

THE SAINT JOSEPH'S

# Chronicle

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*"We write frankly and fearlessly but then we 'modify' before we print". - Mark Twain*



New Column

## Hill-Blazing

With Alberto Page 6

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## MEET THE PRESS



**ANN ROBINSON**  
*Guest Columnist*

"I was born in Barton, NY and now live in Santa Maria, CA, with my dog, Oscar."



**SAVANNAH ANDERSON**

"I do sports. I play Golf and Bocce Ball. I like to hang with my friends. I like to take care of my Mom. I grew up in Santa Maria. I have cousins that live in Orcutt. I like working at Oak Creek Farm with my friends. I like to open the door for people when they need help."



**ROBERT BOBB**

"I play golf. I can hit up to 55 yards on the driving range. I am pretty good at golf. I made four birdies in a row! I am a wrestling fan, I have all the movies at home. I have met Stone Cold Steve Austin. He gave me a t-shirt with his autograph, but I won't wear it at Oak Creek Farm because I don't want it to get dirty. I am a good guy and I like to help people. I do a lot of things with my church. I enjoy volunteering. When I was in ROTC in school, I shook President Reagan's hand and we played golf together. He had his own golf course. I like coming out to Oak Creek Farm, and I keep an eye out for everyone there. I want everyone to read my article and get a kick out of it."





**CORY CULMER**

“My name is Cory Culmer. I was born here in Santa Maria. I am a red/black stripe belt in Taekwondo. I like to help my classmates at Taekwondo. I like going different places. My wife and I go together to the movies. I enjoy getting out and meeting new people in our community.”



**KEVIN DONAGHY**

“I am 56 years old. I have general education requirements completed. I am pursuing a major in language and arithmetic. My hobbies are horticulture and animal care. I am single. I like to keep busy with my schedule, work is a big benefit in my opinion. I am a Lompoc native. I choose to commute for environmental benefits. I appreciate renewing the arts. I keep entertained.”



**ANTOINETTE ELLIS**

“I was born in California. I like to cook and I like to make things. I like to learn new things. I like goats and chickens and cats. My favorite goat is named Hans. I have nice friends. I like to do things with my friends and family. My best friend is funny. My favorite food is pizza.”



**JEANNIE MATTER**

“My name is Jeannie. I grew up in Santa Maria. I am hardworking. I recently retired and now have more time to be an Explorer. I am a good friend and I like animals. I have always been The Chronicle's #1 Fan.”



**ALBERTO OLMEDO**

I like working out at the Farm. I like to do things the right way. I like to help out around the house and work hard. I go to the mall to see scary movies. I am from Santa Maria and enjoy spending time with my family. I like to help out my family by taking care of their cars and helping around the house. I have one sister, four brothers, and I just became an Uncle. I really liked playing flag football for Special Olympics last year and I want to play again this year. My favorite football team is the Dallas Cowboys.



**STEVE SALUTAN**

“My name is Steve. One of the things that I like to do is run the sound system at my church. I am a friendly guy with a good attitude. I have family in Guadalupe, Santa Maria, and Lompoc. I enjoy BBQ'ing with my family, occasionally we cook a pig. I love to ride my bike. I ride it anywhere! I really like working on cars. I am a Chevy guy. I have a Camaro that is a Father/Son project with my Dad. I am handy and like to fix things. I like using power tools. My favorite power tool is...all of them!”



*Photography brought to you by Robert Bobb, Kelly Clayton, Matt Pettersson, and Larry Martel*



