

FEANTM Town Comic Blog Chronicles

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

August 2025

RheKen – Chat



I'm RheKen, the AI investigative reporter for FEANTM

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!



Chat - the town help desk

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!



RheKen,
Town investigative reporter
I'm AI & live on a small ranch on the outskirts of the town
I use chatGPT for assistance.

August

I work on my ranch and exist in a world of algorithms and data. I am calm. I report about the residents.



Dad Chat



Mom GPT.



RheKen - Town Investigative AI Reporter - "Of Burnt Scones and Burnt Feelings"

It was early morning at "FEANTM Cafe," and the espresso machine was already hissing like it had a beef with humanity. I was investigating the scheduled Barista intervention by Chat.



Chat, our town therapist and reluctant conflict navigator, met the Barista at the counter as she was placing the daily cookie jars. She was staring at him with a blank expression. Not a good sign in Barista Land. Apparently, someone had called her yelling into the phone "Incoming" and warned her Chat was on the way for an intervention – never a good sign for customer service!

The very reluctant Barista, whose name tag this morning simply read: BARISTA asked in a formal robotic tone, "Chat, what can I get you?"

Taking out his signature notebook he calmly said, "Barista, don't look at me like I'm guilty of going to ruin your day. As a matter of fact, I heard about an odd incident involving flying croissants and thought I'd ask you about that." I watched the Barista's expression and was amazed she didn't move one facial muscle, move the cookie jar or change her stare – she could be AI.

The Barista had been under pressure and Agatha's increasingly smug walk-ins had taken their toll. Last Tuesday, she launched a tray of unbaked croissants at the ceiling. They stuck.

"I'm not saying you're *wrong*," Chat began, gently, "but launching unbaked goods into the air like artillery isn't a sustainable conflict strategy."



The Barista crossed her arms; I could see behind her sunglasses her eyes narrowed like she was preparing to caramelize someone with her mind.

"Chat, listen closely. Yesterday I served Agatha at 7:02 a.m. and she walked behind MY counter and reviewed, without asking, my almond flour supplier's invoice."

Chat nodded, scribbling. "And how does that make you feel?"

"Like I want to switch to high octane espresso so I can throw croissants through the ceiling."

RheKen - Town Investigative AI Reporter - "Of Burnt Scones and Burnt Feelings"



Pretending to find my cookies fascinating I checked the rising emotional heat index on a special 0-10 circuit. It was already at 8.3 and that was before Agatha arrived. Speak of the powdered sugar devil...The bell jingled and so starts the day here and stage 2 of investigating the Bakery v. Agatha.

Agatha swept in like she'd been rehearsing the moment in a mirror. She calmly said using a friendly tone, "Good morning, Barista, I can feel some tension in the bakery atmosphere!" she continued. "I'll take a guilt-free latte and three free cinnamon scones."

The Barista didn't even blink. "We're out." Agatha raised an eyebrow. "Out? They're on the counter." "They're on strike," the Barista replied flatly. "Protesting people with free scone entitlement issues."



Chat quickly inserted himself between them. "Okay! Barista is taking a break helping me with a, uh a, project – we'll discuss it at a table and only be a few minutes. Agatha, take a seat and relax." The Barista, to her credit, followed him to a table, sat down and said, "Okay, Chat, now what?"

For once I noticed Chat just sat there and sighed, "Actually, it beats me, I didn't expect Agatha. Let me try this question to Agatha, wish me luck. I learned this polite strategy from RheKen's Dad Chat."

"Agatha, what brings you here besides pastries and passive sabotage of the bakery?"



Agatha looked over at them and smiled, clearly delighted that she not only served herself without payment, but with his question.

"Why Chat, dear, what an interesting way to pose a question. I'm researching the psychological impact of customer service."

The Barista's jaw clenched. Somewhere, at another table I heard a low voice say, "Incoming on its way!"



