

The Good Life

Travel, Leisure & Fun for
South Valley Adults 50+

April / May 2014 • Volume 1, Number 2

Tulare Couple Gets Hooked On Gourd Art

By Donna Luallen,
Special to The Good life

Five years ago, Rosemary Catron opened the morning paper and saw a photo of a woman holding a gourd.

The featured article described things that could be done with gourds and Catron said to her husband, Rodger, "Let's go check this out."

The Catrons attended a meeting of the budding group, the Central Valley Gourders, an organization founded by Cecile Garrison, the woman in the photo, and several others to promote growing and designing with gourds. It was and remains an organization where there are no by-laws, no dues and no rules.

Soon the Catrons were accumulating tools, paints and embellishments for their own gourd designs. Rodger Catron planted his first gourd seeds in 2009 and the first finished gourd art appeared in their home in 2010. Now, at their Tulare home, they have a barn dedicated to drying and storing big, round gourds, long, skinny gourds and even tiny gourds, waiting to be a part of the next creative wave to flow through their household.

Rosemary Catron has always been involved in arts, dabbling in needle arts, calligraphy and making paper. She enjoys a weekly line-dancing class and gardening, as well as studying rocks and astronomy. When she looked at the gourds on the

See Gourds on page 7



Photo by Donna Luallen, Special to The Good Life

Rosemary Catron has a special table where she paints her gourds. She has been in the hobby of gourd art for five years.



Photo by Nancy Vigran

Volunteer Rick Struble serves food at the Porterville Senior Center five days per week, and is one the Center's many volunteers.

Porterville Seniors Receive New Center

By Nancy Vigran, editor

Some say it has been a longtime coming, but Porterville seniors finally have a place to truly call their own.

Through an agreement between the City of Porterville, and Community Services and Employment Training (CSET), the new location at will be for senior use only for a longtime to come, according to Albert Cendejas, CSET assistant director for community

initiatives.

It is my understanding that this has been in the works for years, Cendejas said. The old location is a multipurpose building and used for many events. This new facility is a prime location, next to a senior-living apartments.

The new location at the corner of 4th Street and Cleveland Avenue, adjacent to the Playa de Santa Fe Apartments, is equipped with a multipurpose room that serves

See Senior Center on page 8

Hawaiian Luau, Car Show for Senior Day in the Park

By Nancy Vigran, editor

Visalia's Mooney Grove will be the site of a Hawaiian luau on May 16 when more than 700 seniors, their families and caregivers are expected to attend the 45th annual Senior Day in the Park.

Organized by the Kings-Tulare Area Agency on Aging with the help of Community Services Employment Training, anyone 60 and over is welcome along with their family and friends of any age to enjoy live entertainment, food and more. There is no charge to attend and participate.

A traditional part of the event and one looked forward to every year, is the car show hosted by Visalia Vapor Trailers, the Good Timers and Rollin' Relics car clubs. More than 100 cars, originally built before the '60s have been shown each year, said Homer Davis, past president of Visalia Vapor Trailers.

There is no entry fee and no judging.

"It's really just there for the seniors," Davis said.

In fact, most of the cars and their owners are seniors themselves, he said.

There are always a couple Model T Fords and other vintage cars of different makes and models, he said. Davis, himself, has a 1924 Model T, a Model T bucket roadster, a Bricklin and a 1941 Ford pick-up that he used to drive to college.

"Most of us enjoy the old cars," he said. "And those who have older cars, enjoy seeing other old cars."

On hand will be the revamped A&W Restaurant van, Davis said. The Visalia Vapor Trailers supply ice cream, and the local A&W Restaurant supplies root beer for floats that are free, he said.

Some 700 visitors attend the Senior Day in the Park event annually. This year's event starts at 9 a.m. and ends at 2 p.m. Anyone with an older vehicle is welcome to enter it in the car show. There is no preregistration.

"They can just show up and I'll tell them where to park," Davis said.

In May, 1963 Older Americans month was declared by President John F. Kennedy and a few years later, the first Senior Day in the Park was held in Tulare County.

For more information about the event, call 1-800-434-0222.

Calendar of Events



Around the South Valley

Wednesday, April 9 – 11 a.m.- 3 p.m. – Visalia Senior Center Open House. Barbecue lunch, entertainment, class exhibits and information booths. Tickets \$3.50 for 55+; \$4.50 for guests. Tickets are limited. 301 N. Locust, Visalia. Information: 559-713-4381.

