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‘Zero Dark Thirty’: Hunting Down Osama Bin Laden All Over Again
By Richard Lawson | The Atlantic Wire

When, late on a Sunday night, Barack Obama went on television to announce that Osama bin Laden, mastermind of the September 11th terrorist attacks, had been killed by Navy SEALs, Americans, or at least those paying attention, were seized by a strange dichotomy. There were those who celebrated — most famously, right outside the White House — and those who felt that maybe celebration was the wrong response, inexact and tasteless. Our biggest bogeyman — an emblem, terrorism incarnate — had been taken out, but did we...
Commentary

We Say ‘Bah Humbug’ to OBAMACARE

By Aylene Senger,
Morning Bell

This year, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) almost called Obamacare’s individual mandate a tax, stopping mid-word to call it a “penalty”. White House Chief of Staff Jack Lew and other spokespersons echoed this talking point. This is in spite of last week’s Supreme Court ruling that deemed the mandate unconstitutional under both the Commerce Clause and the Necessary and Proper Clause, but ruled that it could stand as part of Congress’s authority to “lay and collect taxes.”

Dubbing the individual mandate a tax saved the President’s health care law, but it’s a concept that President Obama himself has strongly denied. In a 2009 interview, President Obama argued that his individual mandate was not a tax increase, stating, “I absolutely reject that notion.” But now, President Obama must now admit it’s a tax or admit the mandate is unconstitutional. It’s can only be one or the other.

The mandate is in fact a tax, and it’s just one of many new taxes that hit the middle class in Obamacare. Lo and behold, another broken promise. President Obama claims that the mandate is holding people responsible, keeping with that spirit, here’s a reminder of the other promises the President and his health care law are responsible for breaking:

Promise #1: “Under my plan, no family making less than $250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase.”

Reality: The individual mandate is far from alone on Heritage’s lengthy list of Obamacare’s new taxes and penalties, many of which will heavily impact the middle class. Altogether, Obamacare’s taxes and penalties will accumulate an additional $500 billion in new revenue over a 10-year period. Yesterday, a senior economist for The Wall Street Journal revealed that 75 percent of Obamacare’s new taxes will be paid for by American families making under $120,000 a year. Among the taxes that will hit the middle class are the individual mandate, a 2.3 percent excise tax on medical devices, a 10 percent excise tax on indoor tanning, and an increase of the floor on medical deductions from 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income to 10 percent.

Promise #2: “If you like your health care plan, you’ll be able to keep your health care plan, period.”

Reality: Research continues to show that as many as 30 percent of employers will dump their employees from their existing health care coverage. The Administration itself has admitted that “as a practical matter, a majority of group health plans will lose their grandfather status by 2013.”

Promise #3: “I will not sign a plan that adds one dime to our deficits — either now or in the future.”

Reality: As Heritage analysts explain, “A close examination of what [the Congressional Budget Office] said, as well as other evidence, makes it clear that the deficit reduction associated with [Obamacare] is based on budget gimmicks, sleights of hand, accounting tricks, and completely implausible assumptions. A more honest accounting reveals the new law as a trillion-dollar budget buster.”

Promise #4: “I will protect Medicare.”

Reality: A Heritage Factsheet shows the various ways Obamacare ends Medicare as we know it, including severe physician reimbursement cuts that threaten seniors’ access to care and putting an unelected board of bureaucrats in charge of meeting Medicare’s new spending cap.

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From Readers

The following letter is a response correspondence between Richard Matz, Military Press Publisher, and one of our readers, printed in the Dec. 1, 2012 issue.

Richard,
I just finished reading the December 12 edition of The Military Press.
I respect the “unsigned author’s rebuttal to your commentary piece (1 July 2012 issue). I also value his service to our nation and to his continued service in the community as a social worker and probation officer. He’s a servant and patriot and I know you agree that those two facts alone are to be respected and admired.

However, I’m continually flabbergasted nowadays at how some of our military members (active duty and veteran) seem to feel that there’s an obligated allegiance to the POTUS. I served my country 30 plus years and proudly wore the uniform of a United States Marine. During that time, I led, gave and followed orders. However, I readily admit that I didn’t “like” or agree with many of those orders and policies. I followed those that were “lawful.” Nor did I “respect” ALL Presidents or all elected officials... Instead, I respected my country, our flag, our way of life, etc. And to this day, I still do!

I beg to differ with the unnamed reader... Our system DOES NOT “put them in charge” of our country. Instead, it’s “We the People” who are (or should be) “in charge” of our country. They “serve” us not the other way around.

And “We the People” should be plenty “angry” with the lack of accountability in OUR current “system.”

Regarding “support,” in good conscience how (why) should we support rampant corruption, greed, etc.? Why should we support trillions of dollars of debt and no budget for the past four years and none in sight for the foreseeable future? Why should we “support” a complete lack of transparency? Why should we “support” those who don’t support our U.S. Constitution?

We’re NOT “Sheople!” As such, “We the People” SHOULD exercise our voices and votes MORE and louder...

As you’re aware, in our military Oaths of Enlistment/Office, we swear (or affirm) to SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST ALL ENEMIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC...We do NOT swear (or affirm) to “support and defend” the POTUS.

Richard, I “salute” you on exercising your rights and responsibilities as an American citizen - Freedom of Speech.

Richard, please continue to “tell it like it is”...Please continue to state the case and share the facts. Shy away from being “PC” and sugar-coating the message or medicine. There aren’t many others left who have the will or courage to do so...The main (lame) stream media sure doesn’t!

Lastly, and in all fairness maybe that’s why the unnamed reader takes exception with your commentary.

Semper Fidelis,

Frank Pulley
Sergeant Major, USMC (Ret.)
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Se Habla Español
Manny Pacquiao returns to Philippines after defeat: “We will rise again”

Manny Pacquiao has returned to the Philippines after his knockout loss to Juan Manuel Marquez, saying he will fight again despite some members of his family imploring him to retire.

Shortly after arriving in Manila on Wednesday, Pacquiao told fans “we will rise again” and “there will be future fights.”

He says he will rest for five months before going back to the ring.

