



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Symphony auditions

The El Paso Symphony Orchestra will be holding auditions on Sunday, May 15, 2016 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (location TBD) for the following positions:

- Concertmaster;
- Section Violin;
- Section Cello;
- Principal 2nd Violin;
- Assistant Principal 2nd Violin;
- Principal Bass;
- Assistant Principal Bass;
- Section Bass; and
- 3rd Clarinet/Bass Clarinet.

Should any position be filled by a current member of the EPSO, the resulting vacancy(s) may be filled at these auditions. Audition application, requirements and music can be downloaded at [www.epso.org](http://www.epso.org). (Use bookmarks to find instrument requirements and repertoire.) For further information contact El Paso Symphony Personnel Manager Leann Isaac at (915) 637-8144. Applications are due by May 1, 2016.

— Rosemary Flores

### Just hang up

Some of us wouldn't dream of hanging up on an IRS agent who calls to say you owe back taxes, but that's the advice the Internal Revenue Service is passing on, according to the Association of Mature American Citizens. Here's what the agency had to say about the number one scam targeting senior citizens: "The IRS will never call a taxpayer to demand immediate payment, nor will the agency call about taxes owed without first having mailed a bill to the taxpayer. The IRS will never demand that a taxpayer pay taxes without giving him or her the opportunity to question or appeal the amount claimed to be owed." The IRS impersonation scam targets a huge segment of the population based on the fact that the agency receives as many as 13,000 complaints each week. Up to 50 people a week fall for the deception with some 5,000 having lost more than \$26 million.

— John Grimaldi

### Wanted

A man was seriously injured in a hit and run motorcycle crash in East El Paso in February and investigators are

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*Education means developing the mind, not stuffing the memory.*

— Quips & Quotes

## Efforts underway to protect Texas veterans' education benefits

By Alfredo Vasquez  
*Special to the Courier*

TEXAS – The start of the next Texas Legislative session will not convene for another ten months, but efforts are already underway to ensure that the state's Republican-led congress does not tamper with the Hazlewood Act provisions that presently provide education benefits to honorably discharged or separated Texas veterans and their dependent children and spouses.

In June 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 93 which authorized new veteran education exemptions that removed certain residency restrictions, extended eligibility to spouses, and permitted eligible veterans to assign their unused college hours to their children. These new provisions are known as the Hazelwood Legacy Act.

Additionally during the same legislative session, Senate Bill 297 was approved which authorized a new exemption from payment of tuition for a child, or stepchild, of a member of the armed forces who is deployed to active duty in a combat zone outside the United States.

But, in the last state legislative session which ended in June 2015, attempts, headed by Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, were made to drastically cut these new provisions from the program, in particular targeting the Hazelwood Legacy Act exemptions.

Under its current form, the Hazelwood Act provides millions in college tuition for veterans and, in some cases, their families. For example, when the legacy act was introduced during the 2009-2010 school year, only nine students at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) participated in the program. That number rose to 449 in the 2013-2014 year, and costs increased from \$18,000 to \$2.3 million during the same time frame, according to UTEP officials.

The state covers only part of the tuition cost with the institutions of higher learning incurring the remaining balance. Republican lawmakers are

See BENEFITS, Page 3



**READY TO FIGHT** – State Representative Cesar Blanco (D), of El Paso, said that he is prepared to travel throughout the state to raise awareness about the Hazlewood Legacy Act.

## Benitez, Olivas represent San Eli in band competition

By Hector Gonzalez  
*Special to the Courier*

SAN ELIZARIO – Angel Olivas and Josue Benitez are two incredibly talented band students who made it to State and had the opportunity to compete for the top spots in the 'All Texas Small School Bands' competition, also known as ATSSB. They are both juniors at San Elizario High School and have been in band since their freshman year.

This was Olivas' first year making it to State and he placed 4th Chair in the Euphonium group. He was excited about competing against other skilled musicians from across the state and was honored to form part of this competition. "Making it this far means that I have accomplished a lot in music," said Olivas. I aspire to be a professional musician some day and competing in State means that I am one step closer of making my dream come true."

Making it to State is a big accomplishment in itself and not everyone is as lucky to make it that far. For Benitez, this was his second year in a row competing. He placed 1st Chair in the Bass Clarinet group and was extremely ecstatic. "It was an honor for me to compete for a second time in a row and come home a winner," said Benitez. "I was not only representing my high school in this competition, but the community of San Elizario as well."

Even though they came home with high rankings, it took them a lot of hard work and dedication to make it that far. "My



— Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD

**TALENTED** – San Elizario HS student Josue Benitez, left, plays Bass Clarinet and Angel Olivas plays the Euphonium. Both musicians competed in the All Texas Small School Bands this year. Benitez earned a 1st Chair and Olivas a 4th Chair in his first State appearance.

love for band started way back in middle school where I was introduced to music and since then, I have been practicing day after day until I am able to master

the art of music," said Benitez. "I believe that all my practice and commitment is

See BAND, Page 5

## Finances By Nathaniel Sillin

# Putting together a great wedding on a budget

Will a modern wedding doesn't have to. endanger your finances? It With the average price of an

## Veterans Post By Freddy Groves

### Finally, some answers in VA wait-time probe

Allegations of wait-time manipulation at the Phoenix VA Health Care System surfaced two years ago, and more allegations followed. Since then, the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General has conducted more than 70 investigations. It's now starting to roll out the results of those inquiries. Here are few highlights:

Iowa – It was alleged that “secret waiting lists” were destroyed before the inspection. One list had been created by a clinical psychologist to track how long it took for his patients to get appointments. He was told to delete it, even though it helped him help his patients.