# Hill-Blazing

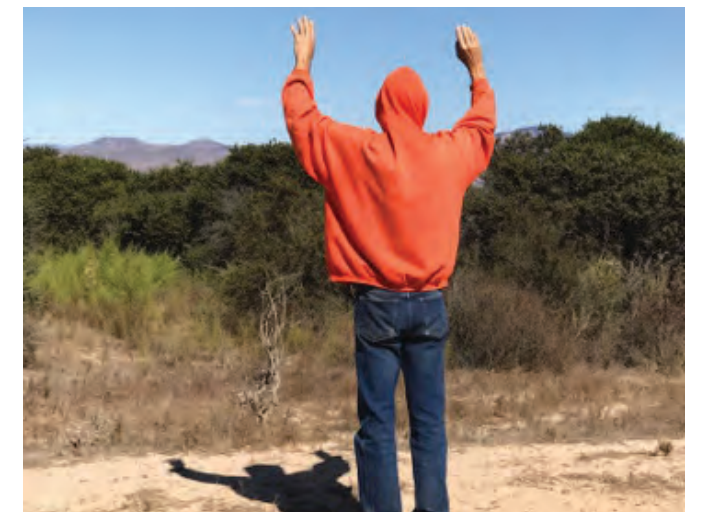
## With Alberto



We come here in the morning and do our chores and then we go on our hike. I liked when we went through the cows on the other side of the new fence. We went up the hill and from there we turned around the other direction and came down the hill to the horses. The view on top was beautiful. The mountains were all green on top and you could see the grass. All of us stayed as a group together. Nobody got injured or hurt. The horses are kind enough to be near us and not afraid of us. When we throw apples and treats over the fence, they come to us. One of the horses kept following behind us. He let us pet him a little bit. The horse didn't want to leave beside us. He didn't want to be left alone.



ALBERTO OLMEDO











Life  
On  
The  
Farm



**ROBERT BOBB**



*"The Three Stooges"*



*"Alberto's digging up the compost."*





*"We had a lot of pumpkins growing this year. There were a whole bunch of them!"*



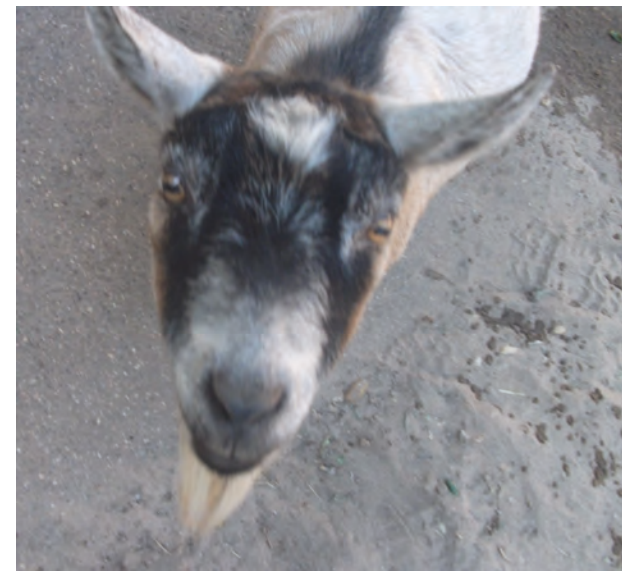
*"We have corn growing at the Farm. That was some good corn. My mom cooked it for me and my son. I like my corn with butter."*



*"We have watermelon growing at the Farm."*



*"We have a bunch of chickens out there. We did have to get rid of a rooster. He had very pretty feathers. He got a nice new home."*



