

My Two Cents

It doesn't seem possible. Next week is Justin's birthday. He's been able to rote count for a while, but we have used this new milestone to begin counting with one-to-one correspondence.



Nikki Thompson-Arko Special to The Chronicle-News

Unlike many grandparents who only see their grandkids once in a blue moon, I get to spend every day with Justin. He has been such a big part of my life that I can't imagine a day without him in it.

There is no way to sugar coat it. Justin had a rough start. Once he got going in the right direction, he made up for lost time. He met every roadblock head on

Three candles on the cake

and eventually broke through it or found a way around it. Talking has been by far his biggest challenge to date. It wasn't that he didn't want to talk. That boy can talk up a blue streak!

Speech therapy is helping, but it was signing that got him moving forward again. He caught on to sign language pretty quickly and it eased his frustration some. Truthfully, he caught on faster than I did. We had some opposition by those who thought learning sign language would hinder speech development even further.

While most preschoolers' behavior can be lulled into a stupor with Sesame Street or cartoons, Justin's television tastes are a little different. If you want to immobilize him turn on, "How It's Made."

It was evident pretty early on that Justin is very mechanically inclined. He wants to know how everything works before he plays with it. He gets mad if you try to show him because he wants to figure it out for himself. My folks bought Justin his first set of tools when he was about 18 months old.

door.

I was a little shocked when he said, "Nana, look," and ran his hand along the door like one of Bob Barker's models. I pushed aside my gut reaction since the pieces seemed meticulously removed and not simply ripped apart.

Justin doesn't wait for an invitation for his assistance if someone is working on something that involves tools. He gets down in the dirt, picks up a tool, and gets to work.

But it isn't just boyish mechanical projects he wants to master. Justin loves to cook. When I am working in the kitchen he pulls a chair over and digs right in.

The night I showed Justin how to make a grilled cheese sandwich, he insisted on making more than one. After a fierce round of negotiation he settled for two. That was also when he learned about the "five-second rule."

Justin "helps" me sew. He likes guiding the fabric across the feed dogs. He likes it even better when I take my machines apart to clean and oil them. "Mario

Andretti's" pedal privileges, however, have been revoked for the time being. Sewing machines were not built to handle that many RPMs.

Since I almost always have knitting in my hands, Justin "helps" with that, too. He puts his hands on top of mine and away we go. The faster I knit the funnier he thinks it is.

Sometimes he gets impatient with me being particular about my needle placement, but he is a pretty good sport. Sometimes, when no one is looking, he tries to "help" the project along unguided.

Someday, Justin is going to realize how boring and

lame I really am. Until then, I plan to revel in every project we can do together no matter how it turns out.

Your feedback is welcome at nikkiarko@yahoo.com.

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Taiko drums liven up serene gardens



Photos by Richard Sitts

In the top photo, professional Taiko drummers Toni Yagami and Lance Acker, on the right, get a kick out of encouraging their two guest drummers during a performance Saturday afternoon in the Baca-Bloom Heritage Gardens as part of the ongoing Celebrate Japan!

Mass casualty incident drill tests emergency responders

Continued from page 1 Atwater issued the emergency call, the exercise's dedicated radio channel came to life as, one by one, the various units responded.

Each of the four surrounding areas - Folsom, Capulin, Grenville, and Des Moines - sent its ambulance and multiple fire trucks. Union County Undersheriff Colleen Johnston started from Clayton. New Mexico State Police sent a unit to control highway traffic as emergency vehicles arrived and departed.

Just as in actual emergencies, the radio calls from volunteer responders were staggered over several minutes. Folsom EMS was first, at 9:43: "Folsom 2349 is 10-8

to the accident at Des Moines, three personnel on board." The Union County MCI trailer was next, followed by Capulin Rescue, Grenville Fire, Des Moines EMS, and the others, 13 responding vehicles altogether.

Then, at the accident site, a funny thing happened - absolute stillness and silence. Nothing. As in real life, it takes awhile after the 911 call before those on the scene see anything happen, especially in such a remote area where volunteer responders are dropping everything else - work, dinner, sleep - to don emergency gear and hurry to the EMS or fire building to join their teammates and drive emergency vehicles many miles to the scene.

Saturday's silence was broken by the distant approach of a helicopter from the north as Flight for Life passed over the Des Moines Cemetery on its way from St. Mary Corwin Hospital in Pueblo to a designated landing zone beside the accident site. Pilot Dale Geanetta shut off the engine, then he and flight nurses John Houston and Lisa Wagner stood by to watch the show: in the planned scenario, they would arrive in a half hour, one of the few timings Saturday that weren't remarkably realistic.