Louisiana – A list similar to the one in Iowa had been created by staff to keep patients from “falling through the cracks” in the system, and had nothing to do with scheduling. New staff was to be hired, and veterans couldn't be assigned appointments with a specific doctor yet... hence the list to keep track of them.

In Minnesota two former employees alleged that they'd

been instructed to manipulate appointment dates or cancel patient appointments. Both had appeared on television shows making allegations, which were not substantiated in 26 subsequent interviews of employees.

In Illinois one employee admitted to changing desired appointment dates and next available dates to create a zero-wait appearance because she thought that's what she was supposed to do in order to avoid repercussions by management.

In Florida a former employee alleged that clerks were manipulating scheduling data, but it appears they just didn't understand the difference between a desired appointment date and an available one.

Intentional manipulation isn't what comes through in an initial reading of these reports. It seems more a matter of confusion.

To read the full reports and keep track of new ones as they come in, check [www.va.gov/oig](http://www.va.gov/oig).

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American wedding over \$31,000, the big day can impose financial stress for those who don't have savings in place. It's important to remember that these numbers indicate greater trends – not suggested spending patterns.

Before discussion about a ceremony or reception even begins, it's smart for couples to have a frank talk about money issues in general. Share financial information such as current spending, savings, investment and credit status (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>). While this conversation may not seem terribly romantic, honesty about respective finances is the first step to responsible financial planning and compatibility.

**Once you've chosen a desired wedding date, set a savings target with a realistic budget.** If you want to get married fairly soon, realize you'll have less time to build a wedding fund. Start by making a general list (<https://www.theknot.com/wedding-budget/start>) of everything you might want in a wedding, and then adjust your vision to what will be in the bank by your desired date.

As the numbers start looking real to you, determine what can be

purchased or done inexpensively and others that will require professional help. Take a look at the guest list and see if you can make some cuts. Consider a handheld music player hooked up to a great speaker system instead of a live band. Are you content with your brother's photo and video skills, or is it a better idea to hire a professional team?

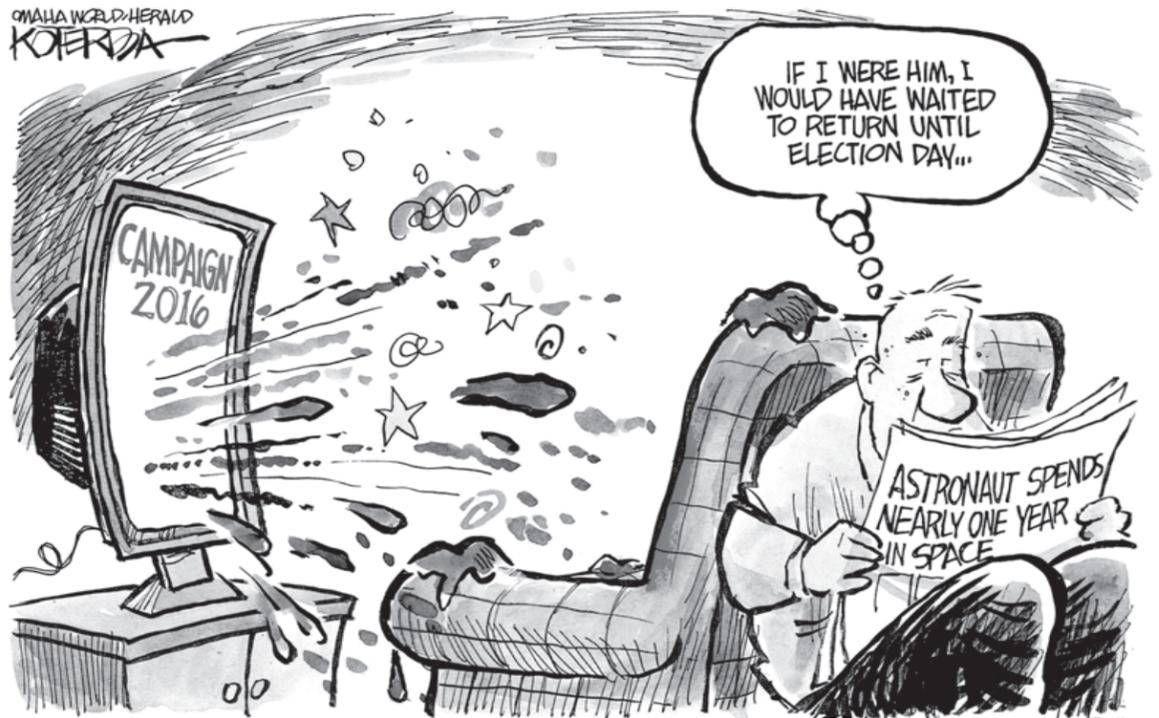
**Consider off-dates, off-times and off-venues.** Though wedding season is more year-round than it's ever been, wedding prices still tend to be highest throughout the warm months. Explore winter dates and more obscure venues. Take City Hall, for example. Depending on the municipality, you can either schedule ahead or show up with local license and ceremonial fees as the only costs involved. There's no need for expensive wardrobe or other trappings. What about having the wedding at home? It's free space and, depending on the talents of friends and family, homemade food and decorations can also keep expenses to a minimum. But remember that the home or property owner may need a special insurance rider to cover any potential damage or liability, particularly if liquor is

being served.

