

THE BUZZ

Compiled from H&R staff and news service reports

Oct. 4 birthdays

Country singer Leroy Van Dyke, 80; actress Felicia Farr, 77; Pro Football Hall of Famer Sam Huff, 75; actor Eddie Applegate, 74; author Roy Blount Jr., 68; author Anne Rice, 68; actress Lori Saunders ("Petticoat Junction"), 68; St. Louis Cardinals manager Tony La Russa, 65; actor Clifton Davis, 64; Adm. Mike Mullen, Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, 63; actress Susan Sarandon, 63; blues musician Duke Robillard, 61; playwright Lee Blessing, 60; actor Armand Assante, 60; actor Alan Rosenberg, 59; actor Bill Fagerbakke, 52; producer Russell Simmons, 52; musician Chris Lowe (The Pet Shop Boys), 50; country musician Gregg "Hobie" Hubbard, 49; actor David W. Harper, 48; singer Jon Secada, 48; TV personality John Melendez, 44; actor Liev Schreiber, 42; actor Abraham Benrubi, 40; country singer-musician Heidi Newfield, 39; rock musician Andy Parle, 39; actress Alicia Silverstone, 33; actor Phillip Glasser, 31; rock singer-musician Marc Roberge (O.A.R.), 31; actress Rachael Leigh Cook, 30; actor Jimmy Workman, 29; rhythm-and-blues singer Jessica Benson (31w), 22; actor Michael Charles Roman, 22.



La Russa

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Award for writer

Novelist Elmore Leonard will receive PEN USA's lifetime achievement award at a December ceremony.

Leonard, 83, has written more than 40 westerns, crime novels and mysteries, including "The Bounty Hunters," "Road Dogs" and "Cuba Libre." Many of his books, notably "Out of Sight," "Get Shorty" and "Be Cool," have been made into films.



Leonard

Past recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award include Ray Bradbury, Woody Allen, Betty Friedan and Gore Vidal.

PEN USA is a Los Angeles-based professional writers organization.

Nobel concert

American rap artist and actor Will Smith and his wife, actress Jada Pinkett Smith, will co-host this year's Nobel Peace Prize Concert in Oslo, Norway.

The Dec. 11 show, a day after the award ceremony, will feature performances by Wyclef Jean, Toby Keith, Donna Summer and Puerto Rican singer Luis Fonsi, as well as Amadou & Mariam, a blues and jazz duo from Mali.

The winner of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize is to be announced in Oslo on Friday. The award is always handed out Dec. 10, the anniversary of prize founder Alfred Nobel's death in 1896.

Reader Focus



Photo by Marianne Dunlap/Decatur
This picture was taken on Madeline Island, one of the Apostle Islands in Lake Superior, on July 4. We are taking submissions for the Reader Focus feature. Send jpeg photo entries to H&R Chief Photographer Kelly Huff at photo@herald-review.com.

Origins of names

1. Hotmail — selected letters with "html"
2. Form 1040 — 1,040th form issued by IRS
3. Neanderthals — for bones found in Germany's Neander Valley
4. Figure skating — for compulsory "figures" the skaters had to make
5. "A Prairie Home Companion" — from Prairie Home Cemetery in Moorhead, Minn.

Source: World Features Syndicate

This year's barn tour includes a whole lot more than just barns/**Tuesday Life**



1930s

Hollywood stars in Marny Elliott's latest puzzle/**D2**

Sunday, October 4, 2009

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Herald & Review
Life

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Questions or comments regarding this section? Contact Life Editor Jeana Matherly at 421-6974



Members of Decatur Gamers watch as Rick Maurer makes his next move in the game Here I Stand.

Herald & Review photos/Brian Bell

Play dates for adults

Decatur Gamers gather twice monthly to test their skills

By SHEILA SMITH
H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — These game players boast about being proud geeks who happen to have a higher form of intelligence when it comes to outwitting and outplaying.

Their concentration is intense, sometimes brutal, when calculating each move.

For them, it's always "game on."

"You don't know what your opponent's doing," said Rick Maurer about one his favorite board games to play, Paths of Glory. "It's like life; you only have a limited number of options."

Maurer, an avid game player, owns 93 games. He said he had searched online for a game group until he learned about the local group that call themselves Decatur Gamers.

A dozen or so game fans get together every first Sunday and third Wednesday of the month to



If you go

WHAT: Decatur Gamers
WHEN: Meetings are at 4 p.m. the first Sunday every month at the library in Cerro Gordo and at 5 p.m. the third Wednesday every month at the Decatur Club.

