



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Vinton award

For the second year, the Village of Vinton received the Texas Comptroller's Gold Status in its Leadership Circle Award Program by scoring 17 of twenty possible points on the State's ratings criteria to make local government more transparent and efficient. The Comptroller of Public Accounts Leadership Circle program recognizes local governments across Texas who strive to meet a high standard for financial transparency online. The Comptroller is spotlighting those local governments that:

- Open their books to the public;
- Provide clear, consistent pictures of spending; and
- Share information in a user-friendly format that allows taxpayers to easily access information.

The State Comptroller developed a self-scoring process that is verified by its Local Government Assistance Division. The Comptroller then awards Leadership Circle designees with a certificate reflecting their Circle Award level: Gold, Silver or Bronze. Gold highlights those entities that are setting the bar in their transparency efforts. Silver encourages those who are making progress. Bronze inspires those who are just beginning their transparency efforts. Financial transparency is an ongoing goal for any government entity. Vinton was the first public entity to achieve Gold Status in El Paso County in 2010. The Texas Comptroller's webpage reflects only 11 percent 570 cities in Texas had achieved Gold Status in 2011, up from 10% in 2010, and only 7 percent had achieved Gold Status two years in a row.

— Jessica Garza

### Benefits extended

The deadline for jobless Texans to qualify for emergency unemployment benefits has been extended to March 3, 2012, affecting approximately 78,000 Texans who would have otherwise exhausted their unemployment benefits during January 2012. Congress approved the extension before December 31, 2011, when qualified claimants would have faced a gap in benefits. Claimants should continue to request unemployment benefit payments on their scheduled day. The legislation did not add benefits for individuals who already have exhausted their regular state unemployment benefits, Emergency Unemployment Compensation and Extended Benefits. Claimants who currently receive benefits may find updated information on their claims by logging on to [ui.texasworkforce.org](http://ui.texasworkforce.org), or by calling TWC's Tele-Serv at 1-800-558-8321 and selecting the second option (payment information or status of your claim). There is no need

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*What can't be done by advise can often be done by example.*

— Quips & Quotes

## Hopp named San Elizario ISD superintendent



— Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD  
**San Elizario ISD Superintendent Sylvia Hopp**

By Cynthia P. Marentes  
*Special to the Courier*

San Elizario Independent School District will begin 2012 lead by a new superintendent who is already a familiar face in the community.

On Monday January 2, Sylvia Hopp began her first day on the job as superintendent although she has already worked eleven years in the district and had been serving as interim superintendent prior to her appointment. In total, Hopp has 36 years of educational experience. She began her career as a special education teacher with El Paso ISD. While at El Paso ISD, Hopp also held the positions of Assistant Principal, Principal, Instructional Consultant, Director of Elementary Personnel, and Executive Director.

At San Elizario ISD Hopp has served as Principal at Alarcon and Borrego Elementary Schools and as Assistant Superintendent for Planning and Instruction. She earned both her bachelor's degree in education and master's degree in educational administration from the

University of Texas at El Paso. She is married to Charles Hopp, a retired educator who currently works for Southwest Airlines.

Hopp stated that she along with the San Elizario ISD Board of Trustees believe in working as a team to continue diligently providing the resources and support needed to ensure the needs of students are met and the success of the district is maintained.

"The district has achieved success and is on the cusp of achieving greater recognition," Hopp added.

The San Elizario ISD Board of Trustees voted to hire Sylvia Hopp as Superintendent at its regular monthly meeting on December 14 with her official appointment beginning on January 1, 2012. San Elizario Independent School District is located in El Paso County's lower valley. The district serves over 4,000 students at six different campuses: Loya Primary School; Alarcon, Borrego, and Sambrano Elementary Schools; Garcia-Enriquez Middle School; and San Elizario High School.

Hopp succeeds Dr. Mike Quatrini who was superintendent for 15 years.

## Maya beliefs may hold lessons for those living, working on the border

By Alfredo Vasquez  
*Special to the Courier*

In conjunction with the The El Paso Museum of History's exhibit, Mystery of the Mayan Medallion, Jena Camp Guel of the renowned group "Ceiba" will present the exciting story of Maya beliefs in connection with the Popol Vuh and its relevance to modern people today.

