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UCAST NEWS

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Is Rock N Roll Dead?

by U Cast Studios



Rock and Roll is a genre of music with so many branches that some people might claim that there is no way that it could be dead, but the truth is - this genre of music, as most people interpret it, is dead... from a mainstream popular culture standpoint.

Now, this does not mean that Rock music isn't still played on the radio - in all of its various forms: alternative, classic, grunge, and so on. In fact, songs that fall under the banner of Rock are regularly played on numerous radio stations throughout the United States. Radio stations that play Rock music exclusively oftentimes have some of the largest audiences in nearly every major and minor media markets in America.

In that sense, Rock is not dead, and it likely never will be, especially when anyone can virtually flip

through radio stations every day and listen to Queen, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Nirvana, Sublime, the Eagles, The Cure, the Rolling Stones, and so on.

Rock is dead because the genre is not creating new music that gets real traction with the public.

One thing that all of the aforementioned bands have in common is that they are legacy bands, and except for the Red Hot Chili Peppers, none have created popular music in decades. If someone wants to point out that other "Rock" bands have released albums that have charted on the Billboard Top 100, and that Paul McCartney and Pearl Jam sell out arenas and stadiums (before this year of course), that is fair, but the thing to take note of is that they are still legacy bands.

From a mainstream perspective,

how many groups or even single acts that fall under Rock do most people know that were formed sometime over the last 12 years? Twenty-One Pilots is one of the most obvious choices that come to mind, but even then, they are something of a hybrid.

That takes us to the cause of death of new popular Rock music - bland corporate interference into content creation. Overwhelmingly, the music that is at the top of the Billboard 100 sounds like three different algorithms created all of it, with hardly any distinguishable difference. Furthermore, the sounds are similar, and virtually all synthetic.

Corporate interference into the creative process for content is not anything new, and some might even claim that the system that

Challenging Business Times? Think about Diamonds

by Roberta Nadler

During challenging business times, companies are carving out new ways to survive. Marketing strategy adjustments can be a solution without changing your core business. One dimension to consider is how your business communicates with past and current customers. In this arena: Think Diamonds! Isn't it true? Customers are diamonds.

According to BIA Advisory Services based in Chantilly, Virginia, 61% of SMBs (Small and Medium Size Businesses) report that more than half of their revenue comes from repeat customers, rather than new business. Therefore, common sense dictates, it is important to reach out to past and current customers as much as possible, especially in challenging times. Some ideas: Communicate with creative announcements, incentivize referrals, snail-mail 'Thank You For Your Business' cards, remember special customer occasions (in addition to Birthdays), and create unforgettable customer promotions.

Effective communication with clients can be compared to

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Thieves in Digital Clothing

by Turner Stephens

One of the goals that people have when walking into a business is experiencing firsthand the products or services they want to buy as well as having a specialist answer all their questions. Going online makes person-to-person communication difficult, so businesses need other things in place to build trust.

Albert Mehrabian and Ray Birdwhistell made big impacts in the field of communication. They discovered that body language and the way words are said (like the tone of voice) are many times more important in creating a sense of integrity and trust than the actual meaning of words. Honest, yet savvy online marketers know this, and try to overcome consumer hesitancy by creatively engaging the customer online, so the customer has a chance to learn about the product or service and vet the seller before they buy. Blogs, podcasts, interviews with experts, articles with citations, videos, consumer reviews, live chat, consumer forums, and a toll-free phone number to speak to a real person all have the potential to give consumers the chance to understand enough, so they feel they know as much or more than if they had been there in person. The growing popularity of all the above communication methods

shows how much consumers want to verify the product quality and honesty of online vendors.

Ecommerce sales as a percentage of the USA retail economy rose from 5.1% in 2017 to 16.0% in 2019. However, not all the sales increase was achieved through high integrity marketing. Sneaky and manipulative marketing methods also abound on the web. There are many ways to spend money online that will end in disappointment. But the big money is lost to identity theft or fraud. Simply stated, this is how criminals use the internet to steal a person’s personal information or trick people into sending them money for something unwanted or of no value.

When buying online, it is best to use websites that use secure HTTP in their URLs, instead of just HTTP protocol. HTTP sites encrypt all message content and have a high layer of protection against cybercriminals. HTTP websites do not have this security feature, and a cybercriminal can steal consumer’s data while they are shopping.

Many cybercriminals acquire the names, phones, home addresses, email addresses, and other personal information that people carelessly post on

Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. This makes people subject to phishing attacks via email, text, or telephone calls, where criminals pretend to be someone familiar or official (corporations, the IRS, government agencies, non-profits, etc.) and manipulate the person to give their social security number, provide credit card numbers, or other data that can be used to access the finances of that person. It is best for a consumer to not trust any messages asking for financial or private information and call the official phone number on the company’s official website or from account statements in one’s files to find out if the stated organization tried to reach out to them and why. Seniors, military personnel, and veterans, social media users, and children are the most common casualties of identity theft, but anyone can easily become a victim if they let their guard down.

Another common scheme is rental fraud. In 2018 over 5.2 million people were victims and about one third lost \$1000 or more. However, some rental scams are geared to trick people into giving financial and personal information instead of asking for money upfront, since scammers find the information more lucrative to exploit later or to sell the data to other criminals.

There are about 4 million court cases per year for debt claims, yet millions of more people are under mountains of debt and the stress makes them more susceptible to manipulation by scam artists. In 2019, consumer debt reached an all-time high of \$14 trillion. Fraudulent debt collectors pose as a legitimate agency or the IRS. These scammers use phone calls, emails, and letters threatening to expose the victim’s financial

situation to their friends or their employer or threatening the victims with jail time. The pressure the victim into revealing personal information, credit card numbers, or bank account information to resolve the debt immediately.

Internet security software is a necessity for anyone wanting to protect the data on their computer from theft, file corruption, keystroke, and password monitoring, or being secretly viewed by strange people through one’s own computer camera or microphone. The best security software programs are highly rated by the top 10 computer magazines, and going to several of these magazine websites will provide comparison shopping to help in making a good decision. These magazines are also a great source for articles on effective actions people can take to protect themselves from identity theft and fraud.

Due diligence is a word that is used in real estate to make sure that all the information exchanged is legitimate, on the level, and as requested. With computers and the digital world replacing face to face human contact, people should take responsibility and learn the types of due diligence necessary to protect their financial and information exchanges. Trust is a wonderful thing to have, but verification is necessary to protect that trust from being violated.

Turner Stephens has been a manager and consultant in the retail food industry and manufacturing for several decades.



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What Causes Diminished Capacity in an Air Conditioning Unit?

by Service Genius

Over time, the capacity of an air conditioning unit will diminish, and the unit will begin to underperform. In most homes, A/C units run under 100% capacity with many running 50% capacity or even less! This can mean your air conditioning stays running for hours without actually cooling your home.

These are just a few reasons why an air conditioning unit won't run at its full potential:

Outdoor Fan Problems

This often goes unnoticed because the fan inside the outdoor condenser isn't responsible for sending any air through the system. If the fan malfunctions, the exchange cycle of heat will be reduced, and the indoor cooling levels will drop.

Refrigerant Is Not Properly Charged

A refrigerant charge that is off by even just 10% can lead to an impact of over 20% on the unit's performance and capacity. A/C installers can often try to save time and cut corners by not properly charging the refrigerant level and this can cost you greatly in the long run.

Air Duct Leakage

Most duct systems in A/C units are not sealed properly and these leaks cause units to lose over 25% of their air. These leaks can impact the wrong rooms in a house like an attic or can even just push the cold air outside altogether without any cooling inside the house.

