



NEWSBRIEFS

SISD names school

The Socorro Independent School District Board of Trustees approved the name of the district's newest elementary school at the regular school board meeting on November 13, 2018. The board voted for the name Cactus Trails Elementary School. The district's 49th campus is being built in the Pebble Hills area and will accommodate about 800 elementary students. The new campus will serve the rapidly expanding east side of Team SISD and alleviate James P. Butler Elementary School, which now overflows students to other schools in the area. The \$28.4 million facility is scheduled to be open for the 2019-2020 school year. Leslie Thomas, formerly the principal of Jane A. Hambric School, will be the principal of Cactus Trails Elementary School. Trustees and Superintendent Espinoza also approved the school mascot and colors. The mascot will be diamondbacks and the school colors will be gray, teal and white.

— Christy Flores-Jones

Some nightcap

True aficionados of whisky are willing to pay dearly for a sip of an extraordinary scotch. Some would pay hundreds, thousands and even tens of thousands of dollars for a bottle of a rare distilled spirit. For example, a flask of Isabella's Islay scotch once sold for more than \$6 million. But, notes the Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC), the bottle was made with white gold and adorned with 8,500 diamonds and 300 rubies, which probably had something to do with the price tag. But, AMAC says more recently a bottle of Macallan scotch that was distilled in 1927 sold for \$27,000 in 1994 and just recently changed hands for a whopping \$1.1 million.

— John Grimaldi

EPCC cybersecurity

El Paso Community College (EPCC) has been designated as a Center of Academic Excellence (CAE) by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the National Security Agency (NSA) through the National Center of Academic Excellence. Institutions are designated based on their robust degree programs and close alignment to specific cybersecurity-related requirements as validated by top subject matter experts in the field.

See BRIEFS, Page 4

The happiest people are those that are too busy to notice whether they are happy or not.

— Quips & Quotes

Fabens ISD superintendent announces his retirement

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

FABENS – Fabens Independent School District (FISD) will soon have its first new superintendent in 18 years. The average tenure for a superintendent in Texas is about four years, according to the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB).

Fabens ISD Superintendent Eldefonso "Poncho" Garcia announced recently that he will be retiring after 18 years of leading the lower valley school district. El Paso County's far east district has about 2,300 students and over 370 employees in four separate campuses.

Fabens ISD officials stated that board members signaled that they expected to name Garcia's replacement soon. They stated that the board was in contract negotiations to hire Veronica Vigil as its next superintendent.

Vigil is the associate superintendent in the Canutillo Independent School District.

Greg Spence, FISD board president, said that it's unclear when Vigil would start at Fabens.



Eldefonso "Poncho" Garcia

"Hopefully everything will go well with the negotiations," Spence added.

As associate superintendent for Canutillo ISD for the past two and a half years, Vigil acts as a liaison between the district, the community, governmental authorities, and other agencies. She coordinates the development of the annual update to the district's long-range plan, which

is based on an analysis of information about facilities, personnel, instructional programs, and financial allocations.

Solis resigns EPCC board for 243rd court

EPCC now accepting applications to fill vacancy

By Keri Moe
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Selena Solis, El Paso Community College (EPCC) Board of Trustee member, has announced her intent to resign after being elected to serve as 243rd Court Judge. Solis represents District 4 which covers parts of Central, West and South El Paso, see map.

Solis has served on the EPCC Board of Trustees since 2013. During her tenure, EPCC was nationally recognized for many initiatives including successful Early College High Schools and Dual Credit, was named as one of the



Selena Solis

map the college's way to the future by transforming education with progress, innovation and engagement. "Ms. Solis has been a dedicated trustee who is committed to ensuring EPCC strives for positive outcomes at every level," Art Fierro Board Chair said. "She has served our students and community well by supporting EPCC's efforts to provide high quality and affordable education."

