



NEWSBRIEFS

Quilters

A membership drive for quilters on the west side of El Paso is ongoing. The meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for July 12, 2015. The membership fee is \$25 per year. New techniques and workshops are being held monthly. Come and join us to learn how to quilt. The Guild assists in aiding many charitable organizations and our main focus is helping wounded warriors at Ft. Bliss by making quilts for them. For more information on Wounded Warriors Soldier Quilts contact Sharon Clouser at (915) 833-5505. For more membership information call Carmen M. Guzman at (915) 203-0515, Membership Officer.

— Carmen M. Guzman

Age segregation

Many of us have fond memories of time spent with elderly relatives when we were kids – a grandfather or grandmother, an aunt or uncle, even the savvy old man next door. Author Silas House does, reports the Association of Mature American Citizens. “I was always with older folks when I was very young,” House recalled in a recent Opinion Article he wrote for the New York Times. He lamented the fact that youngsters today have less inter-generational contact and said that we should encourage greater contact between the young and the old. He wrote: “This is the main thing we lose when we don’t talk to our elders: the histories. How many teenagers, for example, know the intimate details of the Kardashians’ lives but don’t know the love stories of their own parents? The joys and sorrows of the older generations serve as examples for us to learn from, to emulate or, perhaps even more useful, to avoid. As age segregation becomes more ingrained in our culture, what cycles will be repeated, what misconceptions will flourish?”

— John Grimaldi

Attempted theft

At least two men tried to steal an ATM using a stolen milk truck in Northeast El Paso. The men failed in their attempt to steal the ATM and caused thousands of dollars in damage. Detectives from the El Paso Police

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Give a motorist an inch and he’ll take off one of your fenders.

— Quips & Quotes

State legislators revamp public schools’ performance ratings, truancy laws

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – Two major changes to public school policy were approved in the final days of the recently completed Texas Legislative session that should help students and parents better understand the workings of their local school system.

A day before ending the latest legislative session, state officials rallied to revamp the schools’ performance rating designations, and they decided to do something about the much maligned truancy laws.

Changes to the controversial rating

plan to assign public schools A through F grades (House Bill 2804), is currently on the desk of Gov. Greg Abbott awaiting his signature.

This legislation will replace the state’s current system of rating schools as “met standard” or “needs improvement” with the A-through-F grades starting in the 2016 school year. The approved bill is designed to reduce the role student assessments play in measuring public school performance.

Supporters of the grading system change asserted that it provides a simple and transparent way for parents and community members to understand the

performance of their schools.

“This is an opportunity for some parents to have more information,” said the bill’s supporter state Sen. Larry Taylor, of Friendswood. “Once people have those facts before them, a low rating school cannot hide behind a rating system that is not clear.”

Under the new grading system, student performance on state standardized exams would remain the primary measure of school performance. But it would no longer be as dominant a factor in determining a school’s accountability rating. About 45 percent of the rating would take into account a variety of additional information – such as community engagement, AP course enrollment, attendance and dropout rates, stated state officials.

The other major change that state legislators tackled this session was the long-standing Texas law that has sent about 100,000 students a year to criminal court – and some to jail – for missing school. Nonetheless, a Justice Department investigation into one county’s truancy courts continues.

Gov. Abbott has already signed this bill into law and will take effect Sept. 1. The new measure decriminalizes unexcused absences and requires school districts to implement preventive measures.

Advocates for the truancy reform pointed out that the threat of a heavy fine – up to \$500 plus court costs – and a criminal record wasn’t keeping children in school and was sending those who couldn’t pay into a criminal justice system spiral.

Under the old law students, as young as 12, could be ordered to court for three unexcused absences in four weeks. Schools were required to file a misdemeanor failure to attend school charge against students with more than 10 unexcused absences in six months. And unpaid fines landed some students behind bars when they turned 17.

“Most of the truancy issues involve hardships,” state Sen. John Whitmire, of Houston, said. “To criminalize the hardships just doesn’t solve anything. It costs largely low-income families. It doesn’t address the root causes.”

Only two states in the U.S. – Texas and Wyoming – sent truants to adult criminal court. In 2013, Texas prosecuted about 115,000 cases, more than twice the number of truancy cases filed in juvenile courts of all other states, according to a report from the nonprofit advocacy group Texas Appleseed.

An estimated \$10 million was collected from court costs and fines from students for truancy in fiscal year 2014 alone, the

San Elizario students in national career and technical competition

By Cynthia P. Marentes
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO – San Elizario High School career and technical education students are in Kentucky this week competing at the 51st Annual SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference. The team is coached by Rafael Cardoza and includes recent graduates Kimberly Cano, Omar Romero, and Vianey Rueda as well as incoming seniors Natalia Aguilar and Sergio Dominguez. Although this is

the first time for this particular group of students to travel to Louisville for national competition, San Elizario High School has sent other teams to the SkillsUSA championships in the past with its last group of students bringing home gold medals in 2010.

The SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC) showcases the work of thousands of career and technical education (CTE) students from across the country. They compete in approximately 100

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— Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD

From left, Kimberly Cano, Sergio Dominguez, Natalia Aguilar, Coach Rafael Cardoza, Omar Romero, and Vianey Rueda are competing in Kentucky this week at the 51st Annual SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference.

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Finances By Jason Alderman

Ways to save money on a last minute summer trip

If you, your partner or your family want – or need – to get out of town right now, how do you improvise a great last-minute trip without breaking the bank?

Planning is essential. Embrace

travel as a hobby – look for tricks, techniques and current online resources to keep abreast of the best last-minute deals.

Compromises will be necessary. You'll likely need to

travel at off-peak hours (either the first flight out in the morning or the last one at night, usually on weekdays) and stay at hotels or venues off the beaten path.

Here are some quick tips to save money on last-minute travel:

Travel light, move fast. Traveling last-minute isn't for the indecisive. Dedicated travelers are minimalists – they know what to pack, organize their paperwork and payment options and have the mental preparation to deal with problems and challenges along the way. Also realize that last-minute travel can increase risk and other costs. If you're planning a trip that requires travel insurance, (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/learn/travel-insurance-basics/when-to-buy.html>) you may not get coverage approval in time.

Build the right online resources. The Internet has revolutionized most forms of purchasing goods and services, but for travel, it has offered unprecedented speed and customization. Use top travel sites that have a tested track record and broad listings of various travel products, but be on the lookout for new travel websites and apps launch every

day. Some airlines now offer their own last-minute fare sites, but try to sign up for email alerts and social media feeds from a variety of travel resources so you won't miss a deals on air, hotel or ground transportation. Also, layovers are good to build into your itinerary as long as you don't have to pay for a hotel and take a moment to compare the price of two one-way tickets – possibly from competing carriers – against round-trip tickets at single carriers. You might save.

Test new lodging options. The new generation of apartment and spare-bedroom sharing sites and longtime online vacation home rental services offer last-minute and in some cases "day-of" lodging possibilities, but keep in mind that online scammers (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/rentalscams>) have entered this territory and all transactions should be verified independently. Staying in hostels is not just for students and backpackers anymore; there are hostels that aim for older travelers as well. Getting on the phone also works in the hotel industry – check online prices against what you can find by calling up the hotel's booking number and ask if there is a lower corporate rate or special

for the period of your stay.

Compare ride-share with car rental. If you think you're going to need to drive at your destination, check car-rental rates against leading ride-share companies available at the touch of a smartphone screen. Many ride-share companies allow you to get advance pricing estimates in advance. Also keep in mind what it might cost to park the rental car in your destination city – ride-share will help you avoid that expense.

Finally, evaluate every membership connection you have. Start by looking at all the plastic you have in your wallet. From your credit cards to the membership card for your main professional networking group and even to the auto club that tows your car, can you take advantage of any travel benefits you can leverage on a last-minute trip? Take some time to review those benefits – or look at them for the first time.

Bottom line: Last-minute travel is almost always possible as long as you're willing to do a little homework and improvise.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs.

Veterans Post By Freddy Groves

Suicide study is eye-opener

A 10-year study of suicide statistics for veterans has an eye-opening conclusion: Using the Department of Veterans Affairs health services lowers the risk of suicide. The study, appearing in *Psychiatric Services Journal*, looked at data from over 173,000 suicides in 23 states over the years 2000-2010.

Here are some stats:

- Veteran suicide rates went up 25 percent, while civilian rates increased 12 percent.
- Suicide rates were 20 percent higher than expected in 2000. By 2010, that number was up to 60 percent higher.
- Suicide risk for female veterans was higher than that for males.
- Female veterans were six times more likely to commit suicide than non-veteran women. Suicides among female veterans increased 40 percent.
- Veterans over age 50 account for 69 percent of veteran suicides.

While there have been annual reports about the suicide rates, this one concludes with that

crucial fact: Veterans who use VA health services have lower rates of suicide. Researchers admit they weren't expecting that result.

The study didn't attempt to determine why some veterans don't seek help at the VA. Maybe one of these annual suicide rate studies will take on that challenge.

Sources of help if you've had thoughts of suicide:

Call the hotline at 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1. Or send a text message to 38255.

Go online to go to www.veteranscrisisline.net and chat with a counselor.

Every VA medical center has a Women Veteran Program Manager who serves as advocate for female veterans. For referral, women veterans can also call the Women Veterans Call Center, 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636).

If you know you're in trouble, get help... now.

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Texas offers summer reading resource

TEXAS – The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is encouraging young Texans to continue reading throughout the summer by offering a free summer reading online resource called Find a Book, Texas.

The online resource is an easy way to select books based on a child's interests and reading level. A free search tool helps to build custom lists for readers at all ability levels and then locate the selections at local public libraries.

"Reading remains the one skill that can help combat the education summer slide for all students before the new school year," said TEA Commissioner Michael Williams. "Through Find a Book, Texas, TEA joins with school districts, libraries and other organizations statewide providing resources that stress the importance of reading during the summer months."

