

Karen Ravn
Who Knew?



LIVING WITH NOT-SO-GREAT EXPECTATIONS

The other day I had a certain Dreaded Event scheduled for a certain Dreaded Time, which, as Dreaded Times tend to do, drew nigher and nigher and nigher at an utterly alarming rate until, really, I had no choice but to go out to the garage, get in my car and set off on my Dreaded Way.

Except . . . my car wasn't there!
I reacted as follows:
My car! My car! Where on earth is my car!
Did somebody steal it? Somebody stole it!
But it's so old! Who would want it?
But somebody did. Because it's gone!
Great. This is just exactly what I didn't need!
Plus, now I'm going to be late for the stupid Dreaded Event. I hate being late!
Although — come to think of it — I mean, really, maybe now I don't have to go to the stupid Dreaded Event.
I mean, how can I go?
I mean, I couldn't go even if I wanted to.
I don't have a car!
Yay!
I mean, not-yay! What's wrong with me? I need my car!
It's just that . . .
Oh, gee! Oh, brother! I bet I know where my car is. I parked on the street, didn't I?
Great.
I mean, thank goodness!
The point being, as I mentioned last week, a lot of being happy (or un-) depends on our expectations.

When I went out to the garage, I expected to find my car, and I expected to have to go to the Dreaded Event. When my car wasn't there, both of these expectations flew right out the window. I was glad to see the second one go, so glad I nearly forgot for a minute how bummed I was about the first.
But suppose my car had been in the garage just the way I thought it would be. I wouldn't have cried, "Hooray! I still have a car!" now would I? And I wouldn't have moaned, "Oh, woe! I still have to go to the Dreaded Event!"
I would simply have climbed into the car and (stoically, heroically) driven off to the Dreaded Event because all would have been right in my world — or proceeding as expected anyway.

That's what psychologists call a "neutral" situation, and we only get happy or sad, they say, when things get better or worse than neutral.
Last week I suggested that one way to make ourselves happier would be to lower our expectations, thus making our neutral situations easier to improve upon. For instance, we could expect to find hungry alligators in our bathtubs every morning — and be happy when we didn't.

But there's a problem with that, of course. In general, we expect the world to keep operating in the future the way it always has in the past unless we have a pretty good reason to think it might change. That seems to be the secret, if not to being happy, at least to staying sane. We expect the sun to rise in the east. We expect the tide to come in and go out . . . come in and go out . . . come in and go out. We expect our cars to be in the garage where we park them, always, always, (almost) always.

So unless you read a really scary story about alligators in bathtubs just before you fell asleep, or your neighborhood has been besieged of late by a rash of alligator home invasions, or you forgot to feed your pet alligator before you put him to bed in your bathtub last night, it should be pretty hard to convince yourself to honestly expect a hungry alligator in your bathtub in the morning.
And if it's not hard, maybe you don't want to tell anybody.
Which leaves us right about where we were last time.
Great. This is not what I expected at all!

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Monterey County LOCALSTATE

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Obituaries, B7

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42 Coast 39 Inland
Mostly sunny and seasonable.
WINDS: NW 5-15.
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B

One man cleared of all charges, one gets voluntary manslaughter for shooting Salinas man

Cousins acquitted of murder

By VIRGINIA HENNESSEY
Herald Salinas Bureau

A jury acquitted two Salinas men of murder with special circumstances Monday, finding one man not guilty of any crimes, but convicting the other of voluntary manslaughter.
The decision meant release for Harvey Blackburn, who has spent three years in jail awaiting trial for a crime he insisted he did not commit. His co-defendant, Christopher Griffith, who the jury found had personally fired the fatal shot, faces a

sentence of between seven and 22 years in prison.
Both men had faced life in prison without possibility of parole.
The pair, who are cousins, were charged in the death of Horacio Ramos-Ramirez, 26, who prosecutor Stephanie Hulsey described as a drug dealer killed during a robbery in an apartment on East Romie Lane in Salinas on Aug. 21, 2005.
Griffith, 33, testified that Ramos-Ramirez pulled a gun on him, intent on killing Griffith over an old score,

and that the shots were fired as the two struggled over the weapon.
Both he and his co-defendant contended there was no robbery, and Blackburn's attorney maintained his client only entered the scene to defend his cousin after the shots were fired.
The jury found both men innocent of robbery.
Hulsey said the jurors' verdict indicates either that they felt Griffith



Christopher Griffith was found guilty of voluntary manslaughter.

ORVILLE MYERS/HERALD FILE

Please see **Murder page B5**



DAVID ROYAL/The Herald

The Fulmar research vessel cruises into the Monterey harbor Monday.