COST: Free, but donations are welcome

ON THE WEB: www.decaturgamers.com

play, said Brian Bell, who assists and sets up the sessions.

Yes, he said, they may occasionally dabble in the traditional games such as Sorry, Monopoly, Scrabble and Trivial Pursuit.

But they mostly prefer games with more exotic titles: Munchkin, Dungeons and Dragons, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Killer Bunnies, Loot, to name a few. There also are the Euro-style games not too many people have heard of — Settlers of Catan, Agricola and Puerto Rico.

"The focus of those Euro games becomes more of the smooth mechanics of the game, and the rules are simple to learn," said Chris Baker, who co-founded the game group with Matt Williams.

Baker said it was hard finding a game store in town and getting people together to play games.

About 10 years ago, he actually started a Web site to see how many people in Decatur were interested in playing games.

It didn't seem the right time, and he let the idea for a game group sit on a shelf.

Four months ago, however, Baker started up the Web site (www.decaturgamers.com) again and got an overwhelming response.

"People signed up on a waiting list who were interested in playing. Our hope was just to get six or seven people to play games. But more people than expected showed up to play," he said.

"Most of the games we play aren't found on shelves of Walmart. Most people purchase them online or get them from somewhere."

Baker owns 50 games that are not by Hasbro or Mattel but



Bill Owen explains the lay of the land before play started on WWII miniatures game Command Decision.



Ben Williams plans his next move during a game of Brewhouse Bash at the Decatur Gamers Mini Con.

GAMERS/D2

Control your money with a cash-only approach

Banks and retailers benefited greatly during past decades by promoting a cashless lifestyle. They convinced us that it's safer and more convenient to carry plastic. Cash, they declared, is old-fashioned and clunky. Plastic is hip and cool. Gradually, we fell for the pitch and, in turn, got more than we bargained for. Going cashless turned us into a debt-ridden society.

But things are changing on the consumer front. Cash is making a comeback.

Some people, including reader Martin B., are moving to cash to avoid paying credit card companies' high interest rates. Susan J. and her husband wrote that they've closed their bank and credit accounts because of problems with overdraft charges and identity theft. Still others, including Bill and Jan W., are using money orders to pay bills. They cash their paychecks at their company credit union because it doesn't impose high fees the way check-cashing stores do.



MARY HUNT
Everyday Cheapskate

All of these people have gone to cash to avoid specific problems, but there's another reason individuals are making the shift to a cash lifestyle: to reduce spending and improve savings.

Countless studies have proved this fact: You will spend more when you pay with plastic, from 30 percent to 200 percent more, depending on which study you read. Paying with plastic makes it a lot easier to make unplanned purchases. Cash, on the other hand, is unbending. You simply cannot spend more than you have.

Making the shift from plas-

tic back to cash doesn't mean closing your credit accounts. It means depending on cash for your day-to-day spending. It means planning ahead, shopping with a list and paying attention to what things cost. It often means making tough choices because of the amount of cash you have with you at the moment. You do need to have active credit accounts to maintain an excellent credit score, but you don't have to use them on a daily basis.

There are so many benefits to making the shift from a plastic mindset to a cash lifestyle. Living with cash improves your character. It requires personal discipline, accountability and responsibility. Cash promotes delayed gratification and discourages feelings of entitlement.

Here's a simple way to make the switch from reliance on plastic to dependence on cash: Get a stack of envelopes, and label them with your various spending categories, one on

HUNT/D5



All a board!

By SHEILA SMITH, H&R Staff Writer

1. In the game Monopoly, which square is between Pennsylvania Railroad and Community Chest?
a. Oriental Avenue; b. Marvin Gardens; c. St. James Place; d. none of the above

2. Who created the word game Scrabble?
a. Charles Darrow; b. Danny White; c. Donald Green; d. Alfred Butts

3. In the game Battleship, how long is the submarine?
a. 3 spaces; b. 4 spaces; c. 5 spaces; d. 2 spaces

4. This game was first launched in the United States in the 1960s.
a. Pay Day; b. Sorry; c. Trouble; d. Parcheesi

5. It is believed this game descended from a royal game created around 3000 B.C.
a. Go; b. Backgammon; c. Checkers; d. Chess

Answers:

1. c. (St. James Place); 2. d. (Alfred Butts); 3. a. (3 spaces); 4. c. (Trouble); 5. b. (Backgammon)