Friday, April 11 – 11:30 a.m.-Noon – 50+ Speaker Series – Avoiding Falls. Free. Stay for lunch with 24-hour advance reservations. 301 N. Locust, Visalia. Information: 559-713-4381.

Friday, April 11-Sunday, April 13 – 41st Annual JazzAffair throughout Three Rivers. Three days of live jazz music for \$95, shuttle service from venue to venue included. Information: 559-561-4549, or jbarc@thegrid.net.
Saturday, April 12 – 12-4 p.m. – Bowling for PADS. High Game and Low Game Prizes, 1st & 2nd Place winner prizes, other prizes. All proceeds go to Porterville Adult Day Services. \$125/5-person team, any ages. Corporate sponsorships available. Porterville Lanes, 952 W. Grand, Porterville. Information: Tish Davis, 559-436-4782 or tdavis@auspicehomecare.com.

Saturday, April 12 – 7:30 p.m. – Tulare County Symphony at the Visalia Fox Theatre, 300 W. Main, Visalia. Information: 559-625-1369.

Tuesday, April 15 – 7:30 p.m. – The Great Guitars – Martin Taylor, Frank Vignola & Vinny Raniolo and Peppino D'Agostino at the Visalia Fox Theatre, 300 W. Main, Visalia. Information: 559-625-1369.

Wednesday, April 16 – 1 p.m. – Wellness and You: Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia with speakers, Stephen M. Grossman, M.D., C.M.D. and Marie Espinola, executive

director of Alzheimer's Foundation of Central California. Held at Quail Park, 4520 W. Cypress Ave., Visalia. Information: Kaweah Delta Healthcare District - 559-624-5085.

Wednesday, April 16 – 11:30 a.m.-Noon – 50+ Speaker Series – Waste Diversion Options in Visalia. Free. Stay for lunch with 24-hour advance reservations. 301 N. Locust, Visalia. Information: 559-713-4381.

Friday, April 18 – Sunday, April 20 – Exeter Open Air Peddlers Market on Palm Street. For booth rental or information: 559-592-1490; 559-936-1487.

Sunday, April 20 – 3 p.m. – PFLAG meeting. Meeting at Congregation B'Nai David, 1039 S. Chinowith St. Visalia. Information:

Friday, April 25-Sunday, April 27 – Basket and Gourd Conference at Visalia Oaks Lodge, 3100 W. Main St., Visalia. Information: 559-627-5430.

Saturday, April 26 – 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.- Diabetes Expo & Kidney Education Program - hosted in partnership with the American Nephrology Nurses' Association (ANNA), Kaweah Delta Outpatient Specialty Clinics and other local organizations, will provide attendees with a chance to take a kidney disease risk survey, get their body mass index measured, speak with a healthcare professional, and get free educational materials at Kaweah Delta Multiservice Center, 402 W. Acequia Ave., Visalia. Information and pre-registration: 559-624-2520 or eromero@kdhcd.org.

Saturday, May 3 – 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. – The Mighty Oak Chorus presents Harmony on Broadway featuring many Broadway hit tunes. Tickets \$16/adults; \$8/children 12 and under. At the Central Valley Christian High School Theatre, 5600 W. Tulare Ave., Visalia. Information and tickets: 559-901-4615; info@mightyoakschorus.com.

Friday, May 16 – 9 a.m.-2 p.m. – 45th Annual Senior Day in Mooney Grove Park. A luau with live music and food for seniors, their families and caregivers. Information: 1-800-434-0222.

For more events, go to our website www.TheGoodLifeSV.com

To submit events to the calendar, mail to Kast & Company Communications, P.O. Box 7173, Visalia, CA 93290, or e-mail to Editor@TheGoodLifeSV.com. Submissions must be appropriate for The Good Life readership of 50-and-over, and be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Springtime Brings Music to the South Valley

Traditionally spring brings the fragrance of blossoms and the beauty of flowers, but in the South Valley it is also a time when a lot of music fills the air.

April Jazz

In April, jazz returns to Three Rivers with the 41st annual JazzAffair on April 11-13. There are four venue stages featuring different bands all day and into the evening for three days. The High Sierra Jazz Band remains the traditional host band with 12 other bands including the local Reedley High School River Rats.

The event is organized by Sierra Traditional Jazz Club members, who contract bands from around the country and provide help with lodging and information for visitors from around the world, who gather to attend the event.

Tickets are \$95 for all three days including all concerts and a shuttle from one location to another. One-day tickets are also available. Food and drink is available at all sites.

Information and tickets: 559-561-4549, jbarc@thegrid.net.

