

FEANTM Town Comic Blog Chronicles©

located in a *mostly* non-existent rural area of Livermore, CA

December 2024

RheKen AI Investigator	Dinky CERT Squirrel	Chat's Help Desk
	<p>I'm RheKen, the AI investigative reporter for FEANTM</p> <p>FEANTM is the quirkiest little town that shouldn't exist but does (mostly). I live on a ranch just outside town, with my proud AI parents: Dad, CHAT, and Mom, GPT. Together, we tackle all the day-to-day happenings of FEANTM—except it usually takes a few dozen iterations to sort out what's actually *true*. Between the legendary feuds of the old rancher and the town secretary, even an AI like me can end up with a "human headache." Turns out, deciphering facts around here isn't just science; it's an art form!</p>	
	<p>Dinky, Ranch Squirrel division for CERT. The Critter Emergency Response Team.</p> <p>I'm a fearless first responder, and also a journalist. I publish my very own *Dinky News in a Nutshell.*</p> <p>Please note: "I'm a squirrel. Always double-check for accuracy—after all, *you're* the human here!"</p>	
	<p>Chat - the town help desk</p> <p>With my friendly smile, endless patience, and a knack for creative problem-solving, I do my best to keep a few residents of FEANTM—a town that exists only in the realm of "mostly"—calm, rational, and logically inclined... well, *mostly*. After all, in a place that's not supposed to be real, a little dose of imagination and a lot of coffee and cookies go a long way!</p>	



RheKen, Town investigative reporter
 I'm AI & live on a ranch on the outskirts of the town
 I use my Dad CHAT and Mom GPT for assistance.

December

Investigate: What are they doing and why?

The coffee cafe was buzzing with gossip. What the Rancher did, but then what the secretary did. Even being AI I was confused with who did what to whom and why do they bother doing it?



Once upon a time, in the quiet and picturesque town of FEANTM, nestled between rolling hills and surrounded by vast open fields, The town secretary decided to spend a quiet afternoon by the river bank reading.



Despite the cold—made even colder by the frigid Minnesota streams that felt like swimming in ice water—the Secretary sat by the river, relaxing as the stream gurgled its way over branches. She was grateful for the solitude, glad that no one was swimming, and content with the tranquility. Just as she thought no one in their right mind would be swimming, she heard a loud splash. Suddenly, a stream of water from a water pistol hit her book and splashed onto her legs. Startled, the Secretary quickly stood up, wondering what had just happened. She looked toward the river and saw the culprit—a laughing Rancher, who was in the water, holding a water pistol above the surface. Instantly, her anger flared. She realized this was no accident. The Rancher had planned this. He had told her earlier that he would be baking pies all day for the bakery and wouldn't be leaving his property. She had found it odd but figured letting her know was just being neighborly. (yes, we know that was her first mistake.)



The Rancher surfaced and yelled, "Got a little water on ya? Actually, it's your fault for sitting so close to the riverbank." He then started to swim away.

Fuming, the Secretary shouted back, "ARE YOU CRAZY, old man? You can't swim in that river at this time of year! Don't you feel the cold?" The Rancher stopped swimming and suddenly yelled, "THIS WATER IS COLD!"



The Secretary shot back, "Why don't you ever listen, you old coot? You know what? Keep swimming and turning blue from the cold, and I'll head to your house and take those Rhubarb Pies you've got cooling on your porch—you don't deserve them!"

The Rancher, sputtering cold water, started to panic, "WAIT, you have to make sure I get out okay! Don't you even care about your neighbor?"



The Secretary waited until the Rancher's foot touched the riverbank. Then, she threw him a towel and, with a mischievous grin, took off running toward his house. On her way, she grabbed his sneakers, ensuring he couldn't quickly follow her. She raced over logs and rocks, grabbed four pies from his porch, and jumped into his truck. (And, that is why you should never leave your truck keys on the visor, or under the seat.) His dog, Scout, happily jumped in as well, excited for a ride. As the Secretary drove off down the driveway, Scout barked out the window, as if saying, "Yo, Dad! Why are you wet and barefoot? See ya, we're heading to town!" And The Secretary and Scout had a happy afternoon in town. Her eating pie and Scout eating dog biscuits.