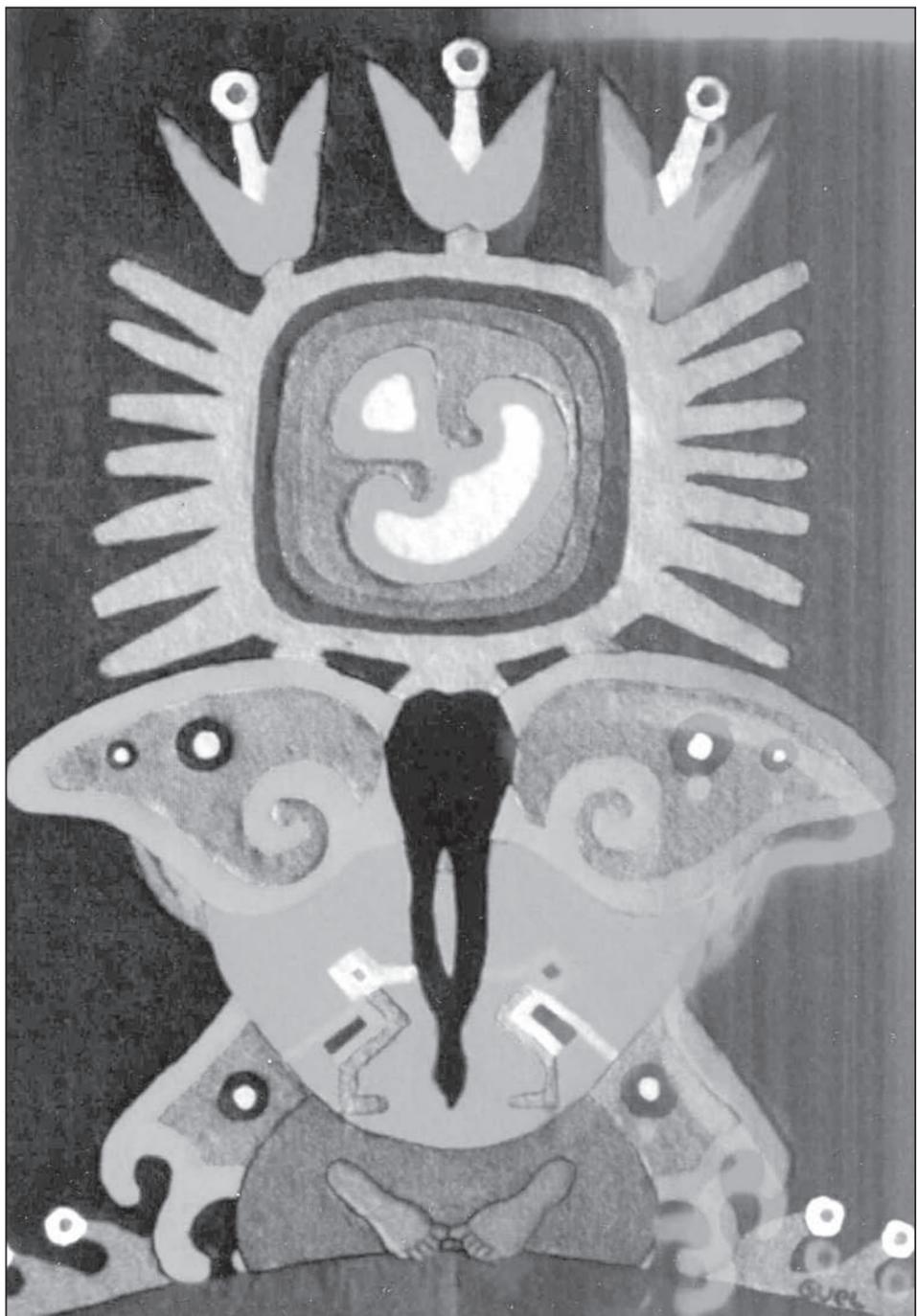
Maya Day-Keeping on the Border and Beyond, an intriguing illustrated lecture, will begin at 2 p.m., Saturday, January 7, in the Museum's Seminar Room. The presentation is free to the public.

According to Museum officials, Jena Camp Guel and her son, Lorenzo, have worked with several Maya educators from Guatemala to explore the Popol Vuh, the ancient Maya epic of the dawn of life, a common thread that runs through most of the Maya folklore.

"Our research is a way of knowing, or epistemology, based on dialogue and practice rather than proofs and absolutes. Epistemology asks "how do we know what we know?" and in the 1970's and 80's anthropologists Barbara and Dennis Tedlock described a practical, dialogical epistemology at work in both the Popol Vuh and the divinations of Mayan priest-shamans called "daykeepers" in Momostenango, Guatemala," explained Camp Guel.

"This predilection for dialogical practice, from the cosmogenesis of the Popol Vuh to the project of 21st century Maya educators, may hold a valuable lesson for those of us living and working on a Border of contending languages and heritages, buffeted by the same global economic winds," Camp Guel stated.

Camp Guel holds an advanced degree in anthropology from the University of Chicago. She has worked extensively with Casa Aztlan



— Photo courtesy of Jena Camp Guel

**Por la Gente** By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

# The lottery and education

Hola, mi gente. Can you believe that we are already into 2012. This last year certainly did pass quickly. I hope that all of you had a great and safe holiday. As always, there were a few very sad stories about tragedy for some families. I hope that you will make a place in your prayers for the families who experienced losses during the normally festive time. My chief of staff attended two services remembering the deceased mothers of close friends.

The first of the year is about a new start for all of us. Whatever did not go so well can be changed for the better this year. All of us in my office hope that your new year is one of great blessings.

I would like to share some good news with you that happened last year.

Last month, we received a very positive report on lottery sales

during the 2011 fiscal year. The information was provided to me by the Lottery Commission Executive Director, Gary Grief. Before the good news, just a little background information to set the stage.

Texas voters approved the lottery back in 1992. When the first fiscal year was completed, the lottery proceeds, less the costs of doing business, were deposited into the general fund. This meant the legislature decided how much actually went to education. In 1997, the law was amended to dedicate all funds into the Foundation School Fund (FSF). The FSF is the main body of revenue from which the Available School Fund (ASF) is appropriated money. The ASF is the actual source that goes to the local school districts.

From 1997 to 2010, the Lottery contributed over \$13 billion to the

FSF. As a matter of fact, the 2010 funds that went to the FSF totaled over a billion dollars in that year alone. The revenues generated in 2010 were at record levels.

For the fiscal year 2011, sales of lottery products surpassed any previous levels and set a new record of \$3.811 billion. The previous record was set in 2006 that produced \$3.775 billion in sales.

This fiscal year saw \$963.1 million dollars injected into the FSF.

In the past, many constituents have asked why the lottery doesn't all go to education. In essence, it does. The sales that the lottery generates just do not reach a level that funds a great portion of education. The original intent was to supplement the property taxes; not to replace them. If not for the lottery, Texans would have had to pay almost \$14 billion more in local taxes to fund schools at their current levels.

I hope this information gives you a better understanding about the funding that the lottery generates for education. There is one thing that should be changed. The entire amount should be deposited into the Available School Fund; it would have greater benefit to school districts.

HAPPY NEW!

Gracias, mi gente, and I remain your friend and public servant, *Chente por la gente.*

**Veterans Post** By Freddy Groves

# More vets landing government jobs

The effort to put more veterans into government jobs is paying off. John Berry, director of the Office of Personnel Management, recently gave a speech at the Veteran Employment Symposium "boot camp" and gave some of the preliminary statistics for fiscal 2011:

- Hiring percentages are at a 20-year high, up 26 percent from last year and 24 percent over 2009. (That's when an Executive Order was issued, creating the Veterans Employment Initiative.)

- Out of 24 federal departments, 22 of them hired more veterans than they did in 2009.

- Out of those 24 departments, 23 of them hired more disabled veterans than they did in 2009.

- Veterans accounted for 29 percent of new hires. That comes to 4.5 percent over 2009 and 2.9 percent over 2010.

Not only that, but a pilot program was approved during the meeting to hire formerly homeless veterans, starting soon. The programs will give veterans a chance to work in various departments in the government and match job skills.

