

COMMUNITY NEWS

GREEN VALLEY

Community swap meet set

Green Valley Charitable Hall will have its semi-annual swap meet from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Vendors who would like to participate can come set up and pay \$10 for the weekend.

A country breakfast and lunch, along with maps to homes selling additional items, will be available at the hall.

For details, call (661) 270-9534.

LANCASTER

Activities at lodge

Lancaster Moose Lodge, 44545 Division St., offers advanced line dancing at 7 p.m. on Monday and beginning to advanced line dancing at 7 p.m. on Tuesday.

The lodge will have dinner from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, followed by dancing to the Al Cooper Band.

For details, call (661) 942-0104.

ROSAMOND

Moose swap meet, barbecue

The Rosamond Moose Lodge, 1105 Sierra Highway, will have a swap meet, barbecue, car and bike show and live band on Saturday.

The swap meet starts at 10 a.m. and the \$5 barbecue and other festivities start at noon.

For details, call (661) 256-2657.

Socialize with veterans

The Rosamond Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9657, 1990 El Rey St., has Happy Hour every Friday from 4 to 6 p.m. featuring reduced drink prices.

For details, call (661) 256-9476.

PALMDALE

Watch your neighborhood

Palmdale will have a Neighborhood Watch Orientation for residents at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 6, in City Council Chambers, 38300 Sierra Highway, Suite B.

Residents are invited to learn about the program and how to form and maintain a group in their neighborhood.

City crime prevention officers and L.A. County sheriff deputies will facilitate the presentation.

For details, call (661) 267-5170.

Dinner at the Moose Lodge

The Palmdale Moose Lodge, 3101 East Ave. Q, will serve a hearty ribeye steak dinner beginning at 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. today.

Donations will be accepted. All proceeds go to Moose charities.

A live band with dancing is from 7 to 11 p.m.

For details, call (661) 947-6207.

Noted astronomer to speak

The AV Astronomy Club will meet at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 9, at the SAGE Planetarium, 38060 20th St. East.

Guest speaker is astronomer Dr. David Lynch, a senior scientist with The Aerospace Corporation.

He specializes in spectroscopy of comets, novae, supernovae, young and very old stars.

His topic is "Color and Light." Admission is free.

For details, call (661) 972-1953.

TEHACHAPI

Community to remember 9/11

First Friday Art Walk, a monthly downtown Tehachapi community event, will commemorate the 10th anniversary of 9/11 from 5 to 8 p.m. today.

CrossRoads Gallery, Gallery 'N' Gifts, Tehachapi Museum, Tehachapi Depot, Fiddlers Crossing and other participating venues will have special displays, demonstrations and tributes.

Live music, champagne and refreshments will be available.

Admission is free.

For details, call (661) 822-5242 or visit www.crossroadsgalleryteahapi.com.

To get your news on this page, send e-mail to valleylife@avpress.com or call (661) 267-4230



Robbie and Stephen Keszey of the Discovery Channel's show "Swamp Brothers" will be appearing at the North American Reptile Breeders Conference and Trade Show opening today at the Anaheim Convention Center. *Contributed*

Cold-blooded creatures come to California

By LIANE M. ROTH Valley Life Editor

The North American Reptile Breeders Conference and Trade Show kicks off with a special VIP reception sponsored by Reptile Magazine at 5 p.m. today and runs through Sunday at the Anaheim Convention Center.

A covey of cold-blooded creatures will be invading the southland, organizers said, with an amazing exhibition and sale of pet-friendly reptiles ranging from \$5 to \$75,000 and open to the public.

Everything from the common gecko to two-headed snakes will be represented by more than 100 dealers from across the country, with thousands of frogs, iguanas, snakes, lizards, tortoises and of course, those charming geckos, available for purchase at the captive-bred-only reptile show produced by ECO Wear and Publishing and Chicago Reptile House, Inc.

"Nothing is taken from the wild," said Brian Potter, co-owner of the show along with partner Bob Ashley.

"We have a showcase of stuff breeders have worked all year to produce that they are bringing to the table, tables and tables of stuff, all for sale."

All things reptilian can be found during what Potter said is the second largest such extravaganza in the country, with dozens of vendors hawking items such as carnivorous plants, T-shirts, hats, books on reptiles, cages and even electronic controls for temperatures and lighting requirements to ensure these prehistoric-looking creatures can survive in comfort.

Herpetology experts will be on hand to answer questions, provide information and share tips, secrets and wisdom, which means amateur collectors or those new to the field as well as professionals can gain valuable knowledge in an affordable arena.

Swamp Brothers Robbie and Stephen Keszey, stars of their own show on Discovery Channel and owners of Glades Herps Farm, a reptile sanctuary in Florida, will be appearing at the convention, Potter said.