Improper Fan Speed

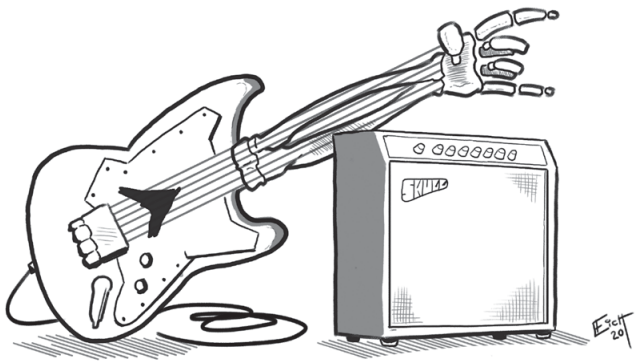
Most systems will have the fans set to high. If the technicians installing the unit don't set the fan to the needs of the other equipment, the results can lead to a drastic drop in capacity. The faster fan speeds will move way too much air for the home and won't properly remove any moisture or humidity.

Old A/C Units

Older A/C units are susceptible to all of these issues and many other ones as well. General wear and tear as well as damaged parts and materials can all impact the A/C unit's capacity. Having old units inspected regularly as well as replaced when it's time will save money over time while also more efficiently cooling the house.

Rock and Roll, *continued from page 1*

exists today is the same one that has been around for a very long time. With that said, the world of popular music today has very little variation. That is one of the key reasons why people first fell



in love with Rock and its numerous sub-genres - musicians wrote their music and performed it. Have there always been studio musicians who play the instruments on albums for certain bands? Of course. But, it would be disingenuous to suggest that Neil Young did not write a good portion of his music, or that Pearl Jam did not write their stuff. Therein lies the crux of why people like Rock - it felt like it had heart and emotion. When you listen to a song like *Old Man* by Neil Young, *Jeremy* by Pearl Jam, or *Under the Bridge* by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, those songs

say something; they resonate with people in ways that songs like *Uptown Funk*, *Blurred Lines*, and *Old Town Road* simply do not. Corporate and commercial interests have completely wiped out any semblance of creativity in popular music and media, more generally speaking. It could also be that Rock had something to say in the past, and as of today, there are not any young voices in the genre that have anything worth listening to because they are not saying anything worth hearing.

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HOARDERS A&E TV Show Star and Professional Organizer Dorothy Breininger to the Rescue during COVID-19

LOS ANGELES, CA – DorothyTheOrganizer (Dorothy Breininger) is helping families and people during the pandemic, one organized room, and office at a time.

When most people think of getting organized, they imagine either the show, "Hoarders" or at the very least see an organizer working directly in someone's home or office with the client.

Last month, Dorothy The Organizer, mastered a "crisis move" for her client, under quarantine in Mexico. Dorothy was able to come to the rescue and assist COVID family forced to move from their home of 29 years in West Hollywood to a condo in downtown LA that he has never lived in. All done remotely via FaceTime!

"Dorothy The Organizer®" is America's Most Innovative Professional Organizer. Known to millions as the fearless-yet-endearing problem solver on the Emmy-nominated TV show on A&E, "Hoarders." Dorothy is also the best-selling author of five books, including her latest, *Stuff Your Face or Face Your Stuff*. In addition to being featured in the Wall Street Journal, Forbes, and O Magazines, Dorothy appears regularly on the Today Show, the Dr. Phil Show, the VIEW, The Doctors, QVC, and PBS. Dorothy lives in Los Angeles with her husband.

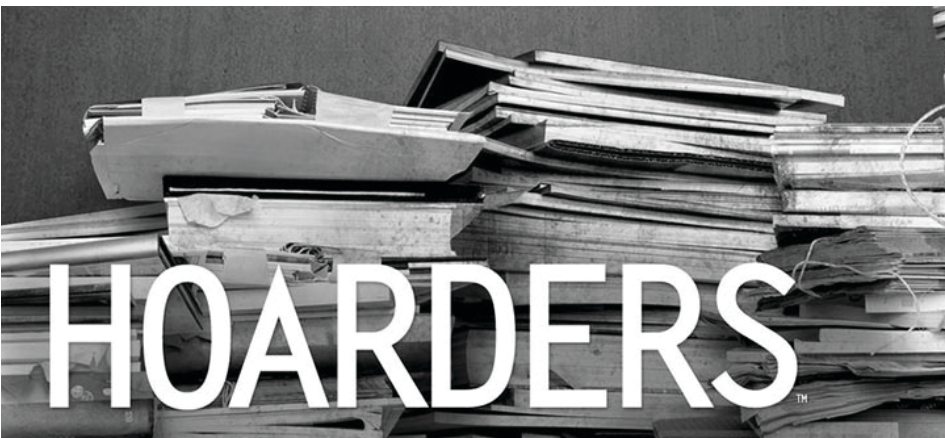
Organizing has been the #1 way for families, individuals, and businesses to gain control and confront fears during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Having survived COVID-19 in early March herself, Dorothy and her team donned mandatory masks, checked temperatures of people, and sanitized the spaces all around them. While the client nervously watched the packing of his most cherished possessions, Dorothy showcased the "Virtual Organizing" aspect of her business - in a SoCal pandemic world.

Over the course of three days, Dorothy and the client connected via Facetime. Dorothy carried out every white glove detail during the pack, move, and staging of her clients' entire home and life.

According to the client, "It is the 25 years of life coaching that Dorothy brings to her work that really makes me want to trust her and her life-saving services."

Dorothy provides on-air organizing demos and extends a FREE invitation to all viewers for her upcoming web class for folks out of work due to the pandemic or are looking to change careers. www.BossOrganizer.com



16 MLB Playoff Teams is the Worst Thing to Happen in Human History

by Alec Moore

When I was a boy, four teams made the playoffs in Major League Baseball. This was up from just the two World Series teams that made it between 1903 and 1969. In 1995, that number was expanded to eight, which made it much more difficult to reach, and win the World Series for the teams that were favored to do so. So, maybe not great, but at least the vast majority of teams still went home as soon as the regular season ended. Well, maybe some of them did not go home. Some probably went on vacation. Others may have stopped off to visit family, or friends on the way home. Odds are, that a couple even went to see their mistresses. There are many places that many of those players may have gone other than home. But the point is, they did not move on to play in the postseason, which is as it should have been.

But then in 2012, the number of postseason teams was expanded to 10, an idea which initially infuriated me. But when I saw that the wild card teams would have to play each other while the division winners would automatically advance to the Division Series round, my rage subsided. And I thought to myself, "Okay so 10 teams are in the postseason, but a full two-thirds of teams still do not make it. And the best teams that made it do not have to face each other in this one-game playoff. And these one-game playoffs are rather exciting for the wild card teams. I can live with this."

But then 2020 happened. We have a pandemic. We have social unrest. It is a difficult time, and we had no sports for months, making it even more difficult for those of us that care about such things. So when baseball finally

returned to us, I was overjoyed. But then on the very day that the game returned, Major League



Baseball announced that rather than 10 teams making the playoffs this year, there will be 16. Sixteen teams out of 30. Ridiculous! It ruined my enjoyment of the first games that night. So filled with fury was I, that I attempted to find baseball commissioner Rob Manfred on Twitter just so that I could berate him. Unfortunately, it seemed that Rob Manfred was anticipating that I would be looking for him, and therefore had deactivated his Twitter account that very day. I suppose it is also possible that he never had a Twitter account in the first place, as I had never searched for Rob Manfred's Twitter account before. Regardless, when I searched for his name on Twitter, I did find that I was not alone in my feelings about Mr. Manfred, Ruiner of Our National Pastime. Many people were already angry at him and they were saying horrible things about him. Terrible things. Awful things. And all of them were well deserved, I am sure.