Government officials and fans carrying signs that read “you’re still our greatest champion and hero” welcomed Pacquiao and his wife Jinkee at the airport.

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At The Movies

THE HOBBIT
An Unexpected Journey

By Jeri Jacquin
Movie Maven

This film tells the story of Bilbo Baggins (Martin Freeman) and his humble beginnings in Bag End, in the Shire of Hobbiton, sixty years before the battle of Mordor. Minding his business of living the life of a hobbit, he meets Gandalf (Ian McKellen). After an initial conversation Bilbo’s life changes at the drop of Gandalf’s hat!

Bilbo hears how the dwarfs home at Lonely Mountain that was taken over by the Dragon Smaug and now, the dwarfs believe it is time to reclaim it. All they need is their leader legendary warrior Thorin Oakenshield (Richard Armitage). The dwarfs must call upon all those who live in Middle Earth if their mission is to be successful.

Bilbo also has his encounter with Gollum in the cave of the underground lake leaving with more in his pocket than he came with.

Freeman is interesting as Bilbo Baggins. He also doesn’t take over the screen or the story. It will be interesting to see where Freeman takes the character with the next installment of THE HOBBIT: The Desolation of Smaug (2013).

It is always a joy to see McKellen and even more so when he takes up the grey hat and walking stick of Gandalf. The standout here is Armitage as Thorin. He is a deeply serious dwarf warrior who wants nothing more than to return to Lonely Mountain. He will be the next heartthrob of and I can pretty much guarantee that.

Peter Jackson, for this film, decided to shoot it in 3-D (48 frame rate) and have to say now it is totally unnecessary. I’m a firm believer in just because you can do a thing doesn’t mean you should do a thing. Headaches and fancy movement aren’t necessary to tell a good story in film.

TUBES OF POPCORN: I give THE HOBBIT: An Unexpected Journey four tubs of popcorn out of five. The story is Blowsome to my way of thinking and someone who has loved the work of J.R.R. Tolkien my whole life. The story is slow in its telling but its setting the viewer up for what is to come. Some parts of the audience will enjoy that while others may wish for a little less of it.

The scenery is comforting and recognizable, the score only adds to each part of the story and with 2013 and 2014 adding to the excitement, Jackson might have recaptured the audience.

So take a gander at the written works of J.R.R. Tolkien to discover how in-depth the story of Middle Earth truly is and what is to come for Bilbo and the cast of characters we all have come to embrace.

In the end – his home is now behind and the world is ahead!
Continued

really want to cheer for death? And what did Osama bin Laden amount to, exactly, in 2011, nearly ten years after he’d pulled off his most infamous act? We were quickly distracted from that quandary by the action-movie plot of it all, as we learned details about a place called Abbottabad, about the mighty SEAL Team 6, about the strange things found in bin Laden’s compound (porn, namely). But what was lost in all these exciting bits of narrative, perhaps, and in the torn emotions of a country unsure of what, exactly, it had “won,” were the real nuts and bolts and process of the years-long hunt for this Big Bad Man. And so, in an effort to sift through the historical data and explain to us how this all went down, director Kathryn Bigelow has made Zero Dark Thirty, a long and sober and theatrical spellbinding account of CIA people treading moral lines and sifting through piles of nothing to find one seven-foot Saudi.

Our follow car through this nearly-decade span of time is a young CIA officer named Maya, played with theatrical vigor by Jessica Chastain and based on a real person — a lot of this movie is real, and in new and surprising ways, which makes it even more chilling and relevant here and now, three weeks before its release. At the beginning of the film, Maya is new to the field, arriving in Pakistan and going straight to a brutal water-board interrogation. She’s hesitant and off-put — she looks away during the water-boarding interrogation. She’s here and now, three weeks before its release, which makes it newsy and relevant.

In its length and up-close intensity, Zero Dark Thirty struck me as almost a geopolitical version of David Fincher’s Zodiac, another movie about an individual consumed with a hunt that most others have given up. Of course that story ends, excruciatingly, with nothing but a big and shadowy question mark, whereas we know where Zero Dark Thirty is ultimately headed.

In its final moments is unintentional. And of course she is, and the film’s climax shows us the SEALs — among them Joel Edgerton and a disarmingly goofy Chris Pratt — doing their thrilling, deadly work. It’s honestly difficult to not forget one’s political convictions at this point in the movie, so awed are we by the majesty and efficiency of our sleek, technological armed forces. Oh, how those stealth helicopters whir through the night! My, how precise and forceful these highly skilled killing machines look as they bust open doors and clear rooms! Bigelow does not shy away from the fact that these men are invading a home filled with non-combatants — namely wives and children — and yet we are still, maybe shamefully, rah-rah-ing along with our guys. I suppose that, as in the analysis scenes, we may simply be cheering for jobs done as well as they can be done, but I also felt an uncomfortable twinge of jingoism rising up in me while I watched this hushed, nighttime raid. Bigelow’s film resonates and connects on multiple levels. We have the profoundly answered intellectual curiosity about how this guy got found, there’s the cool vision of investigative and technical mastery, and there’s a quieter vein of introspection that carries the film to its mysterious final shot. Bigelow closes her film not with a grand pullback on the World Trade Center pullback on the World Trade Center,

where Zero Dark Thirty is ultimately headed. Still, Bigelow and Boal make some salient points by highlighting Maya’s near-crazed fixation and alienation; what good is chasing down one symbol at the expense of ignoring all of that for which it stands? Of course other arms of the CIA were investigating elsewhere while Maya was buried in a pile of satellite images and nom-de guerre, but the film does point to unhawrted post-9/11 terrorist attacks like the 777 bombings in London as a way of dismayingly suggesting that the Western world’s intelligence agencies were perhaps looking in the wrong direction, toward revenge and reprisal rather than larger-reaching prevention. But somehow, despite all that, we are still instep with Maya, even as she suffers setback after setback, essentially relegated to the Fox Mulder crackpot wing of the agency.