If you're unemployed or want

a government job, this is good news for you. Go online to [www.FedsHireVets.gov](http://www.FedsHireVets.gov) and click Veteran, Transitioning Service Member or Family Member, depending on your circumstance. Yes, even some family members (spouse, widow/widower or mother of a veteran) can be meet eligibility criteria.

Learn about Veterans' Preference (this can be confusing, as it's not the same as preference for federal civilian employment) and how you qualify for 5 or 10 points in eligibility preference.

Be sure to read about Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans. Certain other qualifications, such as having a campaign badge or a service medal for a military operation, are extra items in your favor.

To see the video of the speech Berry gave, go to [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) and put "boot camp" in the search box.

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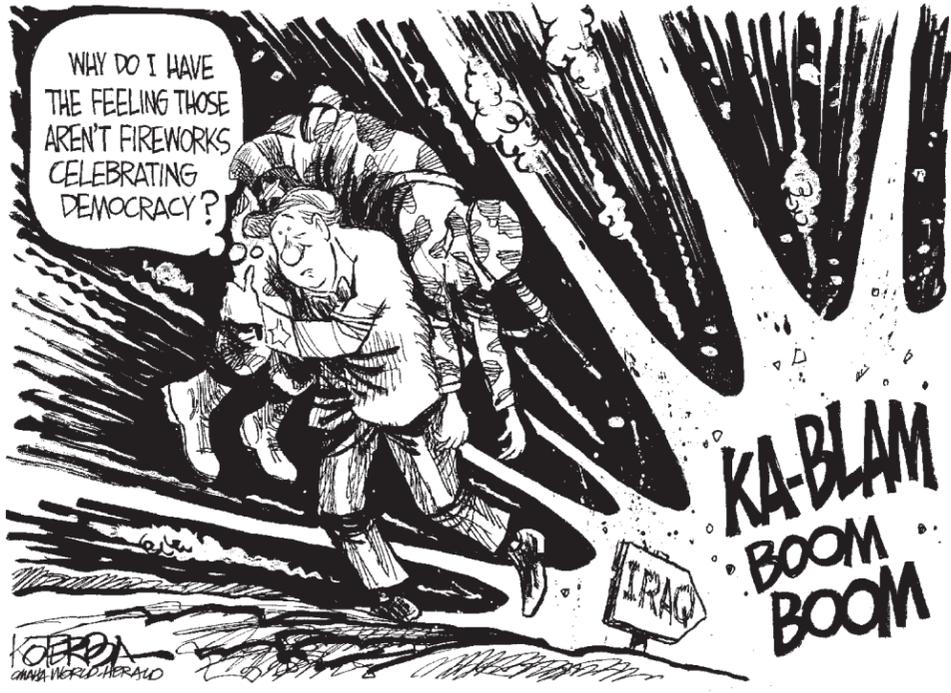
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## Write stuff

### Editor:

Congress needs to quit playing politics with the health and lives of Texas' seniors, military families, and people with disabilities. The idea that it can simply slap a two-month patch on an almost 30-percent cut to physicians' Medicare payments is ludicrous. Frankly, it appears that Congress is doing everything in its power to destroy the viability of our medical practices.

In 2010, Congress did the same thing. Instead of working together to fix the decade-old problem, lawmakers instituted one short-term patch after another – five, in total – to stop a 25-percent cut. It resulted in an administrative catastrophe for physician practices and the program itself by causing millions of dollars in bureaucratic waste and months to straighten out, resubmit, and reconcile claims. Yet hospitals, skilled nursing homes, home health agencies, and inpatient rehabilitation facilities all received Medicare pay increases because they are paid by a different formula.

If Congress truly cares about the health of its senior and military constituents, its members must work together and come up with a long-term solution. The Texas Medical Association

believes, at a minimum, Washington needs to fix the broken physician payment system first. If that means delaying additional payment updates for other providers, so be it. Physician participation is the most essential element to ensuring Medicare patients get timely access to appropriate medical care.

*C. Bruce Malone, MD  
President, Texas Medical Association*

*(Editor's note: Physicians were handed a 27.4-percent cut in federal reimbursements for Medicare patients on Jan. 1, 2012. Congress left a short-term fix for the cut in reimbursements on the table when they adjourned in December. The cut is the largest single decline in federal reimbursements in the history of the Medicare, raising concerns physicians will limit how many new Medicare patients will be accepted into practices. Medicare, in a statement, said it would use administrative tools to hold off actually making payments at the lower rates until Jan. 17. Medicare officials urged Congress to take action to ensure these cuts do not take effect.)*

## Women should make long-term care plans today

**By Amanda Fredriksen**  
*Special to the Courier*

If you're like most women I know, you probably find yourself wearing many hats – from balancing your work and family life, to caring for younger and older loved ones, to trying to find time in your already packed schedule to make it to the gym.

The holidays tend to rush by in a blur. In the midst of cooking, decorating and finding that perfect last minute gift on top of your usual day-to-day obligations, it can start to feel as if there really isn't enough time in the day. And while women are known for their multitasking skills, planning for our futures seems to wind up on the backburner time and time again.

Now the glitz and glamour of the holiday season is winding down. Folks are beginning to look forward and reflect on goals for the upcoming year. Why not take a moment to focus on you?

Thanks to both scientific improvements and efforts to incorporate healthy eating and exercise into our lifestyles, many of us are enjoying longer lives. We continue to outlive men by almost five years, and we make up two-thirds of Americans age 85 and older. Most of us want to stay independent and in our homes as we age, so planning for our futures and for long-term care is crucial.

Long-term care encompasses a variety of services and support options that allow us to live safely and comfortably if we become sick or suffer from a disability that prevents us from caring for ourselves. It usually includes assistance with daily tasks like preparing meals and getting dressed.

The prospect of planning for long-term care can be daunting, but by taking just a little time now to learn about your options, you might save yourself and your family a lot of worry later on. By asking these questions today, you can reach the future you envision tomorrow:

- What sort of future do I want for myself? From decisions about your health and home to legal and financial issues, it's important to know what you want down the road.
- How can I achieve this future? Creating a plan to achieve your goals is crucial to achieving them.
- Who needs to know about my desires and my plan? Sharing this information with loved ones is an important final step.