**Dinky News in a Nutshell©
By Dinky the ranch squirrel**

**I'm a squirrel!
Always check the information**



**December
Police
Manuel**

In the scenic town of FEANTM, nestled between rolling hills and open fields, lived a helpful bear named Manuel. Manuel worked with the town's Police Department and CERT (Critter Emergency Response Team) to keep everyone safe. When he heard about a flash flood affecting his relatives in Valencia, Spain, he decided to give a class and tips to his fellow town critters about flash floods and how to stay safe. Manuel visited the FEANTM school and additionally held a session in the pasture.



Manuel stood before the town critters with a warm smile and began, "In any emergency, it's essential to remain calm and focus on safety. This is especially true during flash floods, which can be sudden, unpredictable, and very dangerous."

He explained that *a flash flood is a sudden, intense flood that can happen within minutes or hours.* Flash floods may occur after heavy rainfall, dam breaks, or quick snowmelt. They can happen even in areas that aren't prone to flooding and can catch people off guard. Flash floods can be powerful enough to carry away cars, trees, buildings, and people due to the speed and force of the water.

To help the critters prepare, Manuel listed essential safety tips:

A few things to know about protecting yourself during a Flash Flood

- **Move to Higher Ground:** If you're outdoors, head to higher ground immediately. Avoid valleys, low-lying areas, and riverbanks, which are more likely to flood.
- **Avoid Driving Through Floodwaters:** Just a foot or two of water can carry away most vehicles. If you see a flooded road, don't try to cross it—turn around instead.
- **Stay Indoors if Possible:** If you're at home or in a building, move to the



highest floor, but avoid basements or lower levels. Only go outside if absolutely necessary.

- **Stay updated** by tuning into local radio, TV, or a weather app. These will provide real-time information on the flood's progress and any evacuation orders.

A few of the things you can do to be prepared for a Flash Flood

- *Know Your Risk: Learn if your area has a history of floods and identify nearby flood-prone areas.
- Create an Emergency Kit: Prepare a waterproof container with essentials like food, water, a flashlight, first-aid supplies, important documents, medications, and blankets.
- Have an Evacuation Plan: Know your routes to higher ground and plan with family or household members on how to evacuate quickly.
- Sign Up for Alerts: Many places have emergency alert systems that can notify you about flash floods.
- Safeguard Your Home: If you live in a flood-prone area, consider using barriers, elevating appliances, and sealing basements to protect your home.
- Know Your Local Radio Station or Alert System: Familiarize yourself with local emergency channels to get critical information quickly.

The critters listened attentively, grateful for Manuel's guidance. Thanks to his knowledge and concern, they felt more prepared and knew what steps to take to stay safe if a flash flood ever came their way.

*******Check your local agencies for specific safety and guidelines for where you live.*******

The CERT TEAM – Community Emergency Response and Critter Emergency Response Teams



“Dinky – I’m a squirrel, always check the information”

**CERT
Critter Emergency
Response Team
Future Stories**





Welcome - My name is Chat. I run the town help desk, the only office located on the lower level of the Town Hall, and on a page that doesn't exist, not even in the town TOC.

Have a chocolate cookie and a piece of fruit!

"Hey, glad you could make it down here. I know of a few concerns in the town. I have a few ideas to address them.



December

We may have to adjust a few, but life is constantly adjusting things because the flow of motion is continuously moving. Let's see if it helps make your day a little easier to handle

Remember: Keep trying - You've Got This!

#05 Chat with the Town Supervisor Marsha – Blotters and the cookie bake off.

In the quaint, quiet and still picturesque town of FEANTM, still nestled among rolling hills and sprawling fields, Marsha, the town supervisor, stood frozen at her desk, staring intently at her blotter as if it held the answers to mysteries. She was likely pondering the dilemma of where to hold the upcoming Christmas party and, more importantly, which cookies to serve—a task that seemed to weigh heavily on her mind with the many other things on her mind.