Eventually, though, she gets a break. While trying to find a guy who believed to be bin Laden’s chief courier — his liaison to the outside world — Maya realizes she may have just stumbled on bin Laden himself. Though the eventual raid on the Abbottabad compound is a foregone conclusion, the lead-up to the event is still freighted with a kind of logistical suspense. By now we’ve spent two hours rattleing around inside Maya’s head, and so the notion she might finally be proven right feels of vital importance. And of course she is, and the film’s climax shows us the SEALs — among them Joel Edgerton and a disarmingly goofy Chris Pratt — doing their thrilling, deadly work. It’s honestly difficult to not forget one’s political convictions at this point in the movie, so awed are we by the majesty and efficiency of our sleek, technological armed forces. Oh, how those stealth helicopters whir through the night! My, how precise and forceful these highly skilled killing machines look as they bust open doors and clear rooms! Bigelow does not shy away from the fact that these men are invading a home filled with non-combatants — namely wives and children — and yet we are still, maybe shamefully, rah-rah-ing along with our guys. I suppose that, as in the analysis scenes, we may simply be cheering for jobs done as well as they can be done, but I also felt an uncomfortable twinge of jingoism rising up in me while I watched this hushed, nighttime raid. Bigelow’s film resonates and connects on multiple levels. We have the profoundly answered intellectual curiosity about how this guy got found, there’s the cool vision of investigative and technical mastery, and there’s a quieter vein of introspection that carries the film to its mysterious final shot. Bigelow closes her film not with a grand pullback on the World Trade Center
After more than 2.4 million votes were cast internationally, Hunger Games’ humble yet fierce Jennifer Lawrence took the number one position on AskMen's "Top 99 Most Desirable Women" list. In the poll, which surveyed AskMen readers, Lawrence shot up ahead of her Hollywood peers, including Kristen Stewart (No. 7), Jessica Biel (No. 24), Charlize Theron (No. 97) and reality TV star Kim Kardashian, who dropped from No. 8 on last year's list to No. 98 this year.

The 12th edition of the Top 99 Most Desirable Women poll, calls on AskMen readers to elect women who most closely match their ideals. These men were tasked with voting on more than just sex appeal, taking into account character, intelligence, talent, sense of humor, professional success, achievements in 2012 and potential for 2013.

Lawrence's victory follows an incredible 2012 for the 22-year-old starlet, whose breakout performances in Hunger Games and Silver Lining Playbook turned the heads of men worldwide and pinned her as the next big thing. Lawrence is followed by TED actress Mila Kunis, who has consistently appeared on AskMen's Top 99 since 2008 a Sports Illustrated turned Vogue model Kate Upton stayed high up on the list, landing at No. 3, dropping only one spot from the 11th edition of the list.

With more than 40% of the women on the list appearing for the first time, it’s fair to say there is a new breed of strong and independent women taking over. Take Lawrence's No. 1 ranking after her fearless roles, or Claire Danes, who earned an Emmy this year for her standout performance on Homeland, at No. 20. Anne Hathaway shaved her head for her dramatic role in Les Miserables and came in at No. 47. Other powerful women on the list include Marissa Mayer, President and CEO of Yahoo!, at No. 59, First Lady Michelle Obama at No. 33 and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova of Russian activist-punk group Pussy Riot at No. 85.

James Bassil, Editor-In-Chief of AskMen, commented, "The top-rated women on AskMen's 12th edition of the Top 99 Most Desirable Women list speaks to men's growing comfort with strong and independent partners. While undeniably successful candidates like Marissa Mayer have rocketed up the list, the more ambiguous "career" women – like Kim Kardashian – have plummeted on it."
‘Tis The Season

A Brief History of the Ugly Christmas Sweater

By Allison Berry

The ugly Christmas sweater has become a ubiquitous feature of the holiday season, often with grumbling about Black Friday or wrestling with the Christmas lights. But these tacky garments are now being re-appropriated from their perpetual spot in the wardrobe of great-aunt Edna or your third grade social studies teacher. Telltale signs of the ugly sweater are liberal use of red and green, comically large depictions of snowmen, reindeer, and Christmas trees, and any sort of pom-pom or felt applique.

Though the sweater as a garment has existed in the U.S. since the late 19th century, hideous holiday versions only began to sprout up in the last several decades. Bill Cosby was a modern-day pioneer of the trend and is revered as an ugly sweater icon. As Cliff Huxtable on his eponymous ‘80s sitcom, the family man’s uniform of choice was a wooly pullover with questionable color mixing and patterns. Thanks to Cosby, as well as Chevy Chase in National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation, these sweaters experienced a resurgence until their popularity faded as the ‘90s began.

But in the past decade, the trend has picked up steam once more. According to The Ugly Christmas Sweater Party Book: The Definitive Guide to Getting Your Ugly On, there was a noticeable uptick in ugly sweater parties around 2001, and the tradition snowballed from there. Now the tops are bigger than ever, but in a very hipstery, oh-so-ironic way. Vintage stores, the Salvation Army, and Goodwill are reaping the benefits of this craze, but the trend has reached as far as fast-fashion shops like H&M and high-end retailers such as Nordstrom. And really, what better way to de-stress than to throw on an obnoxious sweater and have a laugh?

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By Frank Wilkins

Foul Play on Catalina Island or Massive Cover-up?

Natalie Gurdin was born in San Francisco in 1938, to Russian immigrants Nikolai and Maria. When she was just four years old she appeared as an extra in her first movie, Happy Land, with her mother. Convinced her daughter had that special screen presence, Maria moved her family to Los Angeles and changed Natalie's name to Natalie Wood. Although she would eventually go on to appear in over 50 movies, she is probably best known for her role as little Susan Walker in the Christmas classic Miracle on 34th Street.

At the Macy's Department Store Thanksgiving Day parade, the actor playing Santa is discovered to be drunk by a whiskered old man. Dorris Walker, the no-nonsense special events director, persuades the old man to take his place. The old man proves to be a sensation and is quickly recruited to be the store Santa at the main Macy's outlet. While he is successful, Ms. Walker learns that he calls himself Kris Kringle and he claims to be the actual Santa Claus. Despite reassurances by Kringle's doctor that he is harmless, Doris still has misgivings, especially when she has cynically trained herself, and especially her daughter, Susan, to reject all notions of belief and fantasy. And yet, people, especially Susan, begin to notice there is something special about Kris and his determination to advance the true spirit of Christmas amidst the rampant commercialism around him and succeeding in improbable ways.

