep Republicans fighting, allowing Democrats to get a four-month jump on us.

Meanwhile, everyone knows the nominee is going to be Romney.

That's not so bad if you think the most important issues in this election are defeating Obama and repealing Obamacare.

There may be better ways to stop Obamacare than Romney, but, unfortunately, they're not available right now. (And, by the way, where were you conservative purists when Republicans were nominating Waterboarding-Is-Torture-Jerry-Falwell-Is-an-Agent-of-Intolerance-My-Good-Friend-Teddy-Kennedy-Amnesty-for-Illegals John McCain-Feingold for president?)

Among Romney's positives is the fact that he has a demonstrated ability to trick liberals into voting for him. He was elected governor of Massachusetts -- one of the most liberal states in the union -- by appealing to Democrats, independents and suburban women.

He came close to stopping the greatest calamity to befall this nation since Pearl Harbor by nearly beating Teddy Kennedy in a Senate race. (That is when he said a lot of the things about which he's since "changed his mind.") If he had won, we'd be carving his image on Mount Rushmore.

He is not part of the Washington establishment, so he won't be caught taking money from Freddie Mac or cutting commercials with Nancy Pelosi.

Also, Romney will be the first Republican presidential nominee since Ronald Reagan who can talk. Liberals are going to have to dust off their playbook from 30 years ago to figure out

SEE "ROMNEY" PAGE 11.



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Small Inventions Could Boost America's Standing

by *Georgia Anne Geyer*

WASHINGTON -- As American diplomatic and military actions grow in ever greater intensity all over the world, one of the strangest -- and smallest -- new military acts has sneaked into the Pentagon's schedule of "interventions" constantly being reassessed.

This is not to say that because it is relatively small that this intervention will be easy -- or even cheap. Military incursions somehow have a way, no matter how small they seem at first, of turning out to cost, and cost, and cost. Yet the makeup of this new Pentagon plan has the look of potential success about it, perhaps because it seems so eminently logical.

What is this newest wrinkle in the Pentagon's unabashed intention to see the world a safer place? It is the plan, announced by President Obama on Oct. 14, to send some 100 U.S. special operations troops to Uganda in Central Africa. They are going in a non-combat advisory capacity to capture the Ugandan killer and his men who have terrorized the north of the country since 1987.

It was then that Joseph Kony, a

wizened little murderer and perverter of children, founded his "Lord's Resistance Army" or LRA, coming out of the deep African forests in Uganda and southern Sudan only to attack villages, kidnap and rape Ugandan or Sudanese children, and force them to kill their parents or dismember other young girls and boys. Kony quotes biblical phrases in a strange, thwarted voice as he goes about his Lucifer's work.

Lovers of history would know that the former British colony of Uganda, which has lush agriculture and rich minerals, is nevertheless poor. This is because it has had a rogue's gallery of strange, at least half-mad, leaders in its "modern" times. Everyone from the strange Alice Lakwena, who spoke in the voices of many spirits and told soldiers the bullets would not harm them, to the brutal Idi Amin Dada, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Seas and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in Particular, to Kony ...

Today, Uganda's leader is President Yoweri Museveni, a former militia leader against Idi Amin who is one of the

most brilliant leaders in all of Africa and who has had enormous success in rescuing the country from Amin's abuses. But even though he told me that Kony's LRA was finished seven years ago, the fact is that it still operates with its savage practices -- and the United States is to use its well-trained counterinsurgency experts to help in the fight against Kony's army.

Very well, that could unquestionably aid the Ugandans and Museveni -- but what about the U.S.? When I saw Gen. James Jones, our NATO chief in Mons, Belgium, eight years ago, one of the major changes he briefed me on was that he was beginning a tour of Africa in order to pinpoint African military situations where we could help with small numbers of our men and women.

The Uganda situation seems made to order for this combination of good governance on the Ugandan side and American technical help, and there is reason to believe that it will be a major pattern for the future.

One really hopes that America has learned after Iraq and Afghanistan and Pakistan, and after Somalia and Lebanon, and Haiti and Vietnam, that to

put American troops into major ground wars, whether in Asia, Africa or the Near East, is a lost cause. We can neither afford it financially nor emotionally.

But this example of Kony's frightful army -- this could be an example of how we can help other countries and the decent people in them. Our few trainers could be just the element that could push the levers of power around.

We already have some examples of this kind of power being exercised by the United States. We have Kosovo, the autonomous Albanian region of Serbia, which NATO rescued from the Serbs and helped to gain successful independence, joining the West. We have the recent successful positioning of NATO over Libya, only in a non-fly zone, with considerable success in the related Libyan revolution.

Many things are happening with foreign affairs -- and some of them are good. There is nothing wrong with carefully thought-out, half-interventions. We're seeing more examples of new ways for America to succeed in the world.

'Whack-A-Newt' Is The Media's New Game In Town

by *Richard Reeves*

WASHINGTON -- Like most reporters here in the 1980s, I liked Newt Gingrich and spent time listening to his office lectures every few weeks. He was smart, he was candid about most things, wrong about others -- and funny in his hypercharged way. He was young and irreverent -- like us -- and he was on his way to taking over the Republicans in Congress and then Congress itself. His ambition was boundless, but he was changing the rules in Washington for better or worse.

Then, after becoming speaker of the House after the 1994 elections -- the

Contract With America year -- he began his self-destruction. Lord Acton would have understood: Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely. The little professor from a Georgia college no one had ever heard of was of a type I came to know well, the angry academic who feels he is being held back by other teachers.

Well, he showed them all by being elected to Congress. What he found there, he told me then, was a permanent Republican minority, heads down, waiting for their next defeat. He changed that. He organized other young Republicans into a militant force determined to defeat rather than just modify Democratic

initiatives. And he succeeded, for a while. But ... As Politico.com's Jonathan Martin and John Harris wrote last Wednesday:

"The new political lease on life brought on by his buoyant poll numbers guarantees a new season of harsh scrutiny of old Gingrich controversies: his finances, his volatile temperament, his erratic management record, his polarizing brand of politics over the course of nearly 40 years in the public arena.

"He's going to see a real barrage," predicted former House Speaker Dennis Hastert. "His success really depends on how he handles himself."

"Whether Gingrich's revival is a fad or something more substantial hinges on his answers to a handful of questions -- all of them relating to how a politician, at age 68, explains and defends his own past. Can he rewrite his personal narrative?"

"Memories are short in politics. It could be that people supporting Gingrich in recent polls only dimly recall that he made himself the most unpopular man in American politics while House speaker in the mid-1990s. Or that his own GOP colleagues, weary of his melodrama and impatient with the party's poor midterm election results, pushed him out of that job in November 1998. Or that nearly the entirety of his campaign staff, including long-time aides, declared themselves fed up by his decision-making and inconstant attention when they quit en masse earlier this year."

And then there's the three wives, one of whom he left while she was in the hospital battling cancer, and the million-dollar revolving credit line at Tiffany's, and the millions of dollars in "consulting fees" from Freddie Mac as soon as he left Congress.

Now, for the moment at least, he is, according to polls, the last man standing against Mitt Romney, replacing the

equally surprising Herman Cain, who really represented "none of the above."

Romney appears to be hated by a majority of Republicans. They seem determined to do anything to stop him, even raising Gingrich from his political grave. Whatever his past, no one ever questioned Gingrich's intellect. He's probably the quickest of the Republican candidates, even if he often rewrites world history, national history and his own personal history to suit his purposes of the moment. What the adults in the party question is whether he has finally grown up. He also has his own battalions of enemies, as you would expect of a man who once called the then-leader of his party, Sen. Bob Dole, "a tax collector for the welfare state."

Politico's David Mark, who runs an open forum called "The Arena," picked up a couple of these quotes after Gingrich's mini-surge began:

"His record is an opposition researcher's dream," said Brendan Daly, who once served as Nancy Pelosi's communications director and is now in public relations. "The Republicans will be stuck with phony flip-flopper Romney, whether they like him or not."

"The Newt boomlet is an amusing media-inflated diversion from a race that will end with Republicans having to choose between the rudderless (Romney) and the clueless (Perry)," said Robert Borosage of the Campaign for America's Future.

So it's going. The Republicans don't seem to have much of a present or future. So they have turned to an unhappy past -- until Rick Santorum or Jon Huntsman are the next to be bumped up as the Romney plays Whack-a-Mole one more time.

Ed. Note: This guy is so daffy. He quotes the media and then says it will all be Newt's fault. Guess which word I inserted in the headline? I added Media's Richard.

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Op-Ed

Coulter: Hypocrisy Concerning Black Conservatives

by Ann Coulter

By spending the last three decades leveling accusations of "racism" every 10 seconds, liberals have made it virtually impossible for Americans to recognize real racism -- for example, the racism constantly spewed at black conservatives.

In the last year alone, a short list of the things liberals have labeled "racist" include:

- Being a Republican;
- Joining the tea party;
- The word "the" (Donald Trump's statement that he has a "great relationship with *the* blacks");
- References to Barack Obama's playing basketball (Trump again);
- Using Obama's middle name;
- Scott Brown's pickup truck;
- Opposing Obamacare;
- Opposing Obama's stimulus bill;

-- Opposing Obama's jobs bill. The surge in conservative support for Herman Cain confuses the Democrats' story line, which is that Republicans hate Obama because he's black.

Cain is twice as black as Obama. (Possible Obama campaign slogan: "Too Black!")

This is why the liberal website Politico ran with a story on Cain that had everything -- a powerful black man, a Republican presidential candidate, the hint of sexuality -- except facts.

All we learned was: About a

decade ago, as many as two anonymous women accused Cain of making unspecified "inappropriate" remarks and one "inappropriate" gesture in the workplace. (We had more than that on John Edwards' mistress a year into the media's refusal to report that story.)

If the details helped liberals, we'd have the details.

To have been accused of sexual harassment in the 1990s is like having been accused of molesting children at preschools in the 1980s or accused of being a witch in Massachusetts in the 1690s.

In the 1990s, one plaintiff won a \$50 million jury verdict against Wal-Mart on the grounds that a "hostile environment" was created by her supervisor's yelling at both male and female employees. In another case, a plaintiff won a \$250,000 award for sexual harassment based on her complaint that a male colleague had reached for a pastry saying, "Nothing I like more in the morning than sticky buns," while "wriggl(ing)" his eyebrows.

It got so crazy that a 6-year-old boy was suspended from class for a day for kissing a classmate on the cheek, and a Goya painting had to be removed from a Penn State classroom because a professor complained that it constituted sexual harassment.

With no standard other than the subjective offense taken by the accuser, absolutely anyone could be called a witch,

i.e., a sexual harasser. So it's striking that the only two conservative public figures accused of being witches both happened to be conservative blacks: Clarence Thomas and Herman Cain.

Liberals go straight to ugly racist stereotypes when attacking conservative blacks, calling them oversexualized, stupid and/or incompetent.

The late, lamented, white liberal reporter Mary McGrory called Justice Antonin Scalia "a brilliant and compelling extremist" -- while dismissing Thomas as "Scalia's puppet."

More recently, Democratic Sen. Harry Reid called Scalia "one smart guy." In the next breath, he proclaimed Thomas "an embarrassment to the Supreme Court," adding, "I think that his opinions are poorly written."

When Bush made Condoleezza Rice the first black female secretary of state, terror swept through the Democratic Party. What if people began to notice and ask questions: "Who's that black woman always standing with George Bush?" *Never mind! He's probably arresting her.*

In addition to an explosion of racist cartoons portraying Rice as Aunt Jemima, Butterfly McQueen from "Gone With the Wind," a fat-lipped Bush parrot and other racist cliches, allegedly respectable liberals promptly called her stupid and incompetent.

Joseph Cirincione, then with the Carnegie Endowment for International

Peace, said Rice "doesn't bring much experience or knowledge of the world to this position." (Unlike Hillary Clinton, whose experience for the job consisted of being married to an impeached, disbarred former president.)

Democratic consultant Bob Beckel -- who ran Walter Mondale's 1984 campaign so competently that Mondale lost 49 states -- said of Rice, "I don't think she's up to the job."

When Michael Steele ran for senator in Maryland in 2006, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee dug up a copy of his credit report -- something done to no other Republican candidate. He was depicted in black face with huge red lips by liberal blogger Steve Gilliard. Oreo cookies were rolled down the aisle at Steele during a gubernatorial debate in 2002.

Trafficking in racist imagery is consequence-free for liberals because they have ruined charges of "racism" with their own overuse of the term. By now, any accusation of racism has the feel of a Big Foot sighting.

It's a neat trick, rather as if the Nazis had called everything "genocide" right before launching the Holocaust, and then admonished resisters not to "play the genocide card."

Liberals step on black conservatives early and often because they can't have black children thinking, "Hmmm, the Republicans have some good ideas; SEE "COULTER" PAGE 11.

Knowledge Hostility Has No Place In This World

by Cynthia Tucker

WASHINGTON -- If you've been paying any attention to the trial heats of the Republican presidential contest, you've noticed an alarming trend: the conflating of ignorance with authenticity. Herman Cain's fans, for example, seem to believe that his profound lack of knowledge about most of the world is one reason to support him. It makes

him a regular guy, more trustworthy than those hated "elites" and longtime Washington pols.

The trend isn't new, of course. Sarah Palin's admirers responded similarly to her woeful (and willful) lack of knowledge about many of the complex issues that would confront a presidential administration. Palin's voters didn't desert her when she showed her abysmal

ineptitude about subjects that were routinely in the news. Instead, they blamed journalists who asked her questions she couldn't answer.

Indeed, a suspicion of the well-educated is a long-standing strain in American politics. I remember the antics of the late George Wallace, who used to denounce "pointy-headed intellectuals."

But this unfortunate proclivity seems to have reached its apex at just the wrong time: On a "flat" and interconnected planet, Americans need more knowledge, not less. We need to be better educated, not more ignorant. In other words, the nation needs all the pointy-headedness it can muster.

We certainly don't need a president like Cain, who publicly disdained the president of "Ubeki-beki-beki-stanstan" as someone he didn't need to remember and who cannot recall why he disagrees with President Obama's intervention in Libya. (Actually, Cain doesn't know much about Libya, period.) Nor do we need a president like Rick Perry, who proposes to dismantle great swaths of the federal government, but doesn't take his own plan seriously enough to recall its details.

At least Perry was contrite about his "oops" moment. More stunning is Cain's attitude, which echoes Palin's proud ignorance. Both behave as though their lack of knowledge is a selling point -- and their supporters seem to agree.

While Republicans have been proudly showing off their anti-intel-

lectualism of late, the strain is broadly bipartisan. I've known Democrats and Republicans, liberals, conservatives and independents who are dismissive of the benefits of expertise and suspicious about the well-educated.

During my Alabama childhood, for example, I knew lots of proud churchgoers who preferred a minister with little (if any) formal training in theology. Preachers weren't expected to attend divinity school; it was more important that they claimed to be anointed by God. Former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young tells a great story about learning to speak without notes when he was a young preacher assigned to a rural church; the elders were skeptical of any minister who had to read from a text.

While that story is charming, it also speaks to a bygone era. When Young was a newly ordained minister, communist China was still an economic backwater, the euro didn't exist and the United States was a manufacturing powerhouse, providing good jobs to workers without high school diplomas. Those days are so over.

Many college graduates are struggling to find decent jobs these days, but the unemployment rate for those with post-secondary degrees is still much lower than that of high school graduates. Cain, a retired businessman, may be stunningly ignorant of foreign affairs, but he did get an undergraduate degree in math and a graduate degree in compu- SEE "TUCKER" PAGE 7.

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Op-Ed

from page 3.

book from 30 years ago to figure out how to run against a Republican who isn't a tongue-tied marble-mouth.

As we've known for years, his negatives are: Romneycare and Mormonism.

We look forward with cheery anticipation to an explosion of news stories on some of the stranger aspects of Mormonism. The articles have already been written, but they're not scheduled for release until the day Romney wraps up the nomination.

Inasmuch as the Democrats' only argument for the big-eared beanpole who's nearly wrecked the country is that you must be a racist if you oppose Obama, one assumes a lot of attention will be lavished on the Mormon Church's historical position on blacks. Church founder Joseph Smith said blacks had the curse of Cain on them and banned blacks from the priesthood, a directive that was not revoked until 1978.

There's no evidence that this was a policy fiercely pushed by Mitt

Romney. To the contrary, when his father, George Romney, was governor of Michigan, he was the most pro-civil rights elected official in the entire country, far ahead of any Democrat.

No one is worried Romney will double-cross us on repealing Obamacare. We worry that Romneycare will make it harder for him to get elected.

But, again, Romney is the articulate Republican. He's already explained how mandating health insurance in one particular wealthy, liberal Northeastern state is different from inflicting it on the entire country. Our Constitution establishes a federalist system that allows experimentation with different ideas in the individual states.

As governor, Romney didn't have the ability to change federal laws requiring hospital emergency rooms to treat every illegal alien, drug dealer and vagrant who walked in the door, then sending the bill to taxpayers. (Although David Axelrod, Michelle Obama, Eric Whitaker and Valerie Jarrett did figure out a way to throw poor blacks out of

the University of Chicago Medical Center.)

The Heritage Foundation, a leading conservative think tank, supported Romneycare at the time. The biggest warning sign should have been that Gingrich supported it, too.

Most important, Romney has said -- forcefully and repeatedly -- that his first day in office he will issue a 50-state waiver from Obamacare and will then seek a formal repeal.

Romney is not going to get to the White House and announce, "The first thing I'm going to do is implement that fantastic national health care plan signed by my pal, Barack!"

Unlike all other major legislation in the nation's history, Obamacare was narrowly passed along partisan lines by an aberrationally large one-party majority in Congress. (Thanks, McCain supporters!) Not one single Republican in Congress voted for it, not even John McCain.

Obamacare is going to be repealed -- provided only that a Republican wins the next presidential election.

If a Republican does not win, however, it will never be repealed. Recall that, in order to boast about the amazing revenue savings under Obamacare, Democrats had to configure the bill so that the taxes to pay for it start right away, but the goodies don't kick in until 2014.

Once people are thrown off their insurance plans and are forced to depend on the government for "free" health care, Obamacare is here to stay. (And Newt Gingrich will be calling plans to tinker with it "right-wing social engineering.")