Potter said all the animals at the trade show have been checked for compliance according to all federal and state laws as well as guidelines

See CREATURES on B8



A Crested Gecko blends with its surroundings. *Bob Jensen*

Side-splitting barbecue bash

By LIANE M. ROTH Valley Life Editor



Rib-tickling fun is on the menu for the second annual Baby Back Rib Cookoff presented by the Quartz Hill Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3000 Men's Auxiliary on Saturday, Sept. 17 at the post.

Think you've got the sauciest ribs in town? Enter the cookoff and find out if your recipe is a winner.

The entry fee is \$30 and applications are due by Monday, Sept. 5.

The cooking contest kicks off at 10 a.m. with judging at 4 p.m.; prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place.

Those who want to enjoy the fruits (or ribs) of other folks' efforts can stop by from 5 to 7:30 p.m., pony up \$10 for baby back ribs, pulled pork sandwiches, beans and cole slaw.

Entertainment will be provided by a disc jockey, organizers said, and the event is open to members and guests.

The post is located at 4342 West Ave. L, Quartz Hill.

For details, call (661) 317-3076; (661) 618-1959, (305) 1630; or VFW Post 300 at (661) 943-2225 after 2 p.m.

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EXPERT Advice

Pet food labels hard to decipher

By DR. MARTY BECKER and GINA SPADAFORI
Universal Press Syndicate

It sounds great when your dog's or cat's food is described as "natural" or "organic," doesn't it? It's easy to imagine happy cows and chickens being raised sustainably on Farmer Jan's property.

The real definitions don't have anything to do with how farm animals are raised or the quality of the food, though. In the eyes of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the term "natural" does not have an official definition. It simply means that a pet food does not contain artificial flavors, colors or preservatives.

The Association of American Feed Control Officials, a trade organization that develops nutrient standards and ingredient definitions for pet foods, said a "natural" food or ingredient is one that is made only from plant, animal or mined sources and is not produced by or subject to a chemically synthetic process.

Foods described as natural may not contain anything artificial, except in amounts that might occur unavoidably during manufacture.

The AAFCO said the term "natural" should be used only to describe products when all of the ingredients — not counting chemically synthesized vitamins, minerals and other trace nutrients — meet this definition.

No rules govern the use of the word "organic" on pet food labels. The term "organic" refers to the conditions under which plants were grown or animals were raised.

Typically, foods that claim to be organic may not contain ingredients that are genetically engineered or produced using sludge or irradiation, or that contain certain synthetic substances, and they must be free of sulfites, nitrates or nitrites.

Products labeled organic cannot contain non-organic ingredients if organic sources are available.

Feeding an "organic" or "natural" diet is no guarantee against contamination. It's great to look for foods that meet the ideals you desire for a pet's diet, but it's always a good idea to call the manufacturer — contact information is required to be on the label — and ask exactly what is meant by the terms "natural" or "organic."

— Kim Campbell Thornton

Automotive coolant a deadly pet poison

Q: My two dogs lapped up some antifreeze that had spilled in the garage. I saw on the container that it was toxic, so I took them to the veterinarian right away. They needed dialysis, and I was told my dogs could have died. Why is antifreeze so poisonous to pets?

A: Antifreeze, or ethylene glycol, has a sweet flavor that is attractive to pets and children. It is not toxic on its own, but as the body breaks down the antifreeze, it creates metabolites that are toxic to kidney cells. Those metabolites form oxalate crystals that damage and block the kidney tubules. The animals act drunk and become dehydrated. Then kidney damage sets in.

Unless pets are treated quickly, they usually don't recover from the damage done to the kidneys.

In the future, choose a brand of antifreeze that contains bittering agents.

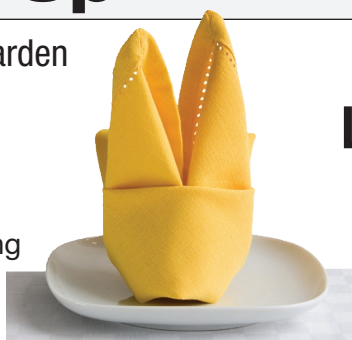
It may cost a little more and it is just as toxic, but because it is unpleasant to drink, your dogs are more likely to leave it alone.

Coming Up

SATURDAY: Home & Garden

Table techniques

The art of table setting and napkin folding



SUNDAY: Travel

Long Beach lobsters

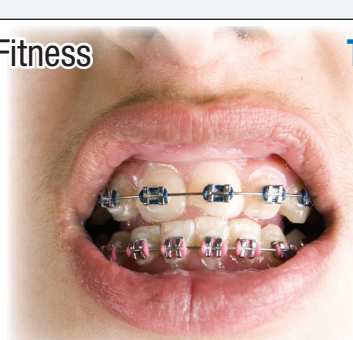
Claw your way to the annual feast



MONDAY: Health & Fitness

Clearly better

Top trends in orthodontics



TUESDAY: Focus on Community

Cellarbration

Wine, dine and dance under the stars