Starring Maureen O'Hara, Edmund Gwenn and Natalie Wood

By the time she had reached 18 years old, Natalie Wood was already a veteran of the screen with more than 30 movies in the can. In 1955, at a mere 17 years old, she starred in "Rebel Without a Cause" opposite James Dean. The Academy would honor her with a nomination for best supporting actress in this film.

On her 18th birthday, Natalie would go on a studio-arranged date with Robert Wagner. After a year-long courtship, Natalie and Robert would marry on December 28, 1957. But Natalie would soon discover that juggling the fame of her movie-star lifestyle with her desire to lead a private life would be too much. She soon found herself confused and depressed. After her divorce, brought about by the discovery of her husband's sexual indiscretions with an opposite James Dean, The Academy would honor her with a nomination for best supporting actress in this film.

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The mysterious death of Natalie Wood

Natalie Wood died on December 29, 1981, after being found unconscious in the bathtub of her hotel room. The official cause of death was listed as drowning, but many in Hollywood suspected foul play. The investigation was botched, and the case was closed without any charges being filed.

Decades later, in 2003, a new film, "In a Lonely Place," was released, which suggested that Natalie Wood's death was the result of murder. The film was based on the murder of actress Lana Turner, who was found dead in the bathtub of her home in 1958. The film depicted a murder plot involving a Hollywood star and a young everybody in the movie business.

The film caused a stir in Hollywood, with many people questioning the official cause of death and calling for a new investigation. The case was reopened, and a new autopsy was performed. The results were guarded, with some suggesting that Natalie Wood may have been strangled.

The case remained unsolved for many years, with many in Hollywood calling for a new investigation. In 2010, a new documentary, "Blood Ties," was released, which suggested that Natalie Wood's death was the result of murder. The documentary was based on the murder of actress Lana Turner, who was found dead in the bathtub of her home in 1958. The documentary suggested that Natalie Wood's death was the result of murder, and that the case had been botched.

The documentary caused a stir in Hollywood, with many people calling for a new investigation. The case was reopened, and a new investigation was launched. The investigation was halted in 2010, with the case being closed without any charges being filed.

The case remains unsolved, with many in Hollywood calling for a new investigation. The case has become a symbol of the corruption and cover-ups that exist in Hollywood, and has become a rallying cry for those who seek justice.

Kris Kringle aka Edmund Gwenn

Born Edmund John Kellaway in Wandsworth, London and educated at St. Olave's School and later at King's College London, Gwenn began his acting career in the theatre in 1895. Gwenn's career was interrupted by his military service during World War I; however, after the war, he began appearing in films in London. (Cecil Kellaway was his cousin and Arthur Chesney was his brother.)

He is perhaps best remembered for his role as Kris Kringle in Miracle on 34th Street, for which he won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor.

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Decades later, in 2003, a new film, "In a Lonely Place," was released, which suggested that Natalie Wood's death was the result of murder. The film was based on the murder of actress Lana Turner, who was found dead in the bathtub of her home in 1958. The film depicted a murder plot involving a Hollywood star and a young everybody in the movie business.

The film caused a stir in Hollywood, with many people questioning the official cause of death and calling for a new investigation. The case was reopened, and a new autopsy was performed. The results were guarded, with some suggesting that Natalie Wood may have been strangled.

The case remains unsolved, with many in Hollywood calling for a new investigation. The case has become a symbol of the corruption and cover-ups that exist in Hollywood, and has become a rallying cry for those who seek justice.

Kris Kringle aka Edmund Gwenn

Born Edmund John Kellaway in Wandsworth, London and educated at St. Olave's School and later at King's College London, Gwenn began his acting career in the theatre in 1895. Gwenn's career was interrupted by his military service during World War I; however, after the war, he began appearing in films in London. (Cecil Kellaway was his cousin and Arthur Chesney was his brother.)

He is perhaps best remembered for his role as Kris Kringle in Miracle on 34th Street, for which he won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor.

The mysterious death of Natalie Wood

By the time she had reached 18 years old, Natalie Wood was already a veteran of the screen with more than 30 movies in the can. In 1955, at a mere 17 years old, she starred in "Rebel Without a Cause" opposite James Dean. The Academy would honor her with a nomination for best supporting actress in this film.

On her 18th birthday, Natalie would go on a studio-arranged date with Robert Wagner. After a year-long courtship, Natalie and Robert would marry on December 28, 1957. But Natalie would soon discover that juggling the fame of her movie-star lifestyle with her desire to lead a private life would be too much. She soon found herself confused and depressed. After her divorce, brought about by the discovery of her husband's sexual indiscretions with another woman, Natalie took her own life, setting off a mystery that would span three decades and involve some of the most prominent names in Hollywood.

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Military News

Camp Pendleton Panda Express Christmas Freebee

On Dec. 25, the Panda Express aboard Camp Pendleton is offering a free two-item combo meal with soda to all active duty military, family members, retirees and DoD personnel. Military identification required. Additional charge for premium entrees. Yummy and no dishes to clean up. Available only base location.

Alcohol-free New Years Party

The 18th Annual Non-Alcoholic New Year’s Eve Bowling Party will be held at SEA, AON Air Lanes, NASNI on Monday, December 31, 2012 from 7:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Military Tribute Days at Knott’s Berry Farm

Now through January 6, 2013. Free admission for active duty military and veterans and a guest. Plus, purchase up to 6 additional tickets for only $25 each at your base MWR Ticket Office. DoD civilians are not eligible for the free admission, however they may purchase the additional discounted tickets. For more details call 619-556-2174.

Winter Camp for Kids Coming

Bring your kids to explore Winter Magic, Physics Fun, Tinkering Time, Grossssss!! Stuff or Flying Objects at the Fleet! School is out for winter break, and there is no better place to spend those break days than at the Fleet for fun days dedicated to hands-on science explorations for Grades 1, A12 and 3, A14. Sign up for one day, multiple days or all five! To register, please contact our Client Services Department at 619-238-1233, ext. 806.