Instead of sitting on our thumbs, wishing Ronald Reagan were around, or chasing the latest mechanical rabbit flashed by the media, conservatives ought to start rallying around Romney as the only Republican who has a shot at beating Obama. We'll attack him when he's president.

It's fun to be a purist, but let's put that on hold until Obama and his abominable health care plan are gone, please.

National Perspective

from page 3.

time, the Democratic Party had such conservatives as Sen. Harry F. Byrd Sr. of Virginia, Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and a series of Southern committee chairmen. The Republicans Party had such liberals as Gov.

Earl Warren of California, Rep. Clifford P. Case of New Jersey and Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. of Massachusetts.

The political scientists' report echoed scholarly critiques dating back a half century, when important figures like Woodrow Wilson, then a prominent political scientist, and Herbert Croly, an important thinker in the Progressive movement and the co-founder of The New Republic, raised questions about the American party system.

"However one may deplore that system, he must concede that it has displayed, if nothing else, a very impressive ability to survive," Austin Ranney,

then a political scientist at the University of Illinois and later the chairman of the political science department at the University of California at Berkeley, wrote in a contemporary critique of the 1950 report.

One reason the old system survived for so long is that the multiplicity of interests and ideologies inside American parties imposed the sorts of restraints on the majority that Americans liked, much like the checks and balances and separation of powers designed in the Constitution to protect the rights and viewpoints of the minority.

Now we have just the kind of

political-party system Roosevelt and the political scientists envisioned. We are living the future, and it does not work.

"When the political scientists were thinking about these things in the 1950s, they were focusing on the good things the 'more responsible' party system might bring," says Larry M. Bartels, the co-director of Vanderbilt University's Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. "Now that we're living it, we see a lot of the bad consequences. Now political scientists are wringing their hands about the negative implications of polarization."

A recent National Journal study showed that every Republican member of the Senate has a voting record to the right of every Democratic member of the Senate, and that only five House Republicans have a voting record to the left of Rep. Gene Taylor of Mississippi, the Democrat with the most conservative voting record. The journal has been conducting these studies since 1982. Only once before, in 1999, did the Senate have a profile like it does today.

In an important retrospective on the 1950 political scientists' report published on its 50th anniversary, UCLA political scientist Barbara Sinclair argued that the modern parties "do represent a clearer policy message than they did 50 years ago."

She's right. If you vote for a Republican today, you are very likely voting for a conservative, and if you vote for a Democrat you are very likely voting for a liberal. That's clear. One other thing also is clear: The political system is a lot worse off.

(David M. Shribman is executive editor of the Post-Gazette (dshribman@post-gazette.com, 412 263-1890). Follow him on Twitter at ShribmanPG.)

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news of the weird

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Weird World

Enterprising reporters get stories by earning the trust of their sources, which Simon Eroro of the Post-Courier (Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea) obviously did. At a banquet in November, the News Limited (Rupert Murdoch's empire) awarded Eroro its "Scoop of the Year" honor for reporting on militant tribal fighters of the Free West Papua movement -- a scoop he had to earn by agreeing to undergo a ritual circumcision, with bamboo sticks, to prove his sincerity. (Some of the rebels still wear penis gourds whose size varies with the status of the wearer.)

The Litigious Society

-- An Illinois appeals court finally threw out a lawsuit in August, but not before the two-year-long battle had created a foot-high pile of legal filings on whether two "children" (now ages 23 and 20) could sue their mother for bad parenting while they were growing up. Among the claims were mom's failure to send birthday cards or "care" packages during the kids' college years and calling her daughter at midnight to ask that she return home from a party (and once failing to take the girl to a car show).

-- Todd Remis, an unemployed stock-market research analyst, filed a lawsuit in 2009 against the photographer of his 2003 wedding, citing breach of contract because the 400 shots taken during the ceremony failed to cover several key moments, such as the "last dance." A November 2011 New York Times report pointed out that Remis is demanding not just the return of his \$4,100, but for the photographer to pay for re-creating the missing scenes by covering travel expenses for all 40 guests to reconvene. (Remis and his wife have divorced; she has returned to her native Latvia, and Remis does not even know how to contact her.)

-- Consumer Rights: (1) Jonathan Rothstein of Encino, Calif., filed a lawsuit in September against Procter & Gamble for selling its Crest toothpaste in "Neat Squeeze" packages, which Rothstein said make it impossible to access the last 20 percent of the contents, thus forcing consumers to buy

more toothpaste prematurely. (He wants Procter & Gamble to return 90 cents to everyone who bought Neat Squeeze packages.) (2) Sarah Deming of Keego Harbor, Mich., filed a lawsuit in September against the distributor of the movie "Drive" (starring Ryan Gosling) because its trailers promised fast-driving scenes (like those in the "Fast and Furious" series), but delivered mostly just drama.

Fine Points of the Law

(1) A recent vicious, unprovoked attack in Toronto by Sammy the cat on Molly the black Labrador (bloodying Molly's ear, paws and eye) left Molly's owner without recourse to Ontario's or Toronto's "dangerous pet" laws. The owner told the Toronto Star in November that, apparently, only dangerous dogs are covered. (2) Maya the cat was central to a recent contentious British immigration case when a judge seemed to favor residence for a Bolivian national because of Maya. The judge had concluded that the Bolivian man and his British partner had established a close-knit "family" relationship because of the need to care for Maya.

Ironies

-- Unclear on the Concept: (1) Licensed Texas physician Akili Graham, 34, who gives paid motivational speeches on healthy living ("How to Deal With Stress"), was arrested in October in Houston and accused as the front man for four "pain clinics" that allegedly dispense prescription drugs illegally. (2) A chief child-abuse investigator for the Catholic Church in Britain, Christopher Jarvis, 49, was sentenced in October following his guilty plea to possession of over 4,000 child-sex images on his computer. Jarvis had been hired in 2002 to protect against pedophiles' access to church groups.

-- Violinist Martin Stoner, 60, who lost his job after 25 years and who is suing the New York City Ballet for age discrimination, petitioned federal judge Robert Patterson to disqualify himself from the case because he is too old (88) and, according to Stoner, has vision and hearing problems.

Compelling Explanations

(1) Management consultant Graham Gibbons, 42, was on trial in Cardiff, Wales, at press time, charged with making a clandestine video of himself and his then-girlfriend in bed. Gibbons denied being a pervert, insisting that he made the video to analyze, for "efficiency," the "time and motion"

of his "performance," as he might do for corporate clients. (Despite his alleged improved lovemaking, the girlfriend broke up with him.) (2) West Virginia roadkill-cooking activist David Cain told Bloomberg News in October that he generally supported Volvo's new driver-safety technology that warns of objects ahead in the road. Cain pointed out that it was just a warning, that the driver "could still choose to run over something that's good for eating."

People With Issues

In November, Tommy Joe Kelly, unsuccessfully acting as his own lawyer, was convicted of slashing a stranger's tire by an Austin, Texas, jury, despite his explanation. "OK, I'm going to tell you the truth on this one," he said from the witness stand. "It doesn't sound right, but it is. I ... had hemorrhoids at that time, super duper bad." (There have been 391 tire slashings in Kelly's neighborhood over the last four years, but he was charged with only one count, and sentenced to 10 years in jail.)

Least Competent Criminals

Robbers Easily Subdued: (1) Dale Foughty, 56, was charged with robbing a convenience store in Jacksonville, N.C., in October, despite attempting to intimidate the clerk by dressing as Spiderman. However, the clerk poked Foughty in the stomach with a broom, sending him away empty-handed. (2) Cody Smith, 18, was charged with snatching a woman's purse in Johnson City, Tenn., in November. The victim chased Smith into nearby shrubbery, entangling him long enough for her to recover the purse. (3) Two men, attempting a robbery of the Ace Smoke Shop in Altadena, Calif., in July, fled after grabbing only part of the store's cash. They were frightened off by the manager's barking Chihuahua.

Recurring Themes

The tactic of "patience" is usually employed when police believe that a suspect has ingested drugs for smuggling, i.e., nature will take its course, and the drugs will appear in the toilet sooner or later. On Oct. 12, Nigerian comic actor Babatunde Omidina (known

as "Baba Suwe") was detained before a flight at the Lagos airport because authorities suspected that he had ingested drugs to smuggle to Paris. Omidina denied the charge, but police locked him up and began monitoring his bowel movements. On Nov. 4, Omidina was released without charges following 25 "evidence"-free movements.

A News of the Weird Classic (March 2008)

The divorce of Anton Popov and his wife, Nataliya, is about to go through (in 2008), but the couple are still contractually committed to the Moscow State Circus, where their act includes Nataliya's shooting an apple off of Anton's head with a crossbow. The Times of London asked Anton during a show in Sheffield, England, in February whether he was afraid. "I still trust her because Nataliya is very professional," he said. "(T)he show must go on."

Mom's Womb

At press time, Melinda Arnold, 34, was waiting to hear whether her mother would be accepted as an organ donor for her daughter -- with the organ being the mom's womb. Melinda (a nurse from Melbourne, Australia) was born without one (though with healthy ovaries and eggs), and if the transplant by Swedish surgeon Mats Brannstrom of Gothenburg University is successful, and Melinda later conceives, her baby will be nurtured in the very same uterus in which Melinda, herself, was nurtured. (Womb transplants have been performed in rats and, with limited success, from a deceased human donor.)

Government in Action

-- A British manufacturer, BCB International, is flourishing, buoyed by sales of its Kevlar underwear, at \$65 a pair, to U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, soldiers and Marines must buy them directly; the "Bomb Boxers" are not supplied by the Pentagon even though nearly 10 percent of battlefield explosive-device injuries result in sometimes-catastrophic genital and rectal damage. According to an October report in Talking Points

SEE "WEIRD" PAGE 8.

TUCKER

from page 5.
ter science. That laid the foundation for his professional accomplishments.
Even Cain must know that much of the world has embraced the knowledge

economy as the ticket to a prosperous future. South Korean parents shamelessly push their children into tutorial sessions that last until the wee hours of the morning. But here in the United States, there is still a clear strain of resentment toward the learned, the intellectually ambitious, the highly educated.

And it is stoked by demagogues who dismiss the conclusions of experts on such issues as climate change, evolution and even the obesity epidemic. Why trust those "pointy-headed" intellectuals who win Nobel prizes in biology and chemistry? That resentment is further fueled by dilettantes such as Cain, who revel in their ignorance of public policy.

Last week, after his disastrous performance before the editorial board of a Milwaukee newspaper, Cain declared at a campaign event in New Hampshire that the nation needs "a leader, not a reader," according to reporters following his campaign.

That's simply appalling. It would be difficult for the nation to adapt to a knowledge economy with a president who is contemptuous of knowledge.

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from page 8.

Memo, the Pentagon's currently issued protection is inferior to BCB's but is less expensive. (Although the Pentagon fully funds post-injury prostheses and colostomies, it could purchase about 7,700 Bomb Boxers for the price of a single Tomahawk missile.)

-- In what a cement company executive said is "one of those bureaucratic things that doesn't make any sense," the city of Detroit recently built wheelchair ramps at 13 intersections along Grandy Street, despite knowing that those ramps are either not connected to sidewalks or connected to seldom-used, badly crumbling sidewalks. The ramps were required by a 2006 lawsuit settlement in which Detroit pledged to build ramps on any street that gets repaved, as Grandy was. (No one in city government thought, apparently, to attempt a trade of these 13 intersections for paving 13 more-widely used ones in the city.)

-- A Chicago Tribune/WGN-TV investigation revealed in September and October the astonishing result that Illinois laws passed in 1997 and 2007 at the behest of organized labor have given at least three former union leaders lifetime government pensions as if they had been city or state employees, totaling an estimated drain on public budgets of about \$7 million. Two teachers' union officials were allowed to teach exactly one day to qualify, and an engineers' union official was hired for exactly one day, with the remainder of the service of the three having been on the payroll of the respective unions. A September Tribune report estimated that perhaps 20 other union officials might have been eligible under similar provisions.

Great Art!

-- It was haute couture meet-

ing haute cuisine at the Communication Museum in Berlin in November, as prominent German chef Roland Trettl introduced his fashions (displayed on live models) made from food, including a tunic of octopus, a miniskirt of seaweed, a trouser suit made with lean bacon, a scarf of squid ink pasta, and a hat woven from lettuce. The museum director (presumably without irony) said the items were "provocative" and "raise(d) questions."

-- Veteran New York City performance artist Marni Kotak, 36, gave birth to her first child, Ajax, on Oct. 25 -- and that was her "art," as the birth took place at the Microscope Gallery in Brooklyn, N.Y., after Kotak had moved into the space two weeks earlier to interact with visitors. Previously, Kotak had "re-enacted," as her "art," both her own birth and the loss of her virginity in the back seat of a car. (A New York Times report suggested that Kotak may not be the most extreme performer in her family. Her artist-husband, Jason Martin, makes videos in which he dresses as a wolf or dog and "conducts seance-like rituals intended to contact the half-animal, half-human creatures that visited him in dreams as a child.")

Police Report

-- Cutting-Edge Policing: Officials in Prince George's County, Md., reported that crime had fallen as much as 23 percent during the first nine months of 2011 -- the result, they said, of holding meetings with 67 of the most likely recidivist offenders in five neighborhoods and sweet-talking them. The 67 were offered help in applying for various government and volunteer programs, but were told they would be watched more closely by patrols.

-- Milestone: Joseph Wilson, 50, was chased by police and arrested in Port St. Lucie, Fla., in October and

charged with shoplifting from a Beall's department store. It was his 100th arrest -- although prosecutors are battling only .353 against him (35-for-99). (Wilson's getaway was delayed when he jumped into the passenger seat of an idling SUV and ordered the driver to "Take off!" but the driver did not.)

-- Points for Style: (1) Police in Corpus Christi, Texas, looked to the public for help in October to find the man who, according to surveillance video of a city agency building, stole three surveillance cameras (not the recording units, just the cameras) by lassoing them from their perches near the ceiling. (2) Theresa Mejia, held in the Burlington, Wash., police station on kidnapping charges, climbed through a ceiling vent in a dramatic escape attempt, traversing the entire length of the building before officers knew where she was. (However, that put her directly over the police chief's office, and she crashed through to the floor.)

The Aristocrats!

(1) Owen Kato, 23, was arrested following a police report in Port Charlotte, Fla., of a man grossing out customers by standing beside the entrance to a McDonald's for about 10 minutes, popping his pimples with his fingers. (2) A man unnamed in a news story was charged on July 24 with resisting arrest (for trespassing) by failing to put his hands behind his back. According to the Destin, Fla., police report, the man explained, "I can't put my hands behind my back because I'm making a bowel movement (in my pants)." (According to the report, that was true.)

Least Competent Criminals

Brent Morgan, 20, was arrested in Prince George, British Columbia, in October on three counts related to the attempted theft of a Corvette. Morgan had seen the car in a driveway, jumped in and locked the doors. However, the owner had been in the process of charging the battery, which was still too weak for the car to start and for the door locks to continue working. Feeling trapped and sensing that the owner had called the police, Morgan panicked and began using any available tool inside the car to smash the window. According to the police report, officers arrived just as Morgan had broken open the driver's side window, but too late for Morgan to realize that he could have exited the car by manually lifting the door lock with his fingers.

Recent Alarming Headlines

"Maine Woman Loses Lawsuit Over Removal of Husband's Brain." "Condoms Rushed to Thai Flood Victims." "Killer Sharks Invade Golf Course in Australia." "Lingerie Football League Wants to Start a Youth League." "Man Uncooperative After Being Stabbed in Scrotum With Hypodermic Needle."

A News of the Weird Classic (May 1991)

Wanda Webb Holloway, 36, was arrested in January (1991) for putting out a murder contract on a Channelview, Texas, woman. Holloway thought killing the mother of her 13-year-old daughter's arch rival would cause the rival to quit the junior high cheerleader squad in grief, making way for the Holloway girl's selection. Reportedly, Holloway imagined the other girl's death, too, but realized that she could only afford one contract. (Holloway's story spawned two TV movies.

She was convicted of soliciting murder, but the verdict was overturned, and she eventually pleaded guilty in exchange for a 10-year sentence, of which she served six months.)

Family Values

-- *Too Soon? An 11-year-old California boy and a 7-year-old Georgia girl have recently decided -- with parental support -- to come out as the other gender. The boy, Tommy, wants more time to think about it, said his lesbian parents, and has begun taking hormone blockers to make his transition easier should he follow through with plans (first disclosed at age 3) to become "Tammy." The McIntosh County, Ga., girl has been living as a boy for a year, said father Tommy Theollyn, a transgendered man who is actually the one who gave birth. Theollyn petitioned the school board in September (unsuccessfully) to allow the child to use the boys' bathroom. Theollyn said the girl first noticed she was a boy at age 18 months.*

Cutting-Edge Tactics

-- Crime-Fighting: (1) In October, about 120 professional mimes began voluntarily patrolling the traffic-congested Sucre district of Caracas, Venezuela, at the request of Mayor Carlos Ocariz. The white-gloved mimes' specialty was wagging their fingers at scofflaw motorists and pedestrians, and mimes interviewed by the Associated Press reported improvements. (2) At least 300 professional clowns from Mexico and Central America, in Mexico City in October for a convention, demonstrated against the country's drug-cartel violence by laughing, in unison, nonstop, for 15 minutes. (They were likely less successful than the mimes.)

-- Parenting: Freemon Seay, 38, was arrested in Thurston County, Wash., in October on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon after disciplining his 16-year-old daughter for leaving home without his approval. Seay allegedly forced the girl to suit up in armor and helmet, with a wooden sword, and to fight him (also in armor, with a wooden sword) for over two hours until she could no longer stand up. Seay's wife (the girl's stepmother) was booked as an accessory and was said by deputies to have been supportive of her husband's "Renaissance fair" enthusiasm (which Freemon Seay called a "lifestyle").

Bright Ideas

-- In Malone, N.Y., in September, Clyde Gardner, 57, was sentenced to five to 15 years in prison for trying to murder his ex-girlfriend twice. Initially, he was going to dress in a recently skinned bear's hide -- walk on its paws, so as not to leave shoe prints, and "maul" her with the claws. After abandoning that plan, he promised a friend \$15,000 to kill the woman in a car crash, and since Gardner was a demolition derby driver, he offered expert instructions (though the friend turned Gardner in).

Armed and Clumsy (All-New!)