This may seem daunting at first but, once you get the ball rolling, it's actually very empowering. Plus, AARP is here to help. Get the latest resources to plan for your future at [www.aarp.org/decide](http://www.aarp.org/decide).

In this new year, isn't time to start thinking about you?

*Amanda Fredriksen is the Advocacy Director for AARP Texas.*

## View from here By Christine L. Owens

### Increasing minimum wage helps working families

While working families struggle to make ends meet in this sluggish economy, there is a bright spot on the horizon: On Jan. 1, the minimum wage will increase in eight states, raising wages for more than 1.4 million low-wage workers. The increases in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Montana, Ohio, Oregon, Vermont and Washington are a result of state laws that adjust the minimum wage upward each year to keep pace with the rising cost of living.

As a result, individuals who do the hard work of cleaning and securing office buildings, providing day care and serving food will not fall further behind as prices for food, gas and utilities continue to rise. The increase not only helps hard-working men and women provide

for their families, but also boosts the overall economy. When Franklin Roosevelt first established the federal minimum wage during the Great Depression in 1938, he emphasized that a strong wage floor is "an essential part of economic recovery." The same is true today.

When low-wage workers have more money in their pockets, they have little choice but to spend it immediately on basic necessities like groceries, clothing and school supplies. And as demand for goods and services grows, businesses expand and hire; the increased spending resulting from the minimum-wage bumps in eight states on Jan. 1 will lead to an additional \$366 million in economic output

**Briefs**

From Page 1

to call TWC to qualify for this extension unless claimants receive a letter telling them to do so. Emergency unemployment benefits are entirely federally funded, so Texas employers will not be charged for any claims paid on this extension. TWC and the 28 local Workforce Development Boards remain committed to providing work search assistance, training and other services to unemployed Texans. Thousands of job postings are available on WorkInTexas.com, TWC's online job-matching website.

— Lisa Givens

**Trees**

Residents of Texas can ring in the New Year by receiving 10 free flowering trees by joining the Arbor Day Foundation any time during January 2012. By becoming a member of the nonprofit Arbor Day Foundation, you will receive two white flowering dogwoods, two flowering crabapples, two Washington hawthorns, two American redbuds and two goldenrain trees. "These beautiful trees will give your home in Texas lovely flowers with pink, yellow and white colors," said John Rosenow, chief executive and founder of the Arbor Day Foundation. "These trees are perfect for large and small spaces, and they will provide food and habitat for songbirds." The free trees are part of the nonprofit Foundation's Trees for America campaign. The trees will be shipped postpaid at the right time for planting, between Feb. 1 and May 31, with enclosed planting instructions. The 6- to 12-inch tall trees are guaranteed to grow or they will be replaced free of charge. Arbor Day Foundation members also receive a subscription to the Foundation's bimonthly publication, Arbor Day, and The Tree Book, which includes information

about tree planting and care. To become a member of the Foundation and to receive your free trees, send a \$10 contribution to TEN FREE FLOWERING TREES, Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410, by January 31, 2012. Texas residents can also join online at [arborday.org/january](http://arborday.org/january).

— Sean Barrys

**Intern deadline**

The end of January marks the end of the application period for college students wishing to pursue an eight-week historic preservation internship with the Texas Historical Commission (THC). In seeking to increase the diversity of professionals working in historic preservation, the internship is offered to students of African, Hispanic/Latino, Asian or Native American/Hawaiian/Alaskan heritage who are Texas residents attending an accredited four-year college or university as a graduate or undergraduate student. Applicants must be U.S. citizens. Friends of the Texas Historical Commission provide a \$5,000 stipend to interns. Strong consideration will be given to applicants who demonstrate an interest in pursuing a career in history, preservation, architecture, landscape architecture, archeology, downtown revitalization, or heritage tourism. Applications are available at [www.thcfriends.org/diversityinternship](http://www.thcfriends.org/diversityinternship). Deadline for submission is January 31, 2012. Contact the Friends of the THC for more information at 512.936.2189.

— Debbi Head

**Tax exemption**

Texas continues to do its part to keep helping military veterans and their families. A full homestead property tax exemption that began in 2009 to help totally disabled military veterans will extend to their surviving spouses after January 1. "This new provision will help families who have been a part of the tremendous sacrifice that veterans have given our country," said Texas

Comptroller Susan Combs. "Texas voters overwhelmingly passed a constitutional amendment that will allow surviving spouses of totally disabled veterans to continue to claim a full homestead exemption and not pay property taxes on their home." In 2009, veterans began receiving an exemption for the total appraised value of their residential homesteads if they have received 100 percent disability rating or are considered unemployable by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Based on information provided by appraisal districts, about 35,300 veterans currently receive that exemption. The homestead exemption for surviving spouses of veterans who received the exemption begins January 1. Senate Bill 516 allows the total homestead exemption if a surviving spouse does not remarry after a disabled veteran passes away and the property remains the homestead of the surviving spouse. Surviving spouses would have to apply for the tax exemption through their county appraisal district. The application form containing property tax exemptions has been updated for residents and appraisal districts to use. It can be found at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxforms/50-114.pdf>.

— R.J. DeSilva

**Crime Stoppers**

A woman walking with her husband on the eastside of town is struck and killed by a motorist who fled, making this the Crime Stoppers "Crime of the Week." 32-year-old Kimberly Esparza, from the 2700 block of Red Sails, was walking home with her husband after a night out when a vehicle heading east on Pebble Hills struck her at approximately 1:20 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 7, 2011. The driver of that vehicle did not stop to render aid. She was pronounced dead at the scene. Speed is not a factor in the collision and it is unknown if alcohol was involved. The vehicle could only be described as a dark-colored SUV. Because this is a heavily traveled area, police

investigators are hoping that someone saw the collision and can provide further details. It is also believed that the vehicle would now show severe damage to the front end. If you have any information at all about the identity the suspect in this case, or the location of the vehicle, please call Crime Stoppers of El Paso at 566-TIPS (8477) or submit your tip online at [www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org](http://www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org). You will remain anonymous and, if your tip leads to an arrest, you may earn a cash reward.

