

# Highs and Lows

God is doing much exciting stuff recently, which creates spiritual highs, but it often is punctuated by deeply frustrating boxing matches with technology, creating spiritual lows. Yes, I know we shouldn't let these kinds of things bother us so much. We shouldn't get so upset when this super-technology that "makes things so much easier" (hahahahahaha) doesn't work. We should EXPECT it not to work, or at least to be imperfect.

But does it have to be SO imperfect?

In our long careers in the grocery business, we've been subjected to the technology revolution from the start to where it is today. When we began our grocery lives at the Hitchin Post, we started with the old mechanical cash registers.

Bookkeeping was done by hand, in pencil, on special bookkeeping paper, balanced by entering long columns of numbers in a calculator that ground out the totals and printed it on a 2" paper roll. We had an old



Hermes calculator that felt like a tank, weighed a ton, and was solid as a rock. I loved it!

We carefully invested in a 3M copier, a significant purchase in those early days. It required a two-step process to transfer the image of the document to a pink sheet which then transferred the image to a white sheet. If my description sounds dumb, it's because it is. I can barely remember how that worked, but it was awkward, and the final image could fade over time. We were so thrilled when we got a copier that didn't require that two step process.

We were also thrilled when we got our first electronic calculator, a Ricoh, that operated wonderfully and had most of the features that today's calculators have. The only mistake we made was to choose one that didn't print, to save a few bucks, as money was that tight.

In about 1976 we were thrilled to get our first electronic cash registers that were quiet and very easy to use. They had the basic functions of entering a sale as we hand-entered the prices (no scanning - gasp!), and the department, like grocery or meat or deli, etc. At the end of the day, just a couple of keystrokes started the daily reset, printing them on the receipt paper, and soon all five of the little registers were printing in unison.

We did payroll by hand, and filled out the appropriate government-required forms by hand. We added up pages filled with numbers and balanced them horizontally and vertically by hand, so that I got very careful to enter numbers accurately to avoid the tedious job of finding that annoying ten cent error. When Security Pacific Banking offered us their payroll service, later to be acquired by ADP, we were hugely relieved.

We came to Lucerne Valley Market just as the personal computer revolution was about

to explode. Our first entanglement in this technological enslavement occurred when I enrolled in an accounting class at Victor Valley College, hoping to fill in the knowledge gaps in accounting I was already doing but without enough understanding.

The instructor was into the PC revolution and was developing a PC and accounting software to go with it. (This was just before Apple emerged from the garage.) In class, he made references to his software, and in my eagerness to make life easier using this marvelous new tool (little did I know!), I approached him about it.

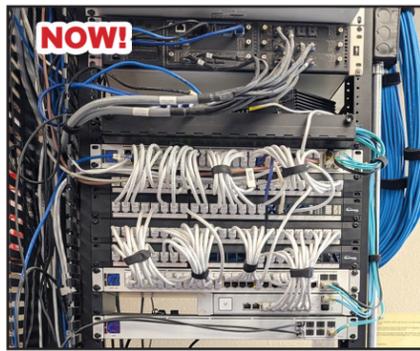
He sensed an opportunity and we agreed to purchase his computer and software, which he delivered to Lucerne Valley Market with the caveat that he needed to do a few tweaks in the software and so needed access to our computer, in our little office that was a deck across the south wall of the store (where the medical clinic is now). We thought the computer was ready to go, but months later, he was still there, "tweaking" the software, but actually writing the program, using our equipment, our facilities, and much of our emotional energy as things constantly errored out and required his attention. I even learned a little programming so that I could fix some of the errors myself.

That should have been a warning to us, a warning of the future to come. Oh no, we would have said at the time, things will be better. We'll get through this, we assured ourselves.

Define "better". Gradually over the years, the cash registers became more capable, opening the door to all sorts of programs the government could use to push its agenda, and which our now sophisticated computers could handle. At the same time, new types of exposure to such things as fraud and stolen identity were created, making necessary new sets of regulations to impose on us businesses, forcing us to allow bureaucrats to inspect and audit our systems.

As of the present, we "enjoy" a capable front end system of cash registers that develops problems every time it must be "upgraded". Our phones are now little minicomputers on each of our desks, and they act like them - full of bugs that drive us nuts. Our desk top computers are tied together in a network, with access to the internet (now a necessity, not a luxury) and the latest version of Windows. Whoopee. Now it's so much easier to go to the website we need, only to be told that the user name or password is incorrect!

In all of this, what are the highs? Are there any? Well, yes, there are because God involves



Himself and we try to listen to Him and follow His lead. Is He really involved with the stinkin' computers? In a way. He has warned us about putting our hope in human achievement, and modern technology is very definitely human achievement. I would even call it our Tower of Babel, built by the

ancients to celebrate their own strength and capabilities and to poke a finger in God's eye. We today have built our technological Tower of Babel, likewise displaying our self-approving arrogance before our Creator.

But there ARE highs, when things come together in such a way that we know God did it. In big and little moments, if we are alert to it, we can see what God does, and it's exciting.

One thing I know. If I get to be with God in eternity, and St. Peter greets me at the Pearly Gates, he'd better not ask me to enter my user name and password!

*Linda Gimmel*



## Lucerne Valley Residents: HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION

Sat. March 28, 2026  
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.



Behind Lucerne Valley Fire Station  
33269 Old Womans Spring Rd  
(Enter through gate on Ladera Rd)

### CAN ONLY TAKE:

- Antifreeze
- Batteries
- Fluorescents
- Medical Needles
- Latex and Oil based paint (max 15 gallons)
- All Electronic Wastes (E-Waste)
- Oil and Filters (max 15 gallons)



**No Containers Larger than 5-gallons and No Business Waste Accepted.**

**NO TRASH - NOTHING ELSE**

## LVEDA Meeting (Lucerne Valley Economic Development Association)

Monday, **March 30th**  
5:00 pm at the **Moose Lodge**  
on Foothill Road, just west of Tradepost Rd.

LVEDA provides an important community forum recognized by County, State, and Local Representatives. Supports real economic development consistent with our rural goals. Opposes projects that harm our land-use integrity and quality of life.

**Is something bugging you? COME TO THE NEXT MEETING TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION!**



## HIGH DESERT DENTAL MOBILE

will be here, on the Porches  
March 24, 2026 / 8am - 4pm

Accepted: Medi-Cal, IEHP, & Uninsured  
For more information or to set up an appointment, call (760) 422-6272

Services: Exams & X-rays • Fillings • Extractions  
Teeth Cleaning • Dental Sealants • And more



will be here, on the Porches  
March 26, 2026 / 10am-3pm

**FREE FLU VACCINES** (while supplies last)  
For more information or to set up an appointment, call (909) 878-8246  
Accepts IEHP

## On The Lighter Side of Serious Stuff . . . from the Web

