



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Scam

The Acting Inspector General of Social Security, Gale Stallworth Stone, is warning citizens about a suspicious email “phishing” scheme that recently surfaced. The Office of the Inspector General received reports that several hundred employees of a private company, with offices across the country, recently received an email message that appears to be from the Social Security Administration. The message alerts the recipient of “unusual” activity with his or her Social Security number. The email subject line reads, “Review Your Social Security Activity”, and while the email sender displayed is “Social Security Administration,” the corresponding email address is ceriley@centurytel.net. The message includes a PDF attachment with the heading “Notification.” It advises the recipient, “We detected something unusual about a recent use of your SSN” and “to help keep you safe, we required an extra security challenge.” The message states that if the recipient did not recently use his or her SSN, then a “malicious user” might have misused the recipient’s number. It asks the recipient to review recent activity via an embedded link, which links to a suspicious SSA-like site. Further, to appear legitimate, the notice includes SSA’s official seal and the words “Social Security Administrator, United States Of America” in the signature. This type of phishing scheme could lead to identity theft of Social Security benefit theft. Therefore, Acting Inspector General Stone urges all citizens to be extremely cautious when receiving requests to provide personal information over the internet or the telephone.

— Andrew Cannarsa

### Fresh air

Did you know that the U.S. Geologic Survey, the government agency that focuses on the country’s natural resources, offers seniors aged 62 and older a lifetime pass to more than 2,000 outdoor recreation facilities throughout the U.S. for just \$10.00? The Association of Mature American Citizens suggests you fire up your computer and visit <http://store.usgs.gov/pass/senior.html#benefits> to discover how you can plan an

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*It is better to become bent with hard work than to become crooked without it.*

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

**OUT OF DATE** – Residents still rely on metal storage tanks for water for their daily use – like the two water tanks above – in the Hillcrest Estates and Hillcrest Center subdivisions in far east El Paso County.

## Grant sought for colonias’ water services

By Alfredo Vasquez  
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Residents of the Hillcrest Estates and Hillcrest Center subdivisions near Montana Ave. and Zaragoza Rd. in far east El Paso County are hopeful that water services for their homes and businesses will become a reality soon.

The renewed optimism was revived after El Paso County Commissioners Court recently directed the public works

department to apply for an \$8.8 million federal grant that would provide water services to about 300 colonia households in that area. The grant is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development (RD).

Colonias are unregulated settlements that emerged with the advent of informal housing. They are considered semi-rural subdivisions of substandard housing lacking basic physical infrastructure, potable water, sanitary sewage, and adequate roads.

Hillcrest Estates and Hillcrest Center

residents, who currently haul their water and use septic tanks, have been waiting patiently more than 50 years for government officials to help their neighborhoods get access to basic water services.

Both colonias were established in the late 1950s. At that time the individuals that subdivided the land and sold vacant lots did not install the water system infrastructure that is now required of all land developments within the county,

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## Fire department rating will save residents money

*Horizon Fire Department earns prestigious classification*

By Ron Larson  
Special to the Courier

HORIZON CITY – El Paso County Emergency Services District #1 (EPCESD#1) – the Horizon Fire Department – has earned an ISO (Insurance Services Office) classification of 2 effective November 1, 2016. ISO sets Public Protection Classification (PPC) to all fire departments. Insurance companies use this information to set the fire portion of the insurance rates for homeowners.

The district’s previous rating was a ISO 5/9 depending on how far a property was from the station, if there were fire hydrants in the area, and if so how far apart they were.

What the new classification means to homeowners is approximately a 35% savings on the fire portion of homeowner’s insurance rates beginning in October. The homeowner must inform



— Photo courtesy Horizon Fire Department

**PREPARED** – In 2015 EPCESD#1 finished a 24,800 square-foot, two-story complex that includes sleeping quarters, a kitchen with dining areas, training facilities, eight offices, a TV room, weight room, central heating and cooling system, and garage bays that adequately accommodate the station’s fire trucks, equipment, and accessories. This allows the station to be staffed and ready to roll out around the clock.

their insurance agent or company of the new rating in order to take advantage of these savings.

To achieve the ISO 2 classification EPCESD#1 had to provide information

the district’s equipment and purpose, firefighter training, number of calls/dispatches, water supplies and response

See RATING, Page 6

## PUBLIC NOTICE – VILLAGE OF VINTON, TX Notice of a Finding of No Significant Impact

The USDA, Rural Utilities Service has received an application for financial assistance from the Village of Vinton. The proposal consists of installation of a looped water system with wholesale supply of treated potable water provided through a purchase agreement with the El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU). The total project will be broken down into three phases. This project is Phase I and will serve customers south of Vinton Road.

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act and agency regulations, the Rural Utilities Service has prepared an Environmental Assessment that evaluated the potential environmental effects and consequences of the proposal. The Environmental Assessment was published on May 12, 2016, for a 30-day public comment period. No comments were received. Upon consideration of the applicant's proposal, federal and state environmental regulatory and natural resource agencies, and public input; the agency has determined that the proposal will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

In order to avoid or minimize any adverse environmental impacts, the Rural Utilities Service will require the applicant to incorporate the following mitigation measures into the proposal's design: If cultural materials or human remains are encountered during construction, work must cease in the immediate area; work can continue in the project area where no cultural materials are present. In the discovery area, work must cease, and the contractor must notify the consultant engineer, Village of Vinton, and both the State Historical Preservation Officer at (512) 463-6100 and the USDA Rural Development State Environmental Coordinator at (254) 742-9789. The alternatives considered to the proposal include using wells within the Village of Vinton.