But without being able to contact Mr. Manfred (Destroyer of All that Is Good) directly on Twitter, I found myself unable to properly vent my immense rage, and I did not know what to do other than make the lives of my loved ones miserable, by sharing my fury with them. This

was especially difficult as most of my family does not care at all about baseball, which is already

an infuriating thing for me to have to deal with. So you can imagine how distressed we all were at the situation: me ranting

and raging about how ridiculous it is that baseball is allowing 16 teams into the playoffs, and my family confused, puzzled, and frustrated that they had to listen to me talk about baseball. It was a bad scene all around. Luckily, I realized I could write this article here and share with you, the readers, my immense and unending rage at the fact that baseball is now sending the majority of its teams in this short season into the playoffs. One reason MLB gave for this format, was because it is such a short season, this will allow for more baseball. Well, if they wanted more baseball, they could have made the regular season just slightly longer, and allowed all 30 teams to play a handful more games than just the 60 that they are playing this year, and then followed that with the normal 10 team postseason. When I read a rationale like this, my fury only grows. My level of fury is getting rather unhealthy at this point.

The whole problem, you see, is that baseball is a game where on any given day, the worst teams can beat the best teams, which is why they typically play 162 games in the first place to see who deserves to reach the postseason. And it is why the team with the best record in the regular season already usually does not end up winning the World Series since teams only need to win three or four games to win a postseason series. So the more teams you add to the postseason mix, the greater the likelihood that the less deserving teams will advance, while the best teams do not. Now that we have 16 teams in the postseason, odds are that at least one or two of the teams that make the postseason will actually be there with a losing

record. It is something we see often in the NBA and the NHL, where they always have 16 teams make the playoffs. The difference in those sports, is that superior teams beat inferior teams with great regularity, so there is little to no chance that a team with a losing record will end up in the finals, much less win the championship. In baseball, that is not the case. If you have a starting pitcher or two get hot, anything can happen.

Fans have been sitting patiently through this pandemic, hoping that their beloved game will return. And how does baseball finally reward their patience? by unloading a bloated postseason where the best teams could easily be eliminated, not in a best-of-five, or a normal best-of-seven series, mind you, but in a super quick best-of-three series in the first round, in which every team will play. Well, my blood is boiling. This is a very uncomfortable situation, being able to feel my blood literally boil. And this is not to say that there are not worse things in the world than baseball allowing 16 teams into the postseason. There most certainly are. There are many terrible, and sad things in the world. However, those things are generally harder to fix. All baseball had to do to alleviate this problem was, not a damn thing different than what it usually does. And we would have our nice 10 team baseball postseason.

Although a 60-game regular season is short, that would still be enough games that by and large, the best teams would be the ones to make the playoffs and we could all enjoy a dramatic, relatively normal postseason, albeit with no fans of the non-cardboard variety in attendance. Instead, I sit trembling in fear - fear that a losing team will beat the best team with the best record in a three-game series, and also fear that my brain will explode when that happens. And if that does indeed come to pass, let it be known that Rob Manfred, Desecrater of All That Is Holy, is responsible for my untimely and overly dramatic demise.



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The Lakers’ All-Decades Team: The 70’s

by *Dustin Brewer*

In the 1970’s the Los Angeles Lakers took a huge leap towards becoming one of the most popular, recognizable, and successful sports franchises in the world. These are the players who helped the team soar to those new heights.

The 1970’s were a time of massive success for the Lakers with multiple legendary players donning the Purple & Gold to help lead the team. Here is the 70’s All-Decade Lakers team.

PG: Magic Johnson – Magic did not come into the league until 1979 but even so, he averaged 18pts, 7ast, and 7.7reb per game in the regular season. Then, he led the Lakers to an NBA title, playing all five positions against the 76ers, including center, where he scored 42 points filling in for an injured Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

SG: Jerry West – With an expanded role on the team, West thrived. With averages of 25.8pts

and almost 10 assists per game, he was a part of the ’71-’72 team that won a record setting 33 games in a row. He may have retired after the ’73-’74 season but when he did it was as the Lakers’ all-time leader in points, more than solidifying his place as Lakers’ legend.

SF: Gail Goodrich – This may is bit too small ball for the ’70s but Goodrich’s ability more than makes up for it. As a Laker he made the leap to All-Star status, with games scoring 49 and 53 points. His time with the team came to an unceremonious end as he held out in 1975 and in 1976 signed a deal to join the New Orleans Jazz but he more than deserves his place in the lineup as one of the teams’ often overlooked stars.



PF: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar – When the Lakers acquired Abdul-Jabbar in 1975, he instantly became a dominant force for the team. He had already won three league MVP awards during his time

with the Milwaukee Bucks but added another two to his mantle with superior play in the Purple & Gold. His absolute dominance on both ends of the floor makes the Captain one of the greatest Lakers ever.

C: Wilt Chamberlain – Before Kareem manned the middle for the Lakers in the latter part of the decade, Wilt absolutely dominated the first half of it. Never averaging below 20 rebounds a season as a Laker, Wilt led the Lakers to a 1972 championship where he was

named Finals MVP. NBA fans may be split on if they remember Wilt for his time on the 76ers or as a Laker but there is no denying the legacy he built for himself, and the team, in Los Angeles.

Sixth Man: Jamal Wilkes – The man known as Silk experienced greater success with the team in the 80’s but consistently averaged double figures in points while shooting over 50% from the field every season. His ability to score and smooth as Silk shooting touch make him an essential part of any 70s Lakers lineup.

The 70s saw great success for the team, as they won conference titles in 1970, 1972, & 1973, claiming the NBA Championship in 1972. The stars were shining brighter but little did Los Angeles know that Showtime was just around the corner.

Next up: the Showtime Lakers’ All-Decade Team!

Time to Call Foul on Basketball Players Fouling Out

by *Alec Moore*

Major League Baseball has returned, but with several rule changes, the most noteworthy and controversial so far, is that each extra inning begins with a runner already on second base. Well, if baseball can change the rules just like that, it is about time basketball makes a rule change too. Why should NBA players automatically be tossed out of a game once they commit six fouls (or five at the college level)? There is already a penalty when they commit the foul; their opponents get to shoot free throws. Even if it is a non-shooting foul, they still add up, and eventually, the opponents get to shoot free throws on non-shooting fouls.

What if movies had a rule that if the bad guy kills too many people, he has to sit out the climax? And some backup bad guy with a much less dramatic snarl, who you have to learn to hate from scratch fills in? If a stand-up comic delivers too many jokes that fall flat, should he or she be yanked from the stage in the middle of the set without being allowed to finish? Okay, maybe

they should, but except Amateur Night at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, comics get an allotted amount of time to perform, no matter how they fare.

In soccer too, there are fouls. But they don’t count personal fouls, and they do not affect whether the players who commit them get to continue to play. There is not much about soccer that I would say is better than basketball, but they seem to have gotten this one thing right. Well, this, plus Megan Rapinoe.

When star basketball players have to sit out with foul trouble and/or when they foul out altogether, the only beneficiary is the opposing team. But the fans never benefit from seeing a superstar sit out. Maybe the fans of the opposing team benefit because their team is more likely to win, but it is still not as fun to watch, nor can victory be as sweet when your team did not have to face the other team’s best. The NBA is a star-driven league, and their many national telecasts are watched mostly by fans not of one of the two competing teams,

but by fans of the game itself, and often of those stars. If the league wants to continue to market its stars and appeal to this broad cross-section of fans, it should do what it can to ensure those stars can remain on the court.



Even when players do not foul out, the coaches’ terror at the mere spectrum of having their guys foul out means they bench them for long stretches if they are simply “on pace” to foul out. So a player who picks up a few early fouls may sit most of the first half, and then could conceivably end the game with only those three early fouls, but still have sat for half the game. I remain unconvinced that saving the best players to play at “crunch time” is the best strategy.

You can lose a game in the first half when your star sits just as easily as you can lose it later. But that is an argument for another day.

It is especially egregious when players foul out in overtime or a multiple overtime situation. In a double or triple OT game, there are typically numerous players who foul out. This should be the most exciting part of the game, but when four or five of the best players are forced to sit, it dampens the excitement. And it is also silly that even though the game suddenly

adds extra minutes for overtime, the players do not get an extra foul. If players get six fouls in a 48-minute game, why on earth should they not get a seventh foul when the game goes an extra 10 minutes?