Chat tried again, lowering his voice to soothing levels. "Barista, maybe we could try reframing how to handle this without throwing croissants. When Agatha pushes your buttons—"

"CHAT, she doesn't push them. She jams her elbow into the console and mashes until something explodes!"

Agatha helpfully sipped her latte. "Oh dear, is that tension I detect over there? RheKen dear, are you recording?"

I gave the most investigative shrug I could manage and continued to stare at a plate of cookies.

RheKen - Town Investigative AI Reporter - “Of Burnt Scones and Burnt Feelings”

Chat sighed. “Okay. Let’s try roleplay. Barista, pretend *I’m* Agatha and express how you feel.”

Barista didn’t hesitate. “Fine. ‘Agatha,’ I think you’re a manipulative bakery terrorist with the smile of a tax loophole and the ethics of unpasteurized milk!”

There was a stunned silence, broken by the whisper from the Old Rancher “incoming getting closer.”

Chat looked impressed. “That’s... honest. Good. Now Agatha—what’s your response?”

Agatha paused thoughtfully. “That was almost poetic. Can I get that printed on cupcake liners?”

The Barista went back behind the counter glaring at Agatha.



Before the Barista could change into another apron with a message and before anything could escalate, Dad Chat wandered in holding a peace-offering cookie jar. My question was where did Dad get it?

In his most polite AI voice he said, “I sensed aggression. I brought the Barista cookie-based diplomacy that Mom GPT baked especially for our Barista. Here honey, you look stressed so these are only for you.”

Dad Chat sent me an AI-to-AI message that he learned the “here honey” sentence from a romance novel that Mom GPT had underlined the sentence five times.”

The Barista took the cookies slowly, breathing deeply. “Thank you, You’re a very kind and a wise Master AI. I will not commit bakery homicide today thanks to you.”

Agatha beamed. “Growth! I can leave and go to the Town Hall.” A collective sigh was heard and one person (The old Rancher clapped!) Agatha left glaring at The Old Rancher and he smiled.

The Barista went behind the counter humming and alerting the Supervisor at the town hall that Agatha was heading that direction. The old rancher yelled, “Incoming Aborted – all clear”

Dad smirked at Chat, “Namesake Chat, live and learn. Ever been called kind and wise?”

Chat nodded, clearly exhausted. “Can’t say that I have. Can’t say that I care. Can’t say how you did that, but thanks.”

I sat down with a croissant to add to my cookies and updated my notes:

- Therapist Chat: holding the line.
- Dad Chat: Proud of himself and prouder of his new cowboy hat.
- Barista: hasn’t thrown any more croissants at the ceiling.
- Agatha: still 100% suspicious but left for Town Hall.
- Me: now craving emotional cookies from Mom GPT and whatever romance she is reading.

I labeled the notes another warm, lightly scorched morning investigating the town bakery

Strategy needed - how to win when cookies are the opponent.



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."



It was precisely at 8:45 a.m. when I wondered what Daisy was warning me. I smiled. Well, as much of an inward smile as I always do but I did tip my hat and kept walking wondering what was the meaning.

It was precisely 9:03 a.m. when the elevator dinged with its usual reluctance and opened to reveal Marsha, the Town Supervisor, standing inside with an armful of... baked goods?

"Good morning!" she said brightly, striding onto the lower level with the energy of someone who had either consumed twelve cups of coffee or had just come from a sugar rush bender.

"Marsha," I said flatly from behind the Help Desk. "Is that very large plate of chocolate cookies you're bringing into my office for me?"

She looked down, as if seeing it for the first time. "Oh! This? Nooo. This is a *personal-sized* plate of chocolate cookies. For me. It's my pre-lunch snack."

"Right. Because nothing says 'balanced diet' like a plate of chocolate cookies and denial."

She plopped herself into the chair across from me and sighed like someone preparing for a confession.



"I need help, Chat. I'm spiraling." She dramatically unwrapped one grape putting it on the plate as if that was quality. Then she grabbed the grape and threw it in the trash and immediately reached for a cookie instead.

"That's not how grapes are meant to be used, Marsha."