Camp is held non-consecutive days, Thursday, Dec. 27 to Friday, Jan. 4, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center. Call 619-255-9426 or email schicione@fleets.org for more information.

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Lincoln Military Housing Pick-A-Prize

Now through Dec. 31, Lincoln Military Housing is giving away MCCSGift Certificates every single day. Register at http://goo.gl/3u9Ar to win.

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Setting Goals for the New Year

Sometimes when people hear the words ‘goal or resolution,’ it’s almost like a scary movie moment. You’ve seen this before and are screaming at the screen, “No. Don’t do it!” Try not to be too scared, pessimistic or standish this year when you create that New Year’s goal; it can be fun, if you let it. “Just Do It!” and try for something new, crazy, adventurous or financially responsible for the next year.

Let’s start a new craze like bringing the ‘80s back, jeggings, Pinterest or Elf on the Shelf but free, less creepy and weird. My idea is simple; just change your way of thinking about goals.

If setting goals is 100% negative process for you and you know you’re going to throw your resolutions out the window almost as soon as you make them, try starting with smaller goals. Realize that you can achieve a small goal while working on the larger picture and waiting for results will seem less daunting. For instance, try to save $20 from each paycheck to put away specifically for holiday spending for next year. You’re not saving an extreme amount of money at one time but you’re building up to what will be about $500 or more when December rolls around again.

Also... it’s not guaranteed that on December 31, your resolution will magically be easier to do. When you accomplishing your goals be easy... but you’ll succeed. Get motivated friends to exercise with you, find free financial advisors to keep you on track, find a Jane Wayne Day evening motivators exercising with you, free financial advisors to keep you on track, find and attend a Jane Wayne Day, and keep striving for your goals.

It’s easy to get discouraged these days. We’re almost all accustomed to instant gratification via email, text, television, Google, Skype, credit cards, etc., and sometimes have forgotten it takes time to achieve some big steps and goals in life. If you want a more communicative marriage, to start college, get a job, buy a horse, work on your Master’s degree, have a baby, invest in the stock market, buy a house — then you’ll have to do some homework and fight for what you’re working towards. Marine spouses are no stranger to adversity. Whatever it is you intend to do, always remember to think of others before you, yourself. Love your Marine unconditionally (your kids too maybe), send handwritten cards because they mean more, volunteer when you have the time but do not forget yourself in taking care of everything and everyone else.

Happy New Year my Steel Magnolias of the Marine Corps! 

Helping Veterans During the Holidays

By Bob Zimmerman
Vetern Advocate

There are all sort of wonderful organizations serving the military and homeless in San Diego. Here are a few helping out this holiday season.

• PayOffLayaways.org: American Christmas Santas are showing up at Walmart across America to pay off Christmas layaways for low income families. Visit their website for more information.

• UT Food Toy Drive: The Salvation Army and U-T team up to collect more than 1.25 million pounds of food and toys this holiday season. Bring a new, unwrapped toy or stockting stuffer or perizable foods to a drop off location by Dec. 21. Visit www.utsandiego.com/foodtoydrive for more information.

• The Shelters for Vets in Need: This is the 15th year of a shelter for homeless veterans during the cold winter months. Veterans Village, a San Diego nonprofit founded in 1981 to offer treatment and housing for struggling veterans, operates the 150-bed facility in a massive city-owned tent.

• The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) helps veterans all year long. Their staff of volunteers links hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families with services that address physical, emotional and financial needs. Donating household items, clothing and money helps veterans all year.

Navy suspends early release program for sailors

Stars and Stripes

With an eye toward unfilled seabillings and maintaining current force levels, the Navy has suspended a program that allowed eligible sailors to opt out of their service contracts up to 24 months early.

The Enlisted Early Transition Program was launched in 2004 amid “unprecedented” retention and recruiting, allowing sailors to request to separate up to 12 months early, according to a Navy statement. The program was expanded to 24 months in 2011, but was rescinded Friday.

Commanding officers have the option to approve sailors departing up to 90 days early for “medical reasons and if their separation date falls during the month of their unit’s deployment.” Navy documents state. Sailors seeking an early release from active duty also can still do so through the Early Career Transition Program.
New ‘Big Sky’ Neighborhood Under Construction

Breathtaking views from all sides in this elevated community under construction in Menifee, Calif.

MENIFEE, CA — Exciting milestones continue to unfold at Big Sky in Audie Murphy Ranch, where model homes are under construction for the largest one- and two-story, single-family designs within this naturally majestic master-planned community. Coming early 2013, Brookfield Homes will introduce floorplans specially created for Audie Murphy Ranch buyers with a focus on family living. Presenting the perfect balance of indoor and outdoor spaces, Big Sky will be situated on large lots that are ideal for year round activity, while thoughtfully planned designs reveal numerous room options so your home can evolve as your life and styles change. As homebuyer excitement increases daily for this extraordinary new home opportunity within Menifee, visit www.BigSkyBrookfield.com today and place your name on the growing interest registry to receive important updates.

Big Sky’s elevated community setting against a backdrop of century-old rock formations will offer distant panoramas of the San Bernardino Mountains, open space and the valley. Presenting the convenience and flexibility that growing families need, one- and two-story floorplans will range from approximately 2,790 to 3,800 square feet, with 4 to 5 bedrooms and three- and four-car garages. Other smart spaces will include expansive dining rooms for entertaining, generous areas for crafting and home schooling, as well as super laundry rooms, large closets and abundant storage space for toys, tools and sports equipment. Prices are anticipated to start from the low $300,000s.

Homebuyers who value a convenient location will appreciate Big Sky’s desirable Audie Murphy Ranch setting near the I-15 and I-215 freeways.

The community’s location near the

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HOUSING

DIVORCE: How to Avoid Costly Housing Mistakes Before and After

SAN DIEGO — Divorce is rarely easy and often means a lot of difficult decisions. One of the most important decisions is what to do about the house. In the midst of the heavy emotional and financial turmoil, what you need most is some non-emotional, straightforward, specific information and answers. Once you know how a divorce affects your home, your mortgage and taxes, critical decisions are easier. Neutral, third-party information can help you make logical, rather than emotional, decisions.