Okay, I have to go now. There is an exciting NBA game on TV, the end of which I want to see, and it is going to double overtime! Oh wait, LeBron and Giannis have fouled out. Never mind.

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This Month In Sports History: October

by Andrew Bernstein (The Official Photographer For The NBA), Veronica An

October 6th

Michael Jordan, of the Chicago Bulls, announces his first retirement in 1993. Jordan led the Bulls to six championships in the ’90s, in two different sets of three-peats, and became known as a legendary dominant offensive player. After a win with the 1992 Olympics “Dream Team” in 1992, where his averages were 14.9 points per game, rebounds: 2.4, assists: 4.8, steals: 4.6, and a field goal percentage of 45.1%, Jordan shocked fans by announcing his sudden retirement. Sports fans theorize that Jordan left the league as part of a secret suspension due to his out-of-control gambling habit. The prior year, Jordan was called to testify in the criminal trial of convicted drug dealer James Bouler, who had a Jordan-signed personal check for \$57,000. San Diego businessman Richard Equinas alleged he won over \$900,000 from Jordan in golf bets the same year. During his hiatus from basketball, Jordan played minor league baseball for the Barons; ending with a .202 average along with 3 homers, 51 RBI, 30 stolen bases, 114 strikeouts, and a .555 OPS.

October 12th

In 1999, Wilt Chamberlain passed away at the age of 63 in his home in Bel-Air, Calif. Chamberlain first joined the NBA in 1959, when he debuted with the Harlem Globetrotters. During his rookie season, he averaged 37.6 points and 27.0 rebounds; winning the NBA Rookie of the Year Award. He was also won the All-Star Game’s Most Valuable Player and NBA Most Valuable Player and was selected to the All-NBA First Team. According to NBA.com, Chamberlain considered leaving the NBA after his first season due to the heavy fouls he often received during games. The next season, he came back stronger and continued to dominate the court, averaging 50.4 points per game, and ending the 1960-61 season with 4,000 points. One of his most memorable performances came in 1962, when he scored 28 out of 32 free throws, leading the Warriors to defeat the New York Knicks 169-147. After this stand-out performance, Chamberlain continued to excel, ending his career as a 13-time NBA All-Star, first-ballot Hall of Famer, and holder of numerous records.

Continued on page 8



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Why Kids Today Don't Like Baseball as much as Basketball

by Alec Moore

These days, basketball is much more popular with the youth than baseball. Some people say it is because basketball is faster paced. While there may be some truth to that, I have another theory: it is the nicknames. Nicknames are fun. And basketball has them. Some of its biggest stars are 'King James,' 'the Greek Freak,' 'CP3,' 'the Beard,' and 'the Joker.' But what happened to the great nicknames in baseball?

Many of the greatest players in baseball from the first half of the 20th century were known almost exclusively by their nicknames. Only some folks know who George Ruth was, but most knows him by his alters ego Babe Ruth. The annual award for the best pitcher is named for Cy Young. That sounds like a real name, but his given name was Denton True Young (which actually sounds pretty cool). 'Cy' was a reference to the fact that he threw like a cyclone.

The Baseball Hall of Fame is filled

with players from the past whose nicknames are much more famous than their real names. It has two 'Leftys' (Grove and Gomez), two 'Whiteys' (Ford and Herzog), two 'Gooses' (or two Geese? - Gossage and Goslin), and three 'Rubes' (Waddell, Marquard, and Foster). There are young and old, Kid Nichols, and Old Hoss Radbourn. The Hall has your Thanksgiving main course, and dessert both covered, with Turkey Stearnes and Pie Traynor. There are diminutive men named 'Wee' (Wee Willie Keeler) and even more so, Pee Wee Reese. There are animals of land and lake (Rabbit Maranville and Catfish Hunter). Two legends of the Negro Leagues were apparently well-known for being fathers, though only one was a Cool Dad, Pop Lloyd, and Cool Papa Bell. Plus, there's Yogi Berra, Pud Galvin, Heinie Manush, Biz Mackey, Buck Leonard, Red Ruffing, Chief Bender, Kiki Cuyler, Dizzy Dean, Hack Wilson, and the legendary Satchel Paige.

Even players who were known primarily by their real names had great nicknames: Willie Mays was the 'Say Hey Kid,' Hank Aaron was 'Hammer,' Lou Gehrig was 'The Iron Horse,' Reggie Jackson was 'Mr. October,' Walter Johnson was 'The Big Train,' Ted Williams was 'The Splendid Splinter,' Stan Musial was 'Stan the Man,' Willie Stargell was 'Pops,' and Duke Snider was 'The Duke of Flatbush' (even Duke was a nickname, as his given name was Edwin, a nickname on top of a nickname).

As the nicknames dwindled, we still had some legendary players with great nicknames in the '80s, '90s, and 2000s. Andre Dawson was 'Hawk,' Ozzie Smith was 'The Wizard of Oz,' Frank Thomas was 'The Big Hurt,' Fred McGriff was 'Crime Dog,' Randy Johnson was 'The Big Unit,' Vladimir Guerrero was 'Vlad the Impaler,' and Sammy Sosa was Sammy 'So-Many-Steroids' (I might be misremembering that

one). And then there was Alex Rodriguez: 'A-Rod.' This might be the nickname and the player that brought baseball low: uncreative nickname, huge cheater.

These days, perhaps the only star player who is mostly known by his nickname is Mookie Betts (real name Markus). But sadly, his nickname is unoriginal, as he was named for former NBA point guard Mookie Blaylock. Side note: Mookie Blaylock was also the original name of the band Pearl Jam and even after they changed their name, they called their debut album "Ten," a nod to Blaylock's jersey number. So Mookie Blaylock has had a bigger influence on rock music and baseball than he ever did in his chosen sport of basketball. Cody Bellinger and

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History, continued from page 7

October 16th

Boxer Mike Tyson scored a technical knockout during the seventh round of a 1987 boxing match against Tyrell Biggs, during the last heavyweight title fight to be scheduled for 15 rounds. Biggs won the gold medal in the super heavyweight division at the 1984 Olympics. Sports critics say Tyson resented Biggs since he did not make the Olympic boxing team. Tyson defeated Biggs with a right hand followed by a flush left hook. Tyson, nicknamed 'Iron Mike,' and 'Kid Dynamite,' was the youngest boxer to win a heavyweight title at 20 years old. He was the "undisputed heavyweight champ," winning all three major belts - World Boxing Association (WBA), World Boxing Council (WBC), and International Boxing Federation (IBF). He also starred in an arcade game called Punch-Out!!, and a Nintendo game, Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!, which were released in 1987. One of his most memorable fights was a 91-second victory - when he knocked out Michael Spinks in the first round.

In a shocking upset, Tyson lost to Buster Douglas and forfeited the championship title in a 1990 match in Tokyo. He was later inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame and named "The Greatest Heavyweights of All-Time" by boxing publication, The Ring.

October 20th

Mike Bossy of the New York Islanders, scored his 30th career hat trick during a 1984 game. According to the NHL website, a hat trick is when a player scores three goals in a game, and fans reciprocate by tossing hats into the rink. This feat came as no surprise for Islanders fans since Bossy scored more than 50 goals, nine straight times since his 1977-78 rookie season. Due to a back injury, Bossy retired from the NHL after 10 seasons. Bossy ended his NHL career with 573 goals and 553 assists in only 752 games and held the record for most goals per season average with 57.3. He was inducted into the NHL Hall of Fame in 1991, and the Islanders retired his #22 the next year.

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Lakers Outsiders is a weekly Lakers-centric podcast hosted by Gary Kester. The Lakers are the greatest team in modern NBA history. Join Gary as he gives his analysis of the playoffs and news related to the Lakers.