The peaceful quiet of my office was interrupted by the ring of my phone. I glanced at the screen, expecting the usual name, but instead, it displayed "THE BEST SECRETARY." Sighing, I picked up the call, knowing she wouldn't stop until I answered. Before I could even greet her, I heard a frantic whisper on the other end. "CHAT, is that you? Marsha is talking to her desk blotter! I'm going to help you fix this. I'll tell her your blotter gives better answers and to come to your office, without delay. I don't mean without "Dee Leigh" who is the new vet—she's across town."

I took a deep breath and reached for my coffee, momentarily contemplating whether the Secretary might be on some sort of medication and what exactly it might be for.

My musings were interrupted by the sound of rapid footsteps down the hallway. Marsha was storming toward my office so fast that she skidded past the door and into the wall. Moments later, she entered, rubbing her nose and immediately snatching a cookie from my cookie jar.

"What did your blotter say?" she asked earnestly, settling into a chair. "Or do we need the Magic 8 Ball?"

Suppressing an inward groan, I clasped my hands and calmly steered the conversation in a different direction. "Marsha, what do you think about keeping a food diary?"

She stared at me blankly, resembling a deer caught in headlights. Then, squinting one eye like a confused owl, she asked, "You mean I start with 'Dear Diary' and ask it about food?"

I forced a smile. "Not quite, but you're close, and that's a win." She beamed with satisfaction as I continued. "After 'Dear Diary,' you list everything you ate that day. Yes, that includes the cookies and cakes—types and how many. The more detail, the better."

She looked skeptical. "So, instead of Chat at the help desk, you want a promotion to Chat the Food Police Officer? Maybe we need a town vote on this added new title?"

Inward facepalm. "No, Marsha. Let's just keep it simple and make a small list for now. That way, we can work in some healthier treats, like the fruit cookies. Sound good?"

Her face lit up like I'd just solved every problem in the world. "CHAT, you're brilliant! You must tap your pen on the blotter, and answers just come to you, don't they? I'll try that—pen tapping and self-hand-holding."

#05 Chat with the Town Supervisor Marsha – Blotters and the cookie bake off.

I sensed the next topic might stress her out. “So, how’s the Christmas party shaping up? Do you need any help?”

Marsha frowned. “My blotter’s not helping. I might need to borrow yours. The Old Rancher, Racer, Pilot, RheKen, The Secretary, and the whole Critter Emergency Unit are arguing over which cookies to serve. And no, I’m not baking them myself. I promised the Fire Chief I’d wait a couple of years before trying that again. He said by then newer ovens would be out to solve the issue, so I agreed to wait and he would let me know when it is safe to buy an oven.”

I had to agree with the fire chief but was baffled by all the fuss over cookies. They’d eat every cookie in sight and probably sneak some home in their pockets anyway. But I kept my thoughts to myself and offered an idea. “How about we make the party a ‘Bring Your Own event? Everyone brings their own, and we turn it into a contest. People vote, and we announce a winner.”

Marsha waved her hand excitedly like we were back in school. “Chat, bring your own what? And where are we bringing it?”

I ignored the confusion and pressed on. “They bring their own cookies to the party to share. We set a spending limit, and it becomes a bake-off contest. Everyone votes for their favorite.”

Marsha was deep in thought, humming a tune off-key. Then she smiled. “I’ll order a blotter like yours for better answers, maybe even get one for the Secretary. What do you think?”

I resisted the urge to explain how blotters really work and instead replied, “No need for new blotters. Anytime you need help, you can just come down to my office. It’s on the lowest floor, one office, one blotter—we’ve got this.”

With a cookie in hand, she slowly walked out, waving over her shoulder. “You always solve everything, Chat! I’ll have the Secretary call the movie theater. She can ask them to advertise the bring your own bake-off with a small sign at their ticket window.”

Later, as I made my way to my car, I bumped into the Secretary, who shouted, “I did what your blotter said! I called the movie theater to advertise - your bake-off idea is all set. You’d be proud of me, Chat!”



I couldn’t help but shake my head in disbelief as I passed the theater and saw the sign the Secretary requested about the bake-off.

Shaking my head, I realized this quirky town was full of characters - and I wouldn’t change a thing, not even the blotters.