-- People Who Shot Themselves Recently: Two men -- a 23-year-old in Fayetteville, N.C. (June), and a 22-year-old in Seminole, Fla. (October), accidentally shot themselves in the head while trying to assure friends that their guns posed no danger. A firearms instructor shot himself in the thigh during his recertification class at the Smith & Wesson facility in Springfield, Mass. (September).



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OLD NEWS REPRINTS: *Archbishop Defies King*

Reprinted from *Old News Archbishop Defies King* by Matthew Surridge

In 1155 Thomas Becket, the thirty-seven-year-old archdeacon of Canterbury, was named chancellor to the King of England by the newly crowned Henry II. The appointment was a considerable promotion, but Becket knew that there were potential political conflicts associated with the post.

Becket was a clever, energetic, and amiable young man who had been born to a merchant family in London. In his twenties he had found his way into the service of Theobald of Bec, the archbishop of Canterbury. It was Theobald who had named Becket archdeacon, and urged Henry to select him as chancellor, the highest ecclesiastical member of the king's court—effectively the royal chaplain—even though Becket had not been formally ordained as a priest. Becket's main responsibility as chancellor was to deal with the financial and legal chores, including the issuing of governmental payments and receipts.

As he learned the ways of the court, Becket soon became the king's best friend. At the same time, Theobald seems to have been satisfied that Becket was a good influence on the king. Worldly-wise and a capable administrator, Becket deftly balanced the interests of both Henry and Theobald for several years.

In 1161 Theobald died after a long period of infirmity. Henry told Becket he intended to have him serve as both chancellor and as the new archbishop. Becket realized that Henry hoped to use their friendship to assert rights over church policies that Henry regarded as traditional powers of the throne. Specifically, Henry resented the fact that churchmen charged with a crime could only be tried in an ecclesiastical court, not a lay court. Becket suspected that Henry would try to assert the crown's right to bring ecclesiastical criminals to trial; if so, Henry would expect Becket as archbishop to agree with him. Becket, though, believed

that as archbishop it would be his responsibility to maintain the church's powers to the best of his ability. He felt that attempting to serve both king and church as archbishop would be a challenge much greater than any he had faced in his role of chancellor. Becket, therefore, attempted to decline the honor.

But then a messenger from Pope Alexander III urged Becket to take the position. The pope was an ally of Henry, and seems to have believed that Becket would be an effective agent of both king and church, helping to keep both institutions in harmony. In the face of this urging, Becket agreed to take the archbishopric.

Many of the English bishops expressed reservations about the installation of Becket as archbishop, arguing that the position was traditionally given to a monk. The bishops felt that a man who had spent much of his life at court was too secular in his orientation to be archbishop. Henry's insistence overcame their opposition. Becket was formally elected archbishop by a council of English churchmen and barons late in May, and established on June 3. He immediately resigned his position of chancellor, believing he needed to do so in order to be fully free to act as archbishop.

The resignation surprised and angered Henry, but Becket felt strongly that the action was necessary. As chancellor, he had led a lifestyle that often involved lavish feasting and other displays of wealth; as archbishop, he had to adopt a different way of living. Becket was relieved to find that despite Henry's initial reaction, Becket's decision did not immediately sour the friendship between the two men.

Then in the summer of 1163, Henry attempted to intervene in the case of a canon who had committed a murder and had been punished by an ecclesiastical court. Henry wanted to reopen the affair, and impose harsher penalties. Becket perceived this as an attempt to strengthen royal authority at the church's expense. As Becket had feared, Henry wanted to prosecute felonious churchmen in an effort to establish the primacy of secular law over church law. Becket was determined to prevent this.

In October of 1163, Becket attended a council in London held by Henry with all his bishops and several dozen barons. At the council, Henry argued that secular courts should have jurisdiction over ecclesiastical criminals. Henry argued that most ecclesiastical punishments, such as being forced into a monastery, were too lenient, while the punishment of exile was something that only the king's courts could rightfully decree.

Becket could not allow Henry's action to go unopposed, even at the cost of angering the king. He launched a detailed rebuttal of the royal proposal. Henry interrupted him. He demanded to know

whether Becket and his bishops would observe what Henry called "royal customs," meaning the royal right to try and punish criminal priests. Becket believed that the supposed customs had no historical basis,



and believed also that to surrender the church's right to try churchmen would set a precedent of handing the church's authority over to the crown.

Becket, along with the other bishops, told the king that

they would support royal customs to the extent that they felt was lawful for churchmen to do so—meaning that they held that canon law superseded the king's claims. Henry was not satisfied, and told Becket he would accept only a simple and unconditional "yes." The king then left the meeting.

The next morning, Becket was summoned to meet Henry. Henry ordered Becket to give up control of certain estates that he had controlled as royal chancellor, and that Henry had allowed him to continue to oversee even after his resignation. Henry then left the city, ending the council. The brief meeting had been a stinging public rebuke for the archbishop. Becket understood that Henry's anger was personal; he felt that Becket had betrayed him. Becket himself was hurt by Henry's public anger but also strongly believed in the rightness of his own actions.

Not long after this confrontation, messengers from Pope Alexander III came to Becket. The pope, who was at that time in Sens, France, had learned of the quarrel. The pope urged moderation; he felt that the king had been so intransigent only to maintain his standing before the barons at the council. Alexander believed that if Becket acceded to Henry's demands to recognize royal customs, the king would not take undue advantage in defining those customs. Becket reluctantly followed the pope's suggestions. He went to speak to Henry at Oxford, where the king was staying. Becket told Henry he would accept the customs Henry had insisted on. Becket was annoyed to find this was not enough for Henry.

The king organized a second council in January of 1164 at a hunting lodge called Clarendon, near Salisbury. Henry forced Becket to state publicly that he would accept the royal customs that Henry would put forward. The king then presented a written list of sixteen customs in the form of a document called the Constitutions of Clarendon.

As had been previously conceded, some of the articles gave the king jurisdiction over criminal priests. In addition, the clergy, including the bishops and archbishops, would be forbidden to leave the country without the king's permission, and they would not be able to excommunicate anyone without the king's agreement. The king would take all revenues from the lands of any cathedral that lacked a bishop or archbishop, and he would control the entire process of nominating and installing a new bishop. In theory, the king could then allow a bishop's seat to remain vacant in order to collect the revenues from the land.

Upon seeing the Constitutions of Clarendon, Becket realized that the

pope had been wrong in his assessment of the king's character and aims. Henry's victory in London over the issue of trying criminal priests had simply emboldened him. Not only did Becket feel it wrong to agree to the constitutions, but he also realized that Henry would likely demand more powers in future. Since Henry had made him agree to the royal customs in the Constitutions before seeing them, though, he could not explicitly reject them. He accepted his copy of the documents but did not sign them.

A dejected Becket wrote to the pope begging forgiveness for what Becket saw as his sin of disloyalty. Exactly what he had feared had come to pass, and he believed that he had failed at both his tasks, alienating the king while also allowing him to take over powers that belonged to the church.

Alexander seems to have forgiven Becket. The pope agreed with Becket that the Constitutions of Clarendon were unacceptable, but he still hoped to keep Henry as an ally, so he did not explicitly reject the new laws, either.

Becket attempted to travel to France to speak directly to the pope, but he was stopped at the coast. Henry was determined to enforce the Constitutions, with or without his archbishop's agreement. Becket again went to speak to the king in person but was dismissed by Henry with the sardonic question: "Do you find my kingdom not big enough for both of us?"

The king seemed determined to coerce Becket into signing the Constitutions of Clarendon. In mid-1164 a baron brought a legal case against Becket over the control of land that was part of the archbishopric. When Becket was unable to appear at the court due to illness, a royal council found him guilty of disobedience and of contempt of the summons. He was fined heavily, but Henry, not content with this, demanded a payment of a past loan and a complete accounting of revenues for all vacant sees and abbeys Becket had controlled as chancellor. Becket could not possibly make these payments; they would bankrupt him.

While Becket was appearing before the royal council in October, a group of bishops heard credible rumors that Henry intended to charge their archbishop with treason. Some of the bishops were alarmed by this escalation of the conflict between church and state, and they blamed it on the personal animosity between Henry and Becket. They visited Becket in his lodgings to urge him to resign.

Becket had decided that he would yield no further. He deeply regretted his initial agreement to Henry's demands, and he had decided to fight back. He castigated the bishops for their disloyalty and faint-hearted council, and told them he would confront Henry. If he was harmed, he ordered them to excommunicate whoever committed the violence.

Becket said mass, then, still wearing his stole, went to face Henry at his castle in Northampton. Becket found that the bishops had preceded him. He was not allowed into the court but kept in an entry room. A peculiar debate developed, with Becket in one room, and the king, who refused to see the archbishop, in another, along with his barons and some bishops. Messengers went back and forth between the two rooms.

Eventually, some of the bishops decided to broker their own deal with the king. They agreed that if Henry convicted Becket of treason, and they did not have to pass sentence, they would appeal

SEE "OLD" PAGE 10.

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Old News

from page 9.

to the pope, saying that the archbishop had forced them to be disloyal to Henry; they would then ask the pope to depose Becket. The king agreed. He had his barons conduct a "trial" of Becket, resulting in the archbishop's conviction for treason.

When a deputation of barons came to Becket's room to deliver the sentence, the haughty and enraged Becket forbade them to do so, claiming that as laymen they had no right to judge an archbishop. He then stood, and went to leave. The barons reacted angrily, shouting, "Traitor!" and throwing whatever came to hand at Becket. Becket and the bishops who were allied with him broke out of the castle. The barons were still somewhat cowed by the sacredness of Becket's office, and it appeared that Henry had decided that open violence against the archbishop was a step too far.

Becket decided to leave the country. He believed that by continuing to reject Henry's claims from foreign soil, he would be more effective than if he continued in England under Henry's power. He fled that night at midnight, in disguise. After some difficulties, he left England on November 2 and landed in Flanders later that day.

Becket was received with open arms at a French abbey. King Louis of France guaranteed him financial help and sanctuary. Meanwhile, ambassadors from Henry and allies of Becket were both making their cases to the pope. Becket went to Sens to speak to Alexander. Ultimately, the pope confirmed Becket in his position.

For six years Becket remained in exile in France. He wrote letters to Henry, and commanded the excommunication of the traitorous bishops. As he had no real power in England, the excommunications were mere formalities, even though some were also pronounced by the pope. Attempts by agents of the pope to effect a reconciliation were fruitless, and in 1169 Henry passed several decrees

forbidding the importation of papal letters into England.

In 1170 reports reached Becket that Henry was preparing to crown his son, Young Henry, heir apparent. This form of coronation rite was frequently practiced in medieval Europe. Although Young Henry would have no greater political power, the line of succession to the English throne would be clearly established.

Such a ceremony would traditionally have been performed by the archbishop of Canterbury. Instead, Henry would have his ally, the archbishop of York, perform the ritual. The pope was outraged at Henry's usurpation of a church prerogative. He refused to sanction the coronation unless it was performed by the proper official—Thomas Becket. He threatened to put England under an interdict unless Henry allowed Becket to return in safety and resume his office. Under an interdict, no one in England could be married, baptized or buried by the church. The pope's ultimatum was smuggled into England but reached the English church officials too late to prevent the coronation.

Although the coronation went ahead on June 14, Henry, realizing the furor his action had caused, agreed to the pope's terms and promised to allow Becket to return to Canterbury. Becket met his old friend in France on July 22. Henry promised to change his ways. The issues of the Constitutions of Clarendon, and of the restitution of Becket's property, were to be officially settled later. For the moment, Henry's repentance seemed genuine, but Becket remained in France until he was sure of it.

However, as the months passed, Becket found reason to doubt Henry's good faith. Henry promised in writing to accept peace with Becket, but added "sav-

ing the honour of my kingdom." Henry still surrounded himself with churchmen who had supported Henry's side during the long conflict, even though the pope had officially excommunicated them. And agents Becket sent to England reported that the return of the archbishop's property had been officially postponed. Nevertheless, Becket, believing his closeness to the pope would protect him, left France in November of 1170 to resume his duties in England. He reached Canterbury on December 2.

Becket found, as had been reported, that many of the lands that were his by right as archbishop were still occupied by Henry's men. Also, Henry continued to try the clergy in secular courts, and still seemed to consider the Constitutions as being in full effect. The people of England, on the other hand, were overjoyed by Becket's return. New taxes imposed by Henry, as well as his general interest in increasing the power of the throne, had made him unpopular; Becket was viewed as a champion of the people against the king.

Appeals soon came from the excommunicated bishops and their allies, asking that their sentences be lifted. Becket refused, claiming that only the pope, who had pronounced these sentences, could revoke them. Orders from the king then came to Becket at Canterbury preventing him from traveling within England. Nevertheless, Becket arranged to have his grievances—both his case for the return of church lands, and his complaints against the Constitutions of Clarendon—put before Young Henry, who was then ruling in London while his father journeyed in his French territories. Becket expected that Henry would take action, possibly violent action, against him but felt that it was his duty to protest against what he perceived as injustice.

It appears, in fact, that Henry made plans on Christmas Eve to send an armed force to Canterbury to take Becket prisoner, while dispatching other men to watch the coast in case Becket tried to flee. But while preparing these plans, he unleashed a tirade against Becket. Reports of his outburst varied; one account claims he said, "What a set of idle cowards I keep in my kingdom, who allow me to be mocked so shamefully by a low-born clerk?" Another account states that he simply demanded rhetorically, "Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?" In any event, four knights decided among themselves to take action against Becket.

On December 29, at 3 p.m., Becket was working in his inner rooms at Canterbury with a number of monks and clerks when his seneschal brought the four knights to his chambers. The men sat without speaking to Becket, who eventually greeted all of them. One of them, Reginald FitzUrse, answered: "God help you," at which Becket flushed with anger.

Becket and the knights then had a heated argument, in which the knights demanded that Becket lift the excommunications on the king's allies and warned him that the king was losing patience with him. Becket refused to yield. He said: "I did not return to flee again. Anyone who wants me can find me here . . . I will strike anyone who violates the right of the Roman see or the church of Christ."

The knights began shouting and threatening Becket, who refused to back down. "Have you come to kill me?" he asked. "I commit myself and my cause to the Jude of all men. Your swords are less ready to strike than is my spirit for martyrdom." The knights turned to Becket's clerks, commanding them to abandon the archbishop if they were loyal servants of the king. No one moved, and the knights went to fetch their followers.

Becket at first refused to move from his rooms, but when the monks

SEE "OLD" PAGE 11.

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DEC. 7: Lemon Chicken, Baked Sweet Potato, Winter Mixed Vegetables, Garden Salad/Italian, Cottage Cheese, Peaches.

DEC. 8: Porcupine Meatballs, Mixed Vegetables, Brussel Sprouts, Biscuit, Fresh Pear.

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Coulter

from page 3.

how to run against a Republican who isn't a tongue-tied marble-mouth.

As we've known for years, his negatives are: Romneycare and Mormonism.

We look forward with cheery anticipation to an explosion of news stories on some of the stranger aspects of Mormonism. The articles have already been written, but they're not scheduled for release until the day Romney wraps up the nomination.

Inasmuch as the Democrats' only argument for the big-eared beanpole who's nearly wrecked the country is that you must be a racist if you oppose Obama, one assumes a lot of attention will be lavished on the Mormon Church's historical position on blacks. Church founder Joseph Smith said blacks had the curse of Cain on them and banned blacks from the priesthood, a directive that was not revoked until 1978.

There's no evidence that this was a policy fiercely pushed by Mitt Romney. To the contrary, when his fa-

ther, George Romney, was governor of Michigan, he was the most pro-civil rights elected official in the entire country, far ahead of any Democrat.

No one is worried Romney will double-cross us on repealing Obamacare. We worry that Romneycare will make it harder for him to get elected.

But, again, Romney is the articulate Republican. He's already explained how mandating health insurance in one particular wealthy, liberal Northeastern state is different from inflicting it on the entire country. Our Constitution establishes a federalist system that allows experimentation with different ideas in the individual states.

As governor, Romney didn't have the ability to change federal laws requiring hospital emergency rooms to treat every illegal alien, drug dealer and vagrant who walked in the door, then sending the bill to taxpayers. (Although David Axelrod, Michelle Obama, Eric Whitaker and Valerie Jarrett did figure out a way to throw poor blacks out of the University of Chicago Medical

Center.)

The Heritage Foundation, a leading conservative think tank, supported Romneycare at the time. The biggest warning sign should have been that Gingrich supported it, too.

Most important, Romney has said -- forcefully and repeatedly -- that his first day in office he will issue a 50-state waiver from Obamacare and will then seek a formal repeal.

Romney is not going to get to the White House and announce, "The first thing I'm going to do is implement that fantastic national health care plan signed by my pal, Barack!"

Unlike all other major legislation in the nation's history, Obamacare was narrowly passed along partisan lines by an aberrationally large one-party majority in Congress. (Thanks, McCain supporters!) Not one single Republican in Congress voted for it, not even John McCain.

Obamacare is going to be repealed -- provided only that a Republican wins the next presidential election.

If a Republican does not win,

however, it will never be repealed. Recall that, in order to boast about the amazing revenue savings under Obamacare, Democrats had to configure the bill so that the taxes to pay for it start right away, but the goodies don't kick in until 2014.

Once people are thrown off their insurance plans and are forced to depend on the government for "free" health care, Obamacare is here to stay. (And Newt Gingrich will be calling plans to tinker with it "right-wing social engineering.")

Instead of sitting on our thumbs, wishing Ronald Reagan were around, or chasing the latest mechanical rabbit flashed by the media, conservatives ought to start rallying around Romney as the only Republican who has a shot at beating Obama. We'll attack him when he's president.

It's fun to be a purist, but let's put that on hold until Obama and his abominable health care plan are gone, please.

OLD NEWS

from page 10.

urged him to at least go into Canterbury Cathedral to say vespers, he agreed. They had to take a roundabout route to avoid the knights, who could be heard breaking their way into the church.

When monks tried to bar the doors within the cathedral, Becket insisted that they leave the doors open, saying: "The church of God is not to be made into a fortress."

The knights burst into the

church, with drawn swords in hand, and confronted Becket before a pillar, near an altar. The knights again demanded a repeal of the excommunications. "I have told you I will not change my mind," Becket said.

The knights then rushed him, and tried to take him prisoner.