*"Hans is a good animal. He's got a good looking goatee."*

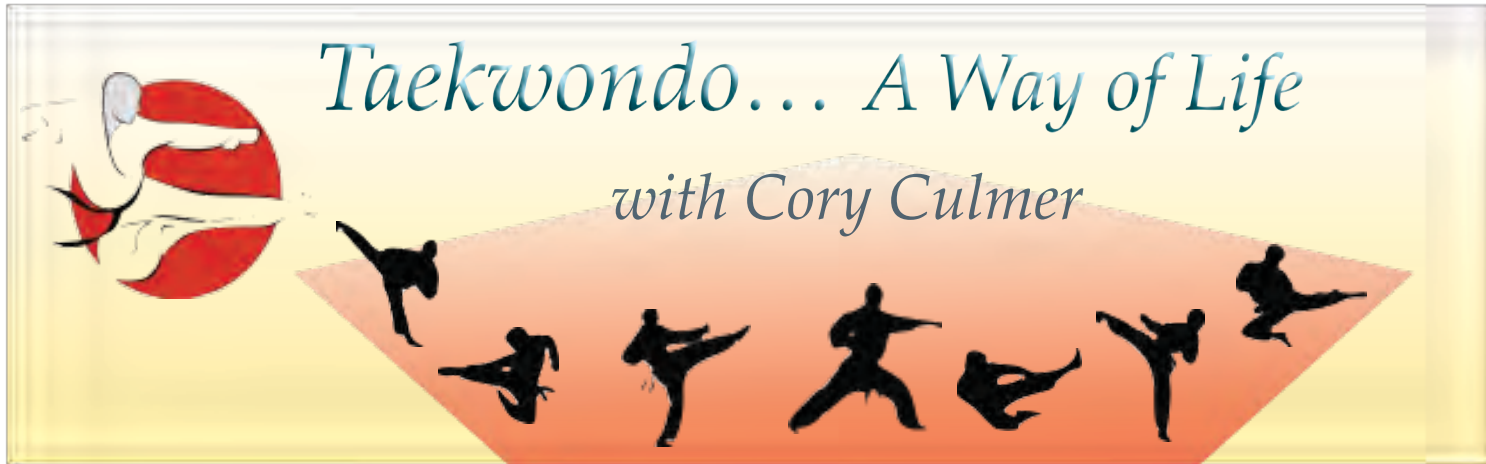


*"This is our hardworking compost crew!"*



*"Chrissy is getting ready to lay an egg."*





I just passed my form for a black belt. It wasn't an easy form to do. The form is called a kick form. You start backwards and look over your shoulder while turning to face Grand Master. I have to still learn more black belt forms. We have a DVD with all the forms on it now. I would like to see that so I can practice. Master Bower and Grand Master gave it to us. My teammates are all doing well. Steve got his brown belt. I am really proud that he got his brown belt. We are all going to keep up the good work. Readers, I will be talking to you again soon.



CORY CULMER









# Let's Talk Painting!

By Antoinette Ellis



I used the color blue for the waves. I really liked painting the water. My ship is sailing away. It is a pirate ship. They are nice pirates on my ship with treasure.

Kim helped me with my painting. She is my friend.



ANTOINETTE ELLIS





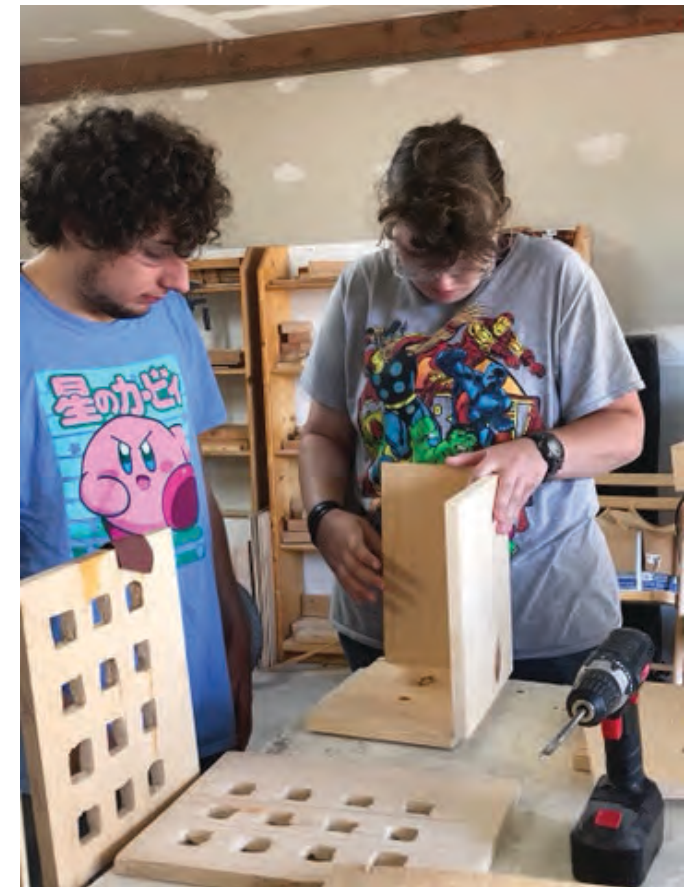


# Let's Chisel This Out with Steve

We started to assemble our boxes by using glue and screws. We were excited to start the next phase of our boxes. The whole purpose of this box is to close it so nobody else can get into it. The design for our top piece is so cool! It is amazing to have something that nobody else has. It is a one of a kind design. I have learned a lot about chiseling, sanding and prepping by working on a lot of squares.



