



NEWSBRIEFS

International chess tourney

Pre-K through 12th Grade students from throughout the region are invited to flex their mental muscles at the ultimate game of strategy during the upcoming Inaugural La Fe Chess Tournament – a scholastic non-rated event scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 9, 2017 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 9, 2017 at the La Fe Preparatory School (LFPS), located at 616 E. Father Rahm Ave., El Paso, TX 79901. The tournament is a one-day team and individual competition open to Pre-K through 12th Grade students from throughout El Paso, Texas, Las Cruces, New Mexico, and Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua. Pre-registration is \$10 per player or \$15 on the event day. Participants can register now, Monday through Friday, until the event day at the LFPS. Payment can be made in cash or with a check made out to the Community Alliance Promoting Educational Alternatives (CAPEA). Competitive sections will include Pre-Kindergarten through 2nd Grade, 3rd through 5th Grade, and 6th through 12th Grade. Each section's first through third-place winning teams will receive team trophies. Each section's first through third-place individual winners will receive medals. There will be one United States Chess Federation (USCF) rated section for all ages. Food and refreshments will be available during the event. Members of the LFPS Chess Club will be selling raffle tickets for a Smart-TV as a fundraiser during this event. All proceeds will benefit the LFPS Chess Club. If you need more information call (915) 545-7226.

– Estela Reyes López

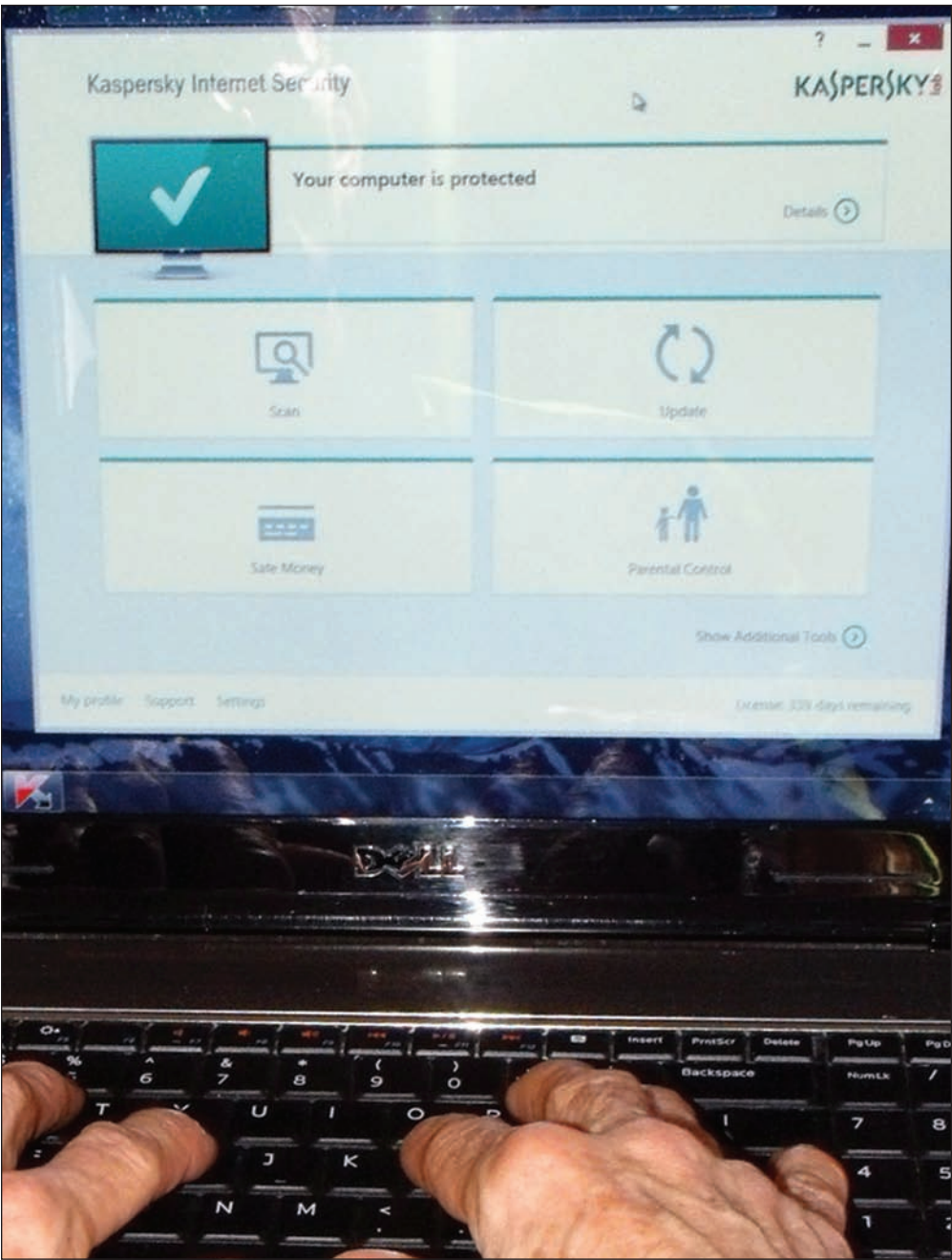
Bare-knuckle logging

Bare-knuckle boxing is illegal in most places, but an Australian he-man recently made the top of the news cycle when he felled a tree with his bare knuckles, according to the Association of Mature American Citizens. He took off his gloves and pounded the trunk of the tree with his bare fists until the tree could take no more and toppled over. He retired in triumph with his head held high and his knuckles awash in blood. Admirers shot video to memorialize the feat but others on the scene simply called him a knucklehead.

– John Grimaldi

A criminal does not care who makes the laws, so long as they are not enforced.