Probably the first decision is whether you want to continue living in the house. Will the familiar surroundings bring you comfort and emotional security, or unpleasant memories? Do you want to minimize change by staying where you are, or sell your home and move to a new place that offers a new start? Only you can answer those questions, but there will almost certainly be some financial repercussions to your decision process. What can you afford? Can you manage the old house on your new budget? Is refinancing possible? Or is it better to sell and buy? How much house can you buy on your new budget?

To help you know what questions you should ask and how to arrive at the right answer for your specific situation, a FREE special report has been prepared by industry experts entitled “Divorce: What You Need to Know About Your House, Your Mortgage and Taxes.”

To order a FREE Special Report, visit www.DivorceTipsVA.com or to hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1-800-294-0388 and enter 6009. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Get your free special report NOW to find out how to make this part of your current situation less stressful.

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On a hillside in Korea 1st Class Frederick McClellan Sr. pretends to be dead on Christmas Day

Instead of opening presents, sitting down to a big dinner or attending religious services, retired Sgt. 1st Class Frederick McClellan Sr. spent Christmas 1950 on a hillside in Korea pretending to be dead.

After first serving in Japan, he was discharged on June 24, 1950. The war in Korea started the next day, and he decided to reenlist. McClellan wanted to go to war with his buddies from the occupation of Japan, but not only was he assigned to a different unit, he became the point man, which meant he had to walk to 10 to 15 yards in front of the rest of his squad, constantly exposed to the enemy.

“It was real scary,” he said of the squad's almost nightly patrols. “I was trying to make contact with the enemy.”

Instead, the enemy found him on Dec. 25, 1950. But he wasn't on patrol and most of his unit was asleep when Chinese soldiers overran their position.

Stationed at the top of a hill, all of the machine gunners were practically killed in their sleeping bags, he said. Part way down the hill, McClellan heard their screams and had time to roll out of his sleeping bag and stretch out on the frozen ground, to keep a low profile.

“All I was thinking was that if they see me, they're going to come over and bayonet me or shoot me to make sure I'm dead. So I just started praying and hoping that they'd never see me.”

If he fixed bayonet and charged the Chinese, he knew he would die. If he ran back toward his unit at the bottom of the hill, he knew they might mistake him for the enemy and shoot him.

Of the seven men on that hill, he was the only one who walked off, after laying motionless for about three hours without gloves in subzero temperatures. The resulting frostbite was so severe that doctors told him if he had been outside another 15 minutes, he would have lost his hands.

He was evacuated to Japan after only four months in Korea and was awarded the Purple Heart, before spending the rest of his career in the Army and civil service. McClellan still takes pain medication for his hands and has post-traumatic stress disorder from the attack.

The huge spread at Christmas brings cheer to weary troops in Iraq

Operation Iraqi Freedom: Andrew D. Swilling

With three deployments to Iraq under his belt, Staff Sgt. Andrew D. Swilling, a military policeman with the 3rd Infantry Division's 293rd MP Company, has seen the war go from invasion to insurgency to surge to relative calm.

Of the three, his most recent tour, from November 2006 to February 2008, sticks with him most. Located in Muqdadiyah in Diyala Province in northern Iraq, he said it was particularly violent. With the town taken over by insurgents and only one route back to the main base, they were fairly easy targets.

“For about 10 months it was a fight every day,” Swilling said. “Someone was getting hit every single day. A lot of people were injured. It was a nasty situation. A lot of times it was very scary. But it's one of those things that nobody lets on to. The last thing you want someone to think is that you're scared. Everyone else who's with you is thinking the same thing. They don't want their buddies to think that they're scared.”

There were several attacks that should have killed him, Swilling said. One improvised explosive device blew the back off his vehicle. Another detonated next to his seat and was so strong it burned all the hair off his gunner's arms. No one was seriously hurt either time, a fact that still amazes Swilling.

“My first thought was 'I'm dead.' Then I thought, 'Well, I'm thinking, so I'm probably not dead.' It's one of those things that I think about, not every day, but pretty often. It was just one of those experiences where you don't know how you lived through it. That one stays with you. A lot of the IEDs do because they're just so sudden and so violent," he said.

The worst part, Swilling said, was knowing that every time they left their base, something was probably going to happen. He couldn't even entirely blame the insurgents, because he knew many of them were only there because al Qaeda threatened their families.

And then, the surge came to Diyala and Swilling said things changed overnight. Al Qaeda disappeared, roads were safe and markets reopened. It was a huge relief, he said, especially because he volunteered for his next two assignments, in part because of his Soldiers. He said he was supposed to lead them, but instead they constantly amazed him with their bravery and dedication.

It was worth eating the same meals over and over again, although according to Swilling, the food improved after his first deployment, when he had meals-ready-to-eat for months at a time. Swilling said Soldiers got so sick of them that they started buying food from Iraqis: kebobs, chicken and even pizza.

There were special shipments of food for holidays, however. According to Swilling, the food improved after his first deployment, when he had meals-ready-to-eat for months at a time. Swilling said Soldiers got so sick of them that they started buying food from Iraqis: kebobs, chicken and even pizza.

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A Soldier’s Christmas Story
Continued from page 3

By Michael Connolly, U.S. Army Veteran

A soldier nervously finds his weapon and stares into the darkness watching for any sign of the enemy. He is alone this night because yesterday his best friend, who usually shared this position with him, was killed. He misses him, he was a brave man who left a wife and two small children behind. The soldier hopes that he will survive this war and someday be able to tell the little ones how bravely their father had died defending freedom. He doesn’t know exactly what time it is but his instincts tell him that it is approaching midnight on this Christmas Eve. Soon it will be Christmas morning at home and his own family will be getting up to have breakfast and open presents. His breakfast will consist of some cold sparse rations and a sip of water from his canteen. There will be no hot cider or coffee for him and no turkey dinner later in the day. He hopes his family enjoys the Christmas celebration and understands why he can’t be with them. There are people in the world that would destroy the things he is fighting to defend, and he faces them this night. He would rather be home, but this is his choice and his responsibility. He hopes his countrymen appreciate what he is doing, but sometimes he wonders. Then he tells himself that it doesn’t matter, he would be here anyway.