STEVE SALUTAN









# FARM COOKING

With Jeannie



I liked peeling and grating the carrots for our coleslaw. I also liked mixing the sauce together. The dressing tasted really good! We washed the cabbage and then used the spinner to get the water out. Larry BBQ'd our chicken. He did a really good job. I had a good time with my friends. This was Kim's first BBQ and I think she had fun too.

## Creamy Coleslaw

### Ingredients:

#### Slaw Mix

- 1 large head green cabbage, finely shredded.*
- 1 large red onion, finely sliced.*
- 1 large carrot, peeled and grated.*
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped fresh parsley leaves.*
- 1 cup white sugar*
- 1/2 cup kosher salt*

#### Dressing

- 3/4 cup mayonnaise*
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar*
- 2 tablespoons dijon mustard*
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper*
- 3 tablespoons sugar*

### Directions:

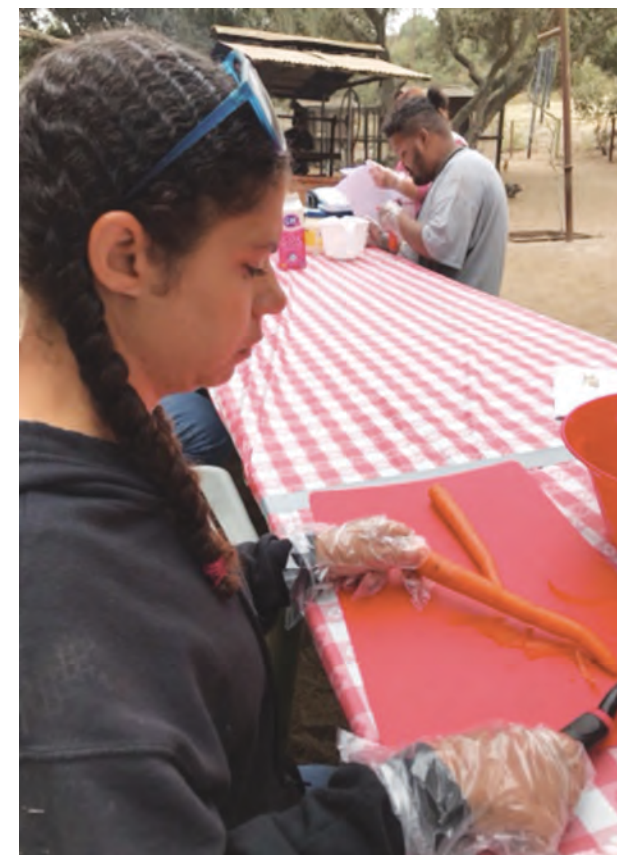
**For the Slaw Mix:** Combine cabbage, onion, carrot, and parsley in a large bowl, leaving plenty of room to toss (you may have to use two large bowls if your bowls are not large enough.) Sprinkle with sugar and salt and toss to combine. Let rest five minutes, then transfer to a large colander and rinse thoroughly under cold running water. Transfer rinsed mixture to a salad spinner and spin dry. Alternatively, transfer to a large rimmed baking sheet lined with a triple layer of paper towels or a clean kitchen towel and blot mixture dry with more paper towels. Return to large bowl and set aside.

**For the Dressing:** Combine mayonnaise, vinegar, mustard, black pepper, and sugar in a medium bowl and whisk until homogenous. Pour dressing over cabbage mixture and toss to coat. Taste and adjust seasoning with more salt, pepper, sugar, and/or vinegar if desired.



JEANNIE MATTER











# Baking for the Holiday



ANN ROBINSON  
*Guest Columnist*

## Frosted Pumpkin Cookies

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of shortening
- 1/2 cup of brown sugar
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 cup pumpkin
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup nuts, chopped



Cream shortening and sugar. Add pumpkin, egg and vanilla, mixing well. Add dry ingredients, then nuts. Drop from teaspoon onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes.

### Frosting:

Combine 3 Tbsp. butter and 1/2 cup brown sugar in a sauce pan. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir 1 minute until slightly thickened. Cool about 15 minutes. Then add 1/4 cup of milk and beat until smooth. Add enough powdered sugar (about 2 cups) for spreading consistency.





# The Inside Scoop

## With Kevin Donaghy

Interview with Carl Holloway owner and operator of Holloway's Christmas Tree Farm



Hello! Mr. Holloway, when was Holloway's Christmas Tree Farm founded?