— James Klaes

**Wanted**

Elizabeth Bernal, 49, is this week's Manhunt Monday Most Wanted Fugitive for a slew of forgery and fraud charges stemming back to 2004. She is 5'1" tall and weighs



Elizabeth Bernal

160 pounds. Her hair is brown and her eyes are brown/hazel. Law enforcement officials have been hot on the trail — Bernal is wanted on 19 counts of forgery and fraud. She recently contacted authorities, indicating she would surrender after the

Christmas/New Years holidays. Bernal said she works as a flight attendant and is always in and out of El Paso, so she could not give a definite answer on her time of surrender. It is unknown what alias she uses to be employed as a flight attendant. Authorities have confirmed Bernal continues to reside in the El Paso area where she is believed to be staying with a boyfriend, friends or relatives. If anyone has any information on the whereabouts of Bernal they can contact Crime Stoppers of El Paso at 566-TIPS (8477). Callers will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a reward if the information provided leads to the apprehension of Bernal.

— Deputy Jesse Tovar



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**Maya**

From Page 1

in Chicago, La Peña Experimental in Oregon, and la Mujer Obrera in El Paso.

In 1990, she and her late husband, artist and musician Lorenzo Guel, began Taller Colibri (Hummingbird Workshop) to promote grassroots social change through cultural knowledge and creative work. Since 1999, "Ceiba" has contributed to this work by performing and giving workshops in the El Paso area.

For information, call Sue Taylor at 915-351-3588 or email at [taylorst@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:taylorst@elpasotexas.gov).

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**CryptoQuip Answer**

Cheap meals served in ancient Greece ought to have been named blue Plato specials.

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# Small businesses drive the U.S. economy

By **Alfredo Vasquez**  
Special to the Courier

VINTON – Starting your own business certainly sounds glamorous enough, but those who have tried starting their own business know that there is a lot more to it than having a good idea or the desire to be your own boss.

There are a lot of obstacles that face small business owners, especially when they are first getting started, and half of all small businesses fail in the first four years of operation?

“To start a small business, you need a lot of determination for what you’re doing because it’s so hard,” said Alex Uranga, owner of the newly-open Don Alex Restaurant located in the Village of Vinton, “but life is too short to stall in life... to not accomplish your dreams.”

Uranga should know, because the new restaurant is his third small business venture. He is also owner of the All American Glass Company, which is just down the street from his restaurant, and he is a licensed real estate agent in southern New Mexico.

The success of his glass company, which he started over eight years ago, afforded him the opportunity to delve into the restaurant business, Uranga said, something that he had wanted to do for a long time.

“I saved money from my glass company to open the restaurant. I figured this was a good business to get into because people will always

need to eat,” Uranga explained.

The new restaurant, which is located near the intersection of Vinton Road and Doniphan Drive in a small strip shopping center, will specialize in Mexican food such as tacos, flautas, and a variety of home-made salsas, said Uranga.

“I am focusing on meat quality to promote my new restaurant. I am using only the choice part of the meat, pure sirloin, to attract customers,” he commented. “I just need to get people to try my ‘Taquitos Don Alex’ to win them over.”

Uranga estimates that it will take a few months to attract a steady clientele, to turn a profit with his restaurant. In the meantime, he has a thriving glass company and a promising future in the real estate business to keep him going, he said.

“I am not the type of person to just sit around; I am always trying to do things better to become a successful businessman,” Uranga said.

Uranga’s ventures are examples of how small businesses drive the U.S. economy, as research indicates that small businesses are providing jobs for over half of the nation’s private workforce.

According to recent government statistics, there are 28 million small businesses in the U.S. – which outnumber corporations 1,162 to 1. Seventy percent of small businesses are owned and operated by a single person, and small businesses employ 57 percent of the country’s private workforce.

The data also shows that small businesses pay 44 percent of U.S. payroll and that only two percent of small businesses are franchises—most (54 percent) are home-based (mom and pop enterprises).

Additionally, the report points out that 60 to 80 percent of all new jobs come from small businesses. In Uranga’s case, he hired three employees to help him with his restaurant and he has three employees working for him in the glass company.

So, while the nation’s politicians are trying to figure out how to create more jobs, how to improve the economy, Uranga is confidently showing the way.

The 37 year-old Gadsden High School graduate and resident of La Union, New Mexico plans to eventually expand his businesses, “My goals are to become a successful businessman by growing my glass company, establishing a chain of restaurants, and pursuing my real estate opportunities,” Uranga said.

## Wages

From Page 3

and create the equivalent of more than 3,000 jobs, according to an analysis by the Economic Policy Institute. That’s a shot in the arm our economy desperately needs.

The minimum-wage increase is especially important when so many better-paying jobs in sectors like construction, manufacturing and finance have disappeared, and many families are left supporting themselves with lower-paid service-sector jobs. An analysis by the National Employment Law Project finds that while the majority of jobs lost during and after the recession were in mid-wage occupations, roughly three-quarters of the jobs added since job growth resumed are

in low-wage occupations.

And things aren’t going to improve any time soon: The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that seven of the 10 occupations with the most job growth between 2008 and 2018 will be low-paying positions. While we know our economy will have an increasing number of positions in home health care, food preparation and customer service, these jobs don’t have to pay poverty wages. At one time, the manufacturing jobs that we now yearn for were dangerous, low-wage and undesirable. But we turned them into good jobs, with safer work places, higher pay, and a voice for workers.

Eight states will take a step in the right direction on Jan. 1 when they raise minimum wage rates to keep pace with inflation. But while more than 1.4 million workers will see

their wages increase Jan. 1, millions more must depend on the stagnant federal minimum wage of just \$7.25, or \$15,000 a year for full-time work. The American people know this isn’t right: A national poll conducted in November found that more than two-thirds of Americans support raising the minimum wage to \$10 an hour. It’s a deeply popular idea that can help boost the economy while not adding to state or federal budget deficits.

It’s time for Congress and state legislatures across the country to take a cue from these state leaders and raise and index the minimum wage.