**And finally, consider a “surprise” wedding.** Planning a party or gathering where a wedding breaks out can provide money-saving advantages to guests and bridal party alike. Having a wedding at a party – especially a regular holiday party you host where family and friends already know to gather – requires little more than a legal officiant and whatever food, beverage, entertainment and insurance costs you need to consider. An unannounced wedding eliminates all pre-wedding costs related to invitations, showers and parties, and you can give your guests a break on gifts.

**Bottom line:** Flashy weddings aren't worth jeopardizing your finances for years to come. Make creative, affordable wedding planning part of your love story.

*This article is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal, tax or financial advice. It's always a good idea to consult a tax or financial advisor for specific information on how certain laws apply to your situation and about your individual financial situation.*



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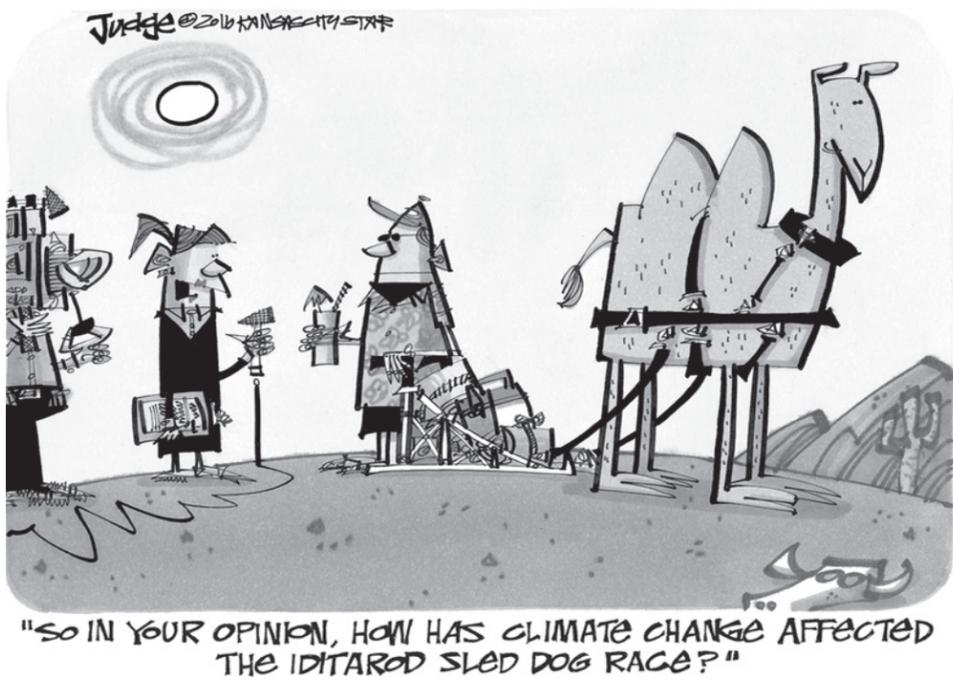
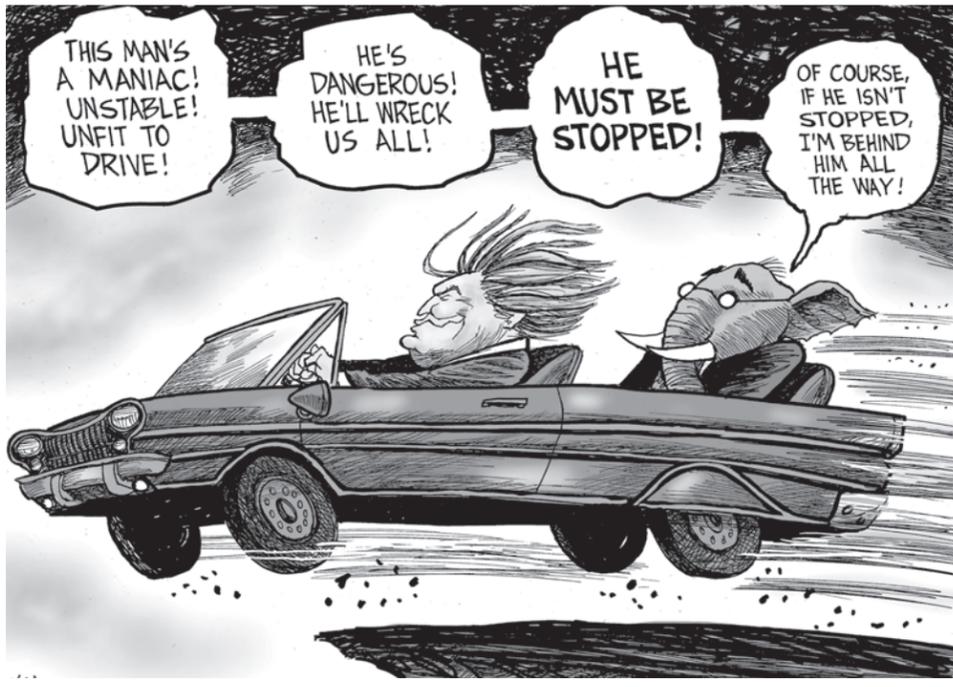
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Homesteader  
Est. 1973  
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## Benefits

From Page 1

concerned that the program places an unsupportable burden on the state colleges and universities.

Because the costs of the program are likely to continue to grow, during the 2015 legislative session Republican legislators proposed to only allow veterans who have served at least six years in the military to transfer their benefits to family members. They also wanted that ability to expire after 15 years. Their proposal was stymied, however, only because they ran out of time at the end of that session.