Becket resisted, and the knights attacked with their blades. Becket took a deep cut in his head, and collapsed to his knees, saying: "I accept death for

the name of Jesus and his church." The knights then struck Becket again with their swords, killing him with another blow to the head. Before leaving the cathedral, the knights broke into Becket's lodgings, and stole his valuables.

Reports of the archbishop's murder spread rapidly, horrifying people throughout Europe. The image of the archbishop cut down in his own church, right by his altar, had a powerful resonance for the devout people of medieval Europe. Legends soon began to spread about healing miracles worked by relics of Thomas Becket.

Henry was shocked by the death of a man who had once been a close friend—he had not meant his frustrated exclamation to be taken as an order. Now he feared that he himself would be excommunicated. He clad himself in sackcloth and ashes, and fasted. Henry refused all responsibility for the killing but still insisted in letters to the pope that Becket had been engaged in sedition. King Louis of France, on the other hand, wrote to the pope demanding justice.

The four knights were excommunicated; when they appealed to the pope, he sentenced them to go on a crusade for fourteen years. In 1172 Henry agreed to meet envoys of the pope, and swore that he would restore to the see of Canterbury all its lands and revenues, allow appeals to Rome, and effectively renounce the

controversial articles in the Constitutions of Clarendon. He did not explicitly renounce the document but agreed to allow the church and its officers their old freedoms.

In 1173 Thomas Becket was canonized. In 1174 Henry did public penance and a night's vigil at Canterbury Cathedral, and was scourged by the community of monks there. By dying, Becket had succeeded in winning his dispute with the king.

Over the following years, Canterbury became one of Europe's most popular sites for pilgrimages. Many retellings of Becket's dramatic martyrdom have been written, including plays by Jean Anouilh and T. S. Eliot. Thomas Becket continues to be revered as a saint in both the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

SOURCES
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Knowles, David. Thomas Becket. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1970.

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Romney

from page 5.

maybe I'm a Republican."

The basic setup is:

Step 1: Spend 30 years telling blacks that Republicans are racist and viciously attacking all black Republicans.

Step 2: Laugh maliciously at Republicans for not having more blacks in their party.

It is beyond insane that Herman Cain would have considered running for president if he had the tiniest skeleton in his closet. To be an out-of-the-closet black Republican, you had better

be a combination rocket scientist/Baptist preacher. Which, as it happens, Cain is.

Meanwhile, MSNBC is cutting into its prime-time programming to announce updates in the fact-free hit on Cain. That's not because anyone there thinks he'll be the nominee. Everyone knows it's going to be Mitt Romney.

But liberals are determined to make sure that, six months from now, everyone has forgotten Herman Cain so they can go back to claiming Republicans oppose Obama because they hate blacks.

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The Pueblo VITA Coalition (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) is looking for volunteers to become IRS-certified tax preparers for the upcoming tax season. Training will be on January 7, 2012 in Pueblo and is free of charge.

Certified tax preparers will volunteer in one of five tax sites throughout Pueblo preparing taxes for low income residents (\$50,000 total annual income or below) during the tax season which opens February 1 and runs through April 13. Those interested should be computer literate, detail oriented and have minimal experience with income tax forms, both state and federal.

This year the VITA program is funded through Pueblo County United Way. This will be the fifth year this service will be available in Pueblo. Last year we served 800 families and individuals in Pueblo bringing \$900K back into the community through refunds which include many tax credits and eliminates the cost of a private tax preparer. Call 296-8768 in Pueblo for more information.

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED - VOLUNTEER TO DELIVER HOLIDAY BASKETS

The Senior Answers and Services Division of the Colorado Gerontological Society is extending an invitation to individuals and families to assemble Holiday Baskets on December 15 and 16, 2011 from 7 pm to 9 pm at 1st Baptist Church, 1375 Grant, Denver. Drivers are needed to deliver baskets throughout the Metro Denver area on December 17 at 9:30 am. Food donations are also being accepted. To volunteer or donate food, please call 303-333-3482. Families are welcome.

WANTED: VOLUNTEER OMBUDSMEN

Share your time, talents and caring hearts with the elderly residents of Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities. This is a great opportunity for individuals who love and want to work with some of the most vulnerable members of our society. In this capacity, you would advocate for these residents and, when necessary, investi-

gate and document violations of nursing home care standards. If interested, please call Rebecca Ann Espinoza, Lead LTC Ombudsman at 583-6123 for all the info.

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

"The Southeastern Colorado Genealogy Society holds regular meetings on the second Saturday of the month beginning at 2:00pm in the Meeting Room "B," Robert Hoag Rawlings Library, 100 Abriendo Ave., Pueblo. There is a continuing Refresher/Beginners class starting at 1:00PM. Call 250-5782 for details." Guests welcome and there is no charge.

PUEBLO SQUARE DANCE LESSONS

Ten-week sessions every Tuesday night from 7-9pm. Great fun! Great exercise! Meet other square dancers. The lessons will be at the Washington Children's Center gym, rear entrance, at Thatcher and Prairie. Call 647-8894 or 489-3478 for further info.

STROKE SURVIVORS SUPPORT GROUP

The Stroke Survivors Support Group has two chapters. The Pueblo West Chapter meets at 2:00 pm the first Thursday of every month at the Pueblo West Library. The Pueblo Chapter meets at 2:00 pm the second Tuesday of each month at the Joseph Edwards Senior Center in Pueblo On Union Ave.

Call Chuck at 583-8498 for all the information.

LOU GEHRIG'S DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

Support group for Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS). Second Thursday each month, 6-7 PM. Thatcher Bldg. 503 N. Main, Suite 103, Pueblo, CO. Call Peggie at 719-584-3068 for all the info.

OWLS MEETING

The OWLS (older-wiser-livelier-seniors) invites new members for their social group that has activities including dining out, bowling, movies, picnics and others. For more information please call Joe or Marie @ 545-2803

RIDE TO CHURCH?

Looking for a ride to church? Call Wesley United Methodist Church at 561-8746 and we can make arrangements to transport you to worship and fellowship."

SRDA CALENDAR

SRDA at 545-8900 has activities for seniors every weekday of the month. From quilting to bridge and from computer classes to movies with popcorn and exercise classes, SRDA tries to offer something for everyone in terms of activities throughout the month.

LIVING WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS?

Osteoarthritis does not only strike the knees, hips and hands. In an estimated one million Americans, it also affects the small, vulnerable joints of the neck, and can cause sudden attacks of severe pain that may radiate into the head and arms.

How can they ease the pain, deal with the limitations it causes, and support their doctor's treatment? With the help of some of the world's leading spine specialists, the American Arthritis Society has compiled twelve practical tips for self-care that are effective and easy to follow. Please visit the Society's website at: www.americanarthritis.org.

AARP SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Pueblo Information Center AARP PHONE: (719) 543-8876, 1117 Prairie Avenue. HOURS: Mon-Sat 10-3pm Pueblo, Colorado 81005

Safe Driving Classes, Benefits Check-up, exercising, Tai-Chi, eating right, Census Bureau testing, Model T care group, Convergys recruiting, classic cars, Food Share America, Better Breathers, preparing taxes, quilters group, medicare and financial planning assistance and more available this month.

TOASTMASTERS

What: Pueblo Toastmasters #179 Public Speaking Class

Where: 310 East Abriendo Ave. Next to the Dept. of Revenue/Driver's License Office (in the Conference Room on the 2nd floor of the Security Service Federal Credit Union's building)

When: 2nd & 4th Mon., of every month, 6:15 - 7:15PM

Contact: Robert W. Johnson, 719-251-8841

STEP-UP PROGRAM

Please call Desi Vial who is the Development Director of Pueblo StepUp at Centura Health, 719-557-3881 Phone 719-557-3880 Fax 1925 E. Orman Ave., Ste G-52 Pueblo, CO 81004 desdavia@centura.org www.centura.org for all the info as to where the programs will be held this month. Also, contact: Cindy at 719-545-1184 for their entire schedule. Get Moving with Pueblo StepUp Community Exercise Programs: Please call Emily Johnson @ 557-3879 for questions about any of Pueblo StepUp's Health & Fitness Programs

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT

The second Tuesday of each

month at 7 pm at the Ecumenical Church located at 434 S. Conquistador Room C an Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group will meet Call 544-5720. Tom Reyes, Facilitator.

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVES

Please call Julie Scott at (800) 365-0006, press 0. ext. 2873 julie_scott@bonfils.org for Pueblo and Pueblo West Community Blood Drives times and places for January 2010.

JOB SEEKERS

Southern Colorado Job Seekers meets the third Tuesday of each month. Contact Bill Smith, 719-583-1837, Patrick Hurley 719-561-1134 or email them at SCJSNETWORK@hotmail.com

HOW DO YOU FEEL?

Come and join us for C.H.A.N.G.E. Canceling Habits Affirming New Goals Easily at 1:00 P.M. on the 3rd Saturday every month at the Rawlings Library 100 E. Abriendo Ave. Pueblo, Colorado. For more information please contact: Ramona Lombard (719) 583-2732 ramonalombard@me.com Ramona Lombard.com

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Please join us for our monthly potluck luncheon, 11:45 to 1:45, at the PW Memorial Recreational Center. Plan your covered dish or dessert to share. Please bring your own table service as well. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Directions to the center; two signs on Joe Martinez Blvd. will alert you to Byrd Street. Turn south on Byrd and east to 230 E George Dr, Pueblo West.

For information call 647-8969 or 404-4413 (membership committee).

ADULT SURVIVORS OF

CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

WINGS provides therapist facilitated support groups for men and women in which survivors are believed, accepted and no longer alone. There is a women's group on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. For more information contact the WINGS office at 1-800-373-8671. Visit our website at www.wingsfound.org.

COMMUNITY EVENTS CHAT

Thursday December 1st 10am-11am @ Thurston Room in the Rawlings Library (free coffee and cookies). Our topic is Medicare but we can talk about anything.

NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

Michael Jacobs, ND, announces the opening of his Independent Naturopathic Medicine Practice in Pueblo, Colorado at: Alternative Touch, LLC., 111 W. Evans Ave. - Pueblo, CO 81004. 719-543-3031 Cell: 719-320-1578

Dr. Jacobs brings 39 years of experience in health care services. He holds the Doctorate of Naturopathic Medicine Degree; a Master's of Science Degree in Sports Medicine & Higher Education; and Bachelor of Science Degrees in Biological Sciences & Physical Therapy.

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Finances: Create And Keep Wealth

Ten Biggest Investor Mistakes: Part 2

by Ron Phillips

Thank you very much for returning for part two of this article. Here is the next set of common investor mistakes to avoid.

6. Setting Aside Too Little for Retirement

Depending on your age, desired retirement income, risk tolerance and many other factors, you should have a clear idea of the number of dollars you need to set aside to reach your goals. Talk with a trustworthy advisor to come up with an adequate amount that accounts for different scenarios, like flat or down markets. When you reach your goals, you should make sure you are invested in the right asset mix to maintain your income.

7. Investing Only in One Asset Class or

Country

We all have our favorite investments. For some, it might be real estate or small stocks or international bonds, although we should not be limited to only one investment. This happened disastrously in the late 1990s when most people were mainly in large growth companies. Then what happened? For three years straight, most suffered declines. Many people lost half or more of their principal! Further back, in the 1980s, a lot of investors were over-weighted in real estate. What resulted? Interest rates went "to the sky", many real estate fortunes were lost and many bankruptcies were declared. It is vitally important to fully diversify into multiple asset classes.

8. Paying Too Much in Taxes on Their

Portfolios

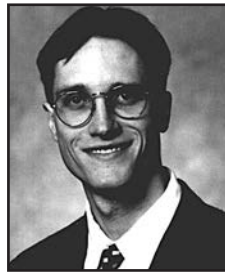
You are efficient in your life and you need to be with your investments, as well. There are many efficient ways to minimize your investment tax bill.

Using tax-deferred and tax-exempt investments whenever possible is one idea. You might use work retirement plans; IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts); business-owner plans like SEP-IRAs, SIMPLE IRAs and "solo" 401Ks; tax-exempt municipal bonds and bond funds; low-cost annuities; low- or no-dividend stocks; tax-efficient mutual funds; and index funds are all tax-smart options.

9. Not Having Enough Life Insurance

If you have no heirs or charities to leave money to then you probably don't need much life insurance. If you have loved ones, seriously consider the right amount of coverage. There are many methods to figure this. The easiest way is to visit a website like SmartMoney.com (look under "tools" then "insurance"). Input your information and coverage is estimated for your situation.

10. Relying on Only One Opinion



If a doctor told you it was necessary to get invasive surgery, you might be inclined to get another opinion. In the same way, if a professional advisor gives you a recommendation, you should consider a second viewpoint. Although not as important as our health, our wealth definitely deserves the thought of more than one advisor. Ask each one you visit with some of the questions mentioned in part one. Compare their answers and get an idea of which person best fits your goals and investment attitude.

"Retirement at sixty-five is ridiculous. When I was sixty-five I still had pimples."

--George Burns

Ron Phillips is an Independent Financial Advisor and a Pueblo, Colorado native.

He and his wife are currently raising their two sons in Pueblo. For a free consultation visit www.RetireIQ.info or leave a message on his prerecorded voicemail at 924-5070. Simply mention Promo Code #1001 when contacting the author.



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Does Santa Have A Rally Bag?

by Gary Neiens

Not unsurprisingly, the stock market remains stuck in a trading range. The indexes reflect this limbo. DJIA (The Dow Jones Industrial Average) began the year at 11,905.67 and at this writing stands at 11,858.73 (November 17, 2011). The news is too bad to allow a strong market advance but many companies are too good to sell off at these prices...or so it seems. So, where do we go from here?

The news (economic and political) remains quite poor. The European economic debt mess (possibly foreshadowing our own) continues. Unemployment remains high in the U.S.. Personal income growth is, and has been, stagnant. The U.S. Financial stocks have sharply underperformed the market (banks down about 24% this year while brokers are down nearly 30% for the year). Housing remains stuck despite a historically low Freddie Mac 30 year loan rate of 3.99%. U.S. economic growth remains anemic with the BEA (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis) this month even revising downward previously reported GDP numbers for 2008 and 2009. The U.S. dollar has managed a decline of 2.6% this year even though it has little competition from the many other

poorly performing currencies...it has still fallen. The news from the second largest world economy, China, is not as hopeful either this year. The Mideast remains riddled with corruption, hate and instability allowing oil to trade at the \$100.00 level again.

It is impossible to give a complete roster of the world's economic and political trouble. This covers only some of the items of concern.

So, with all this economic turmoil what will happen to the stock market? In my opinion, it rallies through the year end. This would be paradoxical and perhaps sounds fanciful. I am guessing the market has discounted the bad news already. Investors and institutions are highly underinvested as fear has governed our investment responses for a long, long time.

Investment managers and investors cannot prosper by getting returns of 1% or less. The market bounced off the technically important 1,100 support level (SPX: Standard & Poor's) by my count 3X since August 2011. With all the down days widely reported the last three months many casual observers would guess the market has been lower. It is not. The SPX stands at this writing above 1,200.

The market may also have no need to worry about the clueless big government economic "help" that has led to few solutions. As I mentioned before, gridlock is good – especially when inept bureaucrats interfere with business. There seems to be little chance of anything new and substantial coming out of big government that may further punish economic activity. This is a positive. The government solutions offered to remedy the FMC and GNMA problems will need a second look, as both need more funding. The General Motors bailout crafted by the bureaucrats has also been falling apart with more money "needed". Elsewhere, I think it might be informative to look at how the year so far has treated a few of Warren Buffet's reported holdings as recorded by the 24/7 Wall Street website. They are:

Costco COST-\$72.75, \$81.72; Exxon Mobil XOM-\$73.72, \$77.69; General Electric GE-\$18.49, \$15.64; Conoco Phillips COP-\$68.77, \$69.41; Coca Cola K O - \$65.88, \$66.57; American Express-AXP, \$43.30, \$46.93; Kraft Foods-KFT-\$31.76,

SEE "NEIENS" PAGE 25.

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BBB: Very Important Odds & Ends For You!

by Katie Carrol

HOLIDAY CARDS

The Better Business Bureau of Southern Colorado's Foundation and Photographer's Edge, a local manufacturer of unique and very high grade greeting cards, have joined forces for the second year in a row to bring our community limited edition, holiday greeting cards assembled by warriors in our area who have been wounded.

It's a win-win situation for everyone.

First, most of these soldiers sustained brain injuries while serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. The repetitive motion of assembling the cards enhances eye-hand dexterity which, in turn, helps to heal the brain. In addition, the wounded warrior receives a fee for each card assembled.

For every card assembled, the Better Business Bureau of Southern Colorado's Foundation will receive 25 cents to be used for its 2012 scholarship program. Last year the program raised more than \$1,500 in scholarship money. Organizers hope to raise more than \$3,000 this year.

There are nine different styles and each card contains a real photo print.

For more information, go to photographersedge.com/bbb or call Douglas or Debbie at Photographer's Edge at 719-528-3988.

THERE IS AN EXCEPTION TO EVERY RULE

Your Better Business Bureau always urges consumers to refrain from providing strangers, even potential employers, with personal information.

This Senior Safety Page is Proudly Sponsored By Four of the finest Assisted Living facilities in the region; North Pointe Gardens, Trinity Life Gardens, Oakshire Garden Assisted Living and Pueblo West Gardens. Matt Coffman and all the employees of these fine facilities welcome you to call them for a tour. See their ad below for details.

However, we have recently learned of a company that is currently hiring in Colorado Springs and requires applicants to provide their social security number when completing its online application. The application appears to be on a secured web page.

IQOR is based in New York City and operates call centers around the world. They are looking for people who live in Colorado Springs to work out of their homes.

Because giving out personal information is so risky, the BBB in New York City has contacted IQOR to encourage them to remove its request for this type of sensitive data.

This situation with IQOR -- both in terms of its request for information, and it being a viable work at home opportunity, -- is an exception to the rule. Your BBB still recommends you take the following precautions to protect yourself against identity theft and from being duped by a misleading employment offer:

- Don't give out personal information unless you are positive the requesting source is legitimate.
- Shred all documents that contain personal information.
- Don't provide potential employers with personal information until you've actually been hired.
- Verify facts about the company by visiting www.bbb.org.

• Find out how you will be paid. Are you considered an employee or an independent contractor?