Copies of the Environmental Assessment are available for review at Rural Development, 2306 W. Dickinson Blvd. Ste. 2, Fort Stockton, Texas 79735. For further information contact USDA Rural Development at 432-360-1298.

A general location map of the proposal is shown below.



## Finances By Nathaniel Sillin

# Choosing the right project for your home renovation

Before the housing market collapse of 2007, all renovation projects – no matter how expensive – seemed like winners. Today, home renovation is a whole new ballgame and why you should carefully research any potential fix-up project you're planning for your home.

For the past 14 years, Remodeling magazine's annual Remodeling 2016 Cost vs. Value Report (<http://www.remodeling.hw.net/cost-vs-value/2016/>) has tracked cost recoupment on renovation projects nationwide and by region, as local tastes are important. Based on trends from transactions tracked in 2015, several guidelines emerged:

- **Aim to cover your costs.** Pre-housing crash, people were investing heavily in their homes and seeing returns greater than 100 percent on their spending. In 2016, the cost and return at resale for the projects listed in the report averaged 64.4 percent for a home sold within a year of the upgrades. Making a profit on a renovation isn't guaranteed, so aim instead to tackle projects

that will allow you to recover your costs at the highest possible level.

- **Smaller projects focusing on essentials can provide better returns.** A decade ago, it was an upscale outdoor deck or a gourmet kitchen. These days, new doors, which can cost under \$500 to replace and install, are one of the most popular projects. A high quality fiberglass entry door replacement can recoup an average 82.3 percent of costs; a garage door replacement can return over 90 percent.

- **Upgrade rooms and spaces, but keep it modest.** A minor kitchen remodel including upgraded cabinet fronts, new hardware and the addition of one or two energy-efficient appliances averaged a return of more than 83 percent of original cost compared to the 65 percent for the gut jobs.

After assessing the national and regional averages, you'll need to evaluate your personal situation, local home market and

See FINANCES, Page 5

## NEW HOUSES

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# \$69,000

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**43**  
YEARS  
2016

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SERVING ANTHONY, VINTON, CANUTILLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINE, FARENS, SAN ELIZABO AND TORNILEO

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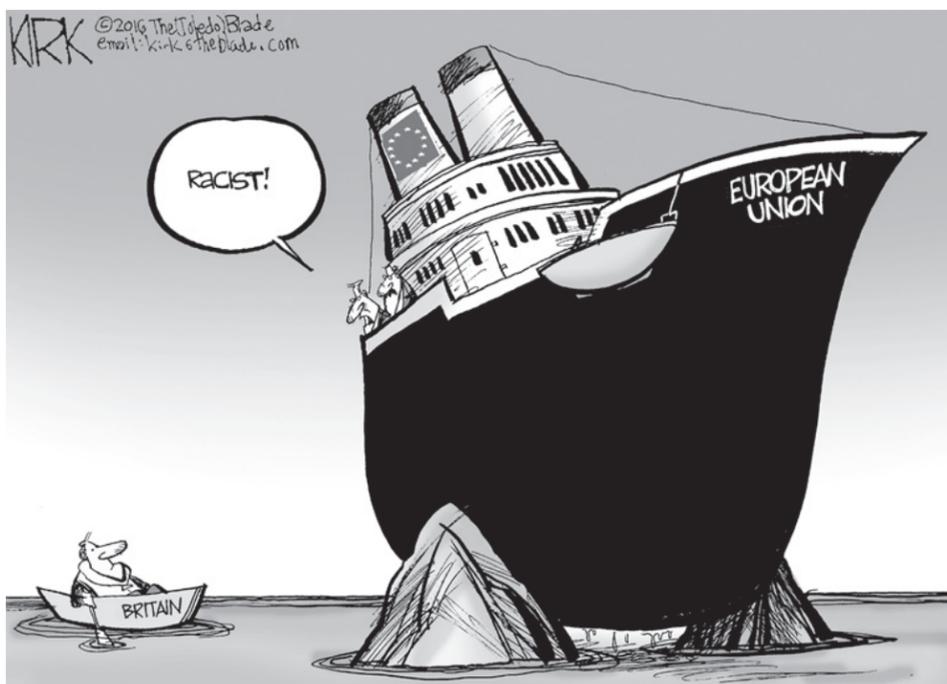
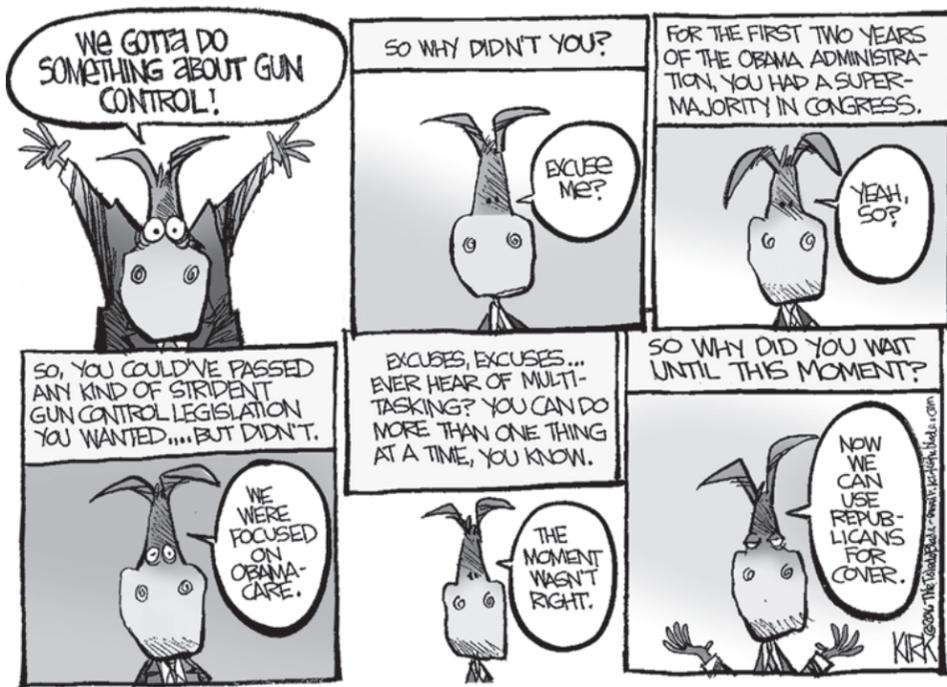
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**View from here** By John Grimaldi