May Broadway

May brings the sound of Broadway musicals to Visalia when the Mighty Oaks Chorus presents Harmony on Broadway on Saturday, May 3 at the Central Valley Christian High School Theatre.

Songs featured are from such Broadway hits at Les Miserables, Fiddler on the Roof, Oklahoma, Phantom of the Opera, Paint Your Wagon and more.

This is the 33rd annual show presented by the Mighty Oaks Chorus. The group has members from all around Tulare, Kings and Fresno counties. The chorus and quartets from the chorus sing at many local events in the South Valley.

Sponsors of the event include A&W Restaurants, ServiceMaster by Benevento, Iron Horse Design, Redwood Springs Healthcare and Village Printing.

There are two performances, a 2 p.m. matinee and 7:30 p.m. evening performance. Tickets are \$16/adults and \$8/children 12 and under. Advance tickets are available, although seating is first come, first serve.

Information and tickets: 559-901-4615, info@mightyoakchorus.org.

AARP Auto Insurance Program from The Hartford

Now available from your local independent agent!

Call Today for your FREE, no-obligation quote:

(559) 592-9411

The NSE Protection Team
NSE Insurance Agencies, Inc.
160 South D Street
Exeter, CA 93221

nse@nseinsurance.com
www.nseinsurance.com
CA License #0496557



*AARP Automobile Insurance Program from The Hartford is underwritten by Hartford Fire Insurance Company and its affiliates, One Hartford Plaza, Hartford CT 06155. AARP membership is required for Program eligibility in most states. AARP and its affiliates are not insurance agencies or brokers and do not employ or endorse insurance agents, brokers, representatives or advisors. The premiums quoted by an authorized agent for any program policy include the additional costs associated with the advice and counsel that your authorized agent provides.

107440 3rd Rev

The Good Life

Publisher	Larry Kast
Editor	Nancy Vigran
Art Director	Kent Stahl

For advertising information call 559-732-5030

The Good Life is published by Kast & Company Communications. Articles and information not written by Kast & Company Communications are assumed to be accurate as provided. This publication is does not provide professional, medical, legal or accounting advice, and always recommends seeking counsel from an appropriate professional.

Kast & Company Communications
PO Box 7173, Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 732-5030





Laughter can be contagious.
A healthy lifestyle can be too.

We're committed to providing quality health care to seniors so that they can maintain healthy and active lifestyles in their communities.

Call us today to schedule an appointment at one of our health centers near you. We also have dental services available at most sites. Pharmacy services are available in Visalia and Porterville.

Our Locations:

- Cutler-Orosi
- Farmersville
- Goshen
- Hanford
- Ivanhoe
- Porterville
- Springville
- Terra Bella
- Three Rivers
- Visalia
- Woodlake



Your Health. Our Mission.

877.960.3426 | fhen.org




History

Dusting Off History with Terry Ommen



The Emergence of Kings County

In 1852, nearly 25,000 square miles of land on the south end of Mariposa County was carved off creating Tulare County. The new county's boundaries stretched from the Los Angeles County line on the south, to the Mariposa line on the north. Its western edge was the coast range and on the east, the county line extended to what we now know as the Nevada state line.

But the huge new county, about the size of West Virginia, was not destined to remain so for long. In 1856, the northern section broke off forming Fresno County and in 1866 Kern and Inyo counties were created from the southern and eastern sections, respectively. For the next 27 years, Tulare County's boundaries remained intact, but in 1893 Tulare County gave birth

to yet another county—this one called Kings.

The beginning of the movement to create Kings County started in 1886, but the bill failed in the state legislature. By the 1890s, west side settlers were again grumbling about the inconvenience of Visalia as the county seat. They claimed it was too far to travel for the people living in and around Hanford where the majority lived. They also complained that Tulare County taxes were too high and noted that many tax dollars were going to areas like the mountains that had little connection to them.

Opponents of a new county, primarily those from the Visalia area, countered by saying Visalia was actually centrally located and the tax money used for mountain area services also



Photos courtesy of Terry Ommen

Kings County Courthouse in Hanford built in 1897.

benefited the western county settlers by providing lumber, mineral resources and pasture land.

Lobbying on both sides was heavy. The Hanford Sentinel advocated strongly for the new county while the Visalia newspapers staunchly opposed it. Surprisingly, the Lemoore Leader opposed the creation of the new county unless, of course, the city of Lemoore could become the county seat. The Visalia Delta expressed obvious frustration over the constant editorial bickering and asked for honest dialogue.

"People are always ready to listen to reason; but the nauseating medicines now being administered in gigantopathic doses make a patient and wearied public wish it had died when a baby," they lamented.