• Also, when working from home, determine who is responsible for out of pocket expenses.

BEWARE OF TRAVELING DRIVEWAY PAVERS

Your Better Business Bureau has received a report from a local couple that were approached by two men at their home in Pueblo offering to pave their driveway. The couple reportedly told the men they did not want the work done.

When the couple returned to their home the next day after being out, the driveway had been paved. The employees, who said they were with a company called Pro Pave, wanted to be paid \$9,000.

The couple refused to pay for work they had not authorized. However, the homeowners began to receive phone calls from a company called Custom Asphalt stating that they owed the company money.

It should be noted there was no contract -- nothing in writing giving the pavers permission to work on the couple's driveway.

The couple was able to obtain the license plate numbers for the two trucks that were at their home. Both had Colorado plates. One was a white Dodge Ram and the other was a tan/gold Dodge Ram.

The BBB called the number given by the Pueblo pavers for Pro Pave, but it turned out to be a company based out on Lakewood, CO. Furthermore, the owner did not know of any paving work done recently in Pueblo. This may indicate that scammers are falsely using the name and giving out the phone number of a legitimate company. Custom Asphalt could not be reached.

The couple has filed a report with the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office and is reporting the case to the Pueblo district attorney's office.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU?

Come to the Better Business Bureau of Southern Colorado's monthly Benefits 101 class and find out!

The event is open to all companies in southern Colorado. You do not need to be an accredited business to attend. Below are the details for the December workshop:

Date: Thurs., Dec. 15, 2011

Time: 8 - 9 AM - Admission: Free

Location: 25 N. Wahsatch Avenue, cross street is Kiowa - Colorado Springs. Better Business Bureau office.

For accredited businesses who would like to customize their free ShopMyBBB.com web page, we will hold an editing class following the benefits event from 9:15 - 10:15 AM.

To RSVP online, please go to www.blacktie-colorado.com/rsvp and enter event code: Benefits1215 (All one word, not case sensitive.)

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 (719) 924-8624

Home Sweet Home



Birdbaths: Sip And Splash

by Marty Ross

The sky's the limit when you put a birdbath in among the daisies. Clouds race by in the sparkling water at your fingertips, and birds swoop down and make quite a splash.

Birdbaths are not just for bird watchers, but have long appealed to gardeners, who love them for their elegant sculptural forms. Bird-watching gardeners also know that water is one of the most powerful ways to attract birds to the garden.

"The birdbath is the *piece de resistance*," says Greg Butcher, director of bird conservation for the National Audubon Society and an enthusiastic backyard bird watcher. "It's really amazing when you get a warbler taking a bath right outside your window."

Birds need water year round, Butcher says. Winter is not the time to retire the birdbath for the season. In fact, a birdbath heater, or a heated birdbath (they're both available at many garden shops and at bird-supply stores) will help make the winter months fly by.

"You can count on seeing some big, colorful birds," Butcher says. "The robins are out there, and they are found all around the country all winter long now." Cardinals, goldfinches and blue jays will also come to a birdbath through the winter.

Birdbaths are beautiful garden decorations. The classic stone or concrete birdbath on a pedestal is a timeless design appropriate for gardens of any style. Contemporary birdbaths, made of stone or steel, look sharp in stylish walled city gardens. Colorful glazed birdbaths can be a bright spot in a green garden, and they

look cheerful among the flowers in bright cottage gardens, too. Birdbaths on short pedestals are a nice choice for the top of a stone wall, and deck-mounted birdbaths clamp on a rail, saving precious space. You can even find birdbaths that hang on sturdy chains from an iron crook or a tree limb.

Birds really don't care what kind of birdbath you have. They prefer a shallow basin, and they appreciate careful placement near small trees or shrubs they can fly to after they've had their bath or drink. Shrubs should be just far enough away from the birdbath to protect birds from opportunistic cats.

Birdbaths with gently sloping basins will accommodate all birds, Butcher says. Small warblers and finches can wade confidently in the shallow water near the edge, and blue jays and robins can hop into the deeper center of the basin for a vigorous splash.

Dave Netten, owner of All Seasons Wild Bird Stores in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, attaches a heated birdbath to his deck railing in October and leaves it there until late April, after the danger of frost has passed. The thermostat turns the 150-watt heater on when the temperature drops below about 40 degrees. It keeps the water from freezing even when the air temperature falls well below zero -- most heated birdbaths are rated to minus-20 degrees.

"With a birdbath, you end up attracting a lot more bird activity than you do with feeders," Netten says. "If you only provide seeds, you miss out."

Of course, a heated birdbath needs a source of power. A sturdy extension cord approved for outdoor use works

fine, Netten says. In snowy climates, just be sure to run the cord where it will not interfere with shoveling a walk or driveway.

To make the basin even more attractive to birds, add a dripper in the summer months. Drippers sit right in the birdbath or can be clipped to the edge. They're attached to a hose and adjusted with a valve to provide a slow, steady drip that birds can see and hear. Chickadees and bluebirds particularly love drippers, and will perch on the tube to take a little sip of a drip.

Many drippers on the market have a mister attachment, which sends a fine spray into the air around the birdbath. The mist catches in the sun and attracts hummingbirds, which delight in flying in and out of the spray. Heidi McCullough, who works at the Wild Bird Center in Prairie Village, Kan., sometimes attaches a mister to a shrub in her backyard. "You can set it up on a bush or a vine, and the birds love to come and flap on the leaves," she says. McCullough turns on the mister for a half-hour on warm summer days when she plans to be outside, so she can watch the birds play in the spray.

Wherever you place a birdbath, it becomes an important sculptural accent in your garden. Place it as you would a piece of statuary: at the center of a flower bed, at the end of a path or in the lawn near the front porch. Above all, make sure you can see your birdbath from inside the house -- especially in winter, so you can enjoy it as much as the birds do.

BIRDBATH TIPS: COME ON IN, THE WATER'S FINE
-- Birdbaths should be about

an inch and a half deep, says Greg Butcher of the National Audubon Society. If your birdbath is too deep, put in a few flat rocks to give birds something to stand on. "That way, the birds can pick their depth," he says. Don't worry about birds drowning in a deep birdbath. "They can flap those wings and get out of trouble easily," he says.

-- A ground-level birdbath is pretty, but a pedestal bath is the safest choice. "It gives birds a little better view of their surroundings," Butcher says.

-- Birds fly off to preen after a bath, so make sure they have a place to perch nearby. Small trees or shrubs within four to eight feet of the birdbath are about right.

-- You can make your own birdbath with a terra-cotta plant saucer. A 14- or 16-inch saucer, placed on a stump or a stone wall, works fine.

-- It's nice to have several birdbaths in the garden. Place one in a sunny spot and another in dappled light.

-- Most birdbaths are sturdy enough to withstand winter weather. To keep water from freezing, install a birdbath heater (available at garden shops and bird-supply shops).

SEE "BIRDBATH" PAGE 17.



A classic pedestal birdbath suits gardens of any style. This is Campania's Juliet birdbath. photo: Campania International

Lymphedema MANAGEMENT

Lymphedema management is a side effect that can begin during or after breast cancer treatment. It involves swelling which may be accompanied by numbness, discomfort and infection. Life Care Center offers lymphedema treatment on an in and out patient basis with complete decongestive therapy.

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There's Nothing Like A Holiday



Cruising To Satisfy Your Cultural Bucket List

by David G. Molyneux-TheTravelMavens.com

Ever since the movie "The Bucket List" starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman as two terminally ill men taking off on a road trip with a wish list of to-dos before they die, travelers have been busy compiling their own "bucket

lists." Satisfying these wish lists – things to see and do before you kick the bucket – has become a major marketing strategy for travel companies and cruise lines. One result is that demand for trips on small cruise ships – ocean-going vessels that can enter exciting tiny ports around

the world – are on the upswing, and new expedition ships, built with hulls to break up ice in Antarctica, are joining the fleet.

Baby boomers are taking to small ship cruising not only on fancy luxury vessels – such as those of Seabourn, Regent Seven Seas and Silversea – but also on expedition ships operated or chartered by such companies as Abercrombie & Kent, Lindblad, Compagnie du Ponant, Orion, Quark, and Hurtigruten.

The newer expedition ships, such as Ponant's Le Boreal, are bridging much of the elegance gap between the roughing-it style of some older expedition vessels and today's demand for modern comfy accommodations with fine food (Le Boreal, for instance, has a seriously French menu). The luxury gap gets even smaller when Abercrombie & Kent charters Le Boreal for four trips to Antarctica this winter, closing the ship's inside cabins to reduce the passenger load from 264 to 199. That way, every cruiser gets an outside view, and group forays into the ice are more manageable and personal.

"Le Boreal is almost too nice for Antarctica," said A&K's U.S. president Scott Wiseman. A&K appeals to travelers who are looking for extra creature comforts as well as the thrill of facing the elements in nature's chill – as passengers pile onto small rubber boats called Zodiacs to get close.

Still, the expedition cruising



Passengers in Zodiacs ride to the shore in Antarctica from Le Boreal. photo Mathieu Gesta, Compagnie du Ponant

crowd is more interested in where they go than how they go, said Gary Blake, a cruise consultant for Global Voyages Group in Bellevue, Wash.

For these travelers, he said, the definition of luxury is less about elegant material surroundings, and more about the freedom to experience what they want.

An expedition cruise is not a typical cruise, said Blake. The ship is a floating hotel to get passengers where they want to go. The important thing is what passengers get to do when the ship stops.

"This is not necessarily a group of cruisers," said Blake. "One year the choice may be a cruise to Antarctica, the next a trek to an eco-lodge in the wilderness." These expedition travelers tend to be older and relatively well heeled. That latter characteristic is important, because cruising on smaller ships costs much more money than a vacation on a big cruise ship – a trip on a new expedition ship runs as much as \$1,000 a day per per-

SEE 'BUCKET' PAGE 25.

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There's Nothing Like A Holiday



In Praise Of The Emerald Isle

(NAPSI)—It's not unusual for people to recommend a vacation destination, but when Queen Elizabeth II and President Barack Obama honored Ireland with their presence, travelers took note.

Visits by these dignitaries helped boost the number of tourists visiting Ireland by 15 percent, according to a recent Reuters article. Both visits took place within a matter of days, with the U.S. president commenting on his distant Irish ancestry and the queen being the first British regent to visit in a century.

Tourists figured these world travelers must know just how much Ireland has to offer.

There is so much to see on the Emerald Isle that many visitors prefer taking a coach tour so they won't miss any of Ireland's wild natural beauty, quaint villages or rich historical legacy.

CIE Tours International will feature three of more than 40 tours in 2012: the seven-day Southern Gems, the eight- or nine-day Irish Gold, and the 12- or 13-day Irish Classic, which

all include a horse-drawn car ride through Killarney's National Park; a traditional Irish evening of song, dance and perhaps a pint of Guinness; as well as breathtaking views from the top of the Cliffs of Moher.

Additionally, the Southern Gems tour includes a visit to the National Stud, where you will see prize-winning racehorses. The Irish Gold includes a dinner at the renowned Killeen House Restaurant in Killarney, and the Irish Classic tour includes a visit to Giant's Causeway, with its astounding 60 million-year-old volcanic formed columns.

Several events on the calendar for 2012 will also draw visitors to Ireland.

- Lovers of nautical history and movie trivia may set a course for the "Remembering the Titanic" event in Belfast.

- Runners may want to participate in The Great Ireland Run, Ireland's fastest-growing 10-km running event,



in Phoenix Park, Dublin.

- Those who appreciate fine stitching may want to attend the first annual International Quilt Festival of Ireland, located in a special Quilter's Village on the banks of the River Corrib.

When deciding on a tour, consider the benefits of all-inclusive travel. Read the fine print to see what is included in the tour price so you don't face daily sales pitches for meals and special events or attractions. CIE Tours' \$550+ Advantage means everything is included, so you will not encounter unexpected costs for "extras."

For more information, visit www.cietours.com/emeraldisle or call (800) 243-8687.

Winter At El Pueblo

from page 1.

hearths, feels the warmth of the fire lit rooms, plays some games of chance, trades with the traders and watches the trappers at work. Along with games and stories, there will be frontier toys that children can play with

In the Galleria there will be demonstrations on yucca weaving and children's activities. Refreshments will be for sale and the gift shop will be having its Holiday Sale.

"Friday Afternoons!"

For children 7 to 12 years of age, these afternoon programs are designed for play, creating and imagining. Instructors will introduce historical and cultural concepts using artifacts, maps, science projects, stories, writing exercises and art projects. The programs are every Friday afternoon in December; from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$1 each Friday. Registration is required by calling 719/583-0453.

"Holiday Splash" The Southern Colorado Watercolor Society Fine Art Exhibit

The Southern Colorado Watercolor Society presents "Holiday Splash" exhibit of fine art in the museum's High Vista Gallery. An array of exquisite watercolors will be presented. The show will continue through December 31, during regular museum hours of Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is free to the art gallery. Artwork is for sale.

For more information call 719/583-0453, or visit elpueblohistorymuseum.org. The museum is located at 301 North Union, Pueblo.

Birdbaths

from page 15.

-- If you live in a cold climate and do not have a heated birdbath, fill your birdbath with warm (not boiling) water every day, or on the weekends when you are home, Butcher suggests. The water will attract birds for an hour or two before it freezes. "Don't worry, the birds will accommodate to your schedule," he says.

SOURCES

-- For more information about backyard bird-watching and birdbaths, check the Audubon Society's "Audubon At Home" website: www.audubon.org/bird/

at_home/index.html and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "All About Birds" site: www.birds.cornell.edu/programs/AllAboutBirds/.

-- All Seasons Wild Bird Store (www.wildbirdstore.com) has five locations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, and ships across the country.

-- Check the Wild Bird Center website (www.wildbird.com) to locate a store or shop online.

-- Campania (www.campaniainternational.com) offers many styles available at garden shops.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Marshall Jay Kaplan

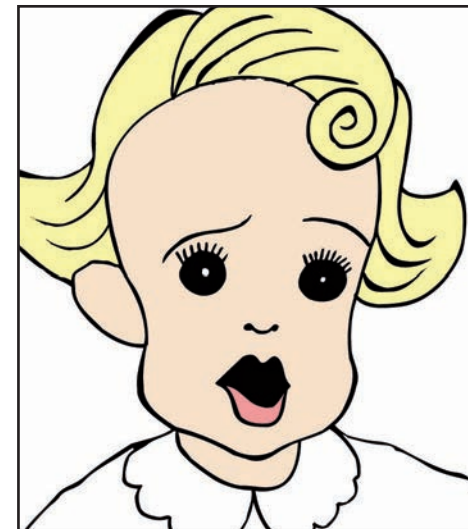
BABY SANDY

The cute child actress who was given her own movie series at the age of three and then retired at the age of five, currently lives a very normal life outside of the glamour of Hollywood.

'Baby Sandy' was born Alexandra Lee Henville in Los Angeles, California on January 14, 1938. In 1939, Alexandra's father, who was a milkman read in the newspaper that Universal Studios was looking for a ten-month old baby to play alongside Bing Crosby in 'East Side of Heaven'. When he delivered the milk to the studio's musical director, Charles Previn (father of Andre), he also dropped off photos of his daughter. One look from studio casting and she was hired! Her expressions and her big, bright doe-like eyes won her the role, yet it was her wonderful and happy temperament on the set that led to Universal signing her at \$50 a week.

Audiences fell in love with the toddler, who the studio renamed, 'Baby Sandy' - a play off of their other previously famous child star (and W.C. Fields' foil), Baby Leroy. Baby Sandy was given the full publicity build up in Life Magazine and Look Magazine, as well as, merchandising of product lines such as diapers, toys, baby food, story books and coloring books.

By 1940, Sandy's popularity was so great her names was used in the film's titles; 'Sandy's a Lady' and 'Sandy Gets Her Man' (both produced in 1940). Her last film, Johnny Dough-



boy (1942) is Sandy's only recollection of her film career. She remembers the line, "I'd rather be in kindergarten."

Baby Sandy retired in 1942. She became a housewife and legal secretary. The twice-married and twice-divorced former child star has two sons and resides in Brevard, North Carolina, living a very, very normal life.

Baby Sandy goes by her birth name, Alexandra, and occasionally sees one of her old movies on television. "I was brat". She recalls that "When I was thirteen or so, I was going to take drama classes and become a big star again. My mother thought that was ridiculous. I suppose she was right."

Luckily for Baby Sandy, all of the money she made from her films, products and endorsements kept her afloat for most of her life.



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Home Sweet Home



Touch Of Glass: Stained Glass Used For 1,000 Years

by Mary G. Pepitone

Even during the winter, many homeowners look out their windows for a splash of color. Humans have used stained glass for 1,000 years in decorative objects and it's still as desirable in 21st-century homes.

Jack Whitworth, past president of the Stained Glass Association of America and owner of Whitworth Stained Glass Studio near San Antonio, Texas, says the medium is timeless because it is natural light in color.

"Stained glass continues to fascinate people," Whitworth says. "Unlike paintings that rely on reflected light, stained glass is a medium that refracts light."

The term "stained glass" originated from the process of applying metal oxides to molten glass, creating the desired color that gives the glass a "stained" appearance. For example, adding iron or copper oxide makes green; selenium or cadmium makes or-

ange and red; and cobalt makes blue.

Stained glass was first introduced to the world in the 11th century, and stained glass windows with leaded assembly (referred to as leaded stained glass) became popular in churches and cathedrals by the 13th century.

In the early 1800s, Louis Comfort Tiffany's creations lit the popularity of stained glass for use in the home. Tiffany created the copper foil technique for stained glass, a procedure which provided the strength and rigidity needed to create his signature lampshades.

In the early 1900s, Frank Lloyd Wright used stained glass in geometrically designed windows. While most stained glass windows use lead came, (the slender channeled stripping that becomes the chief skeletal support in a leaded stained glass construction), Wright also used rigid metal comes to provide strength and straight lines for his designs.

However, Whitworth says

stained glass in the home isn't just limited to windows and nature scenes of flowers and butterflies. "Some leaded stained glass designs are more simplistic with clean lines," he says. "Decorative glass can be worked into any room in a house, including a walk-in closet."

Homeowners might become glassy-eyed when discussing design options, since decorative and stained glass comes in a rainbow of colors and a myriad of different types and textures:

-- Antique Glass

This type of glass is mouth-blown, in the same that way glass was made in medieval times.