Ms. Solis adopted El Paso as her home in October of 2003 when she became an Assistant Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Texas. She has an extensive career of providing legal defense to individuals who are financially unable to obtain adequate

legal representation. In addition to her service at EPCC, she has been involved with many community organizations including the Girl Scouts of the Desert

See SOLIS, Page 2

Fabens, Clint ISD voters approve tax ratification elections

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Fabens and Clint Independent School Districts, situated next to each other in El Paso County's lower valley, received favorable outcomes after voters approved their districts' Tax Ratification Election (TRE) propositions in the recent election.

The two districts, together, will be getting nearly \$4 million in additional state matching funds after successfully passing the tax ratification measures. The change in tax rate makeup that voters approved in each of the two districts was 13 cents.

The successful TREs, also known as penny swaps, will give Fabens ISD an extra \$825,000 and Clint ISD an extra \$3 million in state matching funds, without raising the overall tax rate for residents.

The additional matching funds can be used for a wide variety of expenses that are paid for with the maintenance and operations (M&O) side of the tax rate, school officials pointed out.

Clint ISD officials stated before the election that a loss in revenue due to state funding cuts and no gains in enrollment prompted them to seek the TRE vote. Both Clint and Fabens ISD officials stated that the additional state funds will be used for student programs, teacher salaries, technology and safety upgrades, and improvements to existing facilities.

Also, the City of El Paso's largest school district, El Paso ISD, passed a 10-cent penny swap proposition recently. The proposition's passage will garner an extra \$7.5 million for the city's schools.

EPISD officials stated that their extra funds will go to a \$750 stipend in December for full-time employees; part-timers will receive half, \$375. Officials indicated that the additional TRE funds would also go toward increasing the police communications systems and supplementing the district's rainy day fund balance.

Texas school districts' need to go out to their voters for tax ratification elections is a signal that more schools are struggling to find additional funding in a finance system that experts say is broken.

"I think that one of the biggest

See TAXES, Page 4

Moore Texas by Roger Moore
 Texas' first Thanksgiving feast was likely hosted by Spaniard Juan Onate near present day El Paso in 1598.



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— Photo courtesy Fabens ISD

SALUTING VETS – Under a Grand US Flag, Fabens NJROTC cadets present the Arch of Swords for Veterans as their service was honored at Fabens Veterans Park.

Fabens students honor vets

By Denise Peña
 Special to the Courier

FABENS – Fabens ISD students honored veterans on Friday, November 9 at the district's annual Veterans Day Ceremony held at Fabens' Veterans Park. Approximately 56 veterans were announced along with the military branch of service and given a certificate of appreciation. Fabens graduate and current owner and editor-in-chief of the El Paso Herald Chris Babcock served as the keynote speaker.

The ceremony was a community joint effort to show appreciation to those who have served or are currently serving in the nation's military. In addition to Fabens ISD administrators and

students, El Paso County Commissioner Vince Perez, El Paso County Water Control and Improvement Board President Magda Flores were among the speakers who thanked veterans for their service.

A helicopter fly over and law enforcement siren salute concluded the ceremony. The Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas National Guard, El Paso County Sheriff's Department and U.S. Border Patrol were among the agencies represented.

Veterans were then invited to breakfast held inside the Isaac Camacho Building.

"I think it's nice to take the time to honor our veterans," senior Arlina Trujillo said. "They took time from their lives to serve for our country. It's the very least we could do to show our gratitude."

Solis

From Page 1

Southwest, the El Paso County Civil Service Commission, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, Inc. and numerous others.

EPCC will begin accepting applications to fill the remainder of the term from interested residents from District 4 immediately. Application information can be found online at the College

District's website: www.epcc.edu or can be picked up at the President's Office, located at 9050 Viscount Blvd., Suite A131 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Applications must be received in the President's Office no later than 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time on Monday, November 26, 2018. Please note that EPCC will be closed on November 12th, 22nd and 23rd in observance of institutional holidays.