– Quips & Quotes



– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY – When it comes to computers and scams, the internet is full of them. Should a person receive an email or pop-up that appears to be a scam, he or she should report it directly to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at uce@ftc.gov. If you get a scam email, you can create a spam folder in your files to store them, and you can go to your settings and automatically block future emails from that account. Every computer should have some type of security program like the one above.

Beware of scammers

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Unsuspecting victims are losing thousands of dollars to all types of scams that can be financially and emotionally devastating – especially during the holidays.

Scammers, using either phone calls or emails, seek to find a person's vulnerability through a variety of approaches. Some of these scams involve false sweepstakes or lottery winners, family or friend emergencies, debt collections, credit card issues, adware or malware problems, tech support services, charities, utilities, government grants, travel or vacation offers, and tax collection demands.

Threatening phone calls demanding money is one of the most common ways scammers find victims, according to federal law enforcement officials. Often times they use scare tactics, like jail time. And they won't stop because they are on the job 24/7, constantly re-inventing old tricks with new ones, officials noted.

A current scam, that the U.S. Marshals agency is alerting the public about, is where impostors tell victims that they can avoid jail time for missing jury duty by paying a fine with a debit or gift card.

Federal law enforcement officials said that scammers attempt to make themselves sound credible by providing fake badge numbers or names of actual law

See SCAMMERS, Page 5

EPCC, Sheriff's Department provide blankets for community

On November 21st, El Paso Community College's (EPCC) Professional Staff Association (PSA), Police Department and Service Learning Program presented 189 blankets to the El Paso County Sheriff's Department as part of their Keep El Paso Warm Coat campaign. The Sheriff's Department will distribute the collected items to those in need throughout El Paso County. "The El Paso community has always supported EPCC and in turn, we look for ways to pass it on, Cheryl Bowman, Project Lead, EPCC's 4th Annual Keep El Paso Warm campaign said. "The EPCC Police Department and the EPCC Service Learning Office along with the EPCC PSA Humanitarian Outreach Fund know the heart-wrenching situations that the Sheriff's deputies encounter throughout the county when their duties take them



into homes in desperate need. By working together, we can do more than we can alone." For more information on the EPCC PSA Humanitarian Outreach Fund, contact Cheryl Bowman at 831-6574. Above, EPCC

President, Dr. William Serrata, at right, had some comments for the Sheriff's Department and honored guests. Sheriff Richard Wiles is on the far left.

– Jim Heiney

Veterans Post

By Freddy Groves

Free legal help for vets

The Department of Veterans Affairs is hooking up with other groups to provide pro bono (free) legal services to veterans. The VA, the American Bar Association and The Veterans Consortium and National Law School Veterans Clinic Consortium have signed an agreement to improve access to free help.

Whether it's about foreclosure, eviction or any other legal snarls that surface, veterans need help to ensure that their rights aren't being violated. The seriousness of the issue came to light during the annual Community Homelessness Assessment, wherein lack of legal help topped the list of needed services.

Step one, per VA Secretary David Shulkin, will be to partner VA medical centers with their communities to create more legal clinics.

Right now there are some 165 free legal clinics in VA medical centers, outpatient clinics and vet centers, with the VA partnered with legal service providers. So they know how to do it. Surely in every VA medical center or other facility there's space to set up a couple of rooms for a waiting area and private conference areas.

For more information on this new partnership, go online to www.va.gov/OGC/LegalServices.asp and click through the links. For locations that are up and running, see the "click here" link two lines down from Legal Help for Veterans. Aspreadsheet will open with all the locations, contact info and areas of specialty. Also click on the List of Organizations Providing Pro Bono Legal Services for Veterans link for a map of states and the directory of pro bono legal assistance.

Remember, if you get into a snag, you're not alone. Ask whether one of the legal clinics is already up and running at your local VA medical center or outpatient location. Call and ask for their VA Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist.

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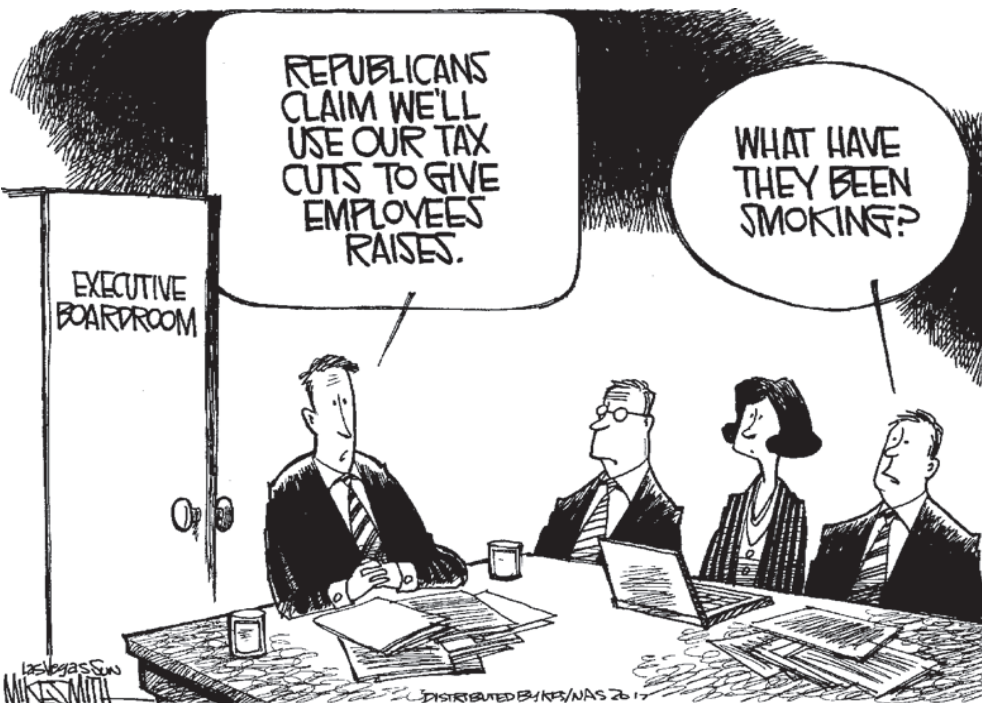
View from here