-- Cathedral Glass

This is a transparent type of glass that is machine-made single-colored glass.

-- Opalescent Glass

Machine-made, this glass is opaque. Rather than allowing the light rays to pass directly through, opalescent glass spreads them within its surface, giving the effect of being lighted from within.

-- Textured Glass

The appearance of this glass can look rippled, hammered, cracked, fractured or ring-mottled.

Not all leaded glass designs contain stained glass. According to Whitworth, clear glass leaded windows are popular because they complement the decor in nearly any home. Instead of creating visual interest using colors, many homeowners are using clear glass with contrasting textures.

Leaded glass windows, fireplace screens and large decorative objects can create an instant focal point in a room, Whitworth says. Pieces can be designed to complement traditional or contemporary styles with the use of floral, art deco, craftsman or religious patterns.

Depending on the intricacies of a leaded glass piece, Whitworth says homeowners can expect to pay upward of at least \$150 per square foot for a



An entryway door is a first impression and with a beautiful stained glass assembly, it can also be a reflection of the person who lives inside. photo: Whitworth Stained Glass Studio.

quality commissioned piece.

Quality leaded glass pieces should have structural integrity in the finished product with smooth lead joints, a consistency in width of lead lines and leaded joints that line up evenly. The glass should fit tightly between lead lines with no rattling.

When constructed properly, leaded stained glass pieces can be expected to last nearly 100 years. Nowadays, many homes built using stained glass at the turn of the 20th century require restoration. When selecting a studio to do stained glass work, Whitworth says you need to find an artist's style you like, view a studio's other projects and check references.

"Having a large stained glass project designed or restored isn't the time to turn it over a hobbyist," he says. "Professionals know how to build structures into the design so it doesn't fall apart."

Large panels of beautiful architectural art glass windows can also be sandwiched between two pieces of clear, tempered safety glass. This process doesn't require any leading, yet affords homeowners privacy and a stained glass look without the price tag of a leaded design, Whitworth says.

"Most people want to be surrounded by light and beauty," he says. "What makes stained glass unique is that depending on how the sunlight strikes it, the colors are ever-changing through the course of the day and seasons."

Warm/Cozy No Matter The Weather

(NAPSI)—One of the hottest trends in warming homes—and keeping them cozy—is the energy-efficient heat pump.

Heat pumps aren't known for being particularly good at providing heating in cold climates. Older models of heat pumps often require an additional heat source to keep a home warm during the winter. However, the latest heat pump technology offers superior heating performance, especially at lower outdoor temperatures, and is changing the way people think about such systems.

For example, Mitsubishi Electric Cooling & Heating, an industry leader in cooling and heating technology, offers a heat pump option that operates at full heating capacity at temperatures as low as 5 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Mitsubishi Electric Hyper-Heating® systems use a unique technology that enables the heat pumps to provide year-round comfort in extreme climates while being extremely energy-efficient. In many applications, there is no need for resistance electric or other supplemental, energy-consuming devices to provide this level of performance.

The H2i® systems are ENERGY STAR® and tax-credit qualified, and the systems maximize energy savings by making sure only the energy needed to heat an area perfectly is used. The system also features an auto changeover function in which it senses whether a space needs cooling or heating and automatically switches mode as needed to maintain a consistent temperature.

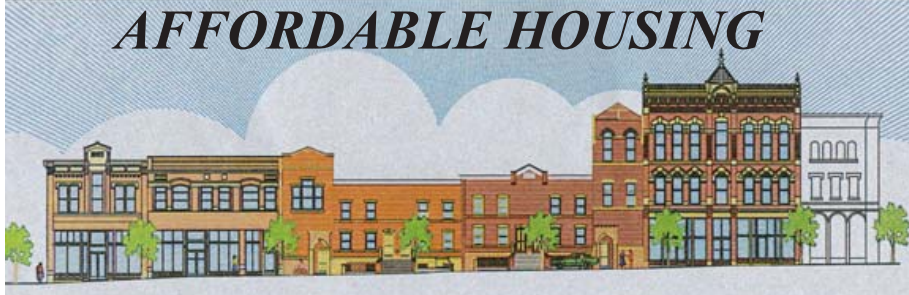
Inside the home, the heat pumps feature quiet operation and an enhanced filter system. A sensor scans the room and makes real-time adjustments based on temperature readings.

These systems don't need ductwork, making them easy to install and providing complete personal comfort control for each room. All Mitsubishi Electric systems use environmentally friendly refrigerant and are made of mostly recyclable parts.

To learn more, you can go to www.MitsubishiComfort.com.



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Home Sweet Home



Easy Home Heating Projects That Save Money

(NAPSI)—Make your home feel warmer without turning up the heat this winter.

The average family spends \$1,400 a year on energy, with nearly half of that on heating and cooling. However, by following some simple steps on home winterizing, and by using energy-efficient heating equipment, homeowners can save as much as 20 percent on annual energy costs.

Before you begin to winterize, you should call in a professionally licensed HVAC contractor to inspect and tune up your heating system. Once that is done, there are several things you can do yourself to prolong the life of the equipment and help ensure proper operation.

- **Oil Heat**—Change fuel filters and service burners if needed. Check fuel tank for water content and fill tank.

- **Forced-Air Systems**—Clean registers and returns, remove grill on returns, vacuum, and reinstall the grill. On older forced-air systems, the entire ductwork should be cleaned every couple

of years. Inspect flue pipe for blockages, leaks and holes and make sure vent cap is in place on roof.

- **Furnaces**—Check fan belts, pilot light, humidifier and media pad if needed. On older furnaces, the pilot light may stay on all the time and you can see it; newer models are usually self-igniting and light only when the furnace is running.

- **Humidifiers or Dehumidifiers**—For freestanding units, change or clean filters. For furnace-mounted humidifiers, check, clean or replace the water media pad, or water level on float-type humidifiers. Check waterline/ waste line for leaks.

- **Hot Water Heaters**—Drain about 10 to 15 gallons from service valve, located at bottom of water tank, to remove sediment. If water has slight rust color at first, this is OK; if after draining more than 10 gallons the water still has a rust color, it's a sign the tank is rusting and that you should consider replacement. On natural gas heaters, inspect

flue pipe to ensure it is secure and has no leaks. Lowering the temperature of water in the water heater to 115° to 120° reduces fuel consumption.

- **An Energy-Efficient Hot Water Circulator**—such as the Bell & Gossett ecocirc®—can save an average family of four more than 12,000 gallons of water and hundreds of dollars in energy costs a year.

- **Thermostat Setting**—68° F is recommended for cold months, 65° F at night. The rule of thumb is that you can save about 3 percent on your heating bill for every degree that you set back your thermostat.

- **New Equipment**—If equipment needs replacement, call a local professional for at least two quotes. Local, state and federal tax credits and rebates can assist in the purchase of an energy-saving product.



- For more information on energy-saving tips and ideas, visit www.energystar.gov, www.eere.energy.gov, www.energysavers.gov and <http://completewatersystems.com>.

National Perspective

from page 3.

At that time, the Democratic Party had such conservatives as Sen. Harry F. Byrd Sr. of Virginia, Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and a series of Southern committee chairmen. The Republicans Party had such liberals as Gov. Earl Warren of California, Rep. Clifford P. Case of New Jersey and Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. of Massachu-

setts.

The political scientists' report echoed scholarly critiques dating back a half century, when important figures like Woodrow Wilson, then a prominent political scientist, and Herbert Croly, an important thinker in the Progressive movement and the co-founder of The New Republic, raised questions about the American party system.

“However one may deplore that system, he must concede that it has displayed, if nothing else, a very impressive ability to survive,” Austin Ranney, then a political scientist at the University of Illinois and later the chairman of the political science department at the University of California at Berkeley, wrote in a contemporary critique of the 1950 report.

One reason the old system survived for so long is that the multiplicity of interests and ideologies inside American parties imposed the sorts of restraints on the majority that Americans liked, much like the checks and balances and separation of powers designed in the Constitution to protect the rights and viewpoints of the minority.

Now we have just the kind of political-party system Roosevelt and the political scientists envisioned. We are living the future, and it does not work.

“When the political scientists were thinking about these things in the 1950s, they were focusing on the good things the ‘more responsible’ party system might bring,” says Larry M. Bartels, the co-director of Vanderbilt University’s Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. “Now that we’re living it, we see a lot of the bad consequences. Now political scientists are wringing their hands about the negative implications of polarization.”

A recent National Journal study showed that every Republican member of the Senate has a voting record to the right of every Democratic member of the Senate, and that only five House Republicans have a voting record to the left of Rep. Gene Taylor of Mississippi, the Democrat with the most conservative voting record. The journal has been conducting these studies since 1982. Only once before, in 1999, did the Senate have a profile like it does today.

In an important retrospective on the 1950 political scientists’ report published on its 50th anniversary, UCLA political scientist Barbara Sinclair argued that the modern parties “do represent a clearer policy message than they did 50 years ago.”

She’s right. If you vote for a Republican today, you are very likely voting for a conservative, and if you vote for a Democrat you are very likely voting for a liberal. That’s clear. One other thing also is clear: The political system is a lot worse off.

(David M. Shribman is executive editor of the Post-Gazette (dshribman@post-gazette.com, 412 263-1890). Follow him on Twitter at [ShribmanPG](https://twitter.com/ShribmanPG).)



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AUTUMN OFFERS LESSONS FOR RETIREMENT

In autumn, animals know winter is coming and take the steps to prepare. Bears grow thicker fur and settle in for peaceful hibernation. Squirrels collect and store acorns and other nuts. Birds, favoring warmer weather and having the means to make it possible, fly south for the winter.

When it comes to preparing for retirement, we can learn from the animals -- making sure the transition into the later years of our lives is as smooth and comfortable as possible. The best place to start is a visit to www.socialsecurity.gov.

You can get an instant, personalized estimate of your future Social Security benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator.

To prepare for a comfortable retirement, you should start saving as early as possible. Social Security is the foundation for a secure retirement, but was never meant to be the sole-source of income for retirees. In addition to Social Security, you also will need savings, investments, pensions or retirement accounts to make sure you have enough money to live comfortably when you retire. Learn about retirement planning and how to save at www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/other2.htm. But wait, there's more.

If you decide you're going to be a "snowbird" when retirement comes,

and go to warmer climates during winter weather, make sure that your Social Security payment goes with you. The best way to do that is to use direct deposit. You never have to worry about where your monthly payment will be delivered — it will show up in your bank account whether you're in the Dakotas or the Florida Keys. Learn all about electronic payments at www.socialsecurity.gov/deposit.

Whether you're in the spring, summer, or entering the autumn of your life, the best time to start preparing for retirement is always the present. A good place to start is at www.socialsecurity.gov. Even the animals know they can't wait until the last minute to prepare for a comfortable winter. Take a lesson from our furry and feathered friends and prepare for your own comfortable retirement.

NO NEED TO HANG UP THE CAPE

Some of the strongest and most youthful superheroes to jump from the pages of comic books to the silver screen in recent years are old enough to be receiving full Social Security retirement benefits. Whether standing before the bat-computer or going online at the fortress of solitude, these guys were certainly wise enough to apply for retirement benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Superman may be America's most popular superhero, and also the oldest to hit the screen in recent years. The man of steel was created in 1932. The guy's 79 years old and he has a new movie coming out in 2012. Superman does mostly volunteer work, but even if he earns wages as Clark Kent, his benefits won't be offset since he reached his full retirement age.

Batman made his debut in 1939, and he's about to star in another feature film, running around like a 30-year-old. Also in his 70s, Mr. Wayne is getting full retirement benefits — and Robin too. The same can't be

said for the Joker or Penguin; you can't collect benefits while you're in prison.

The Green Lantern and Captain America made their silver screen debuts this year. They were "born" in 1940 and 1941, and also are of retirement age. One would expect Captain America to look a little more like Uncle Sam these days, but as is true with many Social Security retirees today, staying active keeps him young.

For the "silver age" of comic book heroes, retirement isn't quite here yet. Spider-Man slung his first web in 1962, the same year the incredible Hulk burst into being. Iron Man and the X-Men first appeared in 1963. They may not be ready to retire just yet, but it's a good time for them to take a look at the online Retirement Estimator, where they can get an instant, personalized estimate of future retirement benefits. Come to think of it, if the Hulk or any of the X-Men ever get severely injured, they may qualify for disability benefits through Social Security. The place to go for more information is www.socialsecurity.gov.

Ask any of these superheroes about retirement plans, and you're likely to get an earful. They won't be sitting around — they'll be staying active even as they collect retirement benefits. You don't have to have a bat-computer or be a superhero to harness the power of the Retirement Estimator at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator, or to apply online for benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov. Up, up, and away into an active retirement!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS GENERAL

Question: I live in a hurricane zone and there's always a good chance I'll have to evacuate. What should I do if I'm expecting my check and a hurricane disrupts the mail?

Answer: To avoid this situation altogether, get your payments sent electronically. Direct Deposit and Direct Express are the fast, easy and secure ways to receive your benefit payment. For more information, see www.socialsecurity.gov/deposit.

RETIREMENT

Question: How long does a person need to work to become eligible for retirement benefits?

Answer: We base Social Security benefits on work credits. Anyone born in 1929 or later needs 40 Social Security credits to be eligible for retirement benefits. You can earn up to four credits a year, so you will need to work at least 10 years to become eligible for retirement benefits. Learn more by reading the publication How You Earn Credits at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10072.html.

Question: Will my son be eligible to receive benefits on his retired father's record while going to college?

Answer: No. At one time, Social Security

did pay benefits to eligible college students. But the law changed in 1981. We now pay benefits only to students taking courses at grade 12 or below. Normally, benefits stop when children reach age 18 unless they are disabled. However, if children are still full-time students at a secondary (or elementary) school at age 18, benefits generally can continue until they graduate or until two months after they reach age 19, whichever is first. If your child is still going to be in school at age 19, you'll want to visit www.socialsecurity.gov/schools.

DISABILITY

Question: My brother had an accident at work last year and is now receiving Social Security disability benefits. His wife and son also receive benefits. Before his accident, he helped support another daughter by a woman he never married. Is the second child entitled to benefits?

Answer: The child may qualify for Social Security benefits even though your brother wasn't married to the second child's mother. The child's caretaker should file an application on her behalf. For more information, visit us online at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Question: What is the "definition of disability" for children filing for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

Answer: A child is disabled if he or she:

- Has a physical or mental condition (or a combination of conditions) that results in "marked and severe functional limitations." This means that the condition very seriously limits the child's activities; and
- The condition has lasted, or is expected to last, at least one year or is expected to result in death; and
- Is not working at a job that we consider to be substantial work.

To determine whether your child meets the definition of disability, we look at medical and other information (such as information from schools and from you) about the child's condition. We also consider how the condition affects the child's daily activities. We consider: what activities is your child not able to do, or is limited in doing; the type of extra help and how much extra help your child needs to perform age-appropriate activities for example, special classes at school, medical equipment; and whether the treatment interferes with your child's day-to-day activities.

Remember that SSI is a needs-based program where family income and resources also play a role in determining eligibility for benefits. For more information, read Benefits For Children With Disabilities at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10026.html.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Question: I'm going to visit relatives outside the country for two weeks during the holidays. Can I still get Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) payments while I'm there?

Answer: Your SSI usually will stop if you leave the United States for 30 consecutive days or more. Since you are going to be away for only two weeks, your SSI should not be affected. However, it's important that you tell Social Security the date you plan to leave and the date you plan to come back. Then we can let you know whether your SSI will be affected. For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov or call our toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

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Senior Beacon serves Pueblo & Fremont Counties and reaches the rest of Southeastern Colorado. It is a monthly newspaper dedicated to inform, serve, educate and entertain the Senior Community in these areas. Subscriptions are available, prepaid with order, at \$19.95 for one 12-month period. Send your order to the mailing list below.

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MAILING ADDRESS

Beacon Publishing/Senior Beacon -- website: www.seniorbeacon.info
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 7215 -Pueblo West, CO 81007-0215
Ph: 719-647-1300 Fax: 719-647-1305 E-mail: srbeacon@gmail.com
Publisher/Sales/Production.....James R. Grasso/Jeannie Grasso
Sales.....Jan McLaughlin, Rick Forman IT/Web Master ...Robin Grasso
Contributing writers.. B. J. Tucker, Chuck Green, Universal Press Syndicate, Ann Coulter, Mature Market Editorial Services, NAPS, Jan McLaughlin

SUBMISSIONS: Senior Beacon welcomes reader contributions in the form of senior groups' news, stories, poetry, recipes and happenings. Letter to the Editor must be typed and double spaced, signed with address and phone number submitted. Deadline is the 10th of the month prior to publication.

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For A Healthier You



Free 'Home For The Holidays' Web Conference

by Robin Mosey

FREE HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS WEB CONFERENCE WILL HELP FAMILY CAREGIVERS TUNE INTO TROUBLE

The holidays are a good time for family caregivers returning home to tune into the signs that an older adult may need extra help to remain safe at home.

To learn more about those signs, register for the free Home for the Holidays web conference, moderated by a representative from the Home Instead Senior Care® network, hosted by the American Society on Aging (ASA), and co-sponsored by the National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA) and the National Alliance for Caregiving

(NAC).

The hour-long web conference will be available in the U.S. and Canada, and offered on two dates and times: Tuesday, Nov. 15, at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, or Monday, Dec. 5, at 8 p.m. Eastern Time. To register, go to the Family Caregiver Education link on CaregiverStress.com.

The web conference will be moderated by Director of Strategic Alliances Mary Alexander of Home Instead, Inc., the franchisor of the Home Instead Senior Care network. Alexander is a family caregiver and a Certified Senior Advisor (CSA).

"It's easy for busy family caregivers to overlook the subtle signs that a senior loved one needs assistance,"

Alexander said. "But the holidays, when many return to their childhood homes with aging parents, can highlight those red flags," she noted.

"Signs of potential trouble can be evident in a senior's home – such as spoiled food in the refrigerator and piles of unpaid bills – or personal indicators such as episodes of confusion or dirty and unkempt clothing," she added.

The web conference will feature information about countering senior resistance to assistance as well as resources that can help family caregivers and senior care professionals.