# New effort to make lifesaving drugs affordable and available

A newly proposed bill would make it easier for generic drug makers to produce affordable, lifesaving pharmaceuticals. And, the Association of Mature American Citizens is urging swift passage for the bi-partisan measure.

Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Mike Lee (R-UT) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) introduced the bill in June. The measure would make it harder for big pharmaceutical companies to use so-called safety rules to prevent low-cost generic versions of their products from coming to market.

“Balancing the cost of developing lifesaving medications with the need to make available affordable prescription drugs to consumers has always been a difficult task. Unfortunately, we’re seeing some brand-name drug companies engage in anti-competitive tactics that delay entry of lower cost generic drugs into the market. This bill takes important steps to ensure that our laws are not frustrated and consumers have access to less expensive generic drugs in a timely fashion,” according to Grassley.

Dan Weber, AMAC president, said there have been numerous complaints that the major drug companies use the FDA’s safety rules to frustrate generic producers from putting cheaper versions of prescription drugs on the market.

“AMAC does not want to see our members’ medical bills, specifically drug costs, go up a penny. So, there’s a lot of concern. You’re looking at an older population, who suffer from chronic conditions who are high utilizers of medications. The federal government has to work in concert with drug organizations to make sure they come up with a fair and equitable solution, but they should not do it on the backs of senior citizens.”

The independent consulting firm, Matrix Global Advisors, estimates that improper use of the FDA’s Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies to keep generic drugs off the market for as long as possible comes with a price tag of some \$5.4 billion.

Chip Davis, president of the Generic Pharmaceuticals Association, said that “it is worth noting and recognizing recent efforts by representatives in the branded industry to highlight the valuable role generic medicines play in driving healthcare system savings. Continued use of these anticompetitive practices by certain manufacturers drives the exact opposite outcome.”

According to Davis generic drugs were responsible for \$254 billion in health system savings in 2014, bringing the total savings over the last 10 years to \$1.68 trillion.

The bill’s co-sponsor Senator Leahy noted that “pharmaceutical companies should be compensated for their important work developing life-saving treatments, but predatory practices at the expense of consumers are unacceptable. Drug affordability is a bipartisan issue that affects each and every one of us.”

*The Association of Mature American Citizens (<http://www.amac.us>) is a senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. We act and speak on their behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today.*

**Veterans Post** By Freddy Groves

## Operation Gratitude

Operation Gratitude needs our help. Carolyn Blashek, founder of OpGrat, recently sent out a request for funds to ship 3,272 more care packages to troops currently deployed in dangerous areas.

It costs \$15 to send one box, so you can do the math. It needs a lot of dollars.

Since its founding in 2003, Operation Gratitude has sent 1.5 million care packages to our active-duty men and women who are deployed overseas. Donations of items for the boxes are given by large corporations and small companies, individuals and groups.

The boxes always contain excellent treats valued at nearly \$100, and might include videos, flash drives, candy, books, toiletries, games and more. Each one contains letters from home. Sometimes there might be a key to a brand-new vehicle that will be waiting when the soldier, sailor, airman or Marine gets home. Additionally, OpGrat now sends packages to first responders, wounded heroes, new recruits and more.

But the postage... that’s the big problem. There are no government handouts, no discounts from the Post Office. It’s all on us to help with that.

OpGrat always does a big push at the holidays, and the goal this year is to send out 250,000 packages as they close in on the 2 million mark.

If you can help out with the cost of mailing a couple of boxes, or even just a few dollars, send a check to:

Operation Gratitude  
PO Box 260257  
Encino, CA 91426-0257

Or visit [www.operationgratitude.com](http://www.operationgratitude.com) for ways to donate online. Your donation is tax deductible. If you like to check out things out in advance (good for you, if you do), go online to [CharityNavigator.com](http://CharityNavigator.com) and hunt for Operation Gratitude. You’ll see it has a solid four-star rating with a 100-percent accountability and transparency score.



## Finances

From Page 2

the type of homes that are selling in your neighborhood. Let's start with the questions you need to ask yourself:

- **What kinds of improvements make sense for my neighborhood?** Generally, exterior renovations that complement nearby homes have greater value, so consider how your new exterior might fit in with other houses on the street. As far as interior renovations, keep your spending in line with your future sale price. For example, a \$100,000 kitchen in a home that might not sell for more than \$300,000 would probably be a wasted investment – but a kitchen update worth \$10,000 or less might help your house move quicker once it's listed for sale.

- **How long will I stay post-renovation?** Remember, the latest Remodeling magazine numbers cover only one year of cost recovery on projects. People renovate for a variety of needs, either to make the home more livable or to make it more salable. The longer you stay, the more you'll get out of the investment – but if you have to sell soon, think carefully about what you'll need to spend to attract a buyer.

- **Will this send my property taxes through the roof?** Renovation projects that create larger homes can risk higher property taxes. You should think through potential property tax impact not only for yourself but also for your future buyer. Consider checking with your local residential taxing body to determine “before and after” property tax rates for renovated properties in your vicinity. Sometimes this information might be available on their websites. If you know a real estate broker with significant knowledge of your immediate neighborhood, you might consider speaking with them

about this issue.