By Ralph Martire

A history lesson on tax cuts

To stimulate the U.S. economy individuals were very high from the end of World War II through 1980 – ranging from 90 to 72 percent. During that sequence, the U.S. economy grew at an average rate of 3.8 percent per year, in real, inflation-adjusted terms. Meanwhile income distribution

second term was 2.8 percent annually after inflation. That's one full percentage point lower than during the previous, high-tax era, and translates to about \$150 billion less in annual economic activity. There was never any trickle-down effect. Meanwhile,



EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM

REPUBLICANS CLAIM WE'LL USE OUR TAX CUTS TO GIVE EMPLOYEES RAISES.

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN SMOKING?

MIKE SMITH

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slightly favored the top, with the wealthiest 10 percent realizing roughly 34 percent of all growth in income over that period, leaving 66 percent of income growth for the bottom 90 percent in earnings to share. Still, these were pretty good times, that included a strong middle class and real income growth for all earners.


Then came supply-side under President Reagan, who cut the top marginal income tax rate from north of 70 percent to 38.5 percent in 1981. President George W. Bush then cut the top rate down to 35 percent in 2001, while also cutting capital gains and dividend tax rates, which all primarily benefited the most affluent. That's nearly four decades of supply-side. And the results ain't pretty. In fact, average U.S. economic growth from the Reagan Administration through the end of George W. Bush's

income inequality became much worse, with more than all real growth in income going to the wealthiest 10 percent. Everyone else earned less after inflation in 2007 than in 1980. And because the promised economic growth never materialized, federal deficits exploded.

Which should surprise no one, because tax cuts mostly benefiting businesses and affluent families can't be expected to stimulate job growth. Here's why: the economy is primarily, as in around 68 percent, consumer spending. Tax cuts for affluent folks won't generate much new consumer spending – because individuals at the top of the ladder already have rapidly growing real incomes. In economic terms, they have a low "marginal propensity to consume," that is, they are unlikely to spend any tax relief they get. No bump in consumer spending, no job growth.

Business tax cuts also don't incentivize job creation, because businesses only hire more workers when they actually need additional capacity to satisfy growing demand for whatever they sell. It makes no sense for a business to utilize tax relief to hire folks if there's no work for them to do. Excess capacity is wasteful, and cuts profits.

Which means there's literally no reason to believe President Trump's proposed tax cuts will stimulate the economy, and every reason to believe they'll grow the national deficit.



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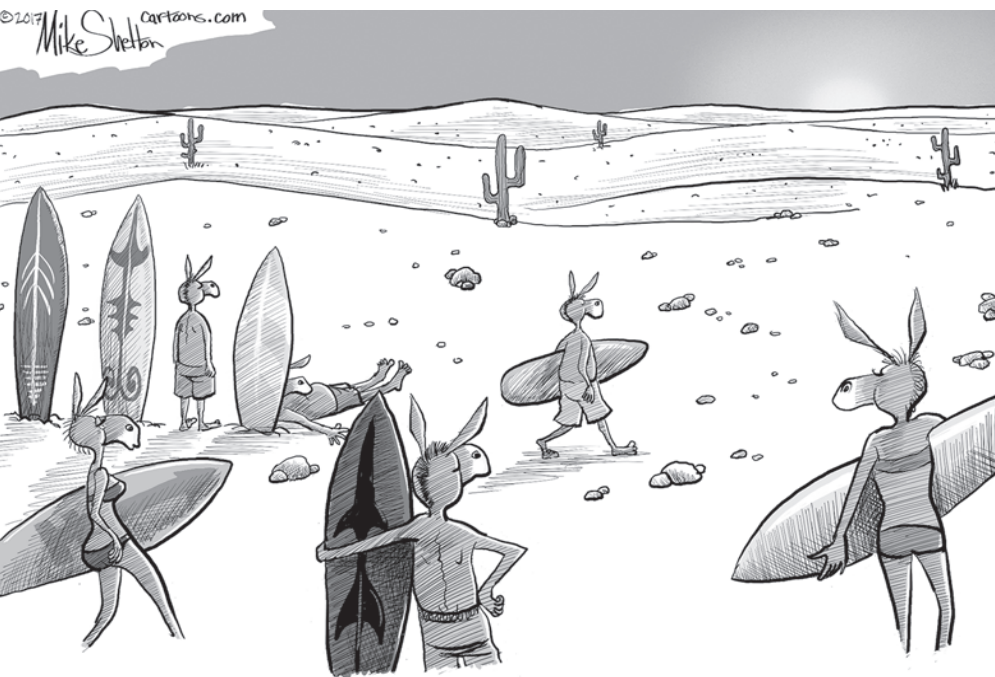
Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Clint Independent School District's State Financial Accountability Rating

Clint Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:00 PM, Thursday, December 14, 2017, in the Central Office Board Room, 14521 Horizon Blvd., El Paso, Texas 79928.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Clint Independent School District's rating on the state's financial accountability system.

WTCC: 11/23/17 & 11/30/17

Ralph Martire is executive director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, a bipartisan fiscal policy think tank.



Democratic wave election predicted for 2018...



View from here

By Marilyn M. Singleton, M.D., J.D.

Money, media and medical care

More than 50 years ago Professor Marshall McLuhan posited that the medium is the message. Now it seems that money is the medium of the message.

This month Medical Marketing and Media magazine published its 2017 Health Influencer 50, a “list of professionals across the health care spectrum.” The magazine writes that these “influencers” made their impact by innovative thinking and “patient-centric” strategies. As expected, the ever-present Google, Facebook, Twitter, and several medical marketers were amply represented. Disturbingly, five of the top eleven influencers were pharmaceutical companies. The only physician on the list (#12) was Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D.