For more information on the application process, contact Pamela Payne at (915) 831-6511.

No, Trump is not diminished

Midterm losses typically humble a sitting president of the United States, but Donald Trump is beyond humbling.

He is the most unbowed president ever to lose a house of Congress. Anyone who thought Trump would be taken down a notch, even by a more stinging electoral rebuke, doesn't know the man. He will remain the ringmaster of American politics until the day, presumably in January 2021 or 2025, when he gets on Marine One for the last time.

He made the midterms about him, because, really, what else would he make them about? Trump will never lose his interest in airtime, or the ratings. He boasted at a rally that, thanks to him, interest in the midterms was running higher than ever. And he was right.

Even if Democrats had a larger victory, on the scale of the Republican sweep in 1994, it would be impossible to imagine Trump getting upstaged.

His 90-minute post-election Q&A in the East Room of the White House was expansive, combative, boastful, gripping, outlandish, conciliatory, amusing – and unlike any postelection news conference we've ever seen (even without Trump mentioning, by the by, that he

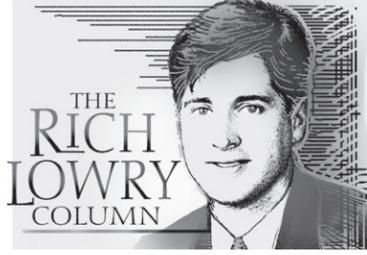
was firing his attorney general).

The press loved every minute of it, practically begging him to keep going. The perverse symbiotic relationship between Trump and the media, so key to the success of both, is alive and well.

According to Trump, the election wasn't a "thumpin'" or "shellacking" – George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's words for their own setbacks – it was a personal victory that had been blighted by some Republicans not sufficiently embracing him. He proceeded to mock by name fellow Republicans who had lost, in another presidential first.

Trump has legitimate bragging rights: The Republican showing in the Senate was strong. His political base is still there for him, and in many key statewide races, there for the candidate he endorsed and stumped for. His rallies are still a hot ticket. He now has a cadre of allies, like newly elected Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, whom he basically created.

Alienating traditional Republican voters in the suburbs, of course, comes with a real cost. For one thing, it hands Democrats a constituency spread throughout the country, as demonstrated by the GOP carnage in widely dispersed House races.