Consider consulting experts to help you answer the basic questions you'll have as you make this decision. Start with trusted financial professionals who can offer a second opinion on what you're planning to do, how much you want to spend, and what particular tax issues

may arise when it's time to sell. If you need to borrow to renovate, that means it's time to make sure your credit reports (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>) are accurate and you are pre-qualified or pre-approved for your loan based on what is required.

In short, do your homework

before you renovate your home.

**Bottom line:** In 2016, home renovation is far from a home run. Know how long you're planning to stay in the home before you start and make sure the project you choose makes sense for your local marketplace or you won't get your money back.

*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.*

## San Elizario Independent District SPECIAL EDUCATION/CHILD FIND

The San Elizario Independent School District provides services for children who are eligible for special education. Eligible special education students will be afforded a free, appropriate public education beginning on their third birthday and continuing through their 21st year. Children who are identified as auditorially impaired, visually impaired or deaf-blind may be served from birth through 21 years of age. The San Elizario Independent School District provides special education and related services to students residing within the District boundaries. A student with a disability must meet eligibility guidelines in one or more areas including physical disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, learning disability, autism, speech impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual or auditory impairment. This impairment must significantly affect the student's ability to progress adequately without support services.

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options including referral for special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all students. At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 45 school days of the date the district received the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent. If the District determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of their rights if they disagree with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards-Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities.

For more information, contact the Director of Special Education, Amanda G. Sanchez-Munoz, (915) 872-3926 at 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd, San Elizario, TX 79849. Mailing address: PO Box 920, San Elizario, TX 79849.

## Educación Especial / Programa De Identificación De Niños (Child Find)

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de San Elizario provee servicios a los niños que califican para recibir educación especial. Los estudiantes que califiquen recibirán una educación pública gratuita y adecuada comenzando con su tercer cumpleaños hasta el fin de su vigésimo-primer año (21). Los niños que son identificados con problemas auditivos, visuales, sordos o ciegos pueden ser atendidos desde su nacimiento hasta los veintiún años de edad. El Distrito Escolar Independiente de San Elizario provee servicios de educación especial y otros servicios relacionados a los estudiantes que vivan dentro de los límites del distrito. Un estudiante con una discapacidad debe cumplir con las guías que reúnen los requisitos en una o más áreas incluyendo: discapacidades físicas, discapacidad intelectual, alteraciones emocionales, discapacidad de aprendizaje, autismo, discapacidad del habla, daño cerebral por trauma, o discapacidad visual o auditiva. Esta discapacidad debe afectar significativamente la habilidad del estudiante para progresar adecuadamente sin asistencia.

Si un alumno está teniendo dificultades en su aprendizaje, los padres pueden contactar a la persona encargada (ver información al final) para que les informe acerca del programa general de derivación (referral) del distrito o sistema de detección para servicios de asistencia. Este sistema enlaza a los estudiantes con una gran variedad de opciones de apoyo que incluyen la derivación para que se le practique una evaluación de educación especial. Los estudiantes que estén teniendo dificultades en un aula regular deber ser considerados para recibir tutoría, planes de compensación educativa y otros servicios de apoyo que estén disponibles para todos los estudiantes. Los padres tienen derecho, en cualquier momento, de pedir una evaluación para recibir servicios de educación especial. El distrito debe decidir, dentro de un plazo razonable, si dicha evaluación es necesaria. En caso afirmativo, el padre será notificado y se le pedirá permiso para realizar la evaluación. El distrito debe llevar a cabo la evaluación y el reporte sobre los resultados dentro de 45 días escuela a partir de la fecha en que el distrito recibió el permiso del padre por escrito. El distrito debe proporcionar una copia del reporte al padre. Si el distrito determina que la evaluación no es necesaria, debe proporcionar por escrito una notificación que explique el por qué. Esta notificación por escrito debe incluir una declaración que informe al padre sobre sus derechos si es que no está de acuerdo con la decisión del distrito. Además, la notificación debe informar al padre cómo obtener una copia del Aviso sobre Garantías Procesales-Derechos de los Padres de Alumnos con Discapacidades.

Para mayores informes, favor de contactar el departamento de Educación Especial, Amanda G. Sanchez-Munoz, (915) 872-3926 at 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd, San Elizario, TX 79849. Mailing address: PO Box 920, San Elizario, TX 79849.

## Briefs

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exciting out of doors holiday anytime it's convenient. For example, go paddling on the Little Calumet River Water Trail in Porter, Indiana or visit Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park in Key Biscayne where you can go sunbathing, swimming, picnicking, camping, hiking and kayaking. AMAC notes that senior pass holders get a lifetime of free access to locations such as these throughout the U.S. along with on-site discounts at campgrounds and other on-site facilities.

– John Grimaldi

# Durant-Golden State pairing may not be a slam dunk

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

One of the loudest cries coming out of Washington D.C. these days is the complaint that the rich in this country just continue to get richer.

Of course most of the politicians doing the crying are filthy rich themselves but part of the fun of being a politician is convincing the electorate otherwise.

The same can be said about super-sized corporations around the world that buy out all the competition and transform themselves into behemoths that can go on and monopolize the industry.

As we've seen recently, the same thing can happen in the world of sports.

The newest member of the "rich-get-richer" regime are the Golden State Warriors.

When they had a 3-1 lead in the recent NBA finals, the Warriors were being talked about as not just the best team of 2016, but as one of the best teams in NBA history.

And though they went on to lose three

in a row to the Cavs, the Warriors were already been touted as the favorite to win it all next year.