So in advance of the upcoming legislative session (January 2017), preparations for the imminent battle to prevent any cuts to the state funded Hazlewood Act program are being coordinated by State Rep. Cesar Blanco, a Democrat who represents most of West Texas including El Paso. Blanco stated recently that he is prepared to travel throughout the state to raise awareness about the Hazlewood Act and about the proposed cuts that the Republican legislators are seeking.

Blanco stated that he heard that the lieutenant governor said that cuts in the program were going to be a priority in the next session.

Consequently, Blanco related that he has teamed-up with colleagues including Rep. Joe Farias, D-San Antonio, and Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer, D-San Antonio, to garner support by holding town hall meetings throughout the state. Blanco said that the meetings are designed to explain the Hazlewood Act and to show why it is important to preserve it in its current form.

Presently, the Hazlewood eligibility requirements remain unchanged. That is, at the time of entry into active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, a veteran must have

designated Texas as Home of Record; or entered the service in Texas; or was a Texas resident.

Also, he must have received an honorable discharge or separation or a general discharge under honorable conditions as indicated on the Veteran's Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214).

Additionally, the veteran must have served at least 181 days of active duty

## Hazlewood Legacy Act application process

A veteran must:

- 1) Apply and be accepted to a Texas public college or university of his/her choice. Go to [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org) to apply or use your institution's application for admission;
- 2) Provide proof (DD214) from the Department of Defense regarding military service and the nature of discharge;
- 3) Provide proof of eligibility or ineligibility for GI Bill benefits (Chapter 31, 33/ Post-9/11) by requesting a certificate of eligibility for federal education benefits from eBenefits (if Veteran has active duty service after 9/11/2001);
- 4) Fill out the Hazlewood Exemption application form; and
- 5) Turn in the Hazlewood Exemption application form, a copy of letter of eligibility/ineligibility, and a copy of DD214 to the financial aid office of the institution that the veteran will attend.

Applications and all supporting documentation must be received by the institution no later than the last day of class in order to be evaluated for the semester or term.

service and have no federal veteran's education benefits, or have no federal veterans education benefits dedicated to the payment of tuition and fees only.

Furthermore, the veteran must not be in default on a student loan made or guaranteed by the State of Texas; he must enroll in classes for which the college receives tax support, and must meet the grade point average requirement of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy; and, as an undergraduate student, not be considered to have attempted an excessive amount of credit hours.

Veterans who are granted their first Hazlewood Act exemption (beginning in the fall of 2011) must reside in Texas during the semester or term for which the exemption is claimed. This requirement does not apply to the veterans who either received the exemption prior to

the 2011-2012 academic year, have re-enlisted into active duty, or reside with a spouse who is on active duty.

Blanco, a veteran himself, said that he and his colleagues are on a mission to raise public awareness about this issue and to preserve the education benefits that veterans deserve.

"I want to hit every major market in Texas," Blanco stated in a recent news report, adding, "I'm hoping I can get some Republican colleagues to agree with me." He stated that he plans to end his crusade with a town hall event in El Paso.

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– Photo by Marina Ramirez

**NOT SO FAST – The UTEP track team slowed down for a moment during Keep Vinton Beautiful’s Project Move. The team, along with the UTEP National Student Speech Language Hearing Association, cleaned up a neglected lot to make a community garden. This is the first of several projects that will run through April.**

# Vinton cleans up the village

By Marina Ramirez  
Special to the Courier

VINTON – Spring is here and so is the Great American Cleanup (GAC). Keep Vinton Beautiful (KVB) – which builds and sustains a clean, green and

a more beautiful Village of Vinton – kicked-off the 2016 GAC with Project Move on February 27. Project Move is an annual university of Texas-El Paso (UTEP) program where students, staff, faculty and alumni give back to the community through a partnership with area

organizations and agencies. This year KVB hosted the nationally recognized UTEP track team and the UTEP National Student Speech Language Hearing Association for Project Move. 92 volunteers helped start the first community garden for the Village of Vinton. “The property where the community garden is located, was vacant for over ten years and needed an enormous amount of TLC. The volunteers were able to remove all of the

debris from the house, clear the land for a native garden, remove most of the dead brush and plant ten trees,” said KVB Chairman Mike Ramirez.

Entering its 18th year, the GAC is the country’s largest community improvement program that kicks off in more than 20,000 communities each spring. Each year, the Keep America Beautiful Great American Cleanup engages more than 4 million volunteers and participants across the country to take action in their local communities to create positive

change and lasting impact.

This year for the GAC, KVB will be painting the exterior of three houses for Helping Hands (March 19), planting trees for Arbor Day (April 30), removing litter from the highway during the state’s largest one-day cleanup event, Don’t Mess With Texas Trash-Off (April 9) and keeping the waterways clear of debris during a River Cleanup (May 28.)

If you would like to volunteer for the events, please send an email to [mramirez@vintontx.us](mailto:mramirez@vintontx.us) or call 886-5104.



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## El Dorado named a top model AVID school

By Cynthia Flores-Jones  
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Dorado High School has been selected as an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) National Demonstration School, a model for the non-profit organization whose goal is to close the achievement gap and prepare all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities.

The Socorro Independent School District campus is one of 31 in Texas and 140 nationally to have the distinction.

“I am extremely honored to be part of an organization like this,” said El Dorado Principal Cindy Retana. “It speaks volumes of the great things that go on at El Dorado. It makes you feel so proud of all the work teachers have put into the school, into the classroom and into the kids.”

The school was selected through an application process, a screening and a review that included a local visit. Now, as part of the demonstration site network, the Aztecs will get visits from schools worldwide who will come to observe a highly evolved AVID system.