The Talk Spot

The Talk Spot is an interview show that features guests from all backgrounds. In a recent interview, Aubrey de Grey, who has been a guest on the Joe Rogan Podcast and who has done a Ted Talk, stops by and talks about his work.

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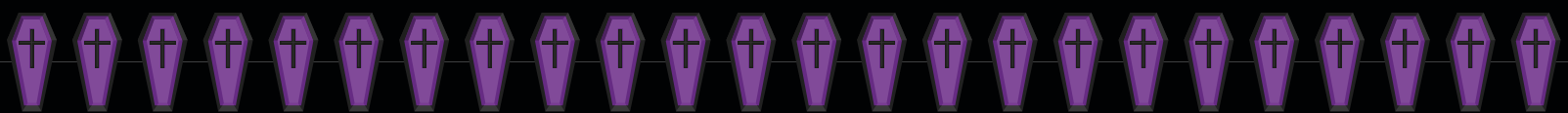
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Big Band Living in the Valley

by Adam Papagan

Show Business has played an undeniable role in shaping the landscape of the San Fernando Valley. Over the years, The Valley has seen countless celebrity-owned eateries, an airport named for comedian Bob Hope, and an entire neighborhood named after the fictional king of the jungle Tarzan. One of the “unsung” heroes of Valley celebrity land development is bandleader Horace Heidt.

Heidt was a popular radio personality in the 1930s. He led several ensembles and bands (including one consisting of eight harmonica players) and was featured regularly on both NBC and CBS radio. His band also scored a number of Top Ten hits during this period. During the depression, Heidt and his band appeared on the Pot o’ Gold radio show, which would phone listeners at random, and give away \$1000, becoming one of the earliest cash give away game shows.

Soon, Hollywood came calling to turn the Pot o’ Gold story into a feature film starring Jimmy

Stewart, and Heidt and his band relocated to Southern California. Finding a space to accommodate Heidt’s entire 30-piece orchestra proved to be a challenge. Then he learned of an old horse ranch for sale in the San Fernando Valley. The property was large enough to house not only the entire band, but was also a great investment in the burgeoning real estate market.

Over the years, the property developed into a full-scale resort-style living community. Christened “Horace Heidt’s Magnolia Estate Apartments,” the development grew to 160 apartment units and twenty stand-alone bungalows. The grounds feature numerous swimming pools, tennis courts, and an eighteen-hole golf course. Much of the complex is decorated in an optimistic exotica/Polynesian theme, complete with waterfalls and tiki statues. Heidt modeled his development after the resorts of Palm Springs because he wanted to give people a relaxing place to come home to after a hard day’s work.



Horace Heidt’s Magnolia Estate Apartments

Remarkably, the complex is much the same today as Horace Heidt originally envisioned it. Over the years, famous residents have included Dick Van Patten, Ed Bagely Sr., and Wally George. The property still hosts movie nights, a bridge club, and an annual luau. According to their website, single units start at around \$1200 a month.

Though Horace Heidt is no longer a household name across the

country, there are at least 300 residents whose households are named after Horace Heidt. The Horace Heidt Estates represent two of the basic tenets of life in Southern California- hard work and relaxation.

Adam Papagan is a historian, tour guide, and occasional consultant to The Valley Relics Museum. He is also host of the YouTube series “Rock and Roll Party!”

Bill & Ted Face The Music

by Chris Carnicelli

It’s been 29 years since Bill (Alex Winter) and Ted (Keanu Reeves) went to Hell, if you remember the events of 1991’s Bill & Ted’s Bogus Journey. Ever since then, the cult following that is B&T has kept growing, thanks to the internet and fans everywhere. Will Wyld Stallyns rise again?

Well, the predictions made in the sequel sorta came true. Bill S. Preston Esq. (Winter) and his BFF, Ted Theodore Logan (Reeves) and their band, Wyld Stallyns did bring us world peace, but only for a while. As with most bands, Wyld Stallyns broke up, and with it, the guys sunk into deep funks. Even their rockin’ daughters, Thea Preston and Billie Logan (Samara Weaving and Brigitte Lundy-Paine) or their Princess wives, Joanna and Elizabeth (Jayma Mays and Erinn Hays) can’t help them. In fact, it’s gotten SO bad that they get a visit from Kelly (Kristin Schaal), the daughter of time-traveling Rufus from the future. Seems there’s trouble in future paradise and B&T are the key.

The Great Leader (Holland Taylor) tells B&T that they need to reunite and come up with a song that unites all humanity across time and space or else all reality will collapse unto itself! It’s so serious that key historical figures are even popping in and out of their own time periods. While B&T are trying to get couples therapy with their wives, they decide to borrow their old time-traveling phone booth and steal the song from themselves in the future, but they get big a surprise from their future selves who are, well, total dicks!

As B&T are busy with their adventures, Thea & Billie are off on their own, borrowing Kelly’s egg-shaped time-machine and stealing famous musicians from history to help their dad’s, much like B&T did in the first movie. They grab Jimi Hendrix (Dazman Still), Louis Armstrong (Jeremiah Craft), Mozart (Daniel Dorr), Chinese flutist Ling Lun (Sharon Gee), and a B.C. African drummer (Patty Anne Miller). But everyone is threatened by a killer robot from the future

who likes to be called Dennis (Anthony Carrigan).

As fate has it, everyone winds up in Hell at one point, which is undoubtedly the funniest part of the movie, ‘cause they meet Death (William Sadler) who was kicked out of the band for his 40-minute solos! LOL! The scene with Death and B&T is worth the price of admission (or your online purchase) alone. But! Will this new Wyld Stallyns band be enough to save the world? Will daughters Thea & Billie come to their dad’s rescue in time with Kid Cudi? And did you know Jesus plays a mean cowbell? I didn’t!

Dean Parisot (Galaxy Quest, Red 2) directs this super fast-paced movie, written by the same guys from the OG series, Chris Matheson and Ed Solomon, and boy! They didn’t miss a beat after all these years. Like putting on an old pair of socks, Winter & Reeves slipped comfortably into their old roles and looked right at home, although Keanu looked more like he was doing an imitation of

old character. The story, if a bit convoluted, moves at a quick 88-minute clip, which makes the movie one of the shortest ever. With such a shortened time-frame you miss alot, especially with character backstories, so you better know your B&T history or you’ll miss many jokes, gags, and inside references!

The real fun is watching the antics of Weaving and Lundy-Paine as they perfectly ape their fathers in mannerisms and vocal inflections. I would have liked to have seen the two Princesses do more other than look concern, but with this short film, that wasn’t to be. A real shame. And again, like in Bill and Ted’s Bogus Journey, William Sadler steals the movie from Reeves & Winter with his hilarious dead-pan (pardon the pun) take on Death, even if he shows up late in act three. All in all, for a movie that took nearly 30 years for a threequel, it was well worth the wait! Party, on dude!!

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Dietitian’s Tips On Shedding Quarantine Pounds

by Maren Stein, RD, Adventist Health Simi Valley

With the COVID-19 pandemic dragging on, it is looking like remote work is here to stay. And with remote work comes the temptation to snack at home, and maybe not make the best food choices. We have all heard of the Quarantine 15 - those 15 pounds or so that some say they are packing on around their waistlines.

We sat down with Adventist Health Simi Valley Registered Dietitian Maren Stein to talk about how we all can make healthier choices while eating at home.

Q: *We’ve all probably been indulging a little too much during this pandemic. How can we continue to snack while staying satisfied?*

A: So, you might be feeling some snack fatigue if you’re spending a lot of time at home. Have a variety of fruits and vegetables on-hand to help when you’re having a craving for something sweet or crunchy. Pair your produce with nut butters and/or dips to help increase protein and fat content, which can help make you feel more satisfied. You can buy pre-chopped produce for convenience, or buy whole fruits and veggies to save some money and cut them yourself to have easy snacks whenever you want.