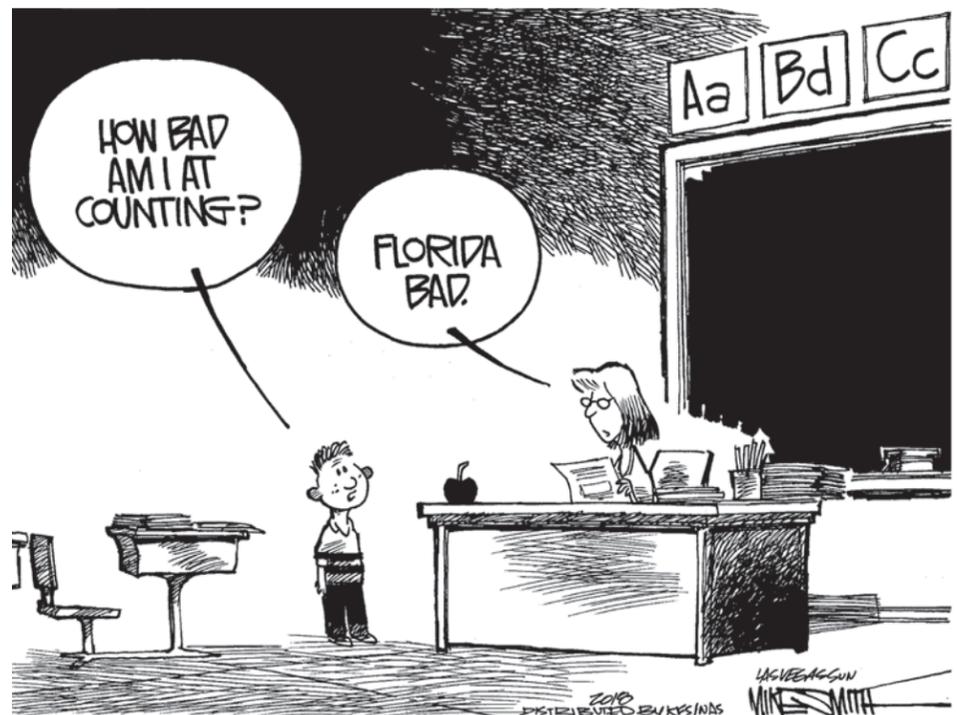
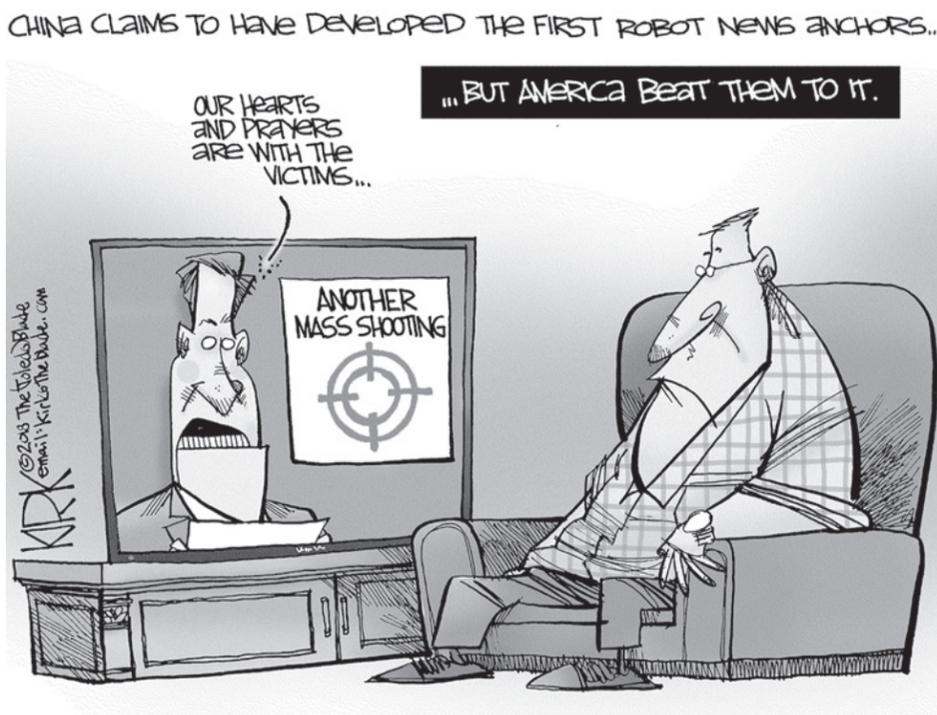
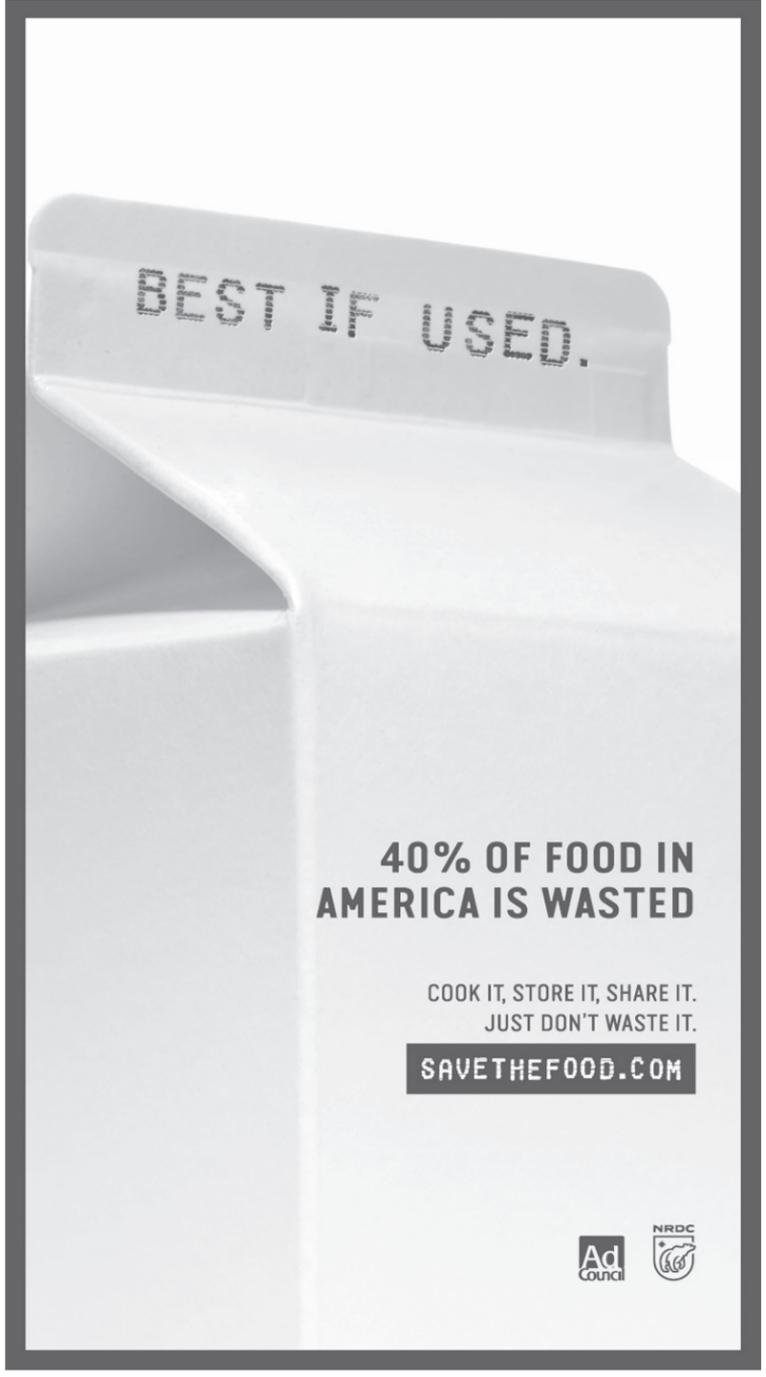
But, for Trump's purposes, the GOP's strength in Florida, Ohio and Iowa suggests that, all things being equal, key pieces of his 2016 electoral map are still ripe for the picking in 2020.