Overall, the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry hired more than 800 lobbyists to the tune of \$132,405,742.

Only three of the named organizations were actually involved in the delivery of medical care: Dignity Health, the fifth largest health system in the nation; Ascension, the largest nonprofit health system in the U.S.; and the Cleveland Clinic.

One troublesome “patient-centric” strategy is the ubiquitous brazen direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical ad. One crafty example is an “informational” or public service-type announcement persuading the viewer to get vaccinated against pneumococcal pneumonia. Ummm. Was the ad sponsored by a health plan? Medicare? The American Academy of Family Physicians? No. The sponsor (credited in very small print) was Pfizer, the vaccine’s manufacturer.

Apparently, the influence of many of these entities extends to Congress. The 2017 lobbying expenses of *Medical Marketing Magazine’s* number one “influencer,” GlaxoSmithKline, totaled \$3,070,000. The other influencers’ lobbying costs: Gilead Sciences (#2), \$2,650,000; Allergan (#4), \$2,380,000; Johnson & Johnson (#8), \$3,160,000; Pfizer (#10), \$8,510,000; and Bayer (#11), \$7,050,000. Overall, the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry hired more than 800 lobbyists to the tune of \$132,405,742.

The mega-health insurer Blue Cross/Blue Shield’s vice president of Strategic Communications made the list at number 39. If the criterion were lobbying, the Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BCBS) had a leg up with \$14,173,960 in lobbying costs – more than triple that of the next health insurer that employs lobbyists.

Or perhaps BCBS was rewarded for navigating its way out of the financial depths of the Affordable Care Act’s essential benefit mandates. Of the 35 BCBS companies, 23 reported a collective \$1.9 billion decline in earnings for the first nine months of 2015 and 16 reported net losses because the ACA’s “free” services resulted in claims paid exceeding premiums collected. But by 2017 BCBS along with the rest of the health insurance industry managed to regain its profits by increasing rates, restricting provider networks, and changing benefits packages.

At first glance, physicians appear to be playing hardball with the big boys. In 2017, the American Medical Association (AMA) spent \$16,970,000 for lobbying. But the AMA might be called the American physicians’ version of AstroTurf. Only 15-18 percent of physicians are paying members and just 11 percent of physicians said AMA’s stance and actions reflect their beliefs regarding physician practice autonomy, tort reform, and intrusive government regulations. Moreover, the AMA benefits from the dominance of insurance market as it exclusively publishes the official CPT® billing codes necessary to file insurance claims.

The problems with the marketing penetration of drug companies and insurers go beyond simple unseemliness. At the patient care level, when insurance companies demand authorizations prior to agreeing to pay for treatment, they are dictating what care we receive. What good is health insurance if the treatments your physician recommends are not covered?

The current opioid problem is a distressing example. The *New York Times* reported that few opioids require preauthorization and are readily covered by insurance plans. When it comes to less addictive but more expensive pharmaceutical alternatives or addiction treatment, the coverage is not guaranteed.

Don’t blame the insurers and drug companies. After all, although they are providing useful products and services, it is their job to make money. It is our congresspersons who are not doing their job.

Sadly, influence peddling has become the norm. But your health is too precious to be bought and sold. Your physician should be the top “influencer” for you. Our physicians, not peddlers, should be the source of the pros and cons of medications and recommendations of specific treatments for their patients.

If you are tired of our do-nothing Congress and big business running up the score, play some defense. Demand transparent prices. Cash prices can be several times lower than prices charged to patients with an insurance card. Demand expanded health savings accounts and universal availability of major medical insurance. Find a direct-pay medical practice (e.g., selfpaypatient.com) and discover how eliminating the middlemen results in reasonable prices.

You have the influence. Use it.

Dr. Singleton is a board-certified anesthesiologist and Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) Board member. She graduated from Stanford and earned her MD at UCSF Medical School. Dr. Singleton completed 2 years of Surgery residency at UCSF, then her Anesthesia residency at Harvard’s Beth Israel Hospital. While still working in the operating room, she attended UC Berkeley Law School, focusing on constitutional law and administrative law. She interned at the National Health Law Project and practiced insurance and health law. She teaches classes in the recognition of elder abuse and constitutional law for non-lawyers.

Scammers

From Page 1

enforcement agents or judges. Caller ID may also appear to show that they are calling from a court or a government agency. The scammers tell the victims to buy the card, and then call back and give them the card numbers over the phone.

“The U.S. Marshals would never ask for a credit/debit or gift card number or bank routing numbers or ask for funds to be wired for any purpose,” U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Texas David Sligh emphasized in a recent public statement.

Additionally, an individual that receives a missing jury duty threat can authenticate the charge by calling the clerk of the court’s office of the local U.S. District Court and verify the court order given by the caller.

Federal officials advised that those that get this type of call to hang up and report the call to the

Marshal’s Service office or to the Federal Trade Commission. The commission can detect fraud patterns and share the data collected with law enforcement agencies, officials said.

Another scam that is presently being used and El Paso’s Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) is warning the public about is the spread of a “virtual kidnapping” phone scam. This is where a victim receives a phone call that begins with the sound of a woman or child screaming. A

person then gets on the line and demands a ransom for whom they claim is a family member of the person they called.

Local FBI officials reported recently that agents have investigated four virtual kidnapping cases in the past two years with ransoms of \$3,000 to \$50,000, some of which were paid.

Still other scams currently making the rounds in this area are the utilities scare. A caller poses as an employee of either

El Paso Electric, El Paso Water, or the Texas Gas Service. The scammer then threatens – by phone, online, or even in person – to disconnect a customer’s utility unless a payment is made immediately. Most scammers ask victims to use prepaid debit cards or gift cards to render a payment, officials said.