Q: *What are some examples you might recommend?*

A: Apples or bananas paired with nut butters. These provide fiber with the plant-based protein and unsaturated fats of the nut butter. Bananas are also a great source of potassium, which is a mineral that many Americans don’t have enough of in their diets.

Q: *And what about vegetables?*

A: Sliced bell peppers, carrots, celery, jicama, or snap peas served with hummus. You can make your version of a fancy crudité spread at home with a variety of veggies that you and your family enjoy with a plain or flavored hummus dip. The

vegetables will provide a variety of different vitamins like Vitamin C from bell peppers, and Vitamin A from carrots, with the additional protein from the chickpeas in the hummus leading to a satisfying snack.

Q: *And what if folks are wanting something more savory? What can they reach for?*

A: If you’re craving something savory, make your own charcuterie board with a variety of meats, cheeses, breads/crackers, nuts, and/or olives. This contains all the macronutrients our body needs (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats) that can lead to a filling and satisfying snack. While prepared deli meats and cheeses can contain a higher amount of sodium, these can still be included in an overall healthful dietary pattern.

Q: *I have a sweet tooth. What do you recommend for somebody who loves desserts?*

A: If you’re craving a sweet and salty combination, some good options can be trail mix with nuts, dried fruits, and/or chocolate chips or yogurt with some granola and honey drizzled on top.

Something to consider is that it’s OK to have chips, cookies, ice cream or other satisfying snacks in the house. When you feel like you can’t allow yourself to enjoy these types of snacks, you may start to feel deprived. This can lead to feelings of immense cravings and you can end up overeating them, leading to feelings of guilt or shame.

These snacks can be included as an enjoyable part of an overall healthy eating plan. All foods fit.

Maren Stein is a registered dietitian at Adventist Health Simi Valley. Follow her on Instagram @guiltfree_dietitian.



Teens Risk Wellness Without Sports Physicals

by Dr. Chelsey Kahanowitch, DO

Each fall, primary care physicians’ offices are flooded with teenagers who come in for pre-sport physicals. Although the main purpose of these physicals is to ensure students are well enough to participate in a team sport, doctors often capitalize on the visits as an opportunity to check in on all aspects of a teen’s wellness.

It is during these visits when we can screen for red flags like cardiovascular disease, disordered eating, uncontrolled convulsive disorders, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health disorders.

But this year, with high school sports on hold across the state because of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare providers could miss a critical opportunity to care for a segment of our population that otherwise would not come to the doctor’s office.

Roughly 30 million athletes under the age of 18, and another 3 million athletes with special needs, receive medical clearance to participate in sports every year, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians. That is too large a segment of our population skipping wellness checks for us to risk. Compound that with the mental health issues we know teens are facing during this pandemic has healthcare and education professionals



concerned.

“We are excessively concerned about our kids’ mental health right now. It’s hard to know how to help them without them being physically in front of us,” Simi Valley Unified School District spokeswoman Jake Finch told me, referring to mandatory distance learning taking place this fall.

The district is actively seeking ways to address these issues, but in order to have the greatest impact, we need to work as a community to ensure our teenagers are receiving the preventive care they need.

If you are a parent, do your child a favor, and schedule your teenager for a wellness check with a doctor.

Dr. Chelsey Kahanowitch is a primary care physician for the Adventist Health Physicians Network practicing in Simi Valley, CA.

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Is Witchcraft Becoming a Wellness Trend?

by Jane Miller

Did you know that about 730,000 American adults identify themselves as Pagans and Wiccans, which is about 0.3% of the U.S. population? That is according to a 2014 Pew Research Center report, so the number could be even higher now. Back in 1990, a study from Trinity College estimated there were 8,000 Wiccans in the United States. That’s a huge leap in twenty-four years.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Wicca is defined as, “a religion influenced by pre-Christian beliefs and practices of Western Europe that affirms the existence of supernatural power (such as magic), and both male, and female deities who inhere in nature and that emphasizes ritual observance of seasonal and life cycles.”

Paganism is a bit of an umbrella term, encompassing religions that are other than the main world religion. It is often based on beliefs focused around the earth and natural forces. Only some Pagans would consider themselves witches. However, all Wiccans are witches but not all witches practice Wicca.

Why is there so much renewed interest in witchcraft? Well, we live in a time of uncertainty and worldwide turmoil, and so it makes sense people are turning to other, more mystical, means of making sense of their world. Perhaps it is also about finding comfort in the unknown or the belief/feeling that you can change your world through unconventional methods.

The images associated with modern-day witchcraft are not broomsticks or smoldering cauldrons, but rather things like crystals, dried herbs, and tarot cards. These are tools used by witches to affect change in one’s environment and world. A core belief of Wicca is the acceptance of magic to affect change. This reminds me of vision boards or the extremely popular book *The Secret*, which



espouses visualization as a form of manifesting what you want to achieve in life. Perhaps witchcraft is a logical jump from astrology, yoga, meditation, and all things considered new-age.

Many people are finding comfort in consulting witches the same

way they might take a yoga class, or find a crystal healer, and modern-day witches are easy enough to find. Do a quick Instagram search, and you will find a host of witch influencers who

offer services, including spell casting, virtual tarot readings, and metaphysical guidance. If you are more of a TikTok user, you may already be familiar with the witches of TikTok, who live-stream everything from tarot card readings to spell tutorials. There is even a moniker for their videos: WitchTok. The term originated in

2019, and there have been over 1.7 billion views of #WitchTok videos.

Wellness and self-care are all about keeping yourself emotionally, physically, and mentally healthy. Basically, if an activity calms your spirit and makes you feel more personally powerful, it is a form of self-care and wellness. According to 2019 figures from the Global Wellness Institute, the “wellness industry” is valued at over 4 trillion dollars, and witchcraft is certainly cashing in on the demand.

Many of the witches on social media platforms offer services for those so inclined. One of the most well-known witches, Juliet Diaz, author of the best-selling book *Witchery: Embrace the Witch Within*, offers Soul Therapy for \$110, and Advance Distance Energy Healing for Adults, Children, and Pets for \$250. Valeria Ruelas, also known as #TheMexicanWitch, offers a 1-hour Spiritual Session for \$100. Clearly, witchcraft is becoming more than a personal practice or religion, but also a way for people to practice self-care and wellness.

Wanna Thank a Cop? Throw a Parade!

by John Tolson

In many cities across the country, the term “defunding the Police” has become a hot topic of discussion. But that was far from the feeling that the Police officers, and the Simi Valley Police Department got, as a grass-roots “Our Cops Are Tops!” parade occurred

in Simi Valley, on August 22nd. Over 500 cars, many dressed up or decorated with signs, balloons and flags, drove from the parking lot of City Hall (and the library, the Senior Center even down Avenida Simi), over to the front parking lot of the Simi Valley Police Station on Cochran St., where five Simi Valley Police officers were standing in front of their respective police vehicles, greeting and waving at the



passersby, honking and waving and receiving gifts of cards, posters, and restaurant gift cards from those coming by. All to show thanks for the Simi Valley Police Department and the officers and staff for all they do to keep our city a safe place to live.

Prior to the parade, local country music star, Lacie Mae, sang a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem, which was broadcast over a local FM radio band, so that all in attendance could hear and still practice social distancing. World famous television star, Bob Eubanks was the emcee of the pre-parade festivities. He was at the event and shared personal stories and inspired the more than 1,500 in

attendance. There were welcome greetings from the Mayor of Simi Valley, Keith Mashburn, as well as other elected officials, including current City Councilpersons Elaine Litster, and Dee Dee Cavanaugh.

The parade was the idea of local citizens Steve Frank and John Tolson. Initially, they wanted to do the parade a week before, but the Police Chief asked them to postpone for one week, so that another very small group of political walkers could go from the local hospital to the City Hall grounds. They had approximately 25-30 walkers. A special thanks goes out to Scott Juceam, from Definite Media, and U Cast Studios & News for their tremendous technical assistance. Radio broadcasting and aerial camera shots, as well as hosting Mr. Eubanks and the other honorable

guests, as well as playing patriotic music while everyone waited in parade formation. There were Veterans, families, young and old. There were multiple car clubs in attendance. The Police Officers in attendance were visibly moved by the showing of appreciation.