The Find a Book, Texas initiative is shared through MetaMetrics, an educational research organization that develops scientific measures of achievement. The initiative utilizes the Lexile measure, which indicates the reading level of an individual or a book. By comparing a child's Lexile measure with the Lexile measure of a book, a parent has a tool to help determine whether the text is too difficult, too easy or just right for a child's reading ability.

MetaMetrics provides free online resources in reading and math for a number of states across the country. To learn more about Find a Book, Texas, visit the website at www.Lexile.com/fab/tx.

– Alfredo Vasquez



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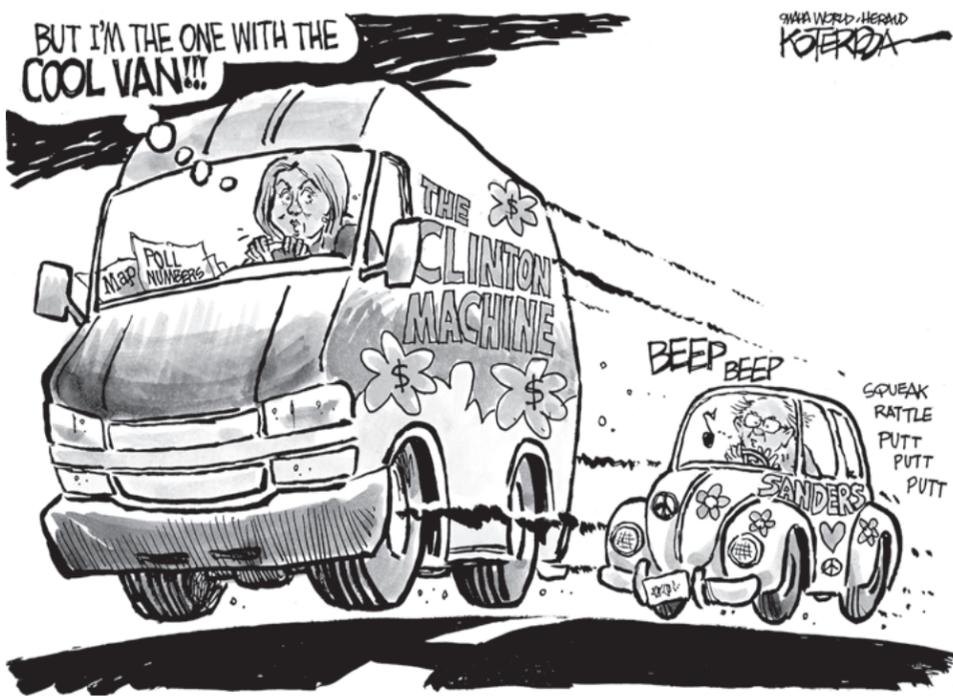
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Americans have trouble with Social Security issues

AMAC has resources to educate senior citizens

By John Grimaldi
Special to the Courier

The Association of Mature American Citizens' (AMAC) determined focus on Social Security gained independent support from a survey conducted by MassMutual Life Insurance Company and released this week, reports Dan Weber, president of the AMAC.

"The study showed that the great majority of Americans have trouble understanding what, for many, is perhaps the most important element of their retirement resources. AMAC saw this coming and that is why we have been creating resources to educate what is the fastest growing segment of our population — our senior citizens — including a dedicated Web site, www.socialsecurityreport.org," Weber said.

Ten-thousand people turn 65 years of age each day in the U.S. and, according to Pew Research, the rate of growth among seniors will continue at that pace for the next two decades. By then, that segment of the population will account for nearly one-fifth of the residents of America, most of whom will be looking forward to receiving Social Security benefits without a clue as to what they can expect.

"Americans who lack the proper knowledge and information about Social Security may be putting their retirement planning in jeopardy. In fact, many may be leaving Social Security retirement benefits they're entitled to on the table, or incorrectly assuming what benefits may be available in retirement," Phil Michalowski, Vice President, U.S. Insurance Group, MassMutual, said in a news release describing the study.

The study revealed that just 28% of the more than 1,500 people who took part in the research managed to pass a

simple true/false quiz. For example, 71 percent of them did not know what the retirement age is for those seeking Social Security benefits. Despite the broad-based coverage of the potential depletion of funds available for future benefits, nearly two-thirds of respondents expressed confidence that the money will be there for them when they retire. Seventy-five percent of them think that only American citizens are eligible to receive benefits.

"We did our own research and found that in some cases the advice that was available was complex and unintelligible for most people and that in other cases it was downright wrong. So, AMAC decided to dedicate itself to simplifying the facts about Social Security and providing a source for real-time information. We owed it to our over-50 membership and to all seniors as they approached retirement age. In addition, we launched a massive effort to work with our lawmakers on Capitol Hill to help shape the future of Social Security," Weber said.

He singled out the Social Security Guarantee plan his association has proposed that Weber said would ensure 75 years of solvency for the Social Security OASI Trust Fund. The plan would include a fair and balanced setback for future recipients, guaranteed cost of living increases and a provision for a new personal Early Retirement Account (ERA).