ABOUT HOME INSTEAD SENIOR CARE
 Founded in 1994 in Omaha by Lori and Paul Hogan, the Home Instead Senior Care® network is the world's largest provider of non-

medical in-home care services for seniors, with more than 900 independently owned and operated franchises providing in excess of 45 million hours of care throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Portugal, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Switzerland, Germany, South Korea, Finland, Austria, Italy and Puerto Rico. Local Home Instead Senior Care offices employ more than 65,000 CAREGiversSM worldwide who provide basic support services – assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), personal care, medication reminders, meal preparation, light housekeeping, errands, incidental transportation and shopping – which enable seniors to live safely and comfortably in their own homes for as long as possible. At Home Instead Senior Care, it's relationship before task, while continuing to provide superior quality service that enhances the lives of seniors everywhere.

Your local Home Instead Senior Care is located in Pueblo, serving the surrounding areas. (719)545-0293, or visit their website at www.homeinstead.com/530

Top Five Tips To Keep Your Brain Fitter!!

(NAPSI)—Maintaining better brain health may be easier than you think. The good news is that there are practical steps you can take to enhance the way your brain functions. Following a few tips will help you remember more, think faster and perform better at work, school and in everyday life.

Five Keys

Here are five keys to improving brain health:

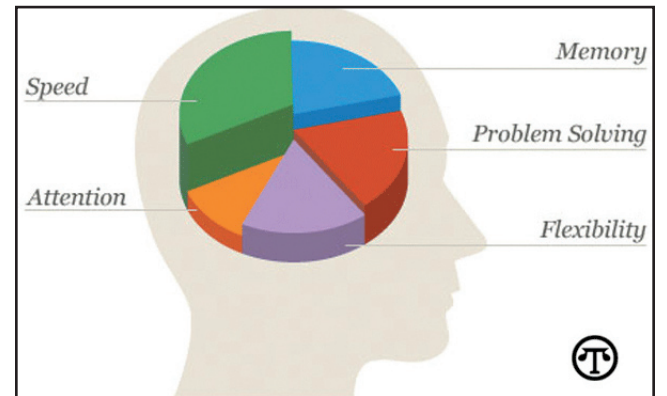
1. Eat right. Just as your body needs proper nutrients to function, so too does your brain. Fuel your brain by eating lots of fruits and vegetables, which contain antioxidants such as vitamins C and E that help prevent cell damage. Include some good fats such as omega-3 fatty acids in your diet—found in fish and shellfish, they constitute important building blocks in the brain. And make sure you drink plenty of water to flush out toxins and keep your brain hydrated.
2. Exercise your body. Regular

physical exercise can help keep your brain fit by promoting increased levels of brain chemicals and more efficient blood circulation, which is vital to removing cellular waste and delivering nutrients needed by the brain. What's more, studies have found that physical exercise stimulates the production of new brain cells.

3. Be social. Humans are social creatures and our brains have evolved to seek out social contact. Studies have reported that an active social life appears to delay age-related memory loss. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health found that individuals in their 50s and 60s who engage in a great deal of social activity had the slowest rate of memory decline, and researchers at Kaiser Permanente found that women with active social lives were half as likely to suffer from dementia.
4. Get good sleep. Sleep plays an important role in memory formation. Your brain uses sleep to process

and make sense of the day, consolidate memories and even generate creative new ideas. Poor sleep can lead to an imbalance in brain chemicals, resulting in depression or cognitive deficits in processing speed, attention, memory and reasoning. A few simple changes in lifestyle, such as getting proper exercise, cutting out caffeine, relaxing before bedtime and drinking in moderation, can often help improve your quality of sleep.

5. Exercise your brain. The best exercises for your brain are new challenges that use different parts of your brain and increase in difficulty as you improve on tasks. For instance, you can learn a foreign language and then use it among native speakers, or take on a new type of dancing that exercises both the body and the brain.



You can also exercise your brain with training programs such as Lumosity.com that are designed specifically to improve brain function.

Described as a "gym for the brain," the site offers personalized training programs and engaging exercises designed to improve core cognitive processes. The site is also available on several mobile application platforms.

To learn more, visit www.lumosity.com.

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For A Healthier You



What A Catch: Seafood Benefits Your Health

(NAPSI)—Here's food for thought: Research shows that eating a variety of cooked seafood two to three times each week has healthy benefits throughout life. Pregnant and breastfeeding women are encouraged to eat more seafood because it boosts their babies' brain development. For adults, eating the recommended amount of seafood helps protect against the No. 1 cause of death: heart disease. However, Americans, especially pregnant women, are not eating enough seafood. In fact, most people should at least double the amount of seafood they eat to meet the recommended amounts for the best possible health.

Recently, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations released a report that looked at the effects of eating or not eating seafood. The report said if pregnant and breastfeeding women don't eat plenty of seafood, their

babies might miss out on the best possible brain development. A low-seafood diet can also increase the risk of dying from heart disease. The U.S. government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that all adults, including pregnant women, eat more seafood.

"Many studies have shown that seafood provides great health benefits in adults, such as reduced risk for heart disease," said Dr. J. Thomas Brenna, Ph.D., professor of human nutrition at Cornell University. "It is particularly important for women to eat seafood during pregnancy to provide their developing babies with crucial nutrients. In fact, limiting or avoiding seafood when you're pregnant can result in slower eye and brain development."

These recommendations are based on the findings from hundreds of scientific studies and are supported by leading nutrition, public health and medical experts. But what the reports don't do much of is tell Americans how to make this change and add more seafood to their diet. The good news is that there are easy ways to eat more seafood.

Chef and nutritionist Robin Miller, who is also the host of Food Network's "Quick Fix Meals" and a best-selling author, agrees. "There are many easy, tasty ways that people can incorporate seafood into their diets," says Miller. "One of my favorite seafood options is canned tuna or tuna in a pouch, as it is affordable and can be used to make a quick, low-calorie meal easily prepared at home."

Miller's new cookbook, "Robin Takes 5," includes 500 recipes each with five ingredients or fewer and with 500 calories or less per serving. Robin recommends many different types of protein, and seafood is a key ingredient in many of the recipes, such as this one:

Tuna Pasta Salad with Roasted Red Peppers

Serves 4; Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

- 12 ounces spiral pasta
- ½ cup light mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 8 ounces light tuna in water (preferably from the pouch)
- 1 cup diced roasted red peppers

Cook the pasta according to the package directions. Drain and transfer the pasta to a large bowl. Whisk together the mayonnaise and mustard and add to the pasta. Stir to coat. Fold in the tuna and roasted peppers. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

To add more seafood to your diet and get its health benefits, try these tips:

- **Swap Proteins**—Replace the usual protein (such as beef or chicken) in your favorite recipes with seafood for a tasty twist. For example, try tuna in your tacos instead of beef.

- **Incorporate Small Bites**—Seafood doesn't need to be your main dish; it can be part of snacks, appetizers, even breakfast. Try salmon on your bagel or crabmeat in your quiche.

- **Go for Convenience**—Busy people need quick solutions and seafood is full of nutrients, whether it is fresh, frozen or canned. So choose a convenient option that fits your lifestyle.

For additional recipes and tips about incorporating seafood into your diet, visit www.RobinTakes5.com and www.aboutseafood.com.

Charlene Causey: Taming The Blood Sugar Beast

by Charlene Causey

With the holidays quickly approaching I thought it was appropriate to address the issue of indulging in too many sweet treats and confections. Type 2 Diabetes has been rapidly rising for several decades, and is currently becoming more frequent among young adults, and even children. Although there are many reasons for the increase in incidence of diabetes, the solution to decreasing the frequency and severity of Type 2 Diabetes has a single major focus. Taming the beast is possible!

For clarification, Juvenile or Type 1 Diabetes is caused by lack of sufficient

insulin, produced by the pancreas, to meet the demand of the circulating blood sugar. It is hereditary and does require medical treatment. While the cause of Type 2 Diabetes is obviously too much sugar circulating in the bloodstream that insulin production cannot keep up with, the main solution is a focused effort at controlling or eliminating sugars. Therefore, Type 2 Diabetes is preventable and manageable; that is great news for those diverting its attack or wanting to kill the beast.

Without a doubt, poor diet and lifestyle choices are the main cause of Type 2 Diabetes. However, education plays a

vital role in understanding how to reduce the risks. Overconsumption of processed, refined, low fiber, and high-glycemic carbohydrates, is almost just a damaging as wildly ingesting random sweets and sugary treats. Additionally, avoiding like the plague, high fructose corn syrup is essential. Becoming a savvy label reader is one of the best offensive strategies to adopt.

The question at hand is how rapidly does the blood sugar rise and how much insulin is needed to tame the blood sugar? If insulin is high in demand, over time, there is a deficit that develops which eventually leads to insulin resistance. When

this occurs, the body cannot cope with the quantity of sugar it is presented with, and diabetes develops. Without a natural approach to bring the body back into balance, medical intervention becomes necessary to correct and manage the sugar overload. Whether good or bad, families tend to have similar habits and thus the misconception that Type 2 Diabetes is hereditary. Patterns are learned, and with today's widely available poor choices, unless you run interference to specifically avoid the disease, it is all too easy for it to rear its ugly head.

Fortunately, with knowledge, comes power. Reading labels and identifying culprits is half the battle. When you know your enemy, you can then discover how to conquer them. Learn disguised names for sugar. Any word that ends in "ose", such as glucose, fructose, maltose, lactose, -- you get the idea -- means it is a sugar derivative and is metabolized as sugar. Once you know the secret language, combine your food choices wisely. If eating sugar, and who doesn't at least every now and then, don't just eat high glycemic substances by themselves. Combine sugary treats or other carbs with protein or some fat to lower the rate at which the blood sugar rises, thus lowering the glycemic index of the food. Here's a carbohydrate example: Instead of eating just bread, bread with butter, or better yet, olive oil, would slow down the rise in blood sugar from the bread, reducing the ensuing insulin surge.

Of course, portion control is an important strategy that can stop the enemy in its tracks. But, along with all the reading, choosing, and controlling, the equally important element to long term success is physical activity or exercise! In fact, exercise alone can reduce the risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes, and an ounce of prevention is, as the old adage states, worth a pound of the cure. Ideally, not developing Type 2 Diabetes in the first place should be the goal and when that battle is won, many other battles such as weight gain, heart disease, retinopathy, neuropathy and others may be won without the need to actually go to war.

Charlene Causey is a former registered nurse who has also been a model, nutrition consultant, fitness instructor and educational consultant. She is currently a Certified Natural Health Professional, nutrition consultant and personal trainer whose main focus is a natural approach to health and wellness. She can be reached at (719) 250-0683 or IOHealth@live.com



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For A Healthier You



December Is 'Safe Toys And Celebrations' Month

Submitted by Kathy-Lyn Allen, PR Coordinator

family, fun and festivity - but it can also be a dangerous time as each year people suffer eye injuries caused by unsafe

toys and celebrations.

When choosing gifts, select toys and gifts appropriate for a child's age and maturity level. Avoid toys with sharp protruding parts like paint or pellet guns, rifles and darts. If you are giving sports equipment, be sure to include appropriate protective gear, such as helmets, facemasks or goggles. These gifts can reduce eye injuries by 90 percent.

Because December is Safe Toys and Celebrations Month, the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) reminds parents of the dangers that some toys may pose to children's eyes.

Celebrating the New Year ushers in the excitement to include fireworks. Schedule your holiday to attend


professional fireworks displays. Never allow children to play with fireworks or sparklers because there is no safe way to handle them.

Have a great holiday season and remember to celebrate responsibly. If you experience any eye injuries seek medical attention promptly. For more information or to schedule your next appointment with Rocky Mountain Eye Center, please call 719-545-1530 (toll-free at 1-800-934-3937) or visit www.rockymountaineyecenter.com American Academy of Ophthalmology. Safe Toys and Celebration Month. Retrieved November 2011, from http://www.aaopt.org/aaosite/eyemd/toys_celebrations.cfm

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 - DEC. 2:** HAM/SCALLOPED POTATOES, Chopped Spinach/Butter, Hard-boiled Egg, Perfection Salad, Apple.
 - DEC. 6:** CHICKEN CACCIATORE, Whipped Potatoes, Spinach, Banana.
 - DEC. 8:** SPINACH LASAGNA, Tossed Vegetable Salad, Seasoned Green Beans, Tangerine.
 - DEC. 9:** HAMBURGER/BUN, Catsup, Mustard & Onion, Split Pea Soup, Creamy Coleslaw, Banana.
 - DEC. 13:** CHICKEN/NOODLES, Seasoned Green Beans, Baked Acorn Squash, Apricot Pineapple Compote.
 - DEC. 15:** BEEF BARLEY SOUP, Whole Wheat Crackers, Sesame Broccoli, Apricot Pineapple Compote, Apple.
 - DEC. 16:** BEEF STROGANOFF, Orange Spiced Carrots, Ruby Beet Salad, Mixed Fruit.
 - DEC. 20:** PASTA PRIMAVERA, Spinach Salad/Egg and Lite Italian Dressing, Apple Pear Salad with Almonds, Plum.
 - DEC. 22:** ROAST TURKEY/GRAVY, Whipped Potatoes, California Vegetable Medley, Raisin & Nuts, Tropical Fruit Cup.
 - DEC. 23:** NO MEAL - SITE CLOSED
 - DEC. 27:** CREAM OF POTATO SOUP, Tuna Salad Wrap, Shredded Lettuce/Tomato, Hardboiled Egg, Grapefruit Half.
 - DEC. 29:** CHICKEN/WHITE CHILI, Spinach Salad/Lite Ranch, Cooked Carrots, Apple, Cornbread with Margarine.
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- DEC. 6:** CHICKEN CACCIATORE, Whipped Potatoes, Chopped Spinach, Banana.
- DEC. 8:** SPINACH LASAGNA, Tossed Vegetable Salad, Seasoned Green Beans, Tangerine.
- DEC. 9:** HAMBURGER/BUN, Catsup, Mustard & Onion, Split Pea Soup, Creamy Coleslaw, Banana.
- DEC. 13:** CHICKEN/NOODLES, Seasoned Green Beans, Baked Acorn Squash, Apricot Pineapple Compote.
- DEC. 15:** BEEF BARLEY SOUP, Whole Wheat Crackers, Sesame Broccoli, Apricot Pineapple Compote, Apple.
- DEC. 16:** BEEF STROGANOFF, Orange

- Spiced Carrots, Ruby Beet Salad, Mixed Fruit.
- DEC. 20:** PASTA PRIMAVERA, Spinach Salad/Egg and Lite Italian Drsg., Apple Pear Salad with Almonds, Plum.
- DEC. 22:** ROAST TURKEY/GRAVY, Whipped Potatoes, California Vegetable Medley, Raisin & Nuts, Tropical Fruit Cup.
- DEC. 23:** LENTIL BLACK BEAN SOUP, Egg Salad Sandwich on Whole Wheat Bread, Slice Tomato on Lettuce, Banana.
- DEC. 27:** CREAM OF POTATO SOUP, Tuna Salad Wrap, Shredded Lettuce and Tomato, Hardboiled Egg, Grapefruit Half.
- DEC. 29:** CHICKEN/WHITE CHILI, Spinach Salad with Lite Ranc, Cooked Carrots, Apple, Cornbread/Margarine.
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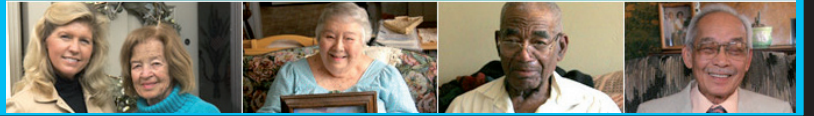
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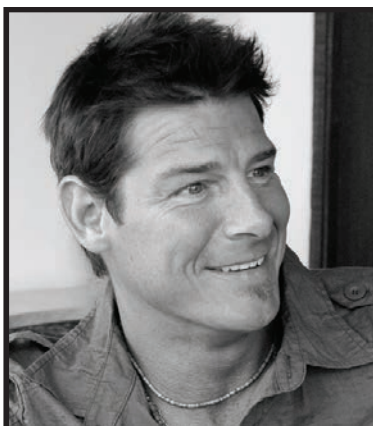
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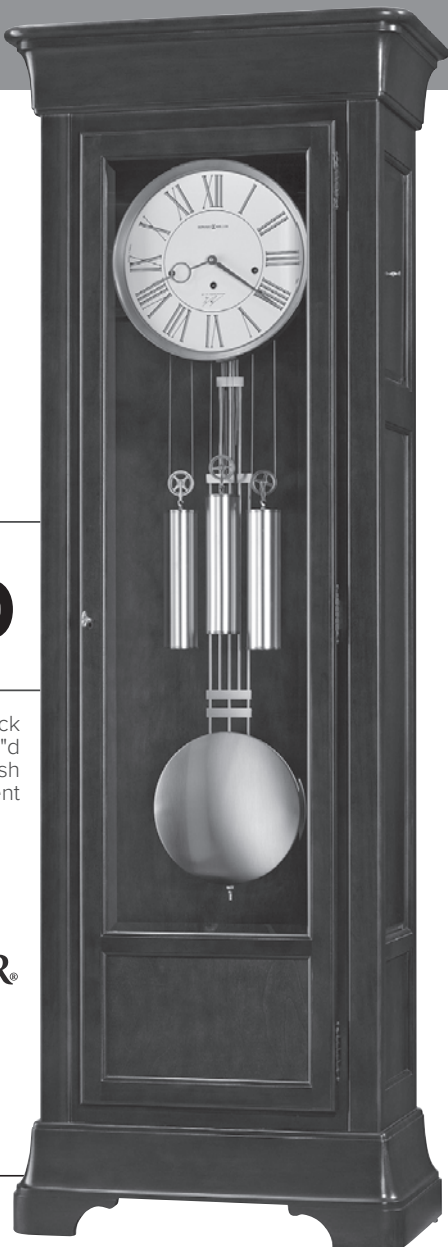
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Medicare Part B To Raise Rates But Not As Much

by Ron Pollack, Executive Director, Families USA-December 2011

At the end of October, people with Medicare got a welcome bit of goodnews. The agency that runs Medicare announced that Part B premiums will increase by much less than expected. In 2012, Medicare premiums for most people will increase by only \$3.50 a month, from the \$96.40 a month now to \$99.90 a month. While this will be the first increase in Medicare premiums in several years, it should be noted that

this new premium is considerably lower than the \$107 that had been predicted last spring.