This was a tremendous showing from the people of Simi Valley, who truly feel that “Our Cops Are Tops!”

John Tolson is the Director of Marketing and Membership for the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce, where he has been for 10 years. He also has an independent insurance business, where he is a Broker for many home and auto carriers. He has owned both a retail and wholesale business for over 18 years. Currently, he is also a Planning Commissioner for the City of Simi Valley. He can be reached at john.tolson@goosehead.com

Healing Your Body with Electrocution?

by Antarra Belcher

When I walked into my new Chiropractor’s office last week, I was not expecting to be offered a free session of PEMF treatment, and to be completely honest, I was not entirely sure what they were even offering to me. When I got home, I began to do some research before my next adjustment so that I could decide if I wanted to take them up on their offer. What I discovered made me not only willing, but excited to try the PEMF treatment on my next visit.

So what exactly is PEMF, and what does it do for the human body? PEMF stands for Pulsed Electromagnetic Field, and it is essentially sending small electrical

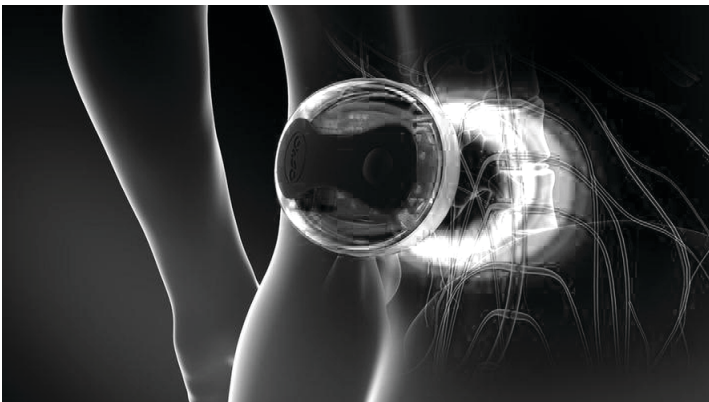
created the first magnetic loop coil, which are now used in PEMF machines. PEMF has been used in many European countries for several years now, and has slowly been gaining popularity here in the United States due to the fact that it works in conjunction with your body’s own healing ability, and causes minimal, to no side effects. The side effects that some people may experience include nausea, and headaches, which can oftentimes be remedied by drinking plenty of water to help detox the body immediately following a session.

I know it sounds a bit odd to think of ourselves as electrical

beings, but in all actuality we most definitely are. We are comprised largely of water, but also have around 100 billion neurons firing off and sending signals

to perform various functions as well as alert us of any ailments, by causing pain to radiate through the body. Relief of pain alone should be reason enough for many to seek out PEMF treatments, however there are other good reasons to try this form of therapy. For instance, our cells are designed to run at -20 to -25 millivolts, but to heal, we must achieve -50 millivolts. The scary news is, when we have reached a state of any type of chronic illness, it means we are running below -20 millivolts.

I have now experienced two PEMF treatments, and look forward to many more. It is a weird experience at first, to feel slightly electrocuted, but as the session continued, I ended up feeling very relaxed, almost like I could fall asleep. I am hopeful to see if my muscle pain diminishes, and if my sleep improves as I continue these PEMF sessions on a weekly basis.



shocks deep into your body to the muscles and organs. During a PEMF session, a mild electrical current is sent deep within your body, and reaches any damaged cells that you may have in your muscles and tissues. When the electricity reaches the cells, it is able to stop or at the very least, lessen the pain or inflammation that a patient is struggling with, as well as increase blood flow to the cells, which encourages a much faster rate of tissue healing. PEMF therapy has shown such promising results that even NASA astronauts are using it to recover after space flight. Being out in space can wreak havoc on their bodies, ranging from cardiovascular damage, immune system weakness, as well as hearing and vision loss. The NASA teams are now using PEMF therapy to heal their cells after a long journey out in space. We can owe the creation of PEMF to the well-known Nikola Tesla. He

The Deadly Hippo

by Greg Goodsell

They have two adorable ears, two beady eyes, a comically rotund belly, a gaping mouth, and they are extremely dangerous. The hippopotamus, or “river horse” as they are known in their native Africa, kill far more people annually than cheetahs and lions. It is estimated that hippos are directly responsible for more than 500 human deaths every year, ranking them as one of the world’s deadliest animals.

A favorite of cartoonists, the hippo is usually depicted as being jolly and clown-like. Nothing could be further from the truth. Hippos are fiercely territorial, and will charge and kill any human or animal they deem an invasive threat.

The hippos’ substantial weight places them as the world’s third largest mammal, following elephants and rhinoceroses. Unwary humans who see them glide in nearby rivers incorrectly assume the hippos as docile, and sometimes climb on their backs as they would when mounting a stallion. The unamused hippo will then discharge the unwanted rider and drag them underwater to drown. Hippos also have very sharp teeth lining their substantial mouths, and are known to frequently maul their prey.

An especially horrifying hippo attack occurred at the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe in 1996. A tour guide was leading a kayak expedition when his party was overpowered, and he found himself being swallowed whole by one of the creatures. “I seemed to be trapped in something slimy. There was a terrible, sulphurous smell, like rotten eggs, and a



tremendous pressure against my chest.” While he was able to escape, the brush with death cost the guide his left arm.

Hippos have proved to be problematic in the South American

nation of Colombia. Notorious drug dealer Pablo Escobar, during his reign in the 1990’s, imported four hippos to his private compound in Villa Napoles. When Escobar’s narcotics empire collapsed following his death, the animals in his collection were relocated to zoos. The one exception were the hippos, who were allowed to roam free in the countryside. It was here the animals began to reproduce at an alarming rate, thriving in the lush jungle landscape without natural predators.

Researchers say that there are more than 80 hippos in the area. Some scientists suggest that the animals are a boon to the ecosystem, as they subsist on the local flora and fauna, and then enrich the surrounding soil with their dung. Other researchers argue that the hippo’s dung poses a threat to aquatic life in the area, as it robs local waterways of oxygen needed for local fish. Most agree, however that the situation gives the nearly extinct species a safe habitat to live and reproduce.

To date, there have been no known attacks on humans in the area. People frequently spot the hippos wandering free in the area, remarking that the creature is a more common sight than the local wildlife. While giving the hippos the affectionate nickname of “village pets,” Villa Napoles natives know well enough to give the two-ton creatures a wide berth.

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Lifestyle

Lemme Tell You About My Best Friend

by John Tolson

Ron Brown did not hesitate to make the 8-hour drive from Tucson to Simi Valley, to just be with me. Why? Because I was feeling very down, because Stephanie, my future wife, was not on the same timeline as I was, as it related to our relationship. I wanted to take it to the next level. She was still enjoying life as a Co-Ed in college. That is what a best friend will do. And Ron was indeed, my best friend.

I had moved from Tucson to Simi Valley in the middle of my Sophomore year of High School, a very troubling year socially. My father was transferred with his job, so it was not like I had a choice. It was hard. The one positive side of the move for my three sisters and I, was going from a flat, rock covered roof home in Arizona, to a two storied home almost like “The Brady Bunch,” a TV show we all watched together as a family each week.

Ron and I did everything together, partly because we were only one-

month apart age-wise. Cub scouts. Church softball, and basketball. Ron was the point guard, and I was a much taller center/power forward. We went to dances for the first time together. We went through Boy Scouts together, at one time the only two Webelos in the group. We eventually even celebrated our Eagle Court of Honor together. It was held in the church hall at the end of January 1976. Ron always gave me a hard time because I was 13 at the time of the ceremony, and he was still 12. His birthday was two weeks later. There was more of an encouraging spirit for each other, rather than a competition.