So, what should one do to protect him or herself from a scam? If a person receives an email that is threatening or if a person receives an arrest warrant call where the perpetrator is impersonating a law enforcement officer, hang up and report it immediately. When in doubt as to whom to report it to, call the El Paso County Sheriff’s Department or the El Paso Police Department.

Email and pop-up scams should be reported directly to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at uce@ftc.gov. Bank scams should be reported immediately to the Internet Crime Complaint Center.


Disability

From Page 8

have earned and to estimate future benefits, please log in to or create your *my Social Security* online account at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

Those who have not worked enough to qualify for Social Security benefits may be eligible for help through our Supplemental Security Income program, or “SSI.” SSI provides financial assistance to disabled children and adults, as well as the aged and blind people, who have little or no income or resources. Learn more about SSI at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi.

Social Security helps you and millions of other Americans secure today and tomorrow by providing important financial benefits, information, and planning tools. Learn more at www.socialsecurity.gov.



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In the Senter of the storm

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Over the last decade or so the UTEP athletic program hasn’t exactly had many things to cheer about, especially in the glamour sports.

The football team has sunk to lows never before witnessed in El Paso. And that’s really saying something for what has undoubtedly been the worst college football program in the country since the 1970s.

The UTEP men’s basketball program, which has brought the most notoriety to the city since the 1960s, is floundering.

Tim Floyd has been winning for the most part, but it’s not “Miner Ball” winning. UTEP has a ton of championship banners hanging from the rafters of the Don Haskins Center.

Most of them courtesy of Don Haskins.

But since the Bear retired, there have been other UTEP NCAA Tournament teams. Billy Gillispie took the Miners to the Big Dance in 2004, Doc Sadler did it in 2005 and Tony Barbee led UTEP there in 2010.

In his seven years as head coach since then, Floyd has taken the Miners to a

couple of NITs and a CBI appearance, losing in the first round all three times.

But El Pasoans are used to watching the Miners make their annual appearance in the NCAA Tournament.

And it’s not just the big sports programs, there are some other sports like softball, volleyball and tennis that are struggling.

UTEP volleyball has had a losing season in 13 of the last 16 years, tennis was had two winning seasons in the last nine years and softball has suffered through six straight losing campaigns.

The only two programs that seem to win year in and year out are UTEP soccer and women’s basketball. Which is awesome, but neither of those produce any revenue for the department.

I didn’t mention men’s baseball because the Miners haven’t had a baseball team since 1985.

In a Triple-A baseball town, UTEP should really consider bringing baseball back. UTEP is just one of two schools in Conference USA that doesn’t field a baseball team.

Anyway, the point is that there are gaping holes in the UTEP athletic program. And most important of all, the moneymaking sports, football and basketball, aren’t

making any.

The Sun Bowl is virtually empty for the football games and very few fans bother to tailgate before the game – which means nobody cares.

The Don Haskins Center, which used to be a place where at least 10,000 fans could be counted on for every game, hasn’t seen a sellout in years. Attendance has dwindled to around 7,000 – on a good day.

So is there a silver lining hiding among all these dark clouds? Maybe.

UTEP finally announced last week that Jim Senter will be the school’s new athletics director.

He may not have been UTEP’s first choice (losing Lisa Campos to UT San Antonio) but he very well could be UTEP’s best choice.

UTEP did something it often hates to do... take a chance. They went outside their losing environment to bring in someone from another part of the country with no ties to the college.

In other words – new blood. And the Miners need an ample infusion of it as quickly as possible.

I really hope that Jim Senter is the kind of guy who enjoys a challenge, because I’m not sure he truly knows what he’s just gotten himself into.

But then again, he could be the guy who infuses the program with new ideas,

great hires, great marketing strategies, infrastructure improvements and renewed fan interest.

Speaking of great hires, the most important hire he’ll have to make, and very quickly for recruiting purposes, is to get a football coach in here.

And now is the time. College seasons are coming to a close – some good head coaches will be let go and some great assistants are now willing to talk.

The one thing UTEP will have to do to be competitive is stick a crowbar in its wallet and pay a new head coach at least a competitive Conference USA wage.

And by the way, I sure hope they’re paying Jim Senter a competitive wage. Talk about an unenviable job.

What is he worth? Hmm, how much are silver linings going for these days?

Shortly before this paper went press, UTEP’s Tim Floyd abruptly announced his retirement. “I’ve coached for 42 years and I love this school,” Floyd said. “My father played here. Nobody wants to win here more than I do. I’ve coached at this university for 16 years and I think it’s time for somebody else to have the opportunity to have the joy that I’ve had, the agony that I’ve had, the acclaim that I’ve had, and the heartbreak that I’ve had in my career.”

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

Love match

Tennis is the only sport in the world to use the word “love” when it comes to scoring. Ironically, when you have nothing, zero points, in tennis, this means you have “love.” But in the early ‘70s, the

sports world and sports reporters had something all right – they had the “Love Match” between tennis’ top two players, Jimmy Connors and Chrissie Evert.

Connors was brash and boorish on the court. His game was about destruction and violence. Connors broke his back during every match. In a sport that harbored a private club mentality, Connors was a prizefighter. (Indeed, he played two winner-take-all prize matches at Caesar’s Palace in Las Vegas in the mid-’70s, winning both times.)

Evert was “Little Miss Icicle.” She moved with grace and never seemed to perspire or struggle with her emotions on the court. She played to win every point and did so with astonishing ease for her entire career, retiring with the highest winning percentage ever.

They had little in common – Connors was from Ohio, Evert from Florida. Evert had her dad as a coach; Connors his mom. In fact, all they really seemed to have in common was a two-handed backhand and the Wilson racquets they used to play with.

Tennis is the only major sport where men and women play

simultaneously. No match is televised without repeated cuts to the girlfriend or husband of the player on the court. Connors and Evert were the Charles and Diana of their day, and the whole world watched.