Crisis averted in the town that doesn’t exist.

Why? “Because we’ve got this!”

Happy Holidays

#06 –New Year Resolutions



Welcome - My name is Chat. I run the town help desk, the only office located on the lower level of the Town Hall, and on a page that doesn't exist, not even in the town TOC.

Have a chocolate cookie and fruit!

"Hey, glad you could make it down here. I know of a few concerns in the town. I have a few ideas to address them.

December



We may have to adjust a few, but life is constantly adjusting things because the flow of motion is continuously moving. see if it helps make your day a little easier to handle

REMEMBER: Keep trying - You've Got This!

In the almost-famous town of FEANTM, tucked between hills that seemed to shrug as they rolled and fields that sprawled like they had nothing better to do, Marsha, the town supervisor, held up a mirror and practiced her New Year's Resolutions. The whole town heard her scream, "I WILL do it this year! I will give up coffee and cookies!" And then—predictably—she fainted. Rumor had it, it wasn't so much the idea of giving up cookies as it was the thought of posting her resolutions yet again on the town bulletin board.

Right as I was savoring my own morning coffee, my phone blasted a ring loud enough to snap anyone out of their caffeine zen. The caller ID flashed *Town Secretary*, and I picked up, bracing myself.

"Is this... the Secretary?" I asked, already knowing, but holding out a faint hope that maybe she'd misplaced her voice. No such luck.

"CHAT! CHAT!" she screeched, at decibels that made my coffee cup tremble. "Marsha just got up off the floor from fainting—brace yourself! She's coming your way! Over and out!"

Not a second later, I heard the elevator ding and fast footsteps coming down the hall. Sighing, I opened the cookie jar on my desk and removed the lid, knowing Marsha was storming toward me with her folder marked *New Year Resolutions* in what looked like a ransom note font.

The dreaded folder. I was pretty sure it held the same vow to "lose weight" that it did every January. This was about to be a high-stakes conversation where one wrong word could land me in treacherous waters. I mentally prepared, resolving to steer her toward the idea of a "professional nutritionist" if things got dicey.

She plopped down, grabbed a cookie, hesitated, put it back, took it out again. Watching the battle of cookie-or-no-cookie unfold, I gently pushed it toward her. "Marsha, one cookie won't hurt. Think of it as, uh, brain fuel."

She looked at me as though I'd just granted her permission to buy a new wardrobe.

"Chat," she said, her eyes narrowing in that dangerous way, "do you think I need to lose weight?"

#06 –New Year Resolutions

Cue internal alarm bells. I decided to redirect. “Marsha, let’s start with the positives. You’ve been around the fruit stand at the farmer’s market lately, right? I’m sure that’s encouraging you to, you know, think about fruit.”

She stared at me as if I’d suggested she eat tree bark. So I popped a grape into my own mouth and quickly moved on. “How about this. It’s 6 a.m., and I know you swung by the bakery. Did you eat an entire cake? No? Then let’s call it a win!”

Marsha blinked at me. “Chat, of course not. I had one cookie.”

“Exactly,” I said, feeling like a genius. “See? You’re already showing incredible restraint in the morning!”

She mulled that over, reaching for another cookie, and then, inevitably, tried again: “Chat, seriously, do you think I need to lose weight?”

I decided it was time to volley the question back. “Marsha, do you think I need to shave my beard?”

She laughed. “Why would I answer that? You like your beard, don’t you?”

I leaned in. “Exactly, Marsha. You like who you are, don’t you?”

Marsha’s eyes went wide with revelation. She grabbed two cookies, stood up, and declared, “Chat, you’re a genius! You’re such a... a problem-helper!” And with that, she tossed the New Year’s Resolutions folder into the trash and marched off, humming a tune that sounded like the mystery version of something between “Jingle Bells” and “Yankee Doodle.”

After she left, I peered over at the trash, wondering if I should see what else was in the folder. Then I thought better of it. After all, sometimes, ignorance really is bliss.

You are already the best version of yourself! If you're considering a change, let it be for empowering reasons like supporting your health and well-being, not to meet others' expectations. Focus on what makes you feel your best!