We kept in touch and communicated as best as we could. I excelled in football, while Ron pursued basketball in HS. We graduated high school in June 1980. He from Catalina High (famous for having Linda Ronstadt as an alumni), and I from Royal High. We even served a two-year church mission in nearly

the same place- the British Isles. I was in Coventry, England at the same time as Ron was in Edinburgh, Scotland.

After that, we both tackled University and careers. Ron would make road trips to the West Coast nearly every summer. Trips to the beach, Magic Mountain, Dodger games, double dating at every opportunity. We married our sweethearts in the same year. Ron was my Best Man, I was his. Ron had three children, as did I. Ron works for a law firm. I have owned businesses and now work for the Chamber of Commerce and sell insurance.

We have been there for each other when needed. He has had some health challenges and so have I. Now, we typically only talk to each other on our birthdays. He knows I will call him (When I call, I will ask to talk to Mr. Ron Brown. When asked who is calling, I will say, “Officer John Tolson from the IRS.” It always gets Ron coming onto the phone



with a big laugh). Our calls always end the same: “Love you, Brother!” I will always be there for him and I know he will be there for me.

My life is such that I have a new ‘best friend’ now. It is a very special relationship. There is not anything I would not do for my best friend. Life is better with a best friend in your life. I know mine is!

John Tolson is the Director of Marketing and Membership for the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce, where he has been for 10 years. He also has an independent insurance business, where he is a Broker for many home and auto carriers. He has owned both a retail and wholesale business for over 18 years. Currently, he is also a Planning Commissioner for the City of Simi Valley. He can be reached at john.tolson@goosehead.com

The Most Unusual and Coolest Hobbies

by Jane Miller

When people ask me what my hobbies are (a rare occurrence mostly occurring on awkward job interviews), I generally say reading and watching movies. That is the truth, but sometimes I wish I had a really cool hobby to tell someone about, or a hobby that did not involve sitting around and learning about fictional characters. Thinking about cool hobbies always brings to mind the seminal show The Wire, and the character of Lester Freamon, the wise detective who carved miniature furniture as a hobby. It seemed to calm him and distract him from his stressful job. Maybe that is what the best hobbies do - they take you out of your usual life and let you utilize a different part of your brain. So, what are some of the coolest and more unusual hobbies out there?

I did some digging into the recesses of the internet to find out.

Geocaching - Maybe you have heard of geocaching, but do not know exactly what it is, as was the case with me. Geocaching is

basically where people use the GPS services on their phone or other devices to find containers hidden at specific locations around the world. It is an active, outdoor adventure hobby that is kind of like treasure hunting, but you do not get to keep the treasure. The “cache” is often hidden within a water-proof container, and is usually an item of little monetary value, such as a small toy or unusual currency. Often, whoever placed the item in the container, had some sort of sentimental attachment to the object. In addition to the “cache,” there is also a logbook where you can record your established code-name, and the date as proof you have found the cache. There is an official geocaching app you can download if you are interested in checking out this hobby.

Magnet Fishing - After my first and only fishing expedition last summer, I knew it was not a sport for me. When I could not find a way to release the fish I had caught from the hook he was on, and had to watch it suffer, I knew I was done

with fishing forever. But metal fishing on the other hand, sounds very cool. Basically, you fish with a large magnet, and instead of fish, you can find some amazing items in lakes and other bodies of water. It is like metal detecting on the beach. Strange finds that have been reported include a gumball machine, bikes, and old firearms. You can “fish” out these huge items because most magnet fishers use a heavy duty neodymium magnet that has a pull force of 500 pounds.

Pen Pal Letters - Now, I know this is a bit old-fashioned, but considering most people cannot remember the last time they received a handwritten letter in the mail, this is an unusual hobby these days. I have kept all the letters and postcards I have received since the time I was in junior high-school. There is just something so sentimental about them. I like the hobby of pen pal letters because the idea of sharing details of your daily life with a stranger from across the world seems pretty cool to me. There are lots of websites and social

media sites that can help connect you with a pen pal, including the Facebook page Worldwide Snail Mail Pen Pals, and the website PenPal World, which has over 2 million members. If a letter seems too long, what about exchanging postcards with strangers? At Postcrossing.com, you can send and receive postcards back from random people around the world. If you are up for a more intense experience, you can also exchange correspondence with inmates on death row at writeaprisoner.com.

Newsraiding - This is kind of like photo-bombing, but it is not accidental. A person who is a “newsraider” will consciously try to get featured on a live newscast. The goal is to appear as a random bystander in the background of news reports. I would assume you have to do a lot of planning and get lucky to be successful at this. If you are looking for your fifteen seconds of fame, this could be the hobby for you. It could also be perfect if you are looking for fifteen seconds of shame.

Weird & Wacky News

by Chris Carnicelli

From around the corner, down the street, and up your alley, here are some stories that hitting the headlines. And they are all TRUE.

Dateline: Clearwater, Florida

Thieves unclear on the process. Herbert McClellan is an idiot. This bozo stole about \$100 worth of scratch-off lottery tickets at a Speedway Gas Station one day. But store employees alerted the police a few hours later, when McClellan returned to the store to claim the \$30 prize he won on one of the scratchers. McClellan was charged with theft, and being a moron.

Dateline: New Zealand

Here, kitty, kitty. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, and New Zealand’s director of health, Dr. Ashley Bloomfield are worried. Their main competition this year for the *New Zealander of the Year*

award is Mittens, a Turkish Angora cat. This kitty has already received the key to the city and has 50,000 followers on Facebook. That is one lucky pussycat.

Dateline: Detroit, Michigan

You had ONE JOB! Workers at the James H. Cole Funeral Home freaked out when dead

20-year-old Timesha Beauchamp, a body they were about to embalm, opened her eyes and came to life. The ER doctor had “pronounced the patient deceased based upon medical information provided,” but apparently that wasn’t the case. Timesha was immediately taken to a hospital where she was listed in critical condition, but very much alive.

WEIRD & WACKY

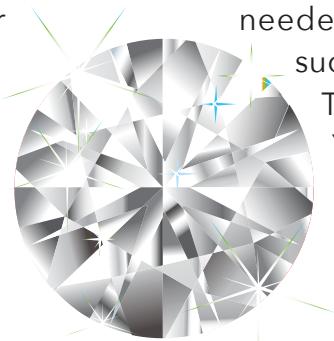
Diamonds, continued from page 1

evaluating a diamond. What do we think about when evaluating Diamonds? The answer is 4 C’s: Clarity, Color, Cut, and Carat Weight. Let’s see how this applies to your business.

Clarity:

Communicate clearly with your customers. Make sure they understand what you are offering in a clear, visual, and uncluttered message. During the Pandemic, people are distracted. Clear communication is needed.

Color: In stressful times, often earth-tone colors are exceptionally appealing for visual communication. Think about using ‘comfort colors,’ communications’ comfort food, for your social media posts, and printed materials. These colors have extended into fashion and home decor trends. According to Better Homes and Gardens, chestnut, burgundy, and deep olive green offer a soothing organic element to indoor spaces.



Cut: Diamonds are cut in a multitude of ways. Likewise, your business can grow by offering new, exciting, and helpful products and services. Locally, I have seen many needed services develop such as Food Delivery, Tutoring, Pet Sitting, Yoga Classes, the list is endless.

Carat Weight: Ever buy a diamond ring? A solitaire diamond is one option. However, another popular choice is a sizable diamond, surrounded by smaller ones. Similarly, in business, a common-sense approach for expansion is to balance larger clients within a foundation of bread-and-butter customers. Loyal clients grow. They start purchasing more frequently. Plus, you gain referrals.

A robust and strategic strategy directed at past and current clients will help your business face challenging times. Why not find a spectacular, never-to-be-forgotten diamond? Your business is full of diamonds. Just ask your customers.



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