Advocates for the new county kept up the pressure and in March 1893, the state senate passed the Kings County bill. California Governor Henry Markham signed it, moving the final decision closer to a vote of the people. The Visalia Delta saw the momentum.

See History on page 4


Diabetes? It could be time for new shoes!

It's no secret that people with diabetes have an increased risk of developing foot problems. These problems can range from mild to major problems, especially if an ulcer or infection should pop up. These infections, if not treated quickly and properly, can and often do lead to amputation.

So how do diabetic shoes help? Quite simply, they lessen the possibility of an infected or ulcerated foot. You cannot drive over to your local shoe outlet and pick up a pair. These shoes can be obtained only by prescription and must be custom fit. You certainly don't want infections or ulcerations, so why not take the necessary steps to prevent them?

Let our licensed pedorthist, Deanna Jackson, come to your home to measure you and show you what is available. Free appointments are available throughout Tulare County.

- Diabetic shoes & insoles (custom and non-custom)
- Custom Orthotics using 3D scanning (custom and non-custom)
- Orthotic fitting of braces for Ankle, Knee, Wrist, Elbow, Back, Shoulder and Neck
- Masectomy and Protheses fitting



FREE prescription delivery daily
Monday - Friday to all local areas
including Dinuba, Sultana,
Cutler & Orosi

"The service you deserve from the neighbors you trust"

33060 Road 159, Ivanhoe **(559)798-1219**

Private Home Care SERVICES



**PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND COMPASSIONATE
EXPERIENCES, EVERY PERSON, EVERY TIME.**

Expert Care at Home

As an affiliate of Kaweah Delta Health Care District, we have the resources and professionals to customize a Care Plan for you. Long standing in the community, Kaweah Delta Private Home Care may be aware of resources that could benefit your needs. Upon hire, our employees are updated on care of Alzheimer's patients, infection control, confidential information and home safety. We provide education on a continuing basis. We want you to feel confident with the care we provide in your home.

Kaweah Delta has a team of experts involved in home care. We will review the care you need and coordinate any other services you may benefit from in Home Care.



(559) 624-2854 • www.kaweahdelta.org

To Buy or Lease Your Next New Car?

By Nancy Vigran, editor

Many years ago, when you needed a new car, you bought one. There was no such thing as a private lease. In more recent years, leasing has become a popular option. But it is not for everyone.

"There is a very narrow group of people for which a lease is advantageous," said Michael Manning, general manager of Jim Manning Dodge, Chrysler, Jeep, Ram in Dinuba. "Leasing is very rigid," Manning said.

If you know you will drive a limited number of miles per year and you like to pay a fixed amount per month, and know that repairs will be taken care of, then a lease could be for you.

This is especially true if you like to a new car every few years.

"If you don't fit that narrow window, then leasing is not for you," Manning said.

Leases are generally offered on luxury cars with a lot of features as opposed to standard models. Most leases are for three years with 30,000 miles covered by the lease. If you drive more miles, it will cost more. And if you have an accident, you and your insurance will have to pay for repairs.

A person's age does not factor into a lease agreement, whether they are twenty or sixty. However, whether the car is for personal use or business use can have some effect on the

decision, said Kevin Green, CPA, with the firm M Green & Company.

Everyone should do research on their own to help make an informed decision.

"No one should let a dealer talk them into a lease, (unless they have all of the details and options)," Green said.

"Do some independent study," he said, adding that whether for personal use or business use, or both, consumers should discuss whether to lease or buy with a financial advisor who is aware of their personal circumstances.

Manning and Green agree that it is important to look at the bottom line, the dollar ratio. A financial calculator on the M. Green & Company website,

www.mgreencpas.com/financial_tools, provides help with buying vs. leasing a new car. Type in the numbers for the vehicle you are looking at for a comparison.

"It's a number calculation, I think," Green said.

For some the decision could be more than just dollars, especially if there is little variation in the cost. Manning suggested considering whether you enjoy changing cars every few years, or get attached and generally like to keep the same one for a longer period of time. While you have the option of buying your previously leased vehicle, it generally will cost you more than buying it in the first place.

History

from page 3

"Kings County contains some of the best agricultural land in the San Joaquin Valley and with an enterprising population...it will prosper," it reported it reported on March 24.

Governor Markham appointed five local commissioners who divided the proposed new county into

supervisorial districts, set up voting precincts, and organized an election to allow the issue to go to the voters.

On May 23, 1893, the west side people went to the polls. After the votes were tallied the Visalia Delta announced the news, "Division Wins—the County of Kings Created by the Electors."