The soldier takes a moment to reach out and gently touch the Christmas tree he and his buddy had set up shortly before he died. It’s not really a tree at all, just a branch that had been blown off a real tree by an artillery shell. They had dug a hole in the hard ground and set it up. Of course, they had no tinsel or ornaments so they decorated it with empty cartridge shells and hoped that the Lord would understand. It was the only way they had to honor his birth.

By now, you may be wondering what place this is and who this soldier fights for. He is an American soldier and the name of the place doesn’t matter. It could be Seated at a box in a storehouse for artillery shells, in Germany, Pvt. Walter E. Przybylo, member of the 2nd Infantry Division, addresses Christmas cards to the folks back home. 11/30/44, B Btry, 37th FA, 2nd Inf. Div., FUSA, Heckhalenfeld, Germany.

Valley Forge, Northern Virginia, the Ardennes, the Chosin Reservoir, the Me-kong Delta, or somewhere near Kabul or Baghdad. For over 200 years, there have been American soldiers far away from home every Christmas watching our backs. Today they are of both genders and many races and religions.

On this Christmas Eve, the soldier quietly hums Silent Night and again wonders if anybody really cares. The he hears a voice from the darkness. It is a soothing and pleasant voice and admonishes him gently for his doubts. “I was born on this night to bring my Father’s word to the world.” says the voice. “My Father is called by many different names and worshiped by many people in different ways, but you are still his protector. You guard the right to believe and you are not alone. WELL DONE AMERICAN SOLDIER!”

Our Father who art in heaven,
    hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
    Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,
give us this day our daily bread
    and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us
    and lead us not into temptation,
    but deliver us from evil,
for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,
    now and forever
Amen...

God wants to tell you that it shall be well with you this coming year. No matter how much your enemies try this year, they will not succeed. You have been destined to make it and you shall surely achieve all your goals this year.

For the remainder of 2012, all your agonies will be diverted and victory and prosperity will be incoming in abundance. Today, God has confirmed the end of your sufferings sorrows and pain because HE that sits on the throne has remembered you. He has taken away the hardships and given you JOY. He will never let you down.

I knocked at heaven’s door this morning, God asked me, My child! What can I do for you?
And I said, ‘Father, please protect and bless the person reading this message.’

“IT WAS IN KABUL, AFGHANISTAN WHILE COMPLETING MY DEGREE.”

By James Grady, Ashford graduate

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December 15, 2012 THE MILITARY PRESS 21
You receive it on Graduation Day. But it's never handed to you. Because when it's a degree from Columbia College, it's a degree that demands effort and rewards hard work. That's a notion our students at 18 campuses on military bases truly understand.

**Jokes**

Elves use what kind of money?  
Answer: Jingle bills!  
What's the first thing learnt by elves in school?  
Answer: The “elf”-abet!  
What would you call the twelfth elf that comes to help other 11 elves in the workshop?  
Answer: The twelf  
Who makes toys and rides around in a pumpkin and lives at the North Pole?  
Answer: Cinder-“elf”-a!  
Santa rides in a sleigh. What do elves ride in?  
Answer: Mini vans!  
What do you call an elf that tells silly jokes?  
Answer: A real Christmas card!  
Where do you find elves?  
Answer: Depends where you left them!  
What would you call an elf who just has won the lottery?  
Answer: Welfy  

How do snowmen travel around?  
Answer: By icicle!  
How one snowman greets the other one?  
Answer: Ice to meet you.  
What is the popular name of the snowman in summers?  
Answer: A puddle.  
What is the favorite Mexican food of snowman?  
Answer: Brrrr-ritos.  
Why does it take longer to build a blonde snowman?  
Answer: You have to hollow out its head first.  
What kind of money snowmen use in the North Pole?  
Answer: Cash!  
How do you get to know if the snowman is in your bed?  
Answer: You wake up wet!  
What snowman likes to eat on Christmas Eve?  
Answer: A snow bank.  
What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?  
Answer: It's Christmas, Eve!  
What did the big angel say to the little angel on Christmas Eve?  
Answer: Halo there!  
If Santa Claus is crossed with a detective then you would get what?  
Answer: Santa Clues!  
A snowman loses weight in what way?  
Answer: He waits for the weather to get warmer!
Mystery

THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF NATALEE WOOD

Continued from page 12

other man (Robert would always deny this) and with the aid of therapy, Natalie would get her career back on track.

As her acting career began to wane, she drifted from one affair to another but was not able to find happiness. She would become completely despondent on one summer night in 1966. She awoke in the hospital after taking an overdose of sleeping pills. Natalie would later admit, "I didn't want to live."

On July 16, 1972, Natalie and Robert remarried aboard a friend's yacht harbored in Malibu. Natalie, determined to make her third marriage stick, quit her acting career and had her second child, Courtney on March 9, 1974.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1981, the Wagens invited Christopher Walken, Natalie's Brainstorm co-star, to an informal thanksgiving weekend aboard their 55-foot cabin cruiser, the Splendor harbored at Marina del Rey. The one-man crew piloted the yacht to Catalina Island, off the Los Angeles coast of California. They anchored the boat and rode the yacht's dinghy in to Avalon. The other five, partying on shore in the hotel as Wagner moved the yacht to a safer harbor. The others stayed on shore in the hotel. At around 2:20 a.m. the harbor patrol arrived and notified the harbor patrol to scout for her. At 7:30 a.m. he notified the harbor patrol to scout for her.

The evening began at about 4:00 p.m. as the trio dined at the Harbor Reef Restaurant. Witnesses claim that this is when things began to unravel. Waitresses at the restaurant saw the trio drink several bottles of ch.m.pagne and state that the three patrons eventually caused a rude and rowdy ruckus with Natalie openly flirting with the server while untying the dinghy, she slipped, striking her head on the side of the boat and fell into the chilly water. She drowned after being pulled under by the heavy, drenched coat.