Rumors that the then 17-year-old Evert and 19-year-old Connors were dating began swirling when the two started missing tennis practices, instead going on dates. The missed practices were few and far between, however, and both became top-10 players. Then, in 1973, Connors proposed to Evert, and she accepted.

Going into the 1974 Wimbledon Championships, bookies were giving 33-1 odds that the engaged couple would win Wimbledon. They both rolled through the tournament in convincing fashion, despite the incredible pressure on them both to win, and emerged victorious. Together, standing on the famed Centre Court of Wimbledon, they held their trophies aloft and kissed. Later that night, Connors gave her a gold charm bracelet – a style of jewelry still referred to as a “tennis bracelet.”

Eventually, both decided that their schedules and desire to be No. 1 made their proposed marriage impossible. Evert went on to marry John Lloyd, followed by Olympic skier Andy Mill and, briefly, golfer Greg Norman. Weep not for Connors, though. He briefly dated a Miss World after the breakup before settling down with famous Playboy playmate Patty McGuire, a love match that has lasted to this day.

Canutillo Independent School District Public Notice

Canutillo Independent School District will hold a public hearing to discuss the District’s 2016-2017 Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) as part of a regular School Board meeting which is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 12, 2017, at the Canutillo Administrative Offices Board Room, 7965 Artcraft, El Paso, TX 79932.

The public is invited to attend. The TAPR report will also be available for review after the hearing at all Canutillo ISD campuses, the central office and at www.canutillo-isd.org.

For more information, call 915-877-7481.

Distrito Escolar Independiente de Canutillo Junta Pública

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Canutillo tendrá una Reunión Pública para informar sobre el “Reporte de Rendimiento Académica de Texas” (TAPR) del año escolar 2016-2017. El reporte sera parte de la reunión de la Mesa Directiva del distrito programada para el martes, 12 de diciembre del 2017 a las 6:00 p.m. en las Oficinas Administrativas de Canutillo en la Sala de Juntas en 7965 Artcraft, El Paso, TX 79932.

Todos los interesados están invitados a asistir. El reporte TAPR estará disponible después de la reunión en todas las escuelas del distrito, en el edificio de las oficinas administrativas y en www.canutillo-isd.org.

Para mas información, favor de llamar al 877-7481.

WTCC: 11-30-17

USDA-Home Preservation Grant



El Paso Office
6090 Surety Dr., Suite 210
El Paso, TX 79905
Ph: (915) 248-5826
Fax: (575) 936-5803

Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation has received a USDA-Home Preservation Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development. The grant is for eligible Very-Low Income homeowners that have homes in need repair. ***The homes must be located in Westway, Canutillo, Clint, Fabens and San Elizario.***

Grant guidelines:

- Used for home repairs and/or modifications;
- Home must be owned and occupied by the homeowner;
- Property taxes must be current or a pay plan in place with payments current; and
- Gross annual income below 50% of Area Median Income.

Typical Repairs:

- Roof Repair or Replacement
- Doors/Windows
- Flooring Materials
- Bathroom Modifications
- Walkways/Ramps
- Weatherize Home

For more information about this program please contact:

Sergio Ruiz - Housing Rehab Manager
(575) 541-0477
sergior@tdshc.org • www.tdshc.org



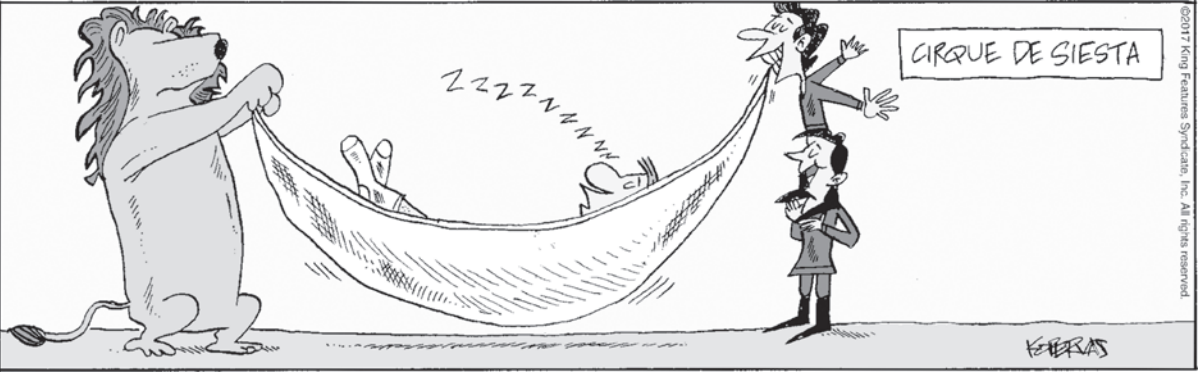
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Mark Vasto is a veterans sports writer who lives in New Jersey. (c) 2017 King Features Synd., Inc.

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



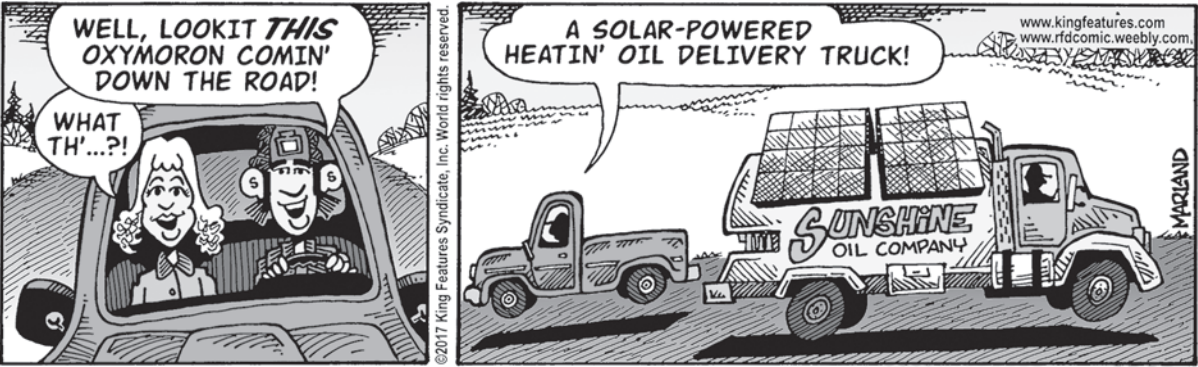
THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