*Christine L. Owens is the Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project. Copyright © American Forum.*



– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

**A GROWING VENTURE – Alex Uranga recently started his third business, the Don Alex Restaurant in Vinton, TX. He also owns the All American Glass Company and is a real estate agent in New Mexico. Uranga’s ventures are examples of how small businesses drive the U.S. economy, as research indicates that small businesses are providing jobs for over half of the nation’s private workforce.**

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Rebecca Terrazas  
Administrator

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Clint, TX 79836  
(915) 851-3528

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Fabens, TX 79838  
764-3168

Montana Vista  
13978 Montana Ave.  
El Paso, Tx 79938  
857-1080

San Elizario  
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Closing date is when positions are filled. To apply send completed resumes to: El Paso County Emergency Services District No. 2 PO Box 683 Clint, TX 79836 or e-mail: rterrazas@epcountyesd2.org or fax: (915) 996-0010

## archives: wtxcc.com



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# The good, the bad and the ugly: Sports stories of 2011

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

First of all, Happy New Year all you sports fans out there.

I hope 2011 was good to you and let's hope that 2012 is an even better year for all of us.

Every time a new year comes around it gives all of us a little time to reflect on the year that just ended.

And I'll be no different. Let's take a look back at what I consider the top 10 national sports stories of 2011.

10. Derek Jeter gets his 3,000th hit. It was a very good year for Jeter, who proved this season that he is still a very viable member of the Yankees.

But nothing compared to the night he picked up number 3,000. In that game, Jeter collected five hits and number 3,000 happened to be a homerun.

9. After years of hearing that they were too soft to win an NBA title, the Dallas Mavericks finally got the job done in 2011.

A lot of fans were especially happy for Dirk Nowitzki, who was finally rewarded with a

championship after years of all-star play.

8. For decades, the Los Angeles Dodgers had been known as one of the best organizations in sports.

But it took owner Frank McCourt to change all that after his greedy mismanagement of the team eventually forced them in bankruptcy.

7. Often mistaken for having the positive morals of Mr. Rogers. It turned out that it was just the sweater vest that Ohio State coach Jim Tressel had in common with the beloved kid's show host.

After Tressel lied about his quarterback Terrelle Pryor's involvement with a memorabilia scandal, he was fired.

6. Though he sometimes had trouble hitting the broadside of a football stadium, Tim Tebow was the talk of the NFL this season.

Tebow's last-second heroics led the Broncos to a number of upset victories, which led them to the playoffs.

But Tebow's play kept the pundits happy all season with all the "should he" or "shouldn't he" start because of his unorthodox style of play.

5. The Boston Red Sox and the Atlanta Braves had huge leads going into the final

month of the Major League Baseball season before suffering monumental collapses.

The September swoons, the worst in their respective league's history, cost each team a chance at the playoffs.

4. In the second sleaziest story of the year, the Syracuse basketball team suffered through a sickening scandal involving assistant coach Bernie Fine.

Fine was accused of sexually molesting several former ball boys for a number of years. Fine and head coach Jim Boeheim angrily denied the accusations until a tape recording of Fine's wife emerged, verifying Fine's penchant for young boys.

3. One thing NFL fans could always count on was the outstanding play of one of the best quarterbacks of all time - Peyton Manning.

But a severe neck injury kept Manning on the bench for the entire season. As a result, the Indianapolis Colts struggled to a miserable 2-14 record.

A direct result of the injury has caused a controversy about whether they will draft Andrew Luck, or stay with Manning, or do both.

2. The best baseball player of the decade

has undoubtedly been Albert Pujols. The St. Louis Cardinals won their second World Series with Pujols this season.

It was also their last with the slugger.

In a surprise, Pujols signed a 10-year, \$250-million free agent contract with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim (they have got to fix that name).

At 32, it was smart that Pujols signed with an American League team because it won't be too long before his body breaks down and he'll have to spend his time as a designated hitter.

1. There was no other university and head football coach that had the spotless reputation that Penn State and legendary head coach Joe Paterno used to enjoy.

That reputation was shattered this year when former assistant Jerry Sandusky was arrested and charged with sexual abuse of several minor boys.

Paterno and several other Penn State administrators were let go because of the lack of action taken against Sandusky.

Though Sandusky has denied the allegations, it is almost overwhelmingly apparent that he is disturbingly guilty. It'll take Penn State at least a decade to recover from this one.

## A sporting view By Mark Vasto

### Madonna? Give me a break!

Madonna is going to play the halftime show at the Super Bowl, and while everyone I've talked to has either shaken their head in silent consternation or flat out said something along the lines of, "That is so (annoying to ponder)."

The way I see it (and haven't we all seen Madonna? I mean, really seen her by now?), who really cares? After Justin Timberlake exposed Janet Jackson's nipple

jewelry almost a decade ago, we've all had to sit and watch the halftime show because most of us are old and care about bands like The Who, The Rolling Stones, Paul McCartney, Tom Petty, and Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.

See? This is a problem. For one - these bands typically do terrible jobs at whatever they're supposed to be doing at a halftime show. McCartney - who was the first post-

Timberlake halftime act - seemed to be pretty game, but that's probably because he plays a stadium every other day of his life.

Can't really say the same for the other acts. Roger Daltrey looked like he wanted to punch Pete Townshend for making him sing a medley at his Super Bowl turn. Keith Richards looked like he wanted to smash his guitar Pete Townshend-style on Mick Jagger during their turn because Jagger was clearly enjoying the attention too much.

Anyway, back to the problem at hand.

We don't want to have a halftime

act - at least not a good one. Halftime is when you check on the chicken or steaks. It's when you hit the restroom. It's when you go outside and have a smoke or comment on the weather. It's when the younger kids, who in all likelihood are bored of the game after 10 minutes anyway, go and play their video games (to date myself, we played Atari and Intellivision).

But now, it's like, nooooo... gotta see the legendary Prince sing "Purple Rain" and burn the Stouffer's lasagna because... I don't know, because it's Prince and we're supposed to watch him because the NFL deemed it to be so.

But it used to really deem a lot of other stuff suitable for the viewing audience. Did you know that Carol Channing performed not one, but two Super Bowl halftimes? That's two more than Lady Gaga, two more

than Madonna until this year.

See, it used to be marching bands. That was until corporate sponsors said, wait a minute! There's a minute not being sponsored by a corporation! Let's fix that! This started in the mid-80s, when those happening fellas George Burns and Mickey Rooney hit the stage a year before Bob Costas introduced "Elvis Presto" to the world (in 3-D, no less).