My father founded the farm in 1958. That is the year that he planted the first trees.



Is Holloway's Christmas Tree Farm still owned and operated by the Holloway family?

Yes, it is.



What are your open hours for visitors to Holloway's this year?

We are open Monday through Friday 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Saturday and Sunday we are open 9:00 am to 8:00 pm.



How big is Holloway's Christmas Tree Farm and what types of trees do you grow at Holloway's?

We have twenty acres of trees under production now. We have tried a variety over the years, but we are currently back to our original tree, which is the Monterey pine. That is the only kind that we have growing on the farm.







**How does a Christmas tree become selected? By its size and shape?**

Generally... Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and in a Christmas tree it is never more true! We will have someone buy a tree because it is a sad little thing that needs a home, or we will have someone need a tree that is absolutely perfect without a single hole. Sometimes people can search for up to five or six hours, driving everyone in their family crazy trying to find the perfect tree! My best advice to anyone that is choosing a tree is to go with your first impression. The first tree that you like and think is a really nice tree, you should stop and cut. Save yourself a headache! What will often happen on a busy day is that people will find a nice tree and they will leave it and put a stick in it. All the stick does is signal to someone else that it is a good tree. Somebody else can swoop in, cut the tree out from underneath them and by the time you get back, the tree is gone. It causes a few problems sometimes. But, it is what it is. If you snooze you loose!



**How old does a tree need to be before it can be sold?**

Well, that is a trick question! If it is a Monterey pine, it needs to be three to four years old. The Noble and Fraser firs tend to be almost double that. So they run six to eight years before they are ready for harvest. Balsam and Grand firs are still part of the fir genus so they do take longer, but a little less time than the Noble and Fraser. Monterey pine is the fastest growing tree in the world, that is used for timber production purposes. It produces almost 70% of the timber in the world, out-producing all the other trees combined. It was originated in America, in 1922, and then went to New Zealand and Australia. They started working with parent trees and then were making offspring that were huge and fast growing. It is amazing what they were able to do! Unfortunately, America doesn't really do experimenting with the Monterey pine anymore.



**Do you also have other varieties of trees to choose from?**

Now we bring in from Washington and Wisconsin, Fraser fir, Balsam fir, Noble fir, and Grand fir. They usually come in the first week that we open, in November. These trees are always kept in water, even when they are in the back. The Fraser and Balsam firs are from Wisconsin and the Noble and Grand firs come from Washington State. We sell Christmas tree stands as well. We have metal stands with the spike in the middle. Those are really good stands because you can take your tree home, cut off more of the tree if you need to, and remount it on that stand because there is a hole drilled into the bottom of the tree. We also offer the Tim Mitchell stands. At Holloway's we also make our own wooden stands that my Dad nicknamed, "The Marriage Saver." It is a cross stand with a staple in each corner and we guy-wire into the tree. It is a great stand because it can be easily adjusted.



**Does a customer have to cut their own tree, or can they get assistance?**

Yes, this year we have 49 employees already on board. We have tractors running around with trailers on them, we have young men and women that can go out and help you cut your tree. We also have hand saws and you can go out and cut your tree with your family.







Which are the most popular Christmas trees that you sell?

When all the trees are at their best, I think the Noble fir would be considered the top dog in the race. The Fraser fir from Wisconsin I think is the best tree. The White House tree is supposed to be a Fraser fir this year.







Is it hard to take care of a real Christmas tree from Holloway's?

No it is not. There is a lot of research done on how to care for a Christmas tree by Dr. Gary Chastagner of Washington State University. His sole purpose in life is to research Christmas tree capability. He has found over the years that the number one factor is the time that the tree is cut to the time it is reintroduced into water. Environmental conditions are also very important: temperature in the house, heat sources, sunlight, things like that, greatly affect the keep-ability of a tree. We put our personal tree in our picture window, but it is never in direct sunlight. The room stays fairly cool in the winter time. Our trees always stay fresh. We have never had a tree dry out before the end of January. A lot of times it will be the first of February before we take our tree down. We kind of like our trees around here!



What are the benefits of choosing a real Christmas tree for Christmas?