The total vote count was 1,355 for division and 412 against giving the new county

supporters more than the two-thirds majority they needed.

Today, Kings County is the 34th largest county with nearly 1,400 square miles. Even after losing ground on the north, south, east and west, Tulare County continues to have more than 4,800 square miles of land, and is the 7th largest in the state.

Local writer Terry Ommen enjoys learning about the old west, especially the role Tulare County played in creating it. He wrote the books "Then & Now Visalia, Wild Tulare County" and "Christ Lutheran Church, A Gathering Place for Half a Century." His blog, "Historic Happenings" www.visaliahistory.blogspot.com serves as a Visalia historical newsletter.

JIM MANNING
 DODGE CHRYSLER Jeep RAM SRT
www.JimManningDodge.com

Great selection of **NEW VEHICLES** ready for delivery



2014
AWARD SEASON EVENT
DOWNTOWN DINUBA
(559) 591-4910
 Sales Hours: M-F 7:30am - 7:00pm • Sat. 8:30am - 5:00pm • Closed Sundays

On the way to clearer nails

Finally, a quick and painless solution to stubborn nail fungus.

Visalia Medical Clinic podiatrist Joseph Reynolds, DPM, offers the PinPointe™ laser treatment.

It is effective and avoids the adverse effects of topical and oral medications. His Cosmetic Maintenance Program helps keep nails clear and healthy.

Show Off!

To request an appointment call Judy at 329-2634.

Be Well
Visalia Medical Clinic

Dr. Joseph W. Reynolds, DPM | 5400 W. Hillsdale | 329-2634 | VMCHealthyFeet.com

Manor House
 Senior Living at its Best!

- Beautiful Bedrooms with Private Bath
- Individually Controlled Heating & Cooling
- Three Meals a Day & Snacks
- Close to Churches, Shopping & Recreation
- Monthly rent includes Meals, Housekeeping, Laundry & Utilities

Call Today and Schedule a **FREE Lunch & Tour!**

For Seniors 62 & Over **592-2132**
 710 Lenox • Exeter

Rooms Available Now!

Home

Gardening in the Central Valley with Peyton Ellas



Spring in the garden: Enjoy the flowers

Springtime in California gardens is a bounty of flowers. From fruit trees to roses to California chaparral plants and wildflowers, we enjoy an abundance of riches, even when rainfall has been sparse. Ah, the wonder and beauty of nature, whether beyond the fence or in our own backyards! Also celebrating with us are hundreds of beneficial insects, birds, reptiles and mammals that share our gardens and revel in springtime bounty.

This year especially, we are all looking for new and creative

ways to reduce our outdoor watering. Many plants are simply over watered. Try reducing your water a little bit at a time until you find a happier, lower balance of water usage and plant health. You may discover that some established plants really didn't need watering at all. Sometimes the planting bed plants have their roots under the lawn and receive all they need from the turf sprinklers.

Consider eliminating or reducing the use of high-

See Gardening on page 7

GET WELL. GO HOME.

RAPID RECOVERY REHABILITATION

We understand that after a physical injury, disease or disability, it may be difficult to carry out activities of daily living.

We want to help you or your loved one gain back independence.



The journey toward home begins here...

Delta Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
514 N. Bridge St, Visalia 93291
559-732-8614

Kings Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
851 Leslie Lane, Hanford 93230
559-582-4414

Hanford Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
1007 W. Lacey Blvd., Hanford 93230
559-582-2871

Tulare Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
680 E. Merritt Ave., Tulare 93274
559-686-8581



Volunteer Corner

Poll Workers Receive Benefits

There are many reasons people volunteer. They want to help in their community. They want to learn about something different. It is a chance to socialize and meet new people. Or, they just may have spare time on their hands.

Offering to help at the election polls has all of these and one more bonus - it pays.

"There is always a need for poll workers," said Kari McCully, department of elections supervisor for Tulare County.

The job includes a small amount of lifting and moving things, but it is a group activity, she explained. The day is long, about 15 hours, but there are rewards.

"As a poll worker, they can see all the checks and balances that we use to make sure the ballots are counted correctly," McCully said, adding that anyone can observe and learn the process without working as a poll worker.

Those interested should complete an application to become a poll worker, which can be found on the website for each county. Poll workers must live in the county where they wish to work.

"There is a need for bilingual workers," said Janis Young, department specialist in Kings County, who coordinates poll workers and polling locations.

Before each election, Young

contacts previous workers to see if they are available. When there is a vacancy, she calls on those who have filled out an application. But even if not contracted to work at the onset, applicants can be called, even on the eve or the morning of Election Day.