In other words, though they failed in their attempt to win their second straight NBA title, Golden State was still considered the best team in the world.

So what did the best team on the planet go out and do? It signed one of the best players the world has ever seen – Kevin Durant.

The rich get richer.

And one universal truth about the rich who get richer – they are soon universally despised.

The Warriors set the regular season wins record a year ago. Can you imagine what they'll be expected to do next year?

Every team and fan base in the league will have big red circles on their calendars reminding them of when the Warriors come to their town.

This is the Beatles or Elvis or Beyonce coming to town. This is the 1927 Yankees and the 1985 Bears.

Only, in this instance, nobody will love them. They are going to be the team that everyone will love to hate.

This does present one problem for the Warriors, though.

The bad news is that as far as I know, the league is still only going to allow one ball on the court at a time. Which could be problematic for a team loaded with players who love to shoot the ball at will.

How is this experiment going to work? Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson averaged 30 and 22 points per game respectively last season. Are they going to be willing to give up a ton of their shots to the new guy? Durant averaged 28 by the way.

Is Curry, the two-time MVP of the league, going to be willing to play second fiddle on the team that he built?

This is not like a mediocre team bringing in a superstar where all the players willingly give him the ball, get out of the way and say, "Carry us to the next level."

The Golden State Warriors are already at the next level.

And Kevin Durant can't win either way the team goes. If the Warriors fail to win a championship it'll be because

Durant changed the chemistry that was in place.

And if the Warriors win a title in 2017, there will be those who will taint Durant's first championship by claiming that he couldn't lead a franchise to a title so he went out and joined one.

And there is some validity to that.

How many of you can imagine Larry Bird joining the Lakers because he wanted an easy championship. Or Magic Johnson leaving to join Michael Jordan and the Bulls to fill his closet with championship trophies.

The fact that Durant is joining the team that just beat him in the playoffs – and the fact that Durant's mediocre play was one of the main reasons they lost – must be driving OKC fans nuts.

The consensus is that this is not good for the NBA. There are now realistically maybe three teams – Golden State, Cleveland and San Antonio – who have a legitimate shot at the title.

That means there will be 27 teams floating around in mediocrity.

Another result of the rich getting richer – the poor get poorer.

## A sporting view By Mark Vasto

### The new villains

I think I remember a time when letting your little kid win was the correct and right thing to do. Now, thanks to PlayStation and Xbox, it is pretty much impossible to beat them.

Over the holidays my nephew showed me his new game, NBA whatever. "Cool," I thought. Well... it was more than just cool. It was a "mind-bending" experience. I'm not going to date myself, but Blip was our Game Boy, and our basketball game was decided by the guy who could hit the most unmissable corner threes. His game was better than anything I'd ever seen.

"Let's play!" he says. "Sure,"

says me.

"What team do you want to be?"

Without hesitating, I say the Knicks – my least favorite, favorite team. (He usually picks the Philadelphia teams, so I always begin a video game with the better team.) After messing around with the uniform selection for, oh, about 20 minutes, he picks his team.

"I pick Michael Jordan, LeBron James, Kareem, Bird and Tim Duncan," he replies, before handing me a controller with 20 different knobs, levers and buttons. "Good luck!"

So the little runt, formerly

known as my great little nephew, proceeds to trounce me. Every once in a while, I get Carmelo Anthony to drive to the hoop uncontested, but it ends up as a travel because I have no earthly idea how to make him let go of the ball.

"Wanna play again?"

Fact is, I can't blame him. On long plane flights I like to play MLB Manager, and I always cheat by choosing the team with the first draft pick and trade until I have an outfield consisting of Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle and Babe Ruth (Ted Williams at DH), and a starting rotation of Feller, Koufax, Walter Johnson, Cy Young and Greg Maddux. I get upset when we don't win 140 regular season games.

But sometimes my team gets swept by the St. Louis Browns in the World Series. It happens.

Herb Brooks used to say that "all-star teams don't work." This observation, while mostly true, has been disproven by the NBA Olympic "Dream Team" concept, but we get the point, and besides, it's different when it comes to individual leagues. Every year, the New York Yankees field an All-Star team on paper, and they don't (usually) win.

Then there's the curious case of Kevin Durant. Fans in Oklahoma City are inconsolable – they've lost the face of their franchise ... the only superstar they've known since their inception. Where is he going? He's going to join Steph Curry, Klay Thompson and Draymond Green, to form

what will be, in all likelihood, the greatest team of all-time.

We've seen this before (Miami Heat), and you know, they probably won't win every game. My only question is, how come Oakland has all this money? What is wrong with the Knicks?

My advice to Oklahoma City and all the other franchises struggling to keep pace is to look at this another way: You didn't lose a player, the entire league found a new villain.

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

## Rating

From Page 1

times for emergencies in the District. Points are issued for the number and types of fire engines the department has and the water capacity available. The ISO asks questions like:

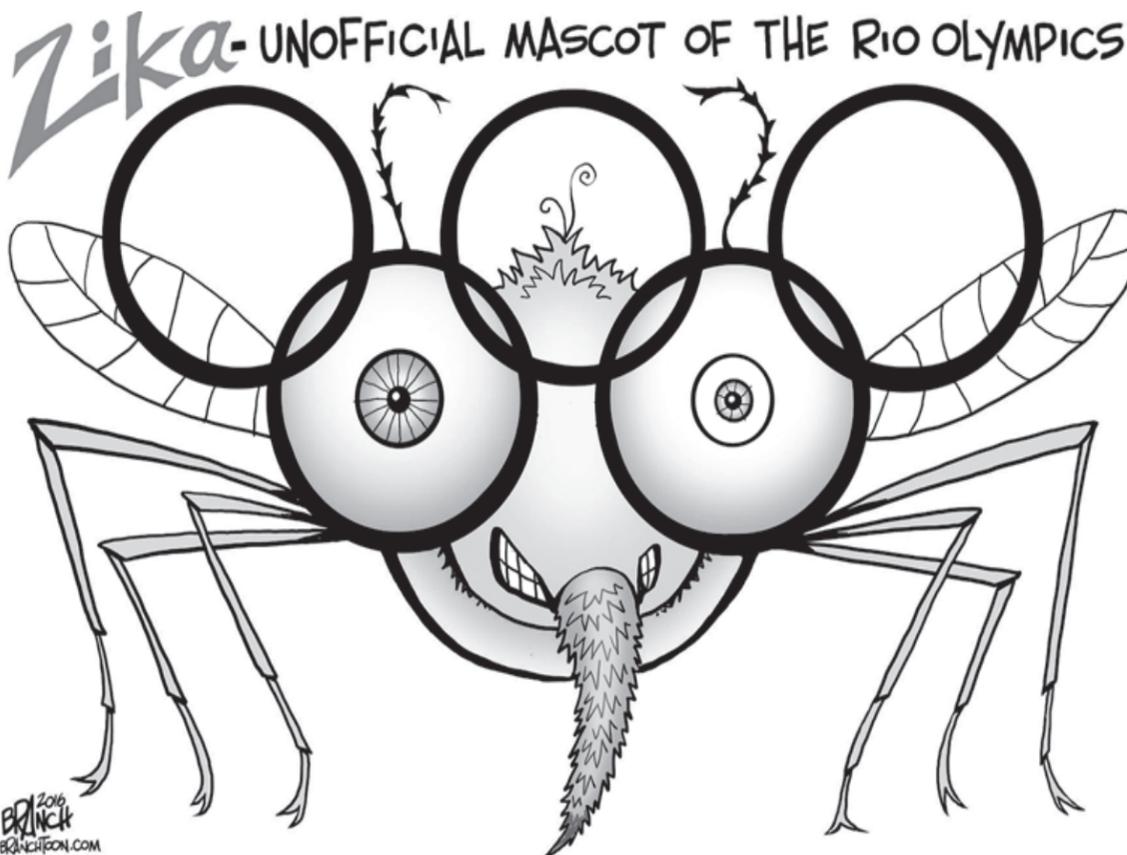
- Do they have a ladder truck;
- What type of communications and dispatching are being used; and
- What type of computer reporting do they use.

The ISO classification also includes the local water utility as a large part of the final grade. David Muñoz and Charlie McGinnis from Horizon Regional Municipal Utility District provided invaluable assistance in obtaining the information requested by the ISO.

The classification is fairly prestigious. Out of 48,885 departments rated nationwide, 97 (including El Paso Fire and Las Cruces Fire) are an ISO 1. 917 nationwide are an ISO 2. This rating places the Horizon Fire Department in the top 3.1% of departments nationwide. Texas beats national averages with 26 departments rated ISO 1 and 201 as ISO 2. EPCESD#1 ranks in the top 8.5% statewide.

The Horizon Fire Department also has a stipend program that enables the department to staff a fire truck with trained fire and EMS personnel 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. What this means to the homeowners and citizens of Horizon City is that they can rest easy knowing that the fine men and women of the Horizon Fire Department are there to answer your calls with the most professional fire department possible.

**To Advertise Call 852-3235**



# Comix

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## R.F.D. By Mike Marland



# Your good health By Keith Roach, M.D.

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** For the past four months, I have had an infection around the cuticle of my right index finger. There is green coloration under the nail near the cuticle, and the nail grew rather deformed. I am a gardener and a homemaker, so I tend to wash my hands often. The urgent-care doctor I saw prescribed clindamycin and mupirocin cream. I also was told to soak my finger twice a day. My family doctor took a culture and, because she did not know if I had a fungus or an infection, prescribed Lamisil and levofloxacin. She also recommended saltwater or peroxide soaks twice daily. The culture showed pseudomonas as the cause of the infection. With no improvement, I saw an orthopedic doctor. He told me to continue the soaking and the mupirocin cream. On my second visit, he lanced the area between the cuticle and the nail bed. There was improvement, but the symptoms soon return. The orthopedic doctor spoke of removing the nail as a possible solution to clearing up the infection. Is this my next step, or is there something else I can do? – P.B.

best oral antibiotic against pseudomonas), antiseptic soaks and by keeping the hands meticulously dry, using gloves and even using a hairdryer to dry the nails after soaking or cleaning.

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am a 67-year-old male who has had mild to moderate psoriasis for the past seven years or so. I have been avoiding the very effective biological drugs because of the scary possible side effects. Instead, I use anti-itch topical creams and lotions, some with cortisone. In researching the topic, I ran across a treatment called Fumaderm that is available in Germany, but I have never heard of it being used in the U.S. – C.S.

Psoriasis is an inflammatory skin condition that can range from annoying to life-threatening in severity. Psoriasis and its common complication, psoriatic arthritis, together are a highly destructive arthritis that often requires powerful treatment: biologic agents, like adalimumab (Humira) or etanercept (Enbrel). These do have the possibility of serious side effects, such as reactivation of tuberculosis.

It sounds as though you have the aptly named “green nail syndrome,” which is caused by the bacteria you mention, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and which often is complicated by a paronychia, an infection along the side of the nail. Your orthopedic surgeon is quite right that sometimes the nail needs to be removed; however, many people can avoid that unpleasant procedure (I had to perform it once) with ciprofloxacin (the

Fumaderm has been used in Germany for 19 years with a generally good safety record. There have been reports of a disease, PML, caused by brain virus, associated with Fumaderm, although it isn't clear whether the Fumaderm predisposed the individuals to develop this infection.