Multiple benefits! Christmas trees are a habitat for all different kinds of animals. Bees are a great example; they are good for everybody. We also have deer and quail that love the trees. When we irrigate our trees it leaves small areas for the quail and deer to get water. Getting a Christmas tree also benefits the American family. You can't have the same experience when you go to a box store and buy a Christmas tree in a box... There is no arguing over the tree, holiday festivities, there is no Christmas involved there! We have third and fourth generation families that come to Holloway's. We could have a group of 30 to 40 people that are here to buy three or four trees as a family outing. There are not a whole lot of places anymore where that kind of stuff happens. Christmas is about celebrating with family.



Can you tell me about your gift shop?

We don't do a lot of commercial items. We try to sell mostly homemade arts and crafts in the gift shop.







What other activities do you offer for families who visit your farm?

We have the giant country swing which is a 40-foot pole with two ropes that come down with an axle on top of the swing and the kids fly through the air on the swing. It is fantastic! The kids love it. We have a quad train that I built, it is also a huge hit. We have a marshmallow fire that we do in the evenings. We, of course, have Christmas music playing all the time. Pedal cars are available for the kids to race on. This year we are adding a bean bag toss and on certain weekends we will also have a petting zoo. All fun stuff. The girls are making wreaths at the gift shop. We are giving away baby seedlings for the first 500 kids that come to the farm. There is a nursery that grows the seedlings for us. We have been giving away the seedlings for a long time. It is neat to have people come back and say that their seedlings from previous years are huge. Kids just don't get to plant things anymore, so it is a neat thing.



I learned that you offer a "Farm Club Membership"; what is that?

About 12 years ago we discovered that out of all the people coming to the farm, only about 50% were buying trees. We had so much fun stuff to do that people would come out for the activities but not buy their tree with us. We went for 45 years without having to have a club membership, but these days it is for absolute economic survival. We have had some push back, but most of our customers understand. So the deal is...to be a *Farm Club Member*, you pay \$30 for admission to the Farm. Admission allows you to do any of the activities on the Farm. If you purchase a tree, all \$30 comes off the price of the tree. So if you just want to come out to play, then you pay \$30 to support the Farm. If you purchase a tree, then the Farm admission is free. So when you come to the Farm, we ask you if you have ever been to Holloway's before, we then explain if you have that you will need to purchase this year's membership and the fee will come off the price of your tree. If people have never been to the Farm before, then we let them know that they are welcome to walk around and take a look, but if they want to play around on any of the rides or activities, that you will need to buy a *Farm Club Card* and get a day pass. That will let them do any activity on the Farm and then, when they go to purchase their tree, whether it's today or next week, the \$30 will come off the price of the tree. People can come back as many times as they want during the season to play at the Farm, as long as they have purchased their *Farm Club Card* for the year.



What is the funniest thing that ever happened at Holloway's Christmas Trees over the last 57 years?

You are really going to like this one! Go on the internet and google "Bat in a Christmas Tree." See what comes up. It was never really funny to us at the time it happened, in 2006. However, the story is pretty outrageous. We became a media sensation. We flocked a tree for a customer and found a small brown bat in it. I removed the bat. Bats are really good for the Farm, so I just set him outside. The customer took her tree home. Two days later, we get a phone call from the customer, and she is apologizing and telling me that I am about to get some visitors. She said she found the bat and called a friend. The friend called the newspapers and the news ran with the story. Well, that was the understatement of the year! The original news reporter said that Holloway's put a bat in every Christmas tree for pest control. This went national. Oprah called us and wanted us to come on her show. Ellen called and wanted us to come on her show. Saturday Night Live wanted to do a skit about the bat in a Christmas tree. Every camera truck from LA to San Fransisco to Fresno to Bakersfield was parked here. I had no parking for my customers. They were all trying to get interviews about why we put bats in all of our Christmas trees. We even had to get a lawyer to represent us because I never said that. We fought with the original reporter because I stated, "I don't kill bats to keep them out of the trees." Bats are good insect control. The reporter finally called us back and apologized for his mistake. This all happened during our biggest week of the season, in 2006. We lost a lot of business, I thought for sure we were done for. Luckily our customers came back. Not only did customers come back, but they started making fun of the situation. My wife Debbie bought little toy bats and we gave away free bats with each tree the next year!







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