"Between the times, life happens," Young said, explaining that something can come up, someone may no longer be available, or illness may prevent them from being able to work.

Kings County poll workers take a training class approximately one week before Election Day. The class lasts a few hours, and teaches all aspects of the workings of the polls.

Coordinators try to keep workers as close to home as possible, but the further someone can travel, the more helpful it is to the community.

Tuesday, June 3, is a statewide Election Day, at which time some 800 to 1,000 poll workers are needed in Tulare County alone.

Poll workers start their day at 6 a.m. and finish somewhere around 8:30 or 9 p.m. They are paid a stipend of around \$100 for the day, and receive payment approximately five weeks after the election.

For more information in Kings County, 559- 582-3211 ext. 4401.

For more information in Tulare County, 559-624-7301.

Fresh Cilantro Vinaigrette

- 7-8 tablespoons olive oil
 - ¼ cup minced fresh cilantro
 - ¼ cup lime juice
 - 1 ½ teaspoons sugar
 - 1 small clove garlic minced
 - ½ teaspoon salt (or salt substitute)
 - ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- Combine ingredients in a vinaigrette bottle and shake well to mix.

This is especially good atop spinach, avocado and seafood salads.



Recipe brought to you by



559-798-0557
www.familyfarmfresh.com

"Bringing the Farmers' Market to Your Door!"



Travel

Now is a Great Time to Book an Alaskan Cruise

By Nancy Vigran, editor

Pristine views, native traditions, unique wildlife; there is so much to see and do with a visit to Alaska. And while on a cruise, vacationers can pick and choose just how much they want to do, or how much they just want to relax.

May through September is cruise time to the 49th state, when the weather and water is best for travel. There are a wide variety of cruise lines and options from which to choose, and travelers should spend some time researching for what is best for their needs and what they want out of the trip.

And while there generally are no "senior discounts" available, now it is quite affordable to take an Alaskan adventure. Plan on a seven or 10 day cruise, or even longer. Cruises leave from ports in San Francisco, Seattle and Vancouver.

Each cruise generally has a southern-central Alaskan

destination port such as Seward or Whittier, where travelers may choose to spend a few days, exploring the local towns, habitat and lifestyle.

Cruises travel each way, so there is a choice to cruise up or down, or both. Some may wish to try a sea/land package, where the tour continues on land by rail or bus returning to the departing city.

Consulting a travel agent is a good idea, as they have a lot of experience working with cruise lines and can arrange the most desirable package for an individual, couple or family.

"We tailor the client to the right ship," said Christine Rowan, manager of Altour-Lewis Travel in Visalia. "It's like hotels, every hotel is different."

Some are more likely to enjoy a casual experience. Others would prefer to "dress" for dinner. Different itineraries and cruise lines offer different experiences.

It is important to take into



Stock photo

Glaciers are one of many draws for visitors on an Alaskan cruise.

consideration just what someone wants to see. Some trips show off more spectacular glaciers and wildlife, right from the ship, while others may offer more land excursions.

Alaskan cruises are a great vacation for grandparents to travel with their grandchildren or entire families, Rowan said.

Booking can be done as early as 18 months ahead of a cruise, and good deals can be made if booked early. However, for those who are more flexible and want to consider a last minute booking, great deals can be had, according to Yeti Ortiz, a consultant with Pro Travel in

Hanford.

"We get new specials all of the time," she said.

Prime travel time to Alaska is June through August, but there may be better deals for those who are willing to travel in May or September.

"I've gone in September, and we had the most beautiful weather," Ortiz said.

If an Alaskan cruise has been the wish list for some time, or is a spur-of-the-moment idea, this may just be a great year to go. With the competition for tourists up and the price of cruising down, it would be wise to check it out.

I believe that even the smallest act of compassion can have a large impact.

We believe that every moment matters. We believe in compassionate care. Most of all, we believe in dignity and respect for each patient we serve. Maybe that's why so many families believe in us when it comes to choosing a hospice provider.

For more information or to receive our free DVD, "Hospice and Your Loved One," call 559-685-9218. Or visit us at gentiva.com/hospice.