Losing the House is a blow, not so much because it stalls Trump's congressional agenda (there wasn't going to be much of one), but because he now has an adversary with subpoena power.

Investigative conflict looms. The subject matter will be most unwelcome to Trump, including his tax returns and his businesses. The fight won't be. It will be high-stakes combat of the sort that he thrives on, the more intense, perilous and dramatic, the better. Because he will be at the center of it.

Trump's genius at keeping our interest is undimmed, whether we are appalled, energized or entertained. He's so far avoided a fate worse than electoral setbacks – getting tuned out.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2018 by King Features Synd., Inc.



Briefs

From Page 1

By attending a CAE institution like EPCC, students have the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge and abilities to protect and defend our nation's infrastructure. According to Tony Vargas, EPCC Regional Cisco Networking Academy Director, there are more than

300,000 cyber security related jobs that go unfilled each year. Consequently, there is a significant workforce demand in this field and EPCC is preparing students to fill these high-demand jobs. "EPCC has received this five-year designation beginning with the Fall 2018 semester. This will provide EPCC Information Technology students a strong resume for any job that requires knowledge

and skills in Cybersecurity," Vargas said. Students who study cybersecurity learn skills needed to protect information systems vital for national security, commercial networks, and critical information infrastructure in the private and public sectors. The work they do also protects people and businesses from cybercrime and cyberattacks

- Jim Heiney

Taxes

From Page 1

takeaways is that the (Texas) Legislature isn't adequately funding our schools," said Chandra Villanueva, economic opportunity program director for the Center for Public Policy Priorities, an Austin-based nonprofit that researches and advocates for various Texas policy initiatives.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

• It was way back in the 19th century that American author and philosopher Henry David Thoreau made the following sage observation: "Men have become the tools of their tools."

• If you were asked to name the U.S. state that is geographically closest to the continent of Africa, you might be tempted to say Florida. You'd be wrong, though; the closest state is actually Maine.

• If you're like most parents, at some point you've been shocked by how quickly your kids outgrow things - especially shoes. What may be an annoyance in a developed country is a major problem in undeveloped areas of the world; Kenton Lee is working on changing that. As a volunteer in an orphanage in Kenya, he noticed that many children had the toes cut out of their shoes just so they could fit in their growing feet. After returning home, Lee developed an adjustable sandal that can grow with a child, increasing up to five sizes using a system of snaps. Although the shoe is only available to nonprofits that send them to organizations in need, domestic demand is increasing. If you're a parent sick of buying seemingly endless pairs of new shoes, you'll be glad to hear that Lee and his team are working on a commercial version.

• It was beloved British author (and, of course, creator of Sherlock Holmes), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who introduced the sport of skiing to Switzerland, thereby transforming that snowy country into a premier tourist destination.

Thought for the Day: "The reason that adulation is not displeasing is that, though untrue, it shows one to be of consequence enough, in one way or other, to induce people to lie."

- Lord Byron

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For free information about preventing type 2 diabetes, visit www.YourDiabetesInfo.org or call 1-888-693-NDEP (6337); TTY: 1-866-569-1162.



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A message from the National Diabetes Education Program, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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CryptoQuip Answer

That guy doesn't eat nearly as much roughage as he claims. He's definitely a fiber fibber.

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• On Dec. 3, 1967, Lewis Washkansky, 53, receives the first human heart transplant, in Cape Town, South Africa. He was given drugs to keep his body from rejecting the heart, but died 18 days later.

• On Dec. 4, 1952, heavy smog begins to hover over London. Smoke, soot and sulfur dioxide from the area's industries and cars were trapped by a high-pressure air mass, leading to the deaths of at least 4,000 people, many of whom died in their sleep.

• On Dec. 5, 1941, John Steinbeck's nonfiction book "The Sea of Cortez" is published. The book reflects Steinbeck's serious study of marine biology. He would later use his knowledge of the sea and its creatures in creating Doc, the marine biologist in "Cannery Row" (1945).

• On Dec. 6, 1933, a federal judge rules that "Ulysses" by James Joyce is not obscene. The book had been banned in both the United States and England when it came out in 1922. Three years earlier, its serialization in an American review had been cut short by the U.S. Post Office.

• On Dec. 7, 1982, the first execution by lethal injection takes place in Texas, when Charles Brooks Jr. receives a fatal dose of a barbiturate by intravenous injection.

• On Dec. 8, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln offers his conciliatory plan for reunification of the United States with his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction. It allowed for a full pardon for and restoration of property to all engaged in the rebellion with the exception of the highest Confederate officials and military leaders.

• On Dec. 9, 1992, nearly 2,000 U.S. Marines arrive in Mogadishu, Somalia, to spearhead a multinational force aimed at restoring order in the conflict-ridden country. In October 1993, rebels shot down two U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopters and killed 18 American soldiers.

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Is latest court decision the final hurdle for downtown arena or...

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It feels as if decades have gone by since the idea of a big shiny new arena was being considered for the city of El Paso.