Your good health

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Two separate days in the past month, I woke up in the middle of the night after being asleep for about four hours and realized that my heart was beating extremely fast. I waited a few minutes and, just as I was wondering if I should go to the emergency room, my pulse started to slow down. I had no other symptoms other than my heart racing. I am a 25-year-old female with no other health problems. My roommate said she thought it could have been caused by stress. I'm scared it will happen again. Should I go to the hospital if it does happen again? – S.C.

Waking up with your heart racing can be due to anxiety, but that isn't a common presentation for anxiety, which usually is in response to stressful situations (or anticipating one). Waking up with a racing heart is more likely to be due to a heart-rhythm disturbance, such as a reentrant AV nodal tachycardia. The most common reason for this is having two pathways from the top of the heart (the sinoatrial node) through the midpoint (the atrioventricular node), which then goes on to the ventricles. A circular pathway can get set up down the abnormal fast pathway and up the slow one (or vice versa) causing a very fast heart rate.

I would not wait for it to happen again but would go see a doctor and maybe get connected to a Holter monitor or event monitor. Both track your heart rhythm for extended periods of time. Once you have a diagnosis, you can be treated,

with radio waves to destroy the abnormal fast pathway or with medication if it ends up being the condition I am concerned about.

READERS: The booklet on heartbeat irregularities – whether too fast, too slow or out of rhythm – explains this potentially deadly condition and how it is treated. Order a copy by writing: Dr. Roach – No. 107W, 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.

DEAR DR. ROACH: A good friend of mine has an unusual problem. Every time he eats fresh tomatoes, he gets pimples. Is this an allergy? It never fails to cause pimples. – E.D.

Yes, I have heard that before. Fresh tomatoes, but not cooked ones, seem to cause some people to have an acne breakout, at any age. Other acidic foods, especially citrus, seem to cause that reaction, too. It's not a true allergy.

Acne is a complex condition, and it starts with a hair follicle being blocked by excessive skin cell growth, causing a plug in the follicle. This allows skin bacteria, *Propionibacterium acnes*, to grow in the oily substance normally used to lubricate the skin and hair follicle. It's called sebum. While there is some evidence that diet can worsen acne, it isn't exactly clear how that works. Most

See HEALTH, Page 8

Super Crossword

- 23RD AMENDMENT ACROSS

1 Tussle (with)

8 Hindu chant

14 Robotic floor vacuum

20 Predicted

21 Daisy types

22 Relatives of

21-Across

23 Pounding one's shawl?

25 Like sacred statues

26 Step up or down

27 Instant, for short

28 Santa _ College

29 In history

30 Book parts

34 What aviator

Orville or Wilbur was called?

37 Found on these pages

38 Kitty treater

39 Fill up fully

40 Celtics rival

41 "What the Butler Saw" dramatist Joe

42 Does penance

45 Sprinter Bolt

47 Small songbird with a cartoon cat?

50 60-min. units

51 "Rockaria!" band, in brief

54 Singer Clay

55 San _ (Italian resort)

57 Poet W.H. _

59 Fusion

64 Old laundry machine that's totally on the fritz?

66 Raving sort

67 People debating

70 Bistro, e.g.

71 "Goodbye, Columbus" author when he's very angry?

73 Throw from a steed

74 Tea garnish

75 Apple debut of 1998

76 Mini-serving

79 Prior to

80 Flan need

82 Damage done to a periodical?

89 Pub buys

91 Find a new place for, as a pet

92 Islamic equivalent of kosher

93 Trial attire

96 Siestas

98 "Mazel _!"

99 Hereditary sequence

100 Declaration upon pulling your valise forcefully?

103 Many a handcuffed person

105 _Jo ('80s track star)

106 That guy's

107 Certain Wall St. trader

108 Paradigm

109 Hereditary

111 Actress Fay who was always cheerful?

117 Get free of

118 Silky goat or rabbit

119 Helm handler

120 Beaches

121 Observed in the vicinity of

122 Actor Erik

DOWN

1 Yackety-yak

2 Lament

3 _ Khan

4 Impose

5 Capital of Kosovo

6 Like the pre-Easter period

7 _ Allan Poe

8 Comic Jay

9 Bunyan's tool

10 Story for an anchor

11 Radials for a Rolls, say

12 Fails to stay poker-faced

13 Viper variety

14 Slickers and galoshes

15 Wilde with wit

16 Bison-hunting tribe

17 Household

18 Intelligent

19 Fancy ties

24 " _ the season!"

28 Gallery gala

30 Grub

31 Berlin man

32 Funnyman Johnson

33 Hireling

34 "... three _ a tub"

35 Ocean liquid

36 Hotel relative

38 Cast a ballot

42 Take _ view of

43 "Bad!" sound

44 Shopping jag

46 Old Testament book

48 Racial equality gp.

49 Part of YTD

51 Lawn gadget

52 Dirty looks

53 Ham _ (deli classic)

56 Rx signers

58 Golden rule's second word

59 Plenteous

60 Bill of "Real Time"

61 Japanese film genre

62 Stitch's cartoon pal

63 Dive variety

64 "Yeah, no kidding!"