The ERA that AMAC envisions would be similar to an IRA or a 401(k) plan. But, in order to ensure that the funds will not be lost as a result of risky investments half of the money individuals invest in ERA accounts would have to be used to purchase guaranteed interest products such as government bonds or annuity contracts. Workers would be free to invest their balances in any other investment that meets certain suitability standards.

Schools

From Page 1

Texas Office of Court Administration reported.

The advocacy group also noted that the policies disproportionately affected low-income, Hispanic, black, and disabled students. The group was also among several groups that filed a U.S. Justice Department complaint about Dallas County's specialty truancy courts, which in 2012 prosecuted over 36,000 cases, more than any other Texas county.

The Justice Department in March began looking into whether students had received due process, something spokeswoman Dena Iverson said will continue as the department evaluates the new legislation's impact.

In 12 of the state's largest 15 counties, Texas Applesseed told The Associated

Press, at least 1,283 teenagers were jailed for failure to attend school from January 2013 through April 2015. At least 910 of them spent at least one night in jail.

Under the new law, all past truancy convictions will be expunged. But what will happen to students' pending fines will be up to the courts to decide, a Texas Judicial Council official surmised.

According to the new law, school districts will still have the option of sending students with 10 unexcused absences over six months to court, but it will be civil court, with treatment and community service among the sentencing options.

Students' fines for not completing their sentence will not exceed \$100 under the new law. And though parents can still be charged with a misdemeanor under the new law, the fines are now graduated, with \$100 for the first offense instead of up to \$500.

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San Eli

From Page 1

various leadership, technical and trade contests that test their competencies in different occupations such as culinary arts, medical assisting, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, etc. Although they might not have known it at the time, most of these students began preparing for competition on the first day that they walked in to their CTE class where they

receive career-specific training. A sample of the CTE courses that are currently offered at San Elizario High School include: graphic design, construction technology, cosmetology, law enforcement, business administration and information technology.

The team from San Elizario High School qualified for nationals in the Chapter Display category. Their project consisted of designing and creating an exhibit that promoted the established contest theme "SkillsUSA: 50 Years of Champions at Work." Perfecting their display since at least February 2015 by working in class and competing in local and state competitions, the students constructed a dynamic display featuring mechanical and lighting components. During nationals, the team will have to present information about their project and answer questions from judges on how the display illustrates the contest theme.

The SkillsUSA NLSC runs from June 22-26 with competitions taking place on Wednesday and Thursday. Other events such as meetings, seminars, expos, and celebrations take place throughout the week before the event caps off with an awards ceremony the evening of June 26 where the team from San Elizario hopes to hear their names called as national gold medalists.



— Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

MONEY AWARD – From left, Cristina Schaffino, Gloria Rodriguez and Sandra Dominguez hold up their scholarship awards for a picture.

Briefs

From Page 1

Department are asking for your help in finding those involved through the Crime Stoppers. At about 2 a.m. on Tuesday, June 16, 2015 two men arrived at the Teacher's Federal Credit Union located at 9835 Kenworthy. The men brought two different vehicles. One was a milk truck that had been stolen a few days earlier and the other was a forklift. The men used the forklift to push the ATM off of the cement base. Once the ATM was on the ground the suspects attempted to get into the machine but were not successful. The men fled the scene in the stolen milk truck and left the forklift at the scene. The next day the milk truck was recovered in the area of Stan Roberts and Martin Luther King. One of the suspects was observed on security video wearing a black shirt, blue jeans and a red bandana. Anyone with information on this attempted bank theft is asked to call Crime Stoppers of El Paso immediately at 566-8477 (TIPS), on-line at www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org or you can send a text message by entering the key word "CRIME1" (no space and include the quotation marks) plus your tip information, and text it to CRIMES (274637). You will remain anonymous, and if your tip leads to an arrest, you can qualify for a cash reward.

— Javier Sambrano

NOW HERE'S A TIP

If you drop an egg, sprinkle with salt before you attempt to clean it up. The salt binds the whites, which will not spread, making pickup easier!

— JoAnn Derson



Six women receive scholarships

By Jim Heiney
Special to the Courier

The El Paso Community College (EPCC) Association of Women in the Community College (AWCC) awarded their Scholarships for Returning Female Students. The ceremony took place June 11 at the historic Little Temple at the

EPCC Rio Grande campus.

The \$500 scholarships for the 2015 Summer Semester were awarded to six EPCC students. The scholarships went to Annastecia Madu, Cristina Schaffino, Sandra Dominguez, Gloria Rodriguez, Diana Mergil and Selene Yu.

The students must be taking six credit hours this summer,

attended EPCC in the 2015 Spring Semester and have completed a total of 12 academic credit hours with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

AWCC consists of women who come together to network, to share their talents with other women in our community, to help EPCC students attain an education, and to have fun.

Public Notice Clint Independent School District 504 Child Find

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children, or for answers to any questions you might have about identification, evaluation and placement into Section 504, please contact the Clint District's Section 504 Coordinator, James Littlejohn, Chief Academic Officer, at 926-4031, or mail at 14521 Horizon Blvd., Horizon City, Texas 79928.