Over the next 10 minutes, the silence was

replaced by controlled chaos as ambulances and fire trucks discharged 48 EMTs and firefighters, overseen by an incident commander, Des Moines Paramedic Jan Pryor, who was assisted by Medical Operations Manager Kim Atwater, Safety Officer David McDonald, Logistics Officer Brad Atwater, Triage Officer Paul Briesh, and Union County Emergency Manager Zina Schamber.

While some EMTs set up equipment and triage stations for the multiple casualty incident, others took inventory of the scene and patients. Is the scene safe? How many vehicles are involved? Is there a vehicle missing, out of sight? What specific damage occurred to each vehicle, and how might that affect each occupant?

Did an airbag deploy? Was this patient belted? How many people were in this car? Is anyone missing, perhaps thrown into the bar ditch? Which patient should be treated first? What should be done with the others?

One vehicle is balanced precariously on its sides and has to be stabilized. Patients are still trapped within vehicles. Dressed in full bunker gear on this bright August morning, firefighters hurry to secure the vehicles and gain access for the EMTs.

The EMTs use a universal triage system to sort patients and their care. Each patient is quickly assessed and a triage tag attached with brief notations. A patient with only minor injuries - "the walking wounded" - is designated Green and walked to a safe zone for later treatment. A patient who is dead or almost certain to die is left in place, tagged Black, so EMTs can render aid where they can do more good.

Patients with high respirations, poor blood flow, and/or impaired mental status are designated Red: they get the first treatment. The remaining patients are designated Yellow and escorted to an area where they can get the next available care.

A danger is tunnel vision: a responder easily gets lost in his or her specific response. Accidents can happen. Responders lose track of the big picture. That's why, in real MCIs and in this drill, one experienced responder takes the duty of incident command. That person stands apart, radio in hand, monitoring and directing all activity associated with the scene. As the scene grows, the IC may be joined by a Medical Operations Manager, a Safety Officer, a Triage Manager - even a Public Information Officer to handle media relations.

Fortunately, multiple casualty incidents are rare, but that means the responders have little experience with the carefully orchestrated procedures. They train in classrooms, fire

halls, and EMS buildings, but that's learning by white board, of limited use when the real thing hits the fan. Thus, Saturday's multi-agency emergency drill.

It was over by 11 a.m., all the patients feeling much better and responders cleaning up the scene. By noon, most of the 60-some participants gathered in the Des Moines EMS building for a de-briefing and lunch.

Colorado Flight Nurse John Houston expressed his helicopter crew's admiration for the entire morning's response. He said the drill's four fire departments and four emergency medical services coordinated their efforts with impressive effectiveness. "It was methodical, step-by-step, and by the book. Most important, it was safe," he said.

Flight Nurse Lisa Wagner agreed. "It's easy to see that all these responders are used to working together. They may come from different towns and organizations, but they clearly worked as a single team. I was impressed."

Although at least two firefighters were briefly treated for dehydration and heat exhaustion after working in their heavy bunker gear under the hot sun, there were smiles and laughter all around as participants recounted the morning's events over a lunch of barbecued beef. They now had plenty of reason to believe that if - when - the real thing comes along, their team will do just as well as they did Saturday.

chicken fried steak \$2.99 meal plus tax | no substitutions lunch or dinner | no limit KFC chicken fried steak with white gravy | individual cole slaw individual mashed potatoes with gravy | 1 baked biscuit SPECIAL OFFER WEDNESDAYS ONLY TRINIDAD 212 Nevada 719-846-7723 dine in - drive thru - carry out

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The South Central Council of Governments (SC COG Transit) will be accepting bids for the sale of the following: • 1999 Dodge 10 passenger van, with wheelchair lift (Minimum bid \$9000) • 1997 Ford/Goshen 11 passenger mini bus with wheelchair lift (Minimum bid \$7000) • 1999 Ford/Diamond 17 passenger (CDL) Required Minibus with Wheelchair lift (Minimum bid \$4800) • 2001 Ford/EI Dorado 17 Passenger (CDL) Minibus (Minimum bid \$8400) All vehicles sold "as is" with no warranty expressed or implied Sealed bids will be received no later than 4 p.m. on August 25, 2010, in the office of Mr. Tom Allen, SC COG Transit Director, located at 300 Bonaventure Avenue, Trinidad, CO. Appointments are required to view the vehicle(s) by calling 719-845-1133 Ext # 204