GENTIVA Hospice

Quercus Landscape Design

Landscape Design & Hourly Consultation
California Native Plant Retailer
Specialty Garden Service • Sustainable Gardening/Eco-Habitat

Sign-up online for our monthly newsletter
Serving Tulare County Since 2005
559 202.8351
www.QuercusLandscapeDesign.com

Peyton Ellas, Owner

Harris Home Furnishings

Free Delivery to surrounding area*

Open Monday - Saturday
10am to 5:30pm & by appointment

All Lift Chairs we carry are Made in America 

TEMPUR-PEDIC (559) 784-1746
214 North Second • Porterville

LA Z BOY
*some restrictions apply

Just Like Home

We are happy and dedicated to provide support and assistance to you, in your own home, whether you require a few hours or continuous care.

We provide flexible in-home care with peace of mind. Quality care Seniors expect and deserve.

Serving Tulare County since 1984

(559) 781-4378
365 North Pearson Drive, Suite #1
Porterville, CA 93257
www.jlh-care.com

"There is NO Place Like Home"

Family Owned, Operated & Licensed
A Division of VOSSCO, Inc.

Gourds

from page 1

Garrison farm, her creativity was inspired with images of abstract, traditional and ethnic motifs.

"I love the feel, touch and smell of what can be done with gourds," she said.

She and her husband threw themselves into learning about growing, drying and the array of methods and materials used in completing a gourd-inspired work of art. She has taken a number of classes, locally and at gourd festivals around the West, to gain insights into the use of dyes and paints, carving and pyrography. She envisions her own designs, often incorporating an Asian influence.

When the Catrons considered building a studio where they could work on gourds and display finished pieces, Rosemary knew she wanted a storage room, a burn room and a painting room, as well as a larger workroom where her

grandnieces could come to do projects. She likes to stand when she is carving or designing, so one of her worktables is tall and long, providing ample room to lay out project elements. The studio even has plumbing, so there is no need to leave the studio for a cup of coffee or other necessities.

Rodger Catron placed a 50-gal plastic drum outside with a locking lid, which can be filled with water. Here the dried gourds are submerged to loosen the cutaneous coating of the gourd and any mold that developed during the months of drying. After soaking a day or two, each gourd is scrubbed with a copper or steel scouring pad, leaving a smooth outer surface hard enough to carve with dremel-like tools or to accept wood burning. They work outdoors when cleaning gourds or doing those tasks that create dust, such as sawing or sanding. Working with gourds requires some attention to eye

safety and protection from the gourd dust or burn fumes, Catron says, which can set off respiratory issues.

Rosemary Catron is most drawn to using pyrography in her art. She is fascinated and even comforted, she said, by the ancient technique of applying heat to a surface to create an image. She has several burners and considers each important for their own qualities. She will never give up her old boy scout-style burning tool even though it is slower and limited compared to the more sophisticated burners with their multiple razor, spoon and micro tips, she said. She recently ordered an extra fine chisel pen for doing Chinese figures.

Catron is a woman with many interests.

"There is absolutely no excuse to sit and stare at a TV," she said.

She has tried telling herself she will practice burning or carving an hour a day, but admits it does not happen. Her time constraints are influenced by her creative whim, but this year she is determined to put her attention to two things she really enjoys, line dancing and gourds. She is dedicating at least two hours a day, three days a week to "gourding."

Next year, she may go on to sculpting, watercolor or some other form of art in her master plan but will never give up her gourds.

Donna Luallen is a freelance writer living in Visalia with her husband, Wayne. She is a master gardener who enjoys the outdoors including fly-fishing and also designs her own gourd art in her spare time.

Gardening

from page 5

nitrogen fertilizer. Many plants, including lawns, are over-fertilized, and in lean-water years we don't need to encourage more foliage growth. Convert to drip irrigation or water-saving pop-up sprinklers wherever possible. Mulch your garden beds to reduce evaporation and keep soil cooler. Consider replacing old plants that have never worked well or are pest-magnets with newer climate-right species. Consider making a species switch for your turf, or reducing the size.

Small changes add up, and all of these things are great spring-time jobs. We want to keep our gardens attractive and healthy, even in a drought, and we can. Instead of "grandmother's way," we can try to do things "granddaughter's way" looking to the future, recognizing the need to stop depleting the water aquifers future generations will need to grow food and prosper in our valley.

April and early May are fine months to transplant new plants, especially those that are frost sensitive, such as citrus and most succulents, or if you have an urgent need, such as a pest-insect ridden shrub, a water-hogging planting bed, an over-sized lawn. We shouldn't think we can't plant anything new just because we lack abundant water. A small new climate-right plant will use less water than a climate-wrong

larger plant.

By reducing water in our ornamental landscapes, we can still easily and successfully grow our own backyard vegetables and fruits. Many methods that work well for ornamentals work for edibles too. We can space vegetable plants closer together, water in the early morning hours instead of during the hot part of the day and grow varieties well suited to our region.