Premiums were frozen in 2010 and 2011 because there has been no cost-of-living increase in Social Security benefits for the past two years due to the slow economy. When Social Security benefits do not increase, under federal law there can be no increase in Medicare premiums. Happily, in 2012, Social Security benefits will at last increase, by 3.6 percent starting in January. To put this in real terms

- the average Social Security benefit for a retiree in 2011 is \$1,186 per month. That will increase in 2012 by about \$43 per month. Of that increase, only \$3.50 will go towards Medicare premiums. It should be remembered that for most people, their Medicare premium is automatically deducted from their Social Security payments. The rest stays in people's pockets, giving them some real financial help in these tough times.

Some important details:

1) Most people who have joined Medicare in 2010 or 2011 will actually see a premium decrease. Their premiums have been unusually high in order to offset the freeze in everyone else's Medicare premiums during the past two years.

2) If you're in a Medicare Advantage plan, your plan may charge an additional premium.

3) If you have Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage, you pay a separate additional premium set by your plan.

4) Finally, high-income people (those whose annual incomes are above \$85,000 for an individual or \$170,000 for a couple) pay higher premiums.

This very modest Medicare premium increase is particularly impressive considering that Medicare coverage has actually gotten better in the past year. In 2011, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Medicare started covering most preventive services for free as well as offering an annual wellness visit. Prescription drug coverage has also improved. Yet costs have

remained under control.

So what's going on? Some of the lower-than-expected costs are due to simple math. With Social Security benefits finally increasing, the costs of Medicare can be spread more evenly across all beneficiaries. But that's only part of the story. The Affordable Care Act made a lot of changes to Medicare and the health care system to make costs more manageable. Fully implementing these changes will take years, but it



looks like they are already having an effect. Medicare's overpayments to private insurance companies are dropping. Efforts to eliminate unnecessary care, like better discharge planning so that people don't need to return to the hospital after surgery, are starting to take root around the country. And stepped up prosecution of the criminals who defraud Medicare is paying dividends.

If you have limited income, check to see if you might qualify for additional help with your Part B or Part D premiums and costs. You can get information from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), which you can find by calling 1-800-MEDICARE and asking for a referral, or go to the Social Security website:

www.ssa.gov/prescriptionhelp. We still have a long way to go before health care is affordable for everyone. But as we head into 2012, there are some encouraging signs that we're on the right track.

Neiens

from page 13.

\$34.87; Johnson & Johnson JNJ-\$62.63, \$63.51; US Bancorp USB \$27.20, \$25.33; Wells Fargo WFC-\$31.30, \$24.89.

The portion of Buffets list that I surveyed here reveals what many of you know. It has been a grinding type of year so far. The SPX (Standard & Poor's Average) started the morning of January 3, 2011 at the 1257.62 level; it is now about 40 points below that level with about a month and a half of trading left to conclude the year.

So, if the market has somewhat accurately discounted the known risks (and I think it has) the not unusual Santa Claus rally could be in the cards. This is needed to improve on the years uninspiring results.

From all of us at Raymond James Financial - Merry Christmas!

Good luck and good investing,
Gary Neiens

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Bucket List

from page 16.

Such prices can make selling expedition cruises in the United States more difficult than in Europe, said Blake. Many Americans tend to compare prices first, whereas Europeans tend to take into account the experience first, then determine whether they can afford it.

Small ships are not the only vessels in the bucket list business. Princess Cruises, for instance, is promoting a Travel Bucket List of 50 Essential Experiences at <http://50essentialexperiences.com/> Cruise Critic, the top website for interactive conversations among cruisers, oversees a Bucket List forum, where readers share their dream voyages at <http://www.cruisecritic.com/articles.cfm?id=1190>

Expedition cruisers can be a touchy-feely group. While lecturers aboard such ships as Le Boreal teach passengers how to touch Mother Nature, the

ship also pays attention to the eccentricities of its passengers.

Phaola Philogene, a cruise consultant for Ponant, said that some Le Boreal guests thoroughly check out their cabin with the company before they book, asking about the color scheme and even the arrangement of the furniture. They want to know which direction the bed faces. "It's all about feng shui," she said.

INFO:

Abercrombie & Kent (AbercrombieKent.com).

Compagnie du Ponant (ponant.com)

Ships of the niche cruise group (nichecruise.com)

Small ships of the world: (smallshipcruises.com/alltheboats.shtml)

David Molyneaux writes monthly about cruising. He is editor of *The TravelMavens.com*

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Fashion: Looooking Gooood!

Christmas Impends: How To Make The Best Of It!

by Patricia McLaughlin

Christmas? Again? *Already?* Must we? 'Fraid so. There's no getting around it this year. The poor, floundering economy needs all the help it can get. And, the way things have been going, the folks on your gift list probably need a hit of Christmas cheer more than ever.

Which makes it more important than ever that we do it right this time: No deadweight.

You may recall that, several years ago, an economics professor named Joel Waldfogel calculated that Christmas is responsible for an annual deadweight loss to the U.S. economy of around \$13 billion. In other words, people spend \$13 billion on Christmas presents that are of no use whatsoever to the people who receive them and that, for one reason or another, cannot be returned. \$13 billion down the drain.

We've all heard that "it's the

thought that counts," but who believes it anymore? That's because it's something people say when they get a present they don't like, don't want, and haven't any use for. What they mean is: "This cufflink box made from the hollowed-out shell of a dead baby armadillo is the most grotesque thing I've ever seen in my life, but it's sweet that my elderly missionary cousin Hermione, whom I haven't seen since I was 11, thought to send it all the way from Patagonia!"

That represents a misunderstanding of "it's the thought that counts." In fact, when we judge cousin Hermione's unfortunate armadillo by the standard of "it's the thought that counts," we find that her thought process was deficient. If she'd really thought about it -- if she'd thought about you, and who you are, and what your life is like, and what sort of things you enjoy and despise, she wouldn't've sent you a grotesque dead baby armadillo, would she?

Clearly, if we want to eliminate the annual \$13 billion loss to our long-suffering economy caused by badly chosen Christmas presents, we need to think more before we shop. A successful present is something that the recipient will find either useful or delightful or both -- and something that, beyond its utility to the recipient, tells the person you know him: You recognize and appreciate who he is.

For instance, the other day I came across a pair of knitted hand warmers in the Fair Indigo catalog (www.fairindigo.com) that somebody ought to give me for Christmas. I could use them: My desk is next to a window that, even with the storm windows shut, produces a draft. (A computer mouse with a heater in it would be a good thing, too.) Also, I like these hand warmers' natty black-and-white stripes, and I like that they're made from recycled cotton fiber right here in the USA. (I think it was a mistake to give up on manufacturing.)

But what makes me feel they were made for me is the big letters knitted into them: L in blue, R in red. I've always had trouble processing certain binary distinctions: Left/Right, East/West, etc. When I was 16, I had to sign up for extra driving lessons to work on left and right turns. I still sometimes have to check my hands to tell which direction is right and which left.

I'm not saying good presents necessarily call attention to the recipient's disabilities -- sometimes that's tactless -- only that they should make the recipient feel *recognized*.

Some givers try to achieve this I-see-who-you-are effect by choosing jokey presents that refer to one of the recipi-



These dual-purpose striped hand warmers, knitted from yarn made from recycled upholstery waste in Binghamton, N.Y., keep your hands warm and your brain oriented in space; \$19.90, www.fairindigo.com. photo: Fair Indigo

ent's hobbies. Think how many meant-to-be-funny wall plaques on the subject of golf the American giftwares industry has produced over the last century. Now think: What percentage of the lucky recipients of these plaques actually wanted to hang them up on a wall in their home? And how many golfers ever buy them for themselves?

Maybe that's the first rule of gift-giving right there: Avoid things that are manufactured purely to be given as gifts, things no sentient being would ever buy for himself.

People don't buy them for themselves because they don't want them. So what sense does it make to give them as gifts?

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Marshall Jay Kaplan

BABY SANDY

The cute child actress who was given her own movie series at the age of three and then retired at the age of five, currently lives a very normal life outside of the glamour of Hollywood.

'Baby Sandy' was born Alexandra Lee Henville in Los Angeles, California on January 14, 1938. In 1939, Alexandra's father, who was a milkman read in the newspaper that Universal Studios was looking for a ten-month old baby to play alongside Bing Crosby in 'East Side of Heaven'. When he delivered the milk to the studio's musical director, Charles Previn (father of Andre), he also dropped of photos of his daughter. One look from studio casting and she was hired! Her expressions and her big, bright doe-like eyes won her the role, yet it was her wonderful and happy temperament on the set that led to Universal signing her at \$50 a week.

Audiences fell in love with the toddler, who the studio renamed, 'Baby Sandy' - a play off of their other previously famous child star (and W.C. Fields' foil), Baby Leroy. Baby Sandy was given the full publicity build up in Life Magazine and Look Magazine, as well as, merchandising of product lines such as diapers, toys, baby food, story books and coloring books.

By 1940, Sandy's popularity was so great her names was used in the film's titles; 'Sandy's a Lady' and 'Sandy Gets Her Man' (both produced in 1940). Her last film, Johnny Dough-



boy (1942) is Sandy's only recollection of her film career. She remembers the line, "I'd rather be in kindergarten."

Baby Sandy retired in 1942. She became a housewife and legal secretary. The twice-married and twice-divorced former child star has two sons and resides in Brevard, North Carolina, living a very, very normal life.

Baby Sandy goes by her birth name, Alexandra, and occasionally sees one of her old movies on television. "I was brat". She recalls that "When I was thirteen or so, I was going to take drama classes and become a big star again. My mother thought that was ridiculous. I suppose she was right."

Luckily for Baby Sandy, all of the money she made from her films, products and endorsements kept her afloat for most of her life.

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“Light For The Journey”

By Jan McLaughlin - Director of Prayer for Prisoners International



DECEMBER 2011
“THE GIFT OF HOPE”

Christmas! Once again the Prayer For Prisoners International office is flooded with requests from eager volunteers wanting to send cards to prisoners around the world. In addition, lists arrive with hundreds of names of prisoners who sign up to receive a card. Our heavenly Father is truly in the midst of this amazing evangelical

Christmas outreach.

How different if caring men and women didn't step up to the plate to offer prisoners the gift of hope through this simple and inexpensive act of kindness. Volunteers' efforts have a powerful eternal impact on the lives of thousands of prisoners. Each year, well over a thousand volunteers attend Christmas card parties at churches or in homes and even in businesses. Individuals write cards at their own

kitchen table or invite friends over to help. Prisoners and volunteers are blessed.

One of the most wonderful aspects of this mission is the change which takes place in the hearts of the volunteers. Through the responses of prisoners, God is helping Christians outside prison walls to realize these incarcerated men and women are real people. This is clearly expressed by volunteers who correspond with several prisoners. I often hear, “A few years ago, I never dreamed I would correspond with prisoners and love it. What a wonderful way to share Jesus! They write back wanting to know more.”

Letters, cards and testimonies testify to the power and importance of this outreach. Responses from prisoners expressing gratitude inundate the mail box, especially right after Christmas. However, these letters and cards continue to arrive well into the summer months.

With thousands of responses it is difficult to choose a few to share but I want you to experience a glimpse of the joy and gratefulness from these men and women. I pray you will hear their hearts. Listen carefully. Perchance you hear God whispering to YOUR heart, it may be He is telling YOU to step up and help with this huge mission outreach.

Gus - Pleasant Valley St. Prison Colenga, CA “I am writing to thank you for the Christmas card I received from your ministry. You have no idea what a blessing that card was to me.”

Nathaniel - Pelican Bay C.I. California “Thank you for the Christmas card. I thank God for you. Never have I received so much support besides my family while incarcerated. My 24th birthday was two days before Christmas. That made your card even more special. My dad is a minister and I believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. He's a wonder!”

Angela - Lowell CI, FL. “I am writing in loving response to the beautiful Christmas card. It reminded me of Christ's love for me. This wonderful card warmed my Christmas like nothing I could have imagined. Thank you. May our Lord Jesus Christ abundantly bless you.”

Troy - Canon City, CO “I humbly and sincerely thank you for all you precious friends do for the kingdom of our Lord. For sure, it is people like you who make the biggest differences in this world.”

Nicholas - Sterling, CO “How do I ever start to thank people whom I've never met but who took time to send a prisoner like me a Christmas card. It brightened up my year and holiday. Thank you for showing me the true meaning of giving and how far people will go to give someone a special gift like you've given me.”

Jimmy - Calhoun Work Camp, FL “Thank you for the beautiful Christmas card. It means so much to me for someone to take a few minutes to sit down and write me. I don't get mail from anyone. Because you wrote to me, I found out God does answer our prayers. I've prayed for a letter every day and then yours came two days ago. I am sure you and your family will have a wonderful Christmas because God watches over special people and you are very special. Thanks so much”

Raphael- St. Johns, Arizona “Do you know what is amazing? I had no idea you even knew who I was, and I get a Christmas card from you saying you are praying for me. Wow, your words brought tears to my eyes. What a wonderful gift you gave me.”

It is difficult to imagine how something as simple as a Christmas card with their first name written inside can have such a powerful impact. How many cards do YOU receive at Christmas? Most of us take them for granted. Knowing that only 10% of prisoners receive mail, can you imagine the joy of the other 90% who never receive ANY mail to hear their names called at mail call? I pray you have a better understanding of the eternal value in a seemingly insignificant act of kindness.

When you read the thank you notes, was your heart touched? Did you hear God's whisper? Will you respond? I pray your answer is “yes” because you will be blessed. You know it is in giving that we receive. Could it be clearer than the Apostle Paul's words when he quoted Jesus? “I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” Acts 20:35. NKJV

Truly, when you give in Jesus' name, you are giving to Him. He told us in *Matt 25:40*, “...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” NIV

Won't you please join me and hundreds of volunteers in giving the GIFT OF HOPE to prisoners this Christmas?

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Jan McLaughlin is Director of Prayer For Prisoners International and can be reached at 719-275-6971 or by e-mail, prayerforprisoners@msn.com.

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Reeling "Old West Vs. Outer Space"

by Film Critic Betty Jo Tucker, Pueblo

OLD WEST VS. OUTER SPACE

If cowboys in the Old West were threatened with aliens from Outer Space, who would win? "Cowboys & Aliens," a rip-roaring action movie starring Daniel Craig and Harrison Ford imagines what might happen in such a farfetched confrontation. And, believe me, it's not a pretty sight. But the film is great fun to watch! Mystery, suspense, sci-fi shenanigans, gunplay and horsemanship fill the screen in one of this year's most entertaining offerings (available December 6 on DVD).

However, don't expect anything like "3:10 to Yuma" or "The Day the Earth Stood Still." This movie is in a class by itself. Yes, there are clichés from

both western and sci-fi movies included here, but they seem to enhance the movie rather than detract from its outrageous story. What's most impressive involves the way all the actors take their roles so seriously. In fact, I think Craig delivers his best performance ever as a man who wakes up in a godforsaken desert with a weird bracelet on one arm and has no idea who or where he is. Ford also excels in the role of a rough-and-tough old guy who takes no guff from anyone, especially a stranger. And beautiful Olivia Wilde adds a haunting presence to the proceedings. Among the supporting cast, Adam Beach, Sam Rockwell, and Paul Dano stand out as Ford's loyal follower, a worried bartender, and Ford's rambunctious son, respectively.

Searching for answers to his identity, Jake (Craig) arrives in town just in time to witness Percy (Dano) showing off with his gun and bad manners. While they are both in custody, all hell breaks loose outside. When Jake tries to take off his strange bracelet, he discovers its unusual power. Soon he's out with the townspeople fighting for their lives during the explosive alien attacks. Not surprisingly, Woodrow (Ford) begrudgingly accepts Jake's help because of his powerful wrist gadget.

The rest of the film deals primar-

ily with humans battling aliens, but during some of these sequences I began to think the title should be "Cowboys, Indians & Aliens," for there's nothing better to unite warring factions than a common enemy. Beach's character serves as a courageous catalyst for that part of the flick.

Fortunately, along the way, the film also answers four important questions that kept running through my mind.

Who is Jake and where did he come from?

How did that bracelet get on his wrist?

Why does a mysterious woman (Wilde) follow Jake wherever he goes?

What do the aliens want?

Although some dark scenes make it difficult to see what's happening, "Cowboys & Aliens" offers a special effects extravaganza in its amazing sci-fi sequences. Whether flying through the air or tromping over the ground, those monstrous aliens gave me a "shock and awe" reaction. So who wins? My lips are sealed. You'll just have to see "Cowboys & Aliens" to find out. (Released by Universal Pictures and rated "PG-13" for intense sequences of western and sci-fi action and violence, some partial nudity and a brief crude reference.)

AND ON THE BIG SCREEN...

Santa always brings movie treats during December, so here are four promising theatrical releases to watch for this month:

"Sherlock Holmes: A Game

of Shadows" (Dec. 16). Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law return for their second adventure as Holmes and Dr. Watson. I think we can expect more special-effects shenanigans and humorous bantering from this entertaining pair of sleuths as they gumshoe around London. The previews look amazing!

"The Iron Lady" (Dec.

16). Meryl Streep portrays Margaret Thatcher in this biopic about the price the Iron Lady paid for power. I'm not alone in predicting another Oscar nomination for her as a result. Why? Because the Academy always finds a slot for Meryl Streep.

"We Bought a Zoo" (Dec. 23).

Matt Damon stars here as a father who moves his family to the country to reopen a rundown zoo. This should be an adorable comedy.

"War Horse" (Dec. 25). Some

say this film is just another version of "Black Beauty," but the marvelous previews show a different story about a young man and his brave horse who struggle through the battles of World War One. Please remember that all release dates are subject to change.

Read more film reviews by Betty Jo Tucker at ReelTalkReviews.com. Copies of her two books, *CONFESSIONS OF A MOVIE ADDICT* and *SUSAN SARANDON: A TRUE MAVERICK*, are available on Amazon.com and at Barnes & Noble in Pueblo. *IT HAD TO BE US*, the award-winning romantic memoir she and her husband co-wrote under the pen names of *Harry & Elizabeth Lawrence*, can be ordered at Amazon's Kindle store, where *CONFESSIONS OF A MOVIE ADDICT* is also available now.

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