Aviso de Identificación de Estudiantes Incapacitados bajo la Sección 504

Bajo la Sección del Decreto de Rehabilitación de 1973, el Distrito Escolar esta obligado a identificar, referir, evaluar, y proporcionar servicios educativos apropiados y gratuitos a los estudiantes incapacitados que califican bajo esta ley. Si usted desea mas información sobre los derechos de padres de niños incapacitados, o si tiene preguntas sobre la identificación, evaluación, y colocación de niños en el programa de Sección 504, favor de ponerse en contacto con la Coordinadora de 504 del Distrito Escolar Independiente de Clint, James Littlejohn, Director acedémco, al numero 926-4031, o por correo a la siguiente dirección: 14521 Horizon Blvd., Horizon City, Texas 79928.

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Clint Independent School District Public Notification of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of Clint ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the district's Title IX Coordinator Rene Chavez at 14521 Horizon Boulevard, El Paso, Texas, 79928, 915-926-4000 and/or Section 504 Coordinator, James Littlejohn, Chief Academic Officer, at 14521 Horizon Boulevard, El Paso, Texas, 79928, 915-926-4031.

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Es norma del distrito independiente de Clint no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento, en sus prácticas de empleo tal como lo requieren el Título VI de la Ley de Deprechos Civiles de 1964, según enmienda; el Título IX de las Emmiendas en la Educación, de 1972, y la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmienda.

Para información sobre sus derechos o procedimientos para quejas, comuníquese con el Coordinador del Título IX, Rene Chavez, en 14521 Horizon Boulevard, El Paso, Texas, 79928, 915-926-4000 y/o el Coordinador de la Sección 504, James Littlejohn, Director acedémco, en 14521 Horizon Boulevard, El Paso, Texas, 79928, 915-926-4031.

WTCC: 06-25-15

Rodriguez' play merits notice but nobody cares anymore

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It isn't often but whenever an athlete reaches a certain historic milestone it is celebrated by all sports fans.

If a player has reached the unreachable, even rival fans that have jeered him for 15 years will stand up and appreciate the accomplishment.

Whenever a coach calls it quits after a career that includes several championships, he is sent off with accolades, awards and the respect of his peers – not to mention the fans.

There are many athletes who reach the top of their respective sport. And there are many athletes who manage to spend many years playing their respective sport.

But when you combine the two and are fortunate enough to stay at the top of your sport for a long period of time – that's where Hall of Famers come from.

That is, unless other unsavory circumstances come along with the great play.

Shoeless Joe Jackson was one of the best ever to play professional baseball,

but because of his involvement with gamblers and the team's "throwing" of the World Series, he was banned from the game.

No player in baseball history had more hits or played harder than Pete Rose. But because of his gambling on baseball games, he was banned from the sport and thus, not eligible for Hall of Fame consideration.

The same goes for steroid users Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire and Roger Clemens, who otherwise would be automatic Hall of Fame selections.

Over the weekend, Alex Rodriguez picked up his 3,000th hit, an unofficial automatic qualifier for the Hall. Earlier this season he also picked up his 2,000th run batted in and his 661st home run, passing the great Willie Mays.

And if you compare the amount of press each athlete got, you would think that Cleveland's Matthew Dellavedova was the one setting all these marks.

The thing is, whether it's Rose or Bonds or McGwire or Clemens or Shoeless Joe or even A-Rod, everyone knows they all belong in the Hall. Everyone knows that no matter what

they did, they are among the very best who ever played.

But the fact still remains that they, for some incredibly selfish reason, felt that the rules of the game didn't necessarily pertain to them.

A-Rod has been a great player since he was 21 in Seattle and is having a surprisingly great year at the age of 40 this season in New York.

Actually, it's kind of a feel-good story with the supposedly washed up Rodriguez humbly saying all the right things and going about his business on the field as if he were in his prime.

But the truth is that he was not very humble for many of those earlier years and developed a knack for not being very honest with teammates, coaches and the fans.

Don't forget it was A-Rod and his people who leaked a lot of information concerning Biogenesis documents to the media that implicated many other players in the steroid scandal.

It was A-Rod who was suspended for the whole 2014 season for repeatedly lying about taking steroids for years.

And it is A-Rod who has a history of

suing anyone and everyone whenever he is caught breaking the rules, including Major League Baseball.

When the time comes to vote for the Hall of Fame a few years from now, A-Rods' name will be on the ballot and guess what – his name will be added to the list of great ballplayers who should be immortalized – but is conspicuously absent.

But his case is a little different. At least in the past fans watched the milestone hit or home run and debated it for the next week or two.

A-Rod's achievements haven't drawn any real interest from the fans or the media. It's like everyone is tired of the whole thing and he truly doesn't matter anymore.

Will any other player in the future pick up over 600 home runs, over 3,000 hits, over 2,000 RBIs and over 300 stolen bases?

The chances are almost zero.

A-Rod is unquestionably one of the greatest players to have ever played professional baseball.

And yet he's so disliked that nobody cares. Now that's quite a feat.

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

No opt outs in the ad game

As any watcher of sports on television can tell you, commercials are unavoidable. Not only are they pervasive, they are repetitious – sometimes, I would argue, to a fault.

We understand that people

need to hear a message more than once to get the point. I'm pretty sure that's Merchandising and Advertising 101. But when is it enough? The major brands out there – the soft drinks, phone companies and

financiers – change it up every once in a while, introducing new characters and songs. And they pretty much know when people aren't into the ad anymore.

For instance, when seeing a certain brand of luxury car reminds you of Jim Carrey imitating Matthew McConaughey's creepy ad, you know it's time to retire that commercial. When

the only people on Twitter taking the time to type #sirloin are the people telling you they hate the commercial where they're told to type #sirloin, it may be time for change.

At one point or another, all of us have lent a hand or given to a charity of some sort. Maybe you canvassed the neighborhood for Easter Seals, threw a few extra bucks into the second collection at church, volunteered your time or work for a non-profit. We appreciate the efforts of all the non-smokers' alliances and the anti-trans-fat corps and all of the other groups out there with

noble causes, spending their money on precious advertising time. The networks thank them, too. And so do the ad firms and all the people that are in the industry.

But I gotta tell ya, it's getting to the point where you're praying for the players to play in perpetuity because you know if they stop for any reason – a pitching change, a technical foul, multiple penalties to sort out – it means you're going to have to watch the guy pop out his eyeball, tear off his legs and

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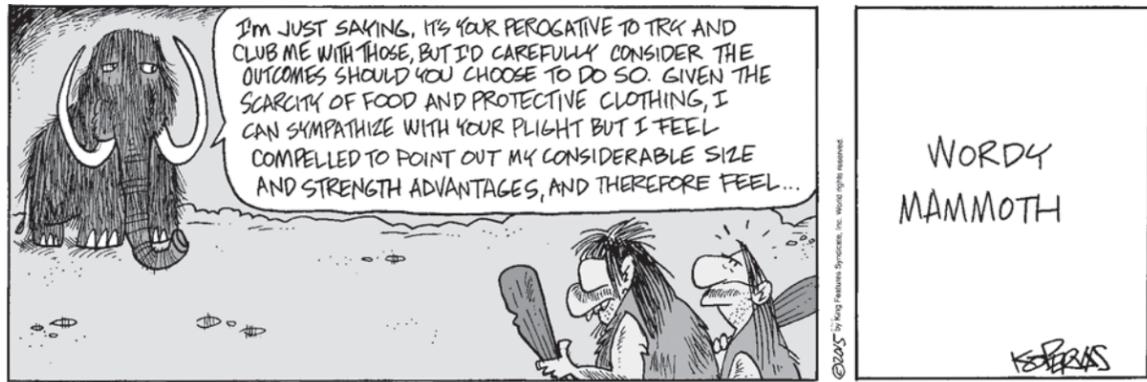
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Deadline: Mondays
Please print. Send form and payment (no cash) to:
West Texas County Courier
15344 Werling Ct.
Horizon City, TX 79928

Contact Information:
Name: _____
Phone: _____

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Your good health By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: You mentioned lupus in a recent column. Is there a connection between lupus and arthritis? – D.J.T.

Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) is a disease that can affect virtually any organ in the body, and usually affects several – often at the same time. The most common symptoms are fatigue, fever and weight loss. Skin signs can be very specific, such as the classic “butterfly rash,” a red, butterfly-shaped rash across the nose and cheeks. Arthritis (joint inflammation) or arthralgia (joint pain) is present in 90 percent of people with lupus at some point in the illness.

The arthritis booklet discusses joint pain found in rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis and lupus. Readers can order a copy by writing: Dr. Roach – No. 301W, 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 four weeks for delivery.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a question about vitamin D-3 pills. How does 400 mg fit into such a tiny pill? I also thought you needed sunlight to make vitamin D. – A.S.

high latitudes (above the line from Los Angeles to Atlanta), the sunlight might not be strong enough to efficiently convert enough vitamin D so many are vitamin-D-deficient during winter.

People who don’t go outside, who usually wear clothing and hats to cover their skin or who have darker skin are less able to create vitamin D. People over 70 also are less able to make their own vitamin D. This is why many foods are supplemented with vitamin D. Even so, a sizable proportion of the population has low levels of vitamin D.

There remains great controversy about whether supplementation will improve overall health. Studies are ongoing to test the effect of vitamin D supplementation to reduce fracture risk, improve muscle function or reduce cancer risk.

DEAR DR. ROACH: If you walk briskly for a certain time and distance, is that not just as good for you as jogging, if you are going for the same time? – A.

It depends on what you mean by “good.” If you mean what I think you do, in terms of overall health and maybe living longer and feeling better, then yes, a brisk walk is nearly as good for you as jogging.

Jogging probably is better for preventing osteoporosis, since it gives more impact to the bones, but on the other hand it is harder on the joints. If your goal is to get faster and win races, then you need to practice going

Four hundred mg is very small. Most of the tablet isn’t even vitamin D – it’s starch and other materials to hold the tablet together.

The skin does make vitamin D-3 from precursors in the presence of sunlight. However, there are several factors that affect this process. During winter months at moderately

See HEALTH, Page 8

Super Crossword

HOLDING THE LINE

- ACROSS**
 1 Boat docks
 8 Mere penny
 15 Stair face
 20 Generally
 21 Infused with carbon dioxide
 22 Cosmetics queen
 23 Holiday tree brighteners
 25 Figure skating category
 26 Baby blues, say
 27 Detroit loc.
 28 By way of
 29 _ Babies
 30 Info on a library slip
 31 Thing swung on a court
 34 Undermined
 38 Federal case, so to speak
 39 Countrified
 40 See 42-Across
 41 German’s “one”
 42 With 40-Across, headwear for doing laps
 46 William Tell wielded one
 50 Nine-footer with 88 keys
 53 Game with a cue stick
 54 “Cat on _ Tin Roof”
 55 Bakery treat

- 56 Atypical pets
 57 Taco sauce brand
 59 Everyone, in German
 61 Topic in question
 62 Beddy-bye clothes
 65 Gravity-defying party decoration
 69 Have a go at
 70 Reply to “You are not!”
 72 Spoiled stars’ problems
 73 Running back
 75 Pro at PR
 78 Crude abode
 79 “Hud” actress
 Patricia
 80 Morales of film and TV
 84 Pinocchio, for one
 86 Rosary’s nonreligious relative
 88 Like a spud-slicing GI
 89 Aide to Santa
 90 Some small batteries
 91 Holiday tree topper
 92 Really mad
 95 Film director
 Martin
 98 Alternative to drapes
 102 Merit
 103 Spanish province capital

- 104 Cellular stuff
 105 Rick’s love in a 1942 film
 106 Farmland unit
 110 Cleaned up some leaves
 111 What eight of this puzzle’s answers have
 115 Saw wood
 116 Capital of New Jersey
 117 Paying to stay at
 118 Disburdened
 119 Like mustard
 120 Post-Trojan War tale
- DOWN**
 1 Knight’s club
 2 White-faced
 3 Seldom seen
 4 Pupil site
 5 Greek letters
 6 “Nashville” director Robert
 7 Arab, e.g.
 8 Unduly quick
 9 Slender fish
 10 Force to rise
 11 Shutting in
 12 Fuel gas
 13 Court divider
 14 Grid stats
 15 Annul
 16 Sci-fi’s Asimov
 17 Smell awful
 18 Uncanny
 19 Turn to 000
 24 Did perfectly
 29 Secret taste-test

- label
 30 Strike mark
 31 Defreeze
 32 Conception
 33 Fisher’s net
 34 Tinfoil, e.g.
 35 Irish money
 36 BP gas brand
 37 Painter Frida
 40 Instructed jointly
 42 Uses a divan
 43 Belt’s place
 44 Acquire, as debt
 45 Stroll
 47 Be worthy of
 48 Kids’ writer
 Silverstein
 49 Bacall’s first hubby
 50 _ monster
 51 Chiles _ (Mexican dishes)
 52 Gist
 55 Blatz brewer
 58 West Virginia’s state flower, for short
 60 Fudd of cartoonom
 62 California’s _ Beach
 63 Osaka’s land
 64 Smarmy smile
 66 Pouty face
 67 Epps of TV’s “House”
 68 Smarmy
 71 Barber’s cut
 74 Some minors
 76 Boxing combo
 77 H’wood type

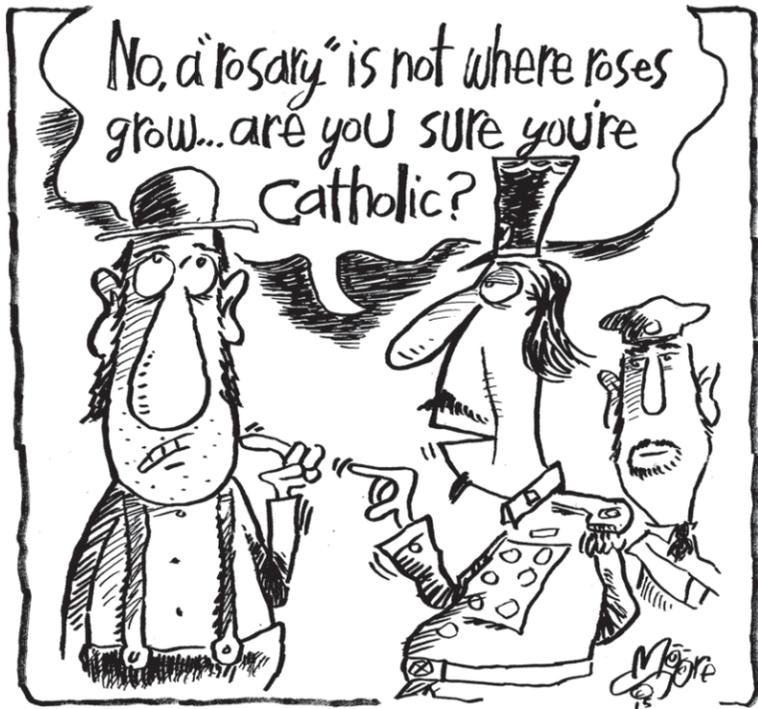
- 81 Wise soul
 82 Some Snapple products
 83 Cruise stop
 85 Big brand of nonstick cookware
 86 Joking types
 87 Cowshed site
 90 It’s faster than adagio
 92 Laid down the lawn?
 93 “The Queen” star Helen
 94 Seventh- _ stretch
 95 Ward of TV
 96 Fidel of Cuba
 97 Sounded off
 98 Poorer
 99 Donald’s first wife
 100 “Zorba the Greek” novelist Kazantzakis
 101 John _ (tractor maker)
 105 Lacks entity
 106 Play units
 107 Greek letters
 108 Artist Magritte
 109 Irritable
 111 Fuel additive brand
 112 Mr. Capote, to his pals
 113 Weed B _ (lawn care product)
 114 In _ case

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
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103																				
110																				
115																				
118																				

MOORE TEXAS

by Roger Todd Moore

Beginning in 1830, The Mexican Government required all immigrants coming to Texas to be Roman Catholics... or at least SAY they were.



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.

	+		×		27
×		÷		×	
	×		-		38
+		+		+	
	+		×		14
17		10		13	

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 7 9

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	1	3	4				7	
	5				6	9		
4				8				1
	6				4	3		
7				2			9	5
		2	3	1			8	
		5			9			2
3			8			7		
	4		5	3				1

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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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: I heard that Social Security benefits increased at the beginning of the year. What is the average Social Security retirement payment that a person receives each month?

A: You are right – Social Security benefits increased this year. In 2015, nearly 64 million Americans who receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) began receiving a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase of 1.7 percent to their monthly benefit payments. The average monthly Social Security benefit for a retired worker in 2015 is \$1,328 (up from \$1,306 in 2014). The average monthly Social Security benefit for a disabled worker in 2015 is \$1,165 (up from \$1,146 in 2014). As a reminder, eligibility for retirement benefits still requires 40 credits (usually about 10 years of work). The Social Security Act details how the COLA is calculated. You can read more about the COLA at www.socialsecurity.gov/cola.

Q: I know that some of my

resources affect my Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Is there a list of resources Social Security takes into account when providing payments?

A: Resources are things you own and can use to pay for food and shelter. Resources include bank accounts, personal property, and real estate. We use the value of your resources to determine if you can get SSI. We don't count all of your resources, including the value of the home and property where you live. Some resources we do count include:

- Cash;
- Bank accounts, stocks, U.S. savings bonds;
- Land;
- Life Insurance;
- Personal Property (excluding the value of your home);
- Vehicles;
- Anything else you own which could be changed to cash and used to pay for food or shelter; and
- Deemed resources.

Sometimes we deem a portion of the resources of a spouse, parent, parent's spouse, sponsor

of an alien, or sponsor's spouse as belonging to the person who applies for SSI. You can learn more about which resources Social Security uses to determine your SSI payment at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/text-resources-ussi.htm.

For more information on any of the questions listed above, visit our website at 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.

Sports

From Page 6

rip out his jaw again during the station break.

As a fan, you should not have to hope that Don Mattingly blows Clayton Kershaw's arm out because you're afraid that if he stops pitching for even a second, it means you have to be subjected to a colonic camera view and thrust on another journey through the fat layers surrounding the liver of the guy who wanted to have a Fanta. Watching a full seven-game series or a Stanley Cup win on home ice should be exciting, but there's a difference between the exhilaration of having witnessed a nail biter for the ages as opposed to being left a complete neurotic with borderline PTSD because of the public service announcements. Whatever happened to frying an egg and just saying no? #I'mJustSayin

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in Kansas City. (c) 2015 King Features Synd., Inc.

Health

From Page 7

faster. But walking is nearly as good for most aspects and is easier on the body than jogging for most people.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. To view and order health pamphlets, visit www.rbmamall.com, or write to P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. (c) 2015 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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: I equals T

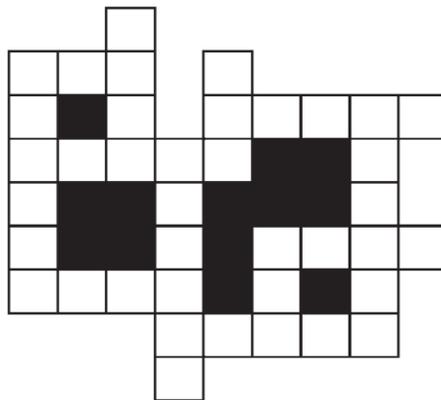
RA SUP JOS "TC JYUPKQ ZU
WGUTM O JKRNC UA WGCOQ,"
NUPKQ SUP NOKK IYOI
EGUEUJRMZ O IUOJI?

Answer Page 4

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- RIA
- UNSEER
- ♥ SNOIR
- ♥ SPOU
- ROZDEE
- ♥ NSU
- SNAU
- ♥ RUESP
- PZI
- ♥ NEPTIC
- PRUPE
- ♥ ZEAD



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.

NEW! 30 Fear Knot puzzles \$3.50 • Six Volumes • Order at rbmamall.com

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