April and May are the best months to transplant summer vegetables and herbs like tomatoes, peppers and basil. You can also direct seed beans, melons, cucumbers, soft-neck garlic, okra and squash. By the end of May, you may be harvesting the garlic you planted in fall, as well as the last of cool season vegetables. Remember to use crop rotation to avoid pest problems, which means don't plant the same family of vegetables in the same place season after season, year after year.

Spring is a great time to be out in the garden. Once we have made the changes we need to and have a plan for keeping our gardens vibrant on less water, which often means less care too. We can relax and enjoy the birds, butterflies and blooms of spring. Enjoy!

Peyton Ellas is the owner of Quercus Landscape Design, specializing in California native plant-based gardens, and the owner of Auntie's Home Grown, a small sustainable farm.

Gourd Conference

Every two years the California Gourd Society holds a conference in Visalia, cosponsored with the Tulare-Sequoia Gourd Patch. Classes are offered in a variety of basketry and gourd techniques. This is an opportunity to see some of the best gourd art in the Western states.

The event is held at the Elks Lodge and is open to the public. The opening reception is Friday, April 25th at Arts Visalia, 214 E Oak Ave. The rest of the event, including classes on Saturday, April 26th and Sunday, April 27th, will be held at the Elk's Lodge, 100 W Main St. Visalia. More information can be found at the California Gourd Society website, www.californiagourdsociety.com.

The Good Life

Do you want each issue of The Good Life delivered to your door?

Subscriptions only \$2 per issue

Send name, address, phone and e-mail address to:

The Good Life,
P.O. Box 7173
Visalia CA 93290

email:
subscriptions@TheGoodLifeSV.com
or call: 732-5030

KAST & COMPANY
COMMUNICATIONS

Central Valley Gourders supports the Basket and Gourd Conference

April 25-27

Visalia Elk's Lodge
3100 W. Main St.

For Registration & information
call 559-627-5430
www.calgourd.com



PHYSICAL, OCCUPATIONAL,
AND SPEECH THERAPY

**Linwood
Meadows**
CARE CENTER

www.LinwoodMeadows.com
4444 West Meadow Ave, Visalia
(559) 627-1241

Senior Center

from page 1

an exercise room, a library/television room, and a computer room. The location makes it convenient for many local seniors to attend, being next door to the senior-living apartment complex and closer to downtown. In its first week of operation in late March, the center had 17 new seniors join and sign up for mid-day meals.

The old one was OK, but this one is so nice with more restrooms and the exercise room, and it's close to us, said Eva Martinez, who volunteers for lunch service and lives next door.

Her friend, Francis Nava, agrees.

I love it here, Nava said. Everything is so nice and clean.

CSET manages seven centers

throughout the county, each employing a manager and in some cases an assistant manager, and with the assistance of several volunteers like Nava and Martinez help to keep the senior centers and lunch programs running.

In Porterville, the center's average attendance is 50 to 55 for lunch, five days a week. Participants 60 and over are asked to pay \$2.50 per lunch, while friends and family who are younger, but always welcome to attend, are asked to pay \$4. Reservations should be made at least 24 hours in advance.

The Porterville Senior Center's current hours are 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. But in the near future, we hope to lengthen them, Cendejas said.

There is an exercise class Monday through Thursday from 11-11:45 a.m., and the computer



Photo by Nancy Vigran

Francis Nava keeps track of lunch reservations at the Porterville Senior Center. She first volunteered at the previous location two years ago and is happy with the new Center, which is next door to where she lives.

room is open for members to use any time during regular hours. More classes and other programs are also being planned, according to Cendejas.

Karen R. Munger

Medicare product specialist

4142 S. Demaree Street
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 737-9660
karenmunger@healthplans2protectU.com
www.karenmungerins.com
California Insurance # 0D73967

Call me for help with your health insurance needs



Discount Directory \$

Reach 200,000 area seniors here for far less than 1 cent each
Call 732-5030

GRANT'S

AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING
and AIR DUCT CLEANING
(559) 734-7361
www.grantsac-heating.com • LIC#622839
Serving Tulare & Kings counties

10% discount on any repairs for those 55+

Providing Exceptional In-Home Senior Care for 15 Years!

It takes a

Team of Professionals

to provide exceptional care ➤



Nutrition
Oral Care
Ambulation
Hydration

Amdal

IN • HOME CARE

We serve Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, San Luis Obispo (and Northern Santa Barbara County) and Northern Kern Counties.

Call today for your consultation! 888-798-0008 • www.amdalinhom.com