No medicine is free of the possibility of side effects, and

See HEALTH, Page 8

# Super Crossword

### SPLITTING SIMPLE

- ACROSS**
- 1 Auto-theft deterrent
  - 9 Nickname for Ireland, with “the”
  - 16 “\_ to say?”
  - 20 Formal written defense
  - 21 Informer
  - 22 Lend a hand
  - 23 1941 hit for Billie Holiday
  - 25 “Would \_ to you?”
  - 26 “Frozen” snow queen
  - 27 Athenian H
  - 28 Of volcanic activity
  - 30 Subpar grade
  - 31 Kind of shipping with smallish freight
  - 37 O’Hara’s Butler
  - 39 Kind of sword
  - 40 Give rise to
  - 41 One watching unobtrusively
  - 46 See 87-Across
  - 49 Fly jets, say
  - 50 Lend a hand
  - 51 Telly initials
  - 54 Bear, in Tijuana
  - 55 Countries
  - 56 Home pest
  - 57 Xeroxing supply
  - 62 Common B.A. major
  - 63 Orly jet, once

- 64 Soprano Gluck
- 65 California’s region
- 66 Legendary king of Camelot
- 70 Little-by-little
- 73 Morales of movies
- 74 High trains
- 75 Stein quaff
- 78 Pilot’s direction detector
- 80 Nada
- 81 Made even
- 83 Gp. of G.P.’s
- 84 One-wd. definition, essentially
- 85 2005 Best Director Lee
- 86 Plod along
- 87 With 46-Across, pancake pour-on
- 90 Like a technology in development
- 95 Singer Clark or Gibbs
- 98 Bowl game org.
- 99 Believer in a “God of reason”
- 100 Ayatollah Khomeini led it in 1979
- 105 “Give \_ try!”
- 108 Forbearance
- 109 Yank enemy
- 110 “\_ all a favor and...”
- 111 Luc’s gal pal
- 112 Simple substances split in eight long answers in this puzzle

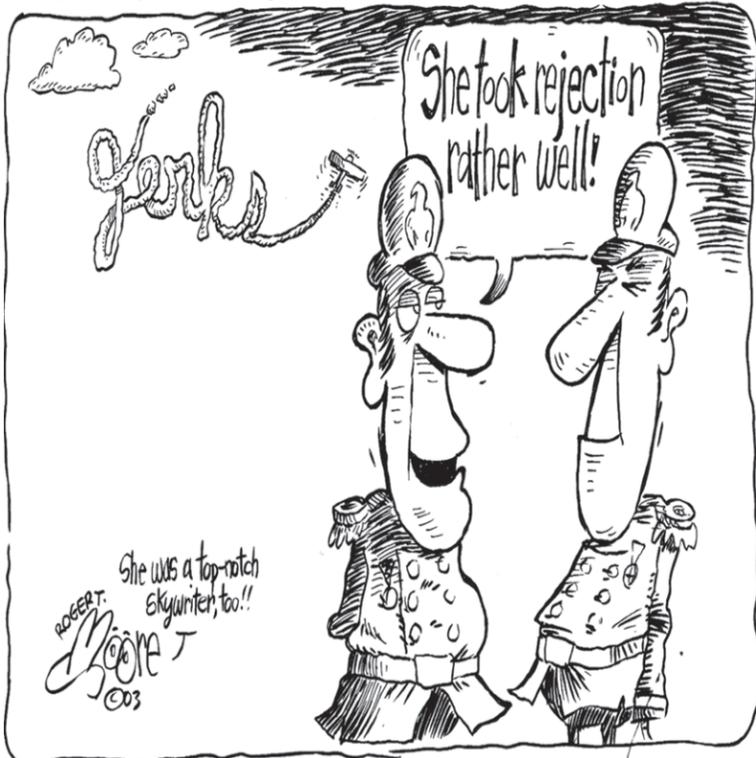
- 119 Pop singer Celine
  - 120 One hanging in the air
  - 121 Sherpa, e.g.
  - 122 E-mail status
  - 123 Fifty percent
  - 124 “The way things look to me...”
- DOWN**
- 1 Pent-up
  - 2 As straight as \_
  - 3 “The Twilight Zone” host
  - 4 Jessica of “Sin City”
  - 5 Texting titter
  - 6 Census stat
  - 7 Meets the challenge of
  - 8 Jib holders
  - 9 Burnt residue
  - 10 Salt Lake City collegian
  - 11 Place: Abbr.
  - 12 Homer’s cry
  - 13 More guileful
  - 14 Slick offering at a spa?
  - 15 Infer
  - 16 County in Kentucky or Indiana
  - 17 Reddish purple color
  - 18 Ex-Twin Tony
  - 19 Swiftmess
  - 24 Pic on a pec, perhaps
  - 29 UPS items: Abbr.