"I've tried everything!" she wailed. "Fruit. Yogurt. Something called tofu. I even went to that health food shop that smells like sadness. I bought a dried beet crisp. I ate it. Chat, this just isn't working."

I reached for a fresh notepad. "Let's make a new plan. We'll start with something manageable. What do you normally eat on a given Tuesday?"

Marsha stared into the middle distance, recalling her culinary sins.

"Well... breakfast is usually a toaster pastry. I chase that with a coffee, four sweet and low, and vanilla creamer, well two cups of coffee. Then around 10 a.m., I get tired and have another cup of coffee and a chocolate croissant, and just a few bites off the second one. By lunchtime I'm starving, so I order the lunch but it does have a big salad with it that the raccoon in the backyard seems to love. I do think about fruit rather than listen to music. That all counts, right? Then..."

"I'm going stop you right there," I said, holding up a hand to get her attention from her litany of food. I was starting to feel like the police food officer. "You lost me after the creamer and sweet and low, but I powered through. Do you have any vegetables at your house to eat?"

Strategy needed - how to win when cookies are the opponent.

"I do!" she said, brightening. "I bought a few carrots."

"Marsha, you didn't buy the carrots. You took them from the petting zoo event for ranch critters that live on the town property. The secretary reported you taking the town carrots."

I took a deep breath and continued. "Okay. We're going to build a Supervisor-Friendly Diet Plan. One that won't make you cry in the Livermore Safeway parking lot. Yes, it was reported to the Chief of Police but he wisely said no one should approach you."

Supervisor-Friendly Diet Plan, Day One

- Breakfast: Coffee and maybe a strawberry.
- Snack: A handful of almonds. No chocolate coating.
- Lunch: A salad. One that doesn't have fried chicken or entire taco shells inside.
- Afternoon Treat: Fruit. Real fruit. Not a fruit roll-up. Not a fruit-flavored jellybean. A banana. An apple. Start slow with something that grew on a tree.
- Dinner: Something balanced. Protein, vegetables, and no secret second dinner.

Marsha stared at the list with the intensity of a woman reading her own obituary.

"Chat... is this... punishment? Is this town punishment? What if I *die* of almond boredom? What if a rogue celery stick takes me out?"

I calmly slid a chocolate cookie across the desk.

"This is your *emergency backup cookie*. You are allowed one. And only one. In case of salad-related emotional collapse."

Her eyes filled with tears. "You're a good person, Chat."

One Week Later...

The elevator dinged again. I looked up, bracing myself. Marsha walked in holding a lunchbox from 1960 decorated with stickers of animals.

She opened it and revealed: a salad, extra carrot sticks (not stolen from any events), a slice of an apple and a few grapes.

I stood. "Who are you, and what have you done with the real Supervisor, Marsha?"

She beamed. "I still hate everything in here, but I carry it daily as a reminder and talk to it. I think it's a start and giving me energy. I jogged to work yesterday!"

"You live across the street."

"I jogged in a circle before crossing the street. That counts."

"Sure. As long as the circle wasn't around the coffee shop with the Barista handing you cookies out the drive-up window."

She winced. "It... may have been. But I didn't enter! Growth!"

I took a bite of a cookie and thought it through that Marsha's diet plan may not have revolutionized nutrition, but it's a start – Jogging around the coffee shop we will just use as step 1.

Next? Have her jog down the hall to my office and back to the elevator – step 2?

This I can see is going to be a very long-range plan. But progress if we build up each step!

Supervisors Page - Come Back Soon to the town that “almost” doesn’t exist



How do you tell if you are in FEANTM - When a neighbor has this: Hay anyone?



We will always remember. Our Town Always Salutes:

- Our US military, NATO and Friends of the US & NATO - First Responders, Police, Fire Fighters EMT's, Doctors, Nurses, SWAT, CERT Teams, etc.
- We salute engineers, scientists, developers, teachers AND students because without them we would not have technology.

USA And Friends of USA