It seems even longer since El Pasoans overwhelmingly voted on funding the construction of an arena in downtown El Paso.

Back in 2012, it seemed like everybody, including grandma, was in favor of an arena being built here.

Everybody was complaining about big acts and bands and productions always bypassing El Paso because we just didn't have the venue to host such things.

You always heard about big bands touring Austin and Dallas and San Antonio and Albuquerque and Phoenix and Denver and San Diego.

Hey wait a second! There was a fairly big city the band just jumped over – El Paso.

El Pasoans just accepted the fact that if they wanted see a big-name concert, they'd just have to hop a plane or drive to another city.

Everything seemed to change back

in 2012, when El Paso voted to build an arena worthy of hosting those big events.

Of course there are those who are always against any progress that may come El Paso's way.

Look at how many people who were opposed to the El Paso Chihuahuas. I'd say that idea turned out to be a pretty good one.

In fact, instead of a bad idea, it turned out to be one of the best things El Paso has to offer.

Remember the complaints – downtown was a horrible location because of the congestion, there was no road access to the ballpark, there wasn't enough parking, the tickets were too expensive, and on and on.

Why El Paso is so afraid of change is a mystery to me.

Do you remember there were people who demonstrated against the demolition of the Asarco smokestacks? When's the last time you even thought about those ugly things?

Anyway, the big controversy about the arena is what is considered the most important thing in real estate, location, location, location.

When the city decided to build the arena on the Duranguito site of downtown, some in the area protested having to move. Of course others in the area who have moved say it was the best thing that ever happened to them.

But court fights and legal battles against the site have stalled construction of the building and many were beginning to lose interest in the project.

The biggest kicker of all came when an Austin judge made the absurd decision that the arena could not host sports because "sports" wasn't specified in the original description of the venue.

As if the words "multi-purpose" and "entertainment" weren't enough.

I'm sure the original description didn't include "dog shows" or "art exhibits" or "off-broadway musicals" or "circus acts" or "fashion shows," either.

But all those do fall under "multi-purpose" and "entertainment."

In one of the first sensible decisions in some time concerning this whole mess, an appellate judge recently declared that sporting events indeed could be held at the arena.

Duh, no kidding?

That decision could be the one that

finally gets the ball rolling on this long-overdue project.

It's obvious why the city chose the site for the arena. The city receives a large incentive for building in Duranguito, which within 1,000 feet of the convention center, which will enable the city to possibly receive approximately \$25 million in tax rebates from the state over a 10-year period.

City officials have also said that the decision is in line with the other investments the city has been making, like the street car tracks running along Santa Fe, the convention center, the baseball stadium as well as the soon-to-be-renovated Camino Real hotel.

Of course there are already new court filings to block any demolition in the area, but it's apparent that will be overturned soon and construction should finally begin sometime in 2019.

I'm afraid that waiting so long has caused the cost of building such an arena much higher than it was a few years ago.

Does that mean El Paso will get a much smaller venue that it was going to get?

If so, won't those big acts just continue to pass us by?