UNDERSEA LIVE

LANDLUBBERS CAN EXPLORE OCEANS ON WEB IN REAL-TIME

By RACHEL TOMPA
Herald Staff Writer

Landlocked. Stuck at school. Can't swim. The excuses might have been barriers for ocean exploration in the past, but no longer.
Students and Internet users everywhere can now follow along as scientists dive through kelp forests, swim alongside whales and otters and otherwise study the vast underwater world of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.
"We're allowing students and Internet viewers to experience the underwater world of Monterey Bay without even getting wet," said Sarah Marquis, spokeswoman for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Sanctuary Program.
"The goal is to increase ocean literacy," said Dawn Hayes, education outreach coordinator for the National Marine



Steve Lonhart, left, and cameraman Mark Carroll demonstrate the film work they do underwater on the Fulmar research vessel.

Sanctuary Program. "We really want to make the connection between students on land, no matter where they live, and the ocean."
The National Marine Sanctuary Program teamed up with the University of

Rhode Island and the Mystic Aquarium & the Institute for Exploration to broadcast 30-minute shows live online and on Internet2, the noncommercial academic and

Please see **Fulmar page B5**

Salmon dip may be due to starvation

By JEFF BARNARD
Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. — Scientists examining the sudden and widespread collapse of West Coast salmon returns are pointing to the unusual changes in weather patterns that caused the bottom to fall out of the ocean food web in 2005.
NOAA Fisheries Service oceanographer Bill Peterson said Monday the juvenile salmon that left their native rivers and entered the Pacific Ocean in 2005 found little food being transported by the

California Current, which flows from the northern Pacific south along the West Coast.
The reason was that the jet stream had shifted to the south, delaying the spring onset of winds out of the north that create a condition known as upwelling, which kickstarts the ocean food web by stirring the water from bottom to top, the agency said.
"If there is no upwelling, there is no phytoplankton growth, no zooplankton growth, and basically you have no food

chain that develops, because it all depends on the upwelling," Peterson said from Newport.
"We are not dismissing other potential causes for this year's low salmon returns," NOAA Fisheries Service Northwest Science Center Director Usha Varanasi said in a statement. "But the widespread pattern of low returns along the West Coast for (both coho and chinook) salmon indicates an environmental anomaly occurred

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Big night for city council

MARINA MAYOR LEAVES; VOTE ON AUTO CENTER

By LARRY PARSONS
Herald Staff Writer

A full plate awaits the Marina City Council today as outgoing Mayor Ila Mettee-McCutchon will wield the gavel for the last time.
Besides deciding how to fill the vacancy created by Mettee-McCutchon's resignation to become a county supervisor, the council is scheduled to hear from a group seeking to build a retail auto center next to Highway 1 just south of central Marina.

Also, the council could take final action on the long-planned Marina Station project, which calls for 1,360 homes, apartments and condominiums along with retail, office and industrial buildings in a "traditional neighborhood" design on 320 acres on the northern city edge.

At the end of the busy agenda, the mayor is expected to submit her formal resignation from the post she has held since 2002 so she can step into the 4th District seat on the Board of Supervisors. That likely will set the stage for the other four council members to pick the next mayor from one of their own.

Mettee-McCutchon was appointed last week by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to fill the vacancy created by the November death of Supervisor Jerry Smith.

She said Monday that she will take the oath of her new office in a swearing-in ceremony at 11 a.m. Thursday in the supervisors' chambers in the Salinas county government center.

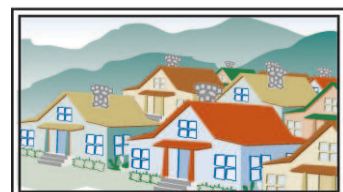
Before Mettee-McCutchon steps down as mayor, the Marina council will hold its second hearing on the Marina Station project.

The project could be ready for a final council vote, depending on the outcome of discussions between the developer and environmental critics seeking more open space in the project, City Manager Tony Altfield said Monday.

On the auto center proposal, the council for the second time will consider approving an agreement that would allow auto center proponents to pay for a

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Your Town



MONTEREY MODEL OF OLD ROW ON DISPLAY AT MUSEUM

A model of Old Cannery Row has been placed on display at the Monterey Maritime and History Museum, 5 Portola

Plaza, near Fisherman's Wharf.
The model was constructed by Cannery Row Foundation member Bill Johnk, who lived upstairs in the Wing Chong Market in the 1960s, and is on loan from the Oakland Museum of California as an extended exhibit. It will serve as the centerpiece for the 25th

Anniversary celebration of the Cannery Row Foundation.
For information, call 372-8512 or see www.canneryrow.org.
TORO PARK Department of Health lifts water warning
A "boil water" order for

California American Water customers in the Toro area issued Thursday has been lifted, according to California American Water.
The state Department of Health has determined through tests that the water in the system is safe to drink.
For information, call 888-237-1333.