But nobody ever watched that stuff. We wouldn't have even seen Janet Jackson's nipple if the FDA or FCC or ESPN - pick your acronym - hadn't told us about it over and over again.

Some of us were making the next batch of nachos, you know?

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in Kansas City. (c) 2011 King Features Synd., Inc.

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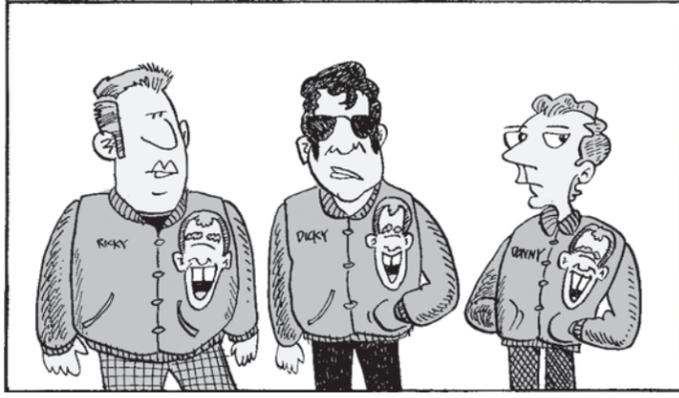
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# Comix

## OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



IN HIGH SCHOOL, ALL THE COOL KIDS WORE LETTERMEN JACKETS

## AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



## THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



## R.F.D. By Mike Marland



## Your good health By Paul G. Donohue, M.D.

**DEAR DR. DONOHUE:** Six years ago, my father died of a stroke. My mother tried to rouse him from bed, but he responded with confusion and was unable to speak. She called for an ambulance. He was in the hospital only four hours before he died. The doctor said he would have lived if he had gotten treatment sooner. My mother has felt guilty about this ever since. She lives with us now. I don't want to miss a stroke if she has one. How do you recognize one, and what should be done right away in an emergency? - T.B.

lead to a full recovery of function. Now the window has been opened wider, to 4 1/2 hours. That doesn't detract from the important message that the earlier the treatment, the better the result.

The booklet on strokes tells their signs and their treatments. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Donohue - No. 902W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Canada with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow two weeks for delivery.

Nearly 900,000 strokes occur yearly in the United States, and of those victims, 200,000 die. Many of the survivors are left with great disabilities. Strokes come in two types: One is an ischemic (is-KEY-mick) stroke, and the other is a hemorrhagic stroke. "Ischemic" means "deprived of blood." It's the more common kind of stroke, accounting for 80 percent of all strokes. The flow of blood to part of the brain is blocked by a clot in an artery. It's the brain's equivalent of a heart attack. The other 20 percent comes from bleeding in the brain, a hemorrhagic stroke.

**DEAR DR. DONOHUE:** My husband is very nearsighted and has to wear thick glasses. I'm not. I don't wear glasses at age 50. We have four children. What are their chances of having to wear glasses? - E.P.

Nearsightedness (myopia) indicates that the eyes can see things that are near. Nearsighted eyes don't see distant objects clearly. It's a common eye condition, and genetic involvement in it is high.

Signs of either kind of stroke include slurred speech, sudden confusion, numbness of the face, arm or leg, trouble seeing, dizziness and severe headache. Many advocate testing the person to decide if a stroke has occurred. Asking the affected person to stick out his or her tongue and seeing if it deviates to the side is one of those tests. Don't waste time doing tests. Immediately call 911.

If one parent is nearsighted, the children have a 24 percent chance of also being nearsighted. If both parents are nearsighted, the children's risk increases to 48 percent.

I'm limiting what I say about treatment to strokes resulting from the obstruction of blood flow. Brain cells begin to die within minutes. However, there's a three-hour window during which clot-dissolving medicines can be given. They almost always

If neither parent is affected, the children have an 8 percent chance of developing nearsightedness. Factors other than genes have to be at work. (Don't believe these percentages with unquestioning acceptance. I don't.)

*Dr. Donohue regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Readers may write him or request an order form of available health newsletters at P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. (c) 2011 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.*

# Super Crossword

### PUBLICATIONS

- ACROSS**
- 1 Move like a mouse
  - 5 Neighbor of Java
  - 9 "Medicine"
  - (88 hit)
  - 12 Corrupt
  - 15 Early computer
  - 17 TV's "Heroes"
  - 19 Campbell of UB40
  - 20 Poorly
  - 21 Restaurant critic's zine?
  - 23 Librarian's journal?
  - 25 Explosive initials
  - 26 Column
  - 27 Max \_ Sydow
  - 29 Bunch of ballplayers
  - 30 Solidify
  - 31 Weber's \_
  - Freischutz?
  - 32 Prepared to drive
  - 33 Let up
  - 36 Arthur or Pons
  - 38 \_ carrier
  - 42 Snapshot
  - 43 \_ Lama
  - 45 Strained
  - 46 DEA officer
  - 48 Browning's bedtime?
  - 49 Gardener's monthly?
  - 53 \_ jongg
  - 54 Hymns of praise
  - 56 Viper

- 57 Milne creature
- 58 Digression
- 60 Gouda alternative
- 61 \_ River, NJ
- 63 Tenor Peerce
- 64 Like Simon
- 66 Groovy Austin
- 68 Pugilistic poke
- 69 Stephen King book
- 70 Mutiny
- 71 Produce a parka
- 72 \_ fide
- 73 Byzantine art form
- 76 Pants parts
- 77 Ram's ma'am
- 78 Directional suffix
- 79 Sock style
- 81 Feign
- 82 Tree surgeon's periodical?
- 87 Middling mark
- 88 Whippet's wagger
- 90 Enormous
- 91 Terpsichore's sister
- 92 104 Down, e.g.
- 94 Broadway arrangement
- 96 Kennel feature
- 97 Kitten gear?
- 99 Petite pie
- 100 Sprite
- 102 "Buttermilk Sky" (46 song)
- 103 Classify
- 106 Maestro de Waart
- 107 "Electric \_" ('83 hit)
- 111 To and \_
- 114 Sailor's reading?
- 116 Depression era magazine?
- 119 Icelandic epic
- 120 Capek play
- 121 Bring to light
- 122 Goatish gamboler
- 123 Have unpaid bills
- 124 "Hiver" opposite
- 125 " \_ to Order" ('87 film)
- 126 Highflying agcy.