Los Angeles County coroner to the stars, Dr. Thomas Noguchi had his own Natalie Wood theory. He concluded the actress did indeed escape in the dinghy. She then slipped and fell into the harbor waters. She attempted to crawl up the sides of the rubber dinghy, but the heavy coat, now weighing 30-40 pounds prevented her from lifting herself into the boat. As Wood struggled to get into the dinghy, she noticed it slowly drifting away out into the harbor. She became more and more frightened and began to screa.m. but her voice was drowned out by the low noise of some local revelers. Natalie grabbed the side of the dinghy and began to steer it toward the shore. She eventually succumbed to the cold, and slipped into death shrouded in her nightgown and red down coat. Natalie Wood was 43 years old.

We'll probably never know what really happened that night. Wagner and Walken refused to talk about it and eyewitness accounts don't really match up with all the facts. The official coroner's report states the following: a private searcher who located the dinghy says that the key was in the ignition, which was in the off position. The gear was in neutral and the oars tied. In the hyperbaric chamber building for the life of your tire! See store for complete details.

Natalie Wood was 43 years old.

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• 4 tire rotation
• Free vehicle inspection
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December 15, 2012

THE MILITARY PRESS 23
ACROSS
1. Craves
2. Two-toed sloth
3. Dispatched
4. Three-some
5. Postage
6. Mixologist
7. Unassisted
8. Roman emperor
9. Twice ten
10. Subsequently
11. Not tight
12. Bread from Heaven
13. Mixture of rain and snow
14. Unreactive
15. Again
16. A young horse
17. Craze
18. Unusual
19. Anagram of “Note”
20. Mechanization
22. Feudal worker
23. Implored
24. Menace
25. German for “Mister”
26. Clothing
27. Dogfish
28. Lass
29. A cylinder in a cave
30. Half of a pair
31. A type of evergreen tree
32. Leave out
33. Probabilities
34. Untarnished
35. Indian prince
36. Prison
37. Skin disease
38. Pay attention to
39. Long-necked animal
40. Tumbled
41. Patio
42. Grain disease
43. French for “Room”
44. Back
45. Shoulder board
46. Eat
47. Altitude (abbrev.)
48. Part of a tea service
49. Hog
50. Sleigh
51. Greek letter
52. Lengthways
53. Nigerian monetary unit
54. Dwarf buffalo
55. Long times
56. Test
57. Mixed with impurities
58. Mixed with impurities
59. Violent disturbance
60. Countertenor
61. Adolescent
62. Countercurrent
63. 53 in Roman numerals
64. Wan
65. Lubricated
66. Sourish
67. Poems
68. Well-known
69. Wings
70. Makes lace
71. Obdurate
72. Detached

DOWN
1. City in Peru
2. Two-toed sloth
3. Dispatched
4. Three-some
5. Postage
6. Mixologist
7. Unassisted
8. Roman emperor
9. Twice ten
10. Subsequently
11. Not tight
12. Bread from Heaven
13. Mixture of rain and snow
14. Unreactive
15. Again
16. A young horse
17. Craze
18. Unusual
19. Anagram of “Note”
20. Mechanization
22. Feudal worker
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3. For the adrenalin junkie, the Robb Report recommends splashing out $3 million on the Aero L-39 fighter jet deal. The Top Gun-style package pays for eight people to take part in four days of aerial training in Arizona – culminating in a stomach-churning four-on-four fighter jet battle aboard the 540mph aircraft.

4. And then there’s the gift for the billionaire’s inner-child – a $25 million theme park. The Thinkwell Group of California, which built the world’s first indoor ski resort in Dubai, will design and oversee the development and construction of the backyard theme park, including a full-size steel roller coaster, a virtual-reality roller coaster, a rotating hammer swing, a children’s wooden coaster, a carousel, and other attractions.

5. A Bugatti ‘package’ featuring the Veyron supercar is the ultimate boys’. With a 1,200bhp engine, the Bugatti is capable of 0-62mph in just 2.5 seconds and can sprint all the way to 268mph. The Veyron is assembled as part of the $14 million Bugatti package which also includes a 1936 Bugatti Type 57SC worth $9 million and a Parmigiani watch costing $345,000.

6. Gold chalice from the 17th-century Santa Margarita shipwreck: £830,000.


8. A 12kg chunk of the Willamette meteorite: $1,276,000.

9. Big Cat Rescue Project: $2.12 million. Co-sponsor and participation in the Big Cats’ Flyover, a three-month mission to help save lions from extinction, led by National Geographic Explorers-in-Residence Dereck and Beverly Joubert. All-expense-paid travel (via private plane and helicopter) for two for all or part of the mission through 11 African countries with the Jouberts and other wildlife experts.

10. Van Cleef & Arpels His & Hers Watches: $1,192,000. His and hers one-of-a-kind Van Cleef & Arpels watches designed to tell the story of the couple’s romance.

11. Charlie Palmer Dining Experience: $190,000. A vineyard-to-table trip for two-created and led by chef Charlie Palmer that begins in California’s Sonoma wine country and ends in two New York temples of haute cuisine.

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THE MILITARY PRESS 27

December 15, 2012
Events

- World War I begins: Austria declares war on Serbia; Germany on Russia and France; Britain on Germany.
- Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand and wife Sophie assassinated in Sarajevo by Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip
- Panama Canal is officially opened after 10 years of construction
- Congress sets up Federal Trade Commission, passes Clayton Antitrust Act

Baseball legend Babe Ruth makes his major league debut
Charles Chaplin makes his film debut in the comedy short Making a Living

The first everyday items made of stainless steel come into public circulation
In his second big-screen appearance, Charlie Chaplin plays the Little Tramp, his most famous character
Edgar Rice Burroughs’ Tarzan of the Apes published
Winsor McCay unleashes Gertie the Dinosaur, the first animated cartoon
George Washington Carver begins experimenting with peanuts as a new cash crop for Southern farmers
The last known passenger pigeon dies in the Cincinnati Zoo

“Liberty has never come from Government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of it. The history of liberty is a history of limitations of governmental power, not the increase of it.”
– Woodrow Wilson

“You just can’t beat the person who never gives up.” – Babe Ruth
“Failure is unimportant. It takes courage to make a fool of yourself.” – Charlie Chaplin
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