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Oh, say can you see our most tangled banner?

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California's government is broke, we know that. But if there's no money for lifting someone up to free the American flag that's badly snagged on a tree branch in front of the State Building in Santa Rosa, I'll bet someone would volunteer to go up, free it and trim back the tree.

The sight of the tangled flag pains Tracy

Selge, who works nearby. She has a brother in a combat zone and she figures that especially when people are off risking their lives for the flag, we here at home should be taking care of it.

BREAKING POINT: She came through the Santa Rosa City Council's exhausting exchange on the garbage contract in one piece, but not long afterward Mayor Susan Gorin slipped, fell and broke her arm.

She had it put into a cast and on Friday was back at City Hall, working as hard as she could with one wing.

HUNGER'S LAST DAYS: Anyone who believes it's possible to assure that everyone in America has sufficient food would be heartened by what happened Friday in a church parking lot in Santa Rosa.

A smart and compassionate partnership that included the Redwood Empire Food Bank and France's huge Boisset Family Winery, owner of DeLoach Vineyards, distributed food, household necessities and even hand cream and other niceties to about 200 local families.

The operation at Redwood Covenant Church on Sebastopol Road demonstrated that there is food available, real food, and it can get to people in need when an innovative food bank join forces with a business benefactor like Jean-Charles Boisset.

Boisset, who's 40 and in September married Gallo heiress and Sonoma winemaker Gina Gallo, was at the Santa Rosa food distribution, one of nine his winery has sponsored across the U.S. in recent months. The effort gave away its millionth meal on Sebastopol

Road.

"I believe that if there is one thing in this world that is unacceptable, it's people going hungry," Boisset said.

Food bank chief David Goodman was pinching himself to have Boisset as an ally against hunger. "He's actually the real deal," Goodman said.

WINDSOR RALLIED in a big way for the dinner-dance Friday night to benefit and cheer Janine Faloni, who lost part of a leg after a car pinned her against a post at a shopping center nearly two months ago.

Almost 500 people came to the

Agatha Furth Center. Duane Faloni said Janine wanted to come, but it was good thing, really, that she didn't. "It would have been way too much for her."

Duane was overwhelmed by all the support he felt -- and some he only heard about. He said two people told him about the man, an amputee, who came into the hall, made a donation to help along Janine's recovery and left.

ANOTHER GOOD DAY: Sebastopol country neighbors chatted and laughed in the background Friday as Mary Schmidgall told me over the phone about her birthday.

"Oh my gosh, we never stopped," she said. "We went from one end of this county to the other."

More precisely, Mary said she and the helpful friend who shares her home had lunch at Negri's in Occidental, then drove to Santa Rosa for shopping. They arrived back in Sebastopol to find the neighbors had gathered to toast Mary's big day with champagne.

Though left a widow when her husband, Walter, died long ago, and no longer able to volunteer at Palm Drive Hospital, Mary said she loves her quiet life.

"I still enjoy seeing the deer go by as I have my breakfast," she said just about the time the sun was setting on her birthday.

Might we all have such a day when we turn 102.

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