- 31 Pre-Easter periods
- 32 Kitchen extension?
- 33 Pay mind to
- 34 Tax mo.
- 35 Ut. neighbor
- 36 Golfing peg
- 38 Skull’s place
- 41 Outlet event
- 42 Writer Bunin
- 43 Zulu’s group
- 44 Plop (down)
- 45 Fenway stat
- 47 Functions
- 48 Cruise stop
- 52 Happen to
- 53 Rocky peaks
- 56 Wynonna Judd’s sister
- 57 Unsoiled
- 58 Luxury hotel chain
- 59 Hip dwelling
- 60 NHLer, e.g.
- 61 Barley bristle
- 63 Sharp pains
- 64 Lhasa \_ (dog breed)
- 66 Nabokov heroine
- 67 Classic Karel Capek play
- 68 \_ center (play area)
- 69 Be in power
- 70 Unit of fat
- 71 “\_ Lama Ding Dong”
- 72 Film version, e.g.
- 75 Person reading

- for a role, say
- 76 Big name in toy bricks
- 77 Place of bliss
- 79 Heart rocker Wilson
- 80 Wind dir.
- 81 Choo-choo
- 82 Furrows
- 85 “\_ in Calico” (old song)
- 86 Smartphone of the 2000s
- 88 Merciful
- 89 Iroquois tribe
- 91 Suffix with ethyl
- 92 95, to Nero
- 93 Asian ideal
- 94 Food
- 96 Western cattle farm
- 97 Korean city near Seoul
- 100 Apple tablets
- 101 Flaxlike fiber
- 102 Superman portrayer Christopher
- 103 WWW bookmark
- 104 Singer \_ Marie
- 106 People of Rwanda
- 107 Benefit
- 110 Galley mark
- 113 “Ho-hum”
- 114 401(k) kin
- 115 Bit of cartoon art
- 116 Whelp’s yelp
- 117 Prefix with center
- 118 Family VIPs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
20								21							22					
23							24								25					
26						27					28			29						
30				31	32				33	34	35	36								
		37	38					39			40									
41	42						43	44			45			46			47	48		
49							50					51	52	53			54			
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62						63			64				65							
					66	67			68			69								
70	71	72						73				74					75	76	77	
78							79				80			81	82					
83							84				85				86					
87			88	89				90	91	92	93			94						
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100	101							102				103	104					105	106	107
108												109						110		
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119								120												
122								123												
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**TRUE TEXAS FACTS** by Roger Moore July 12, 1912, Katherine Stimson gets her pilot's license. In spite of being an accomplished and famous pilot, she is rejected by the military because of her gender in WWI.



## Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

**Q:** What are the rules for getting Supplemental Security Income (SSI)? I'm thinking about applying based on my disability.

**A:** To be eligible to receive SSI benefits, you must be disabled, blind, or age 65 or older and have limited income and resources. Income is money you receive such as wages, Social Security benefits, and pensions. Income also includes the value of such things as food and shelter you receive from others. Resources are things you own such as real estate, bank accounts, cash, stocks, and bonds. You may be able to get SSI if your resources are worth no more than \$2,000. A couple may be able to get SSI if they have resources worth no more than \$3,000. Learn more by reading our publication, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs).

count as earnings for Social Security purposes?

**A:** No. We count only the wages you earn from a job or your net profit if you're self-employed. Non-work income such as annuities, investment income, interest, capital gains, and other government benefits are not counted and will not affect your Social Security benefits. Most pensions will not affect your benefits. However, your benefit may be affected by government pensions earned through work on which you did not pay Social Security tax. You can retire online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). For more information, call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

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

## Water

From Page 1

according to official records.

The county's USDA grant application specifies that the requested funds would go towards the construction of a permanent connection to the El Paso Water Utilities system from Zaragoza Road, and extend the water lines into the subdivisions.

About 130 lots in each colonia are presently occupied, and they are surrounded by other subdivisions that have water and wastewater collection systems, according to county reports.

County officials estimated that it would take about six months to find out whether the county will receive some or all of the funding from the USDA grant. Officials are optimistic that the county will receive at least a part of the \$8.8 million because it was the USDA that encouraged the county to apply for the grant. County officials also acknowledged that matching funds from the county of up to 25 percent may be required as part of the grant award.

County Commissioner Vince Perez, who represents the colonias that will benefit from the grant, said in a public statement that he believes the county has a great chance of obtaining the grant money for the project. Perez stated in a recent interview that a representative with the USDA-RD told him that there was money available and encouraged El Paso County to apply for the funding.

"It's an expensive project, and anytime we can leverage federal dollars we should do it," Perez stated. In the meantime, county officials indicated that plans are to hire an engineer to begin preliminary designs for the project.

## 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.

	÷		+		7
×		+		÷	
	-		×		10
÷		÷		+	
	×		÷		2
6		2		7	

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 3 4 5 5 6 7 9

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Answer Page 4

## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

5				6	7		
	9		1				8
		4		7			3
	6			1			9
3				8	4		
		8	9				5
	7			2			5
		2	5		6		
4			9				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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## 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: Q equals Y

BY HSR BIIDJHABFDJ JBHXA  
MIXQRA JSXZNXA SXJ X YXLFABHR  
MXJHX OBJS, OF QFD HSBZN BH'J

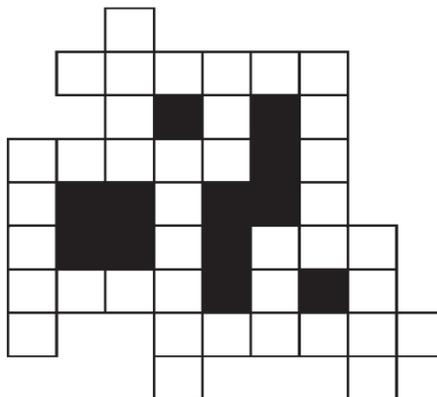
AXLB-FIB?

Answer Page 4

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- GID
- GUSDEL
- ♥ HITGR
- ILEB
- BIDTTI
- TBE
- TAGI
- STUGE
- ♥ DBA
- BLINGO
- ♥ SORIT
- ♥ EDTN



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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## Health

From Page 7

treatment for psoriasis should be appropriate for the degree of severity of the illness. If you are doing well enough with your current treatment, I wouldn't recommend trying a treatment with a higher risk of serious side effects.

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.