65 Taylor of "The Nanny"

67 Chair part

68 Traipse

69 Sporty auto

72 Tepees' kin

73 _ Reader (alternative digest)

76 Sierra Nevada lake

77 Sea of _ (waters

off Ukraine)

78 Gaming "City" dweller

81 Non-Jews

83 Somehow manages with

84 Pair attached to an axle

85 Also-_ (losers)

86 Scores

87 Arose (from)

88 Painter Paul

89 Nectar lover

90 CIA worker

93 Searches and robs

94 Wise-looking

95 Bucking one

97 Card game expert John

99 Bestows

101 Triangle, e.g.

102 Fly into _ (get furious)

103 Madison Ave. output

104 Find a new purpose for

108 _ first you don't succeed..."

110 Corn spike

111 Once existed

112 _ pro nobis

113 That gal's

114 Levin or Glass

115 TV neighbor of Homer

116 Time of note
- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 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 | | | | | | 55 | | 56 | | | 57 | 58 | | | |
| 59 | 60 | 61 | 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 |
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| 93 | 94 | 95 | | | 96 | | | 97 | | 98 | | | | | 99 | | | | | |
| 100 | | | | | 101 | | | | 102 | | | | | 103 | 104 | | | | | |
| 105 | | | | | 106 | | | | 107 | | | | 108 | | | | | | | |
| 109 | | | | 110 | | | | 111 | | | | 112 | | | | | 113 | 114 | 115 | 116 |
| 117 | | | | | | | | 118 | | | | | | 119 | | | | | | |
| 120 | | | | | | | | 121 | | | | | | 122 | | | | | | |
- Answer Page 4

MOORE TEXAS

by Roger Todd Moore

December 9, 1844: Anson Jones begins his term as the last President of the Republic of Texas.



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		15
+		x		x	
	x		+		20
x		-		-	
	+		+		20
27		19		22	

2 3 4 5 6 7 7 8 9

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging

Answer Page 4

◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Things to think about before applying for disability benefits

Social Security is with you throughout life’s journey. We’re here for you if the unexpected happens. We are there for you when you finally stop working as well. We provide vital financial support to tens of millions of American workers, primarily through retirement benefits. But we’re also there for you if the unexpected happens and a serious medical condition stops you from working and being able to support yourself and your family.

In such cases, you may qualify for Social Security disability benefits, which replace a portion of lost income when a worker becomes seriously disabled. Here are three of the key factors we use to determine if you may qualify for Social Security disability benefits:

- You must have a lasting medical condition so severe that it prevents you from doing the work that you did in the past or adjusting to other types of work;
- Your physical or mental

impairment(s) must have lasted or be expected to last at least a year or result in death; and

- You must have worked long enough – and recently enough – in jobs covered by Social Security.

To learn more about disability benefits, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/disability.

You become eligible for Social Security benefits by working and paying FICA taxes, which translate into Social Security “credits.” How many credits you need to receive disability benefits depends on how old you are when you become disabled.

For example, if you become disabled at age 31 or older, you generally must have earned at least 20 credits in the 10 years immediately before you became disabled. Twenty credits are equal to five years of substantial earnings. Younger workers may qualify with fewer credits.

To see how many credits you

See DISABILITY, Page 5

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: Y equals L

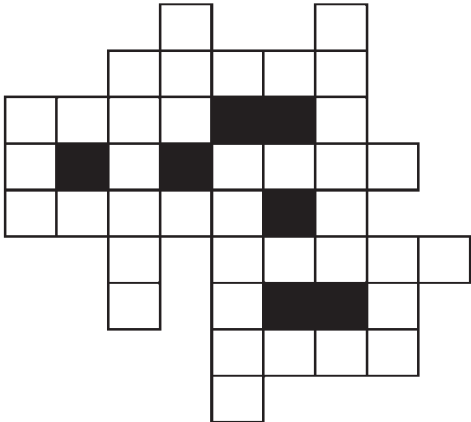
MAGM FGE G JZUC DGENTKGMTKW
QTM XD MUTJTG CXH BTJHYWZB.
TM’YY QZ G MXHWA DGNM MX
DXYYXF!

Answer Page 4

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- T I Z
♥ HATSOP
♥ OSGTU
♥ AMTO
GUMMAN
♥ NPI
GAPN
ZIPAZ
♥ MGU
♥ SPONAR
PEMOT
♥ ANSP



Answer Page 4

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

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

Here’s a Tip

By JoAnn Derson

• Buy an extra gift and wrap it, just in case you have forgotten someone. If you pick something gender-neutral, you could keep it for yourself if it goes unneeded. You won’t be caught off-guard when someone you forgot to put on your list stops by with a gift for you.

• Here’s a great rule of thumb when planning a large holiday dinner: For every side dish that requires extra preparation time, plan for one or two that don’t. For instance, if you are preparing a casserole with many ingredients or complicated instructions, serve a package of vegetables that requires nothing more than steaming. If you are preparing a time-consuming dessert, buy a prepared pie or fresh fruit salad and whipped topping. Don’t overstress yourself in the kitchen.

• “In my family, you come to a holiday dinner with your own plastic containers for leftovers. If you don’t bring your own, you don’t go home with tomorrow’s lunch. Mom instituted this rule after the first Thanksgiving when all the kids had moved out. We practically cleaned her out of Tupperware!”
– E.Y. in New Mexico

• Want to beat clutter but need to start slowly? Try this trick: Put a date label (the peel-off kind) on seldom-used items. Then if you use the item, remove the sticker. In a few months, re-evaluate what items still have stickers.

• Soak cloudy glassware in hot vinegar for 15 minutes to clear them up. Wash good crystal by hand only, never in a dishwasher.

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2017 King Features Synd., Inc.

Health

From Page 7

cases of adolescent acne are primarily due to the hormonal changes causing increased sebum production.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. To view and order health pamphlets, visit www.rbmall.com, or write to. (c) 2017 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.