“El Dorado was selected as an AVID National Demonstration School because it has implemented the AVID system throughout the school and can serve as a model for new sites,” said AVID Chief Executive Officer Sandy Husk, on the significance of attaining demonstration site status.

AVID is implemented in approximately 5,000 schools in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and 16 other countries/territories and impacts more than 800,000 students annually in grades K-12 and postsecondary institutions.

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## STRANGE BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

• It was Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and biographer Carl Sandburg who made the following sage observation: "Slang is a language that rolls up its sleeves, spits on its hands, and goes to work."

• Boon or bane? While DDT was first synthesized in 1874, it wasn't until 1939 that Swiss chemist Paul Hermann Muller discovered its insecticidal properties. DDT was so effective in curbing the spread of insect-borne diseases such as malaria and yellow fever that in 1948, Muller was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. However, with the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring," the devastating environmental effects of widespread DDT use led to an eventual ban in the United States.

• You might be surprised to learn that, aside from his inaugural addresses, Abraham Lincoln gave only one speech during his entire presidency: the Gettysburg Address.

• In Venice at one time, every merchant who traveled to the Orient was required by law to bring back a piece of art and donate it to St. Mark's Cathedral.

• It was all the way back in 1837 that modern multinational corporation Procter and Gamble was founded, by candle maker William Procter and soap maker James Gamble. During the Civil War, the company supplied candles and soap to the Union Army, in the process introducing its products to soldiers from all over the country.

• Those who study such things say that there are more possible iterations of a game of chess than there are atoms in the known universe.

Thought for the Day: "The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists, who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood. The trailblazers in human, academic, scientific and religious freedom have always been nonconformists. In any cause that concerns the progress of mankind, put your faith in the nonconformist!"

– Martin Luther King Jr.

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# Home repair funds available for low-income residents

By Gayle Aubrey  
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – Texas USDA Rural Development has announced funding is available for the purpose of repairing homes in eligible rural areas. The

funds are available through Rural Development's 504 Home Repair loan and grant program.

The program is available to low income recipients to make essential repairs to modernize and repair homes, and to remove health and safety hazards. Most

repairs completed under the program are for roof, window and door replacements, as well as electrical, plumbing and air conditioning upgrades as well as other repairs needed to increase the home's energy efficiency and overall comfort and quality. Renovations to make a home wheelchair or handicap accessible are also considered

To qualify for the program, applicants must own their home, and fall within Rural Development's income guidelines, defined as below 50 percent of the area median income and unable to obtain affordable credit elsewhere. Homeowners, at least 62 years old, may qualify for a grant.

Grant funding up to \$7,500 is limited and many times repairs will be funded with a combination of loan and grant. One percent loans up to \$20,000 will be on a repayment term of up to 20 years and will require low monthly payments.

Further information on the program is available by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-repair-loans-grants/tx>. For local information, verification of area eligibility and application assistance, determine your local office by visiting <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices/tx> or call the Texas State Office at (254) 742-9770.

## Band

From Page 1

what helped me get first place," he said.

As for Olivas, he said the key to making it far is not giving up. "I can honestly say this has not been easy for me. Some days, I felt stressed out and wanted to call it quits but then I remembered that I have come a long way to get to where I am now."

Another obstacle for them was time. "It can be difficult keeping up with all of our other extracurricular activities and make time to practice," said Benitez. They both stayed after school several times to catch up with band practice. "We managed to get things done and balance our time, all thanks to the help and support of our families and teachers," said Olivas.

"I am very proud of Angel and Josue because they have put San Elizario on the map," said San Elizario High School Band Director, Cristina Barajas. Her, along with Assistant Band Director, Freddie Gates, believe that anyone can make it to State as long as they are passionate and have an open mind about music. "Sometimes you get students who are reluctant to join band because they feel that they do not have what it takes, but we are here to help and guide them every step of the way," said Barajas.

Both Olivas and Benitez will remain in band up until their senior year in high school. After that, they plan to go to college and study Music.

## Briefs

From Page 1



Have youseen this vehicle?

asking for the public's help in finding the driver through Crime Stoppers. The crash took place at about 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 on the 10500 block of Montana Ave. Investigators learned from witnesses that a 19-year-old male was driving a 2005 Suzuki GSX-R600 motorcycle westbound in the center lane of Montana Ave. The motorcyclist changed lanes at the same time the SUV changed lanes and struck the motorcycle. The 19-year old driver of the bike received serious injuries and was hospitalized. The driver of the SUV fled the scene in a vehicle that is described as a blue Dodge Durango. A witness took a picture of the vehicle suspected to be involved. Anyone with information on the driver involved in this hit and run crash on February 23 is asked to call Crime Stoppers of El Paso immediately at 566-8477 (TIPS), on-line at [www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org](http://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

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Learn and Live

# It's time to fill out your bracket for the Big Dance

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

There are certain times of the year that stand out for obvious reasons.

There's always the holidays like Christmas and Halloween and the Fourth of July, that bring people together.

There are important life events like election time in November.

And there are sporting events like the Super Bowl, the World Series and the Olympics that get people talking and have them glued to their seats.

But this week, sports fans are going to celebrate one of the best weekends on the calendar.

The NCAA basketball tournament, the Big Dance, gets underway and just like every year before, it will be jam-packed with last-second heroics and incredible upsets.

And while the games are exciting, whether you root for your favorite team or wish the worst for your enemy, there's another reason fans love this time of year.

Some things have always gone hand-in-hand like peanut butter and jelly,

Romeo and Juliet, and republicans and democrats.

Another all-important duo is sports and sports betting.

At almost every business copier at almost every business in the country, somebody is running copies of NCAA Tournament brackets for their office pool.