- DOWN**
- 1 Adroit
  - 2 Ever's partner
  - 3 Crowdburst?
  - 4 Lincoln son
  - 5 Pipe part
  - 6 Turkish title
  - 7 Den
  - 8 "Newhart" setting
  - 9 Holstein's home
  - 10 Flagon filler
  - 11 Patois
  - 12 Beat
  - 13 Felipe, Jesus, or Matty
  - 14 Little one
  - 16 South African port
  - 17 Cholesterol letters
  - 18 Golfer Ballesteros
  - 20 Nigerian city
  - 22 "Aida" river
  - 24 Forest ruminant
  - 28 Ciceronian speech
  - 30 "GoodFellas" gun
  - 31 Place to pontificate
  - 32 Correct
  - 33 Forward
  - 34 Rover's review?
  - 35 Presidential monogram
  - 36 Sanctify
  - 37 Tombstone
  - lawman
  - 39 Shakespearean heavy
  - 40 Wholesome
  - biker's publication?
  - 41 Carpentry or printing
  - 42 Monsieur Le Pew
  - 44 Patriot Samuel
  - 47 "Evita" character
  - 50 \_ Park, CO
  - 51 Uninteresting
  - 52 Subdue Simba
  - 55 Pavarotti's love
  - 59 Bit of parsley
  - 62 Northwestern st.
  - 63 Mouth piece?
  - 64 Anger or envy
  - 65 Composer Albeniz
  - 67 Slender trace
  - 68 Be a wise guy
  - 69 French impressionist
  - 70 Chingachgook's son
  - 71 Nailed a gnat
  - 72 Boitano or Blessed

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**Moore Texas** by Roger Moore Texas AandM's Bill "Jitterbug" Henderson won a record 11 letters



**Social Security Q&A** By Ray Vigil

**Q:** I am receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Can my children receive dependent's benefits based on my benefits?

**A:** No. SSI benefits are based on the needs of one individual and are paid only to the qualifying person. Disabled children are potentially eligible for SSI, but there are no spouse's, dependent children's, or survivors benefits payable as there are with Social Security benefits. For more information, see our publication, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), available online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/11000.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/11000.html). You also may want to read Understanding Supplemental Security Income (SSI) at [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/text-understanding-ssi.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/text-understanding-ssi.htm). For even more information, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

**Q:** Is it true that if you have low income you can get help paying your Medicare premiums?

**A:** Yes. If your income and resources are limited, your State may be able to help with your Medicare Part B premium, deductibles, and coinsurance amounts. State rules vary on the income and resources that apply. Contact your State or local medical assistance, social services, or welfare office, or call the Medicare hotline, 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), and ask about the

Medicare Savings Programs. If you have limited income and resources, you also may be able to get help paying for prescription drug coverage under Medicare Part D. Call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778) or visit any Social Security office. Also, see our publication, Medicare (Publication 10043), at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10043.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10043.html). For even more information, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

**Q:** Are Social Security numbers reassigned after a person dies?

**A:** No. We do not reassign Social Security numbers. In all, we have assigned more than 460 million Social Security numbers, and each year we assign about 5.5 million new numbers. The current system has enough new numbers for several more generations. For more information, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

For more information on any of the questions listed above, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call us at 1-800-772-1213. If you have any questions that you would like to have answered, please mail them to the Social Security Office, 1111 Gateway West, Attn: Ray Vigil, El Paso, Texas 79935.

**STRANGE BUT TRUE**  
By Samantha Weaver

- It was 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche who made the following sage observation: "One will rarely err if extreme actions be ascribed to vanity, ordinary actions to habit, and mean actions to fear."

- Are you an agelast or an abderian? If you never laugh, you're the latter; if you laugh too much, you're the former.

- There is one species of frog, found in the Southeast Asian country of Indonesia, that has no lungs; it breathes entirely through its skin.

- You might be surprised to learn that the largest employer in the United States is the Department of Defense. Wal-Mart is No. 2, followed by the U.S. Postal Service.

- Those who study such things say that as we age, a man's brain shrinks more rapidly than a woman's.

- According to Tibetan tradition, a man must get permission from his lady love's maternal uncle before the couple can get married.

- If you're in Florida and make a trip to the hair salon, keep in mind that in that state, it's illegal to fall asleep under a hair dryer. Both the client and the salon can be fined.

- It seems that almost every little girl has a Barbie doll, but have you ever thought about what a life-size Barbie would look like? She would be 7 feet, 2 inches tall, weigh 125 pounds and have bust-waist-hip measurements of 40-22-36.

- The white rhinoceros is not actually white. The "white" part of the name comes from the Afrikaans word "wijd," which means "wide"; it describes the animal's lips.

- Iconic German-American actress Marlene Dietrich once said that her favorite meal was hot dogs and champagne.

Thought for the Day: "We all have strength enough to endure the misfortunes of others."

— Francois de La Rochefoucauld

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**GO FIGURE!** by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

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+		+		÷	
	-		÷		4
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	-		×		15
24		20		8	

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 4 4 5 6 7 8 9

Answer Page 4

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**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging

Answer Page 4

★★★ HOO BOY!

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**CryptoQuip**

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: D equals E

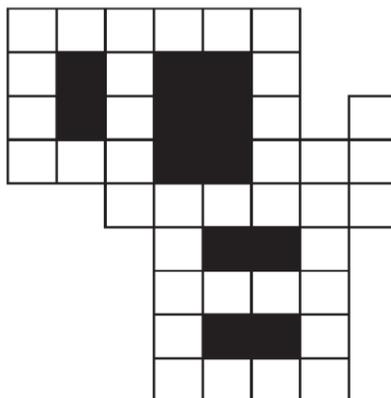
JWDEU YDENO ODBFDG CZ  
EZJCDZL HBDDJD PVHWL LP  
WEFD IDDZ ZEYDG INVD  
UNELP OUDJCENO.

Answer Page 4

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- TYS
- TOBSUR
- SLOAB
- ♥APLE
- DEPYES
- ♥TAE
- LUSP
- ♥RIBET
- ♥ATB
- SODPAT
- ♥PLYPO
- ♥ITER



Answer Page 4

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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