Super Crossword

- MANY MEANINGS ACROSS**
- 1 Build up
 - 6 Features of gymnasts' horses
 - 13 With a single flat, musically
 - 16 Tam or fez
 - 19 Start a web session
 - 20 "Seriously!"
 - 21 Measure in Ohm's law
 - 23 See 112-Across
 - 25 Metallic marble
 - 26 German GM subsidiary
 - 27 Ernie of the PGA Tour
 - 29 Put forth, as effort
 - 30 See 112-Across
 - 38 Lake vessel
 - 39 "I Go _" (Peter Allen song)
 - 40 Hindu masters
 - 41 Spies, e.g.
 - 43 Kind of violet
 - 45 _ kwon do
 - 46 With 87-Down, collectively
 - 49 TV's Arnaz
 - 50 See 112-Across
 - 55 Singer King of "Tapestry"
 - 57 Barmaid on "Cheers"
 - 58 Name of five Norse kings
 - 59 Profs.' helpers
 - 62 "Man" or "12" lead-in
 - 63 Gulf War missiles
 - 65 Mold, as clay
 - 66 See 112-Across
 - 72 "The Wild Swans at _" (poem by Yeats)
 - 73 Lawyer on "Ally McBeal"
 - 74 H.S. math class
 - 75 Blaster's stuff
 - 76 Like much music of the '90s
 - 77 "You _ both!"
 - 79 Many a Muslim
 - 82 See 112-Across
 - 86 Debussy's "Clair de _"
 - 90 Bundy and Unser
 - 91 "Mazel _"
 - 92 " _ is human..."
 - 93 Like a perfect place
 - 95 School skipper
 - 98 Like back-in-fashion 12-Down
 - 100 Buddy
 - 101 See 112-Across
 - 106 Microsoft ad campaign
 - 107 Ear-relevant prefix
 - 108 Paula once on CNN
 - 109 Sleep-inducing drug
 - 112 Not sharp, as a picture on a screen
 - (and what 23-, 30-, 50-, 66-, 82- and 101-Across are, literally)
 - 120 Comic actress
 - Wiig
 - 121 Alcohol in liquor
 - 122 Comaneci of gymnastics
 - 123 DOS part: Abbr.
 - 124 "Assuredly!"
 - 125 Wet outside
 - 126 Clearing in the woods
- DOWN**
- 1 Alien of TV
 - 2 Stooge of TV
 - 3 Get ripper
 - 4 Very wise
 - 5 Brief excerpt
 - 6 Little oinker
 - 7 "Holy cow!," in a text
 - 8 Singer Tillis
 - 9 _ Zedong
 - 10 Brian of electronica
 - 11 Treated with calcium compounds
 - 12 Fashion trends
 - 13 ICU sights
 - 14 " _ fair!"
 - 15 More woolly
 - 16 Novelist Carr
 - 17 "It's _" (delivery cry)
 - 18 Calvin of golf
 - 22 Dallas locale
 - 24 " _ Blu Dipinto di Blu"
 - 101-Across are, literally)
 - 28 Dallas-to-Austin dir.
 - 30 Gerbil holder
 - 31 Singles
 - 32 "Fiddler on the Roof" star
 - 33 Obliterate
 - 34 Quick note
 - 35 Ned who manages the Royals
 - 36 Plate for the Eucharist
 - 37 Picture
 - 38 Blackguard
 - 42 Scuffle
 - 44 "Hey, bro"
 - 46 Phrase after "cafe"
 - 47 Fasten with a click
 - 48 Onset
 - 51 Nessie's waters
 - 52 Lunar effect
 - 53 Door fixture
 - 54 Big-top cries
 - 56 Church area
 - 59 Port near Seattle
 - 60 Musically keyless
 - 61 Artists' wear
 - 63 Tight-lipped
 - 64 Quarter of M
 - 65 USMC rank
 - 67 Merrie _ England
 - 68 Inner: Prefix
 - 69 Do, _ fa...
 - 70 Sprinkle, say
 - 71 Skip over
 - 77 Love, to Gigi
 - 78 Kim of "Pal Joey"
 - 79 Kinda maybe
 - 80 Rush
 - 81 Rudimentary
 - 83 Horrible thing
 - 84 Like slasher films
 - 85 Look like
 - 87 See 46-Across
 - 88 Nearly here
 - 89 Prefix with law or chic
 - 94 Debonair
 - 95 Sorts
 - 96 Cpl., for one
 - 97 Epithets
 - 99 How slimy stuff seeps
 - 101 Tiny wounds
 - 102 University in Atlanta
 - 103 Seasonally dry ravines
 - 104 Molar, e.g.
 - 105 Tore
 - 110 Born, to Gigi
 - 111 Lt.'s inferior
 - 113 " _ is it?"
 - 