Of course there's a small fee to participate that will be distributed to the best prognosticators in the office.

It's one of the best times of the year. People in accounting and people in purchasing and people in the warehouse will all be sharing the common goal of outguessing the others for money and bragging rights.

And by the way, when people start with the "that's illegal gambling" argument, that's when I pull out my libertarian card.

I say keep the government out of every aspect of the citizen's lives. Also, don't forget that the money people are putting into the pot has already been taxed once by Uncle Sam.

I say that's enough.

Anyway, this year's bracket is going to be especially hard to predict.

With no clearcut favorite in the field, even my Aunt Margie has a chance to take the cash.

I guess the best team going into the tournament is Kansas – but not by very much.

One thing that has never happened in the tournament's history is a #16 seed knocking off a #1. But you know it's going to happen sometime.

The chances of that finally happening this year is as good as any.

Of course the best time of the tournament is when everybody switches to watch the last five minutes of a game in which the little guy is leading or within a couple points of a big school.

And the big school is suddenly under the weight of the entire country that is pulling for the little guy to finish off the upset.

It usually doesn't happen, but what a great feeling when it does, and those young guys and coaches are running around the court in joyous disbelief.

That's what makes this tournament so much fun to watch. The little guy actually has a chance. In other college sports the little school is seldom even given the opportunity.

Again this year, games will be played throughout the weekend and carried on several networks and the internet. I dare you not to be able to follow the tournament.

One after the other after the other, tournament games will flood the landscape and people will be either smiling, or ripping up those bracket sheets.

There is no actual rule to filling out a tournament bracket. Some people like to fill several, which gives them more chances to get it right.

And then there are the "do the New York Times crossword puzzle in ink" types who fill out only one bracket.

I've never finished a New York Times crossword puzzle, and I use a pencil. So I think I'll fill out three brackets and wish for the best.

At one time I thought Oklahoma was the best team in the country. Then I thought it was North Carolina, then Kansas.

If I had to pick an eventual champion I guess I might go with the team that I think is really playing their best right now... Virginia.

But don't listen to me – I picked the Carolina Panthers to win the Super Bowl.

## A sporting view By Mark Vasto

### The sound of crickets

Cricket is a sport that Americans, in general, do not ever play. But here's what we do know: We know that the game exists. We know that India, Britain and Australia play the game often. We know that it requires hitting a ball with a stick, and history has shown that we're

very good at hitting things. It's not like it's bobsledding, a sport we perennially suck at. This is something we can actually do. It is for just those reasons that I submit the challenge.

I looked into the rules of how the game is played, and I stand here before you none the wiser.

I haven't a clue as to the subtle nuances of the game. I know that you can hit the baseball-sized ball with a flattened side of a willow wood bat out of the park and it's worth 6 runs. A ground rule double is apparently worth 4 runs. There are 10 outs per inning, there are 11 players on defense and each game lasts about 5 days.

And people complain that baseball is too slow?

The game has other rules.

There's one rule that states if a red ball is used, no team can wear colorful uniforms. They have to wear white or off-white uniforms. I don't see this as an obstacle. I'm sure that Under Armour can come up with something that fits the bill.

Naturally, there will be naysayers. Americans barely support outdoor or, for that matter, indoor lacrosse. How can we just pick up another sport when the WNBA still needs our support? The answer is easy, my friends: Gary Sheffield.

Admittedly, I have not run this idea past Mr. Sheffield.

This is partially because I fear him a great deal. That being said, who out there among us can deny the fact that Gary Sheffield will destroy the ball in cricket? Send Sheffield, Derek Jeter (because you have to send Derek Jeter, if only to make nice with the international press) and all manner of ex-baseball players to play the game. I think Curt Schilling would make an excellent bowler (pitcher, in baseball vernacular) along with John Smoltz. I bet Jorge Posada and Bernie Williams would

See SPORTS, Page 8



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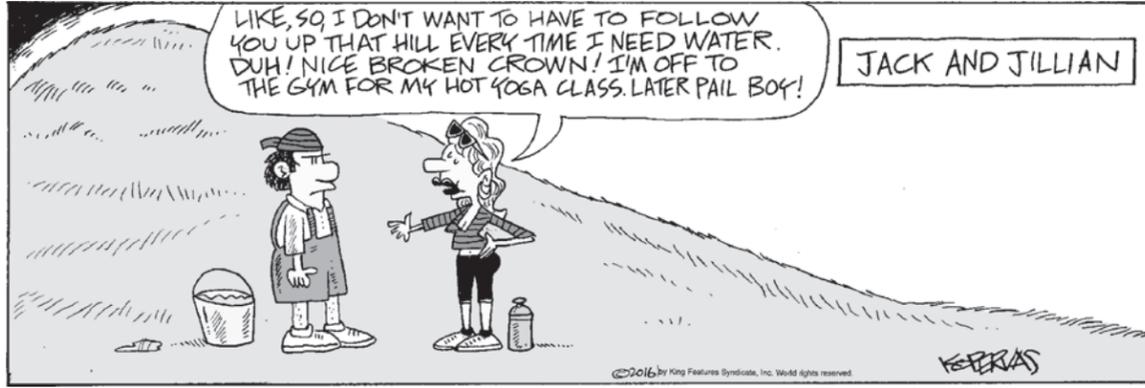
# Comix

# Your good health

By Keith Roach, M.D.

## OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



## AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



## THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



## R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am 61 years old, and was anxious to get a shingles vaccine shot. I was upset to learn that, because I am allergic to neomycin, an ingredient in the vaccine, I cannot get vaccinated. I have talked to my doctor and a pharmacist about options, but they don't know of any. Do you know of anything I could use to protect myself against shingles? – B.G.P.

offers it, but I cannot afford the cost, as my insurance does not cover it. Do you know of a place where I can get the vaccine at a little or no cost? – M.B.

It is frustrating that a recommended and potentially cost-saving measure like a vaccine costs so much out of pocket. However, the drug company (Merck) does have a rebate program that covers much of the cost for people with insurance that does not cover the shot. You can find out more at [www.rebate4zostavax.com](http://www.rebate4zostavax.com) or at 1-888-ZOSTA-INFO. You have to pay for the vaccine, then get your rebate.

Shingles questions are among the most frequently asked by readers. The booklet on the shingles virus answers many of them. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Donohue – No. 1201W, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. 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.

If it's a severe (the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says "life-threatening") reaction to neomycin, then you cannot get the vaccine. There is no other way to reliably prevent getting shingles. Keeping your immune system healthy (good diet, regular exercise, good sleep) may help. However, the most important thing for you and others who haven't been vaccinated will be to recognize shingles early and get treated immediately. Being treated early, preferably within 24 hours of the rash, can reduce the duration of symptoms.

Shingles usually starts with pain, burning or itching on one side of the body in a particular location, called a dermatome. This might be a band around the torso, the top of the arm or part of the face. The classic description of the rash is a clear, fluid-filled blister on reddened skin ("dewdrop on a rose petal"), but it does not always look so classic. See your doctor immediately after any painful rash shows up in a single area of the body.

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I had chickenpox as a child. I am 60 years old and was shocked to find out that the shingles vaccine costs \$249 here. My doctor

I have had allergies for the past 50 years. Every morning, my nose runs for approximately 15-30 minutes. I can't take antihistamines due to heart issues. Any suggestions? – E.A.K.

Most people with heart and blood pressure issues who are warned about allergy medicines are warned about decongestants, not antihistamines. It may be safe for you to take an antihistamine, so you should ask your internist

See HEALTH, Page 8

# Super Crossword

### MIXED VEGETABLES

- ACROSS**
- 1 Reinforcing shoe tip
  - 7 Brand of prescription painkiller
  - 13 Toss out
  - 20 Southern African land
  - 21 Give in
  - 22 Big markets
  - 23 Many an earthen plant holder
  - 25 Vegetable mixed inside 110-Across
  - 26 Dog biscuit, to a dog
  - 27 Bit in a stew
  - 28 Canon \_ Rebel
  - 29 Bakery item
  - 30 \_ Paese (cheese)
  - 31 Mall with wholesale goods
  - 34 Speakers of Celtic
  - 36 Put\_ (ruses)
  - 37 "\_ a woman?": Sojourner Truth
  - 38 Knife cut
  - 39 Writer Oz
  - 43 Diplomacy
  - 45 Food store worker
  - 49 Vegetable mixed inside 72-Across
  - 52 Ranks
  - 54 Gorbachev's wife
  - 55 Not sleeping
  - 56 Fills untidily
  - 57 Vegetable mixed inside 23-Across and

- 84-Across
- 58 Vegetable mixed inside 97-Across
- 60 It's charged
- 61 Like slightly spoiled meat
- 62 "Ta-ta"
- 63 Pack-toting beast
- 64 Dell products
- 65 Vast span
- 66 DOJ arm
- 69 Swinging ditty
- 71 Toby brew
- 72 Rapid weight-loss option
- 75 Vegetable mixed inside 23-Across
- 78 University in Silicon Valley
- 80 Moray lurer
- 81 Eye-tricking paintings
- 82 Lobbies for
- 83 Vegetable mixed inside 45-Across
- 84 Impact depression near Flagstaff
- 86 Jedi sage
- 87 Begged
- 88 Corn units
- 89 1950s Ford
- 92 Vacation site
- 95 In a strange way
- 97 Affect one's emotions
- 101 Spinks foe
- 104 Dijon "yes"
- 105 Sauna sound
- 106 Part of GPS: Abbr.

- 107 Made known
  - 108 Vegetable mixed inside 31-Across
  - 110 Surfs while watching TV
  - 113 Intertangles
  - 114 Langston Hughes memoir, with "The"
  - 115 Probes into
  - 116 TV satirist
  - 117 Party split
  - 118 Double boxing punch
- DOWN**
- 1 Bit of skin art
  - 2 Minimal lead in baseball
  - 3 Some herons
  - 4 \_ reef
  - 5 Get \_ start (be tardy)
  - 6 D.C. donor
  - 7 Kind of sail
  - 8 Circle eighth
  - 9 Brand of cable modem
  - 10 Plains shelter
  - 11 "When is \_ not..."
  - 12 Reno stakes
  - 13 Loses hope
  - 14 Irreverence
  - 15 Pitcher's talk
  - 16 Dupe
  - 17 Qatari, e.g.
  - 18 Paddy plant
  - 19 Writer Roald
  - 24 In the work

- already mentioned: Abbr.
- 32 Dash device
  - 33 Snug
  - 34 Dells
  - 35 Periodic pay
  - 38 Contempt
  - 40 Israel's Golda
  - 41 "In that area"
  - 42 Three-hand card game
  - 43 "Kon-\_"
  - 44 "Just \_!"
  - 46 Tendency to keep silent
  - 47 Nondairy spreads
  - 48 Overpack
  - 49 Broccoli \_
  - 50 Cockeyed
  - 51 Calendar info
  - 52 Lodge group
  - 53 Feed lines to
  - 56 Amount paid
  - 57 See 67-Down
  - 59 Ring of virtue
  - 61 Urge on
  - 64 Braid
  - 65 Isn't right
  - 66 Folder filler
  - 67 With 57-Down, some tavern trash
  - 68 Response to "Nice job!"
  - 69 Texas city
  - 70 "I gotta hand \_ ya..."
  - 71 Chart book
  - 72 Bivouac bed
  - 73 Take note of

- 74 Oscar \_ Renta
- 75 Pageantry
- 76 German car
- 77 British art gallery
- 78 Apology word
- 79 One axing
- 82 Most flaky
- 83 RC, say
- 85 One losing weight
- 86 "You've gotta be kidding!"
- 90 Puts down, to a rapper
- 91 Overhead stadium recorder
- 92 Most irritated
- 93 Future D.A.'s major
- 94 Builds on
- 96 "Irma la \_"
- 97 \_ law (old Germanic legal code)
- 98 Femur locale
- 99 "Emperor of the Air" author Ethan
- 100 Doorway joint
- 101 British actor Guinness
- 102 Jay of TV
- 103 "\_ never fly!"
- 105 Fliers' mil. posts
- 109 Key near Q
- 111 23rd Greek letter
- 112 Bustle

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|     |     |     |   |    |    |    |    | 69 | 70 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 73 | 74 |    |
| 75  | 76  | 77  |   |    |    |    |    | 78 |    |    |    | 79 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 80 |    |    |
| 81  |     |     |   |    |    |    |    | 82 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 83 |    |    |
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**Moore Texas** by Roger Moore April 14, 1847:  
Gen. Winfield Scott whips Santa Anna at Sierra Gorda and "captures" his wooden leg just for kicks.



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

*Q: I am receiving Social Security retirement benefits and I recently went back to work. Do I have to pay Social Security (FICA) taxes on my income?*

**A:** Yes. By law, your employer must withhold FICA taxes from your paycheck. Although you are retired, you do receive credit for those new earnings. Each year Social Security automatically credits the new earnings and, if your new earnings are higher than in any earlier year used to calculate your current benefit, your monthly benefit could increase. For more information, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

*Q: I am expecting a child and will be out of work for six months. Can I qualify for short-term disability?*

**A:** No. Social Security pays only for total disability – conditions that render you unable to work and are expected to last for at least a year or end in death. No benefits are payable for partial disability or short-term disability, including benefits while on maternity leave. If you think your short-term disability might develop into a long-term one, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityssi/apply.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityssi/apply.html) for more information.

*Q: How do I earn Social Security credits, and how many do I need to qualify for benefits?*

**A:** We use your total yearly earnings to figure your Social Security credits. The amount needed for a credit in 2015 is \$1,220. You can earn a maximum of four credits for any year. The amount needed to earn one credit increases automatically each year when average wages increase. You must earn a certain number of credits to qualify for Social Security benefits. The number of credits you need depends on your age when you apply and the type of benefit application. No one needs more than 40 credits for any Social Security benefit. For more information, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

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.

**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.

|    |   |    |   |    |    |
|----|---|----|---|----|----|
|    | x |    | - |    | 23 |
| -  |   | x  |   | ÷  |    |
|    | x |    | - |    | 26 |
| x  |   | -  |   | +  |    |
|    | x |    | - |    | 23 |
| 25 |   | 30 |   | 16 |    |

**DIFFICULTY: ★**

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

Answer Page 4

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**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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

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: K equals I

XNVLBWN K FMT'H ELUN NTMBYE

RMTNS HM XBS RS OLUMJKHN

TBHW, K YBNWW K'R

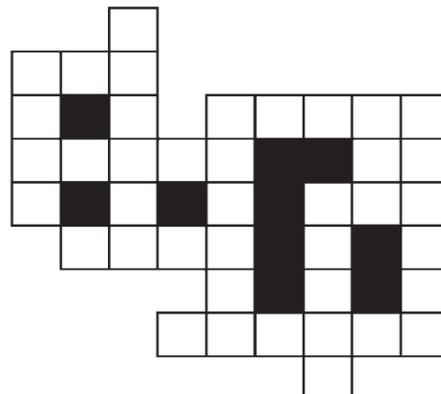
WHJLCCNF OMJ VLWENIW.

Answer Page 4

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**FEAR KNOT**  
By: rj johnson  
DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

- ETY
- HETCAD
- HOLST
- ♥ ISRA
- ♥ CASNET
- YST
- HANT
- ♥ SARTO
- ♥ AET
- ♥ CRENAT
- ♥ RAYST
- ERYA



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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**Sports**

From Page 6

sign on. Ichiro would be a no-brainer, and for laughs we can ask Lou Piniella to coach the team. Surely he will appreciate the pace of each 30-hour game.

Look... President John F. Kennedy issued the challenge that we put a man on the moon, not because it was easy but because it was hard, and that was in the 1960s. President George W. Bush challenged us to go to Mars, and as far as he's concerned, Matt Damon fulfilled his mission. But I'm talking cricket, America. This is something we can actually do, that will never be considered a hoax or ever require the approval of Ben Affleck.

Cricket, America. It's time.

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in New Jersey. (c) 2016 King Features Synd., Inc.

**Health**

From Page 7

or cardiologist. I also have had good results using an antihistamine nasal spray such as levocabastine in people who can't tolerate antihistamines by mouth.

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](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu). To view and order health pamphlets, visit [www.rbmamall.com](http://www.rbmamall.com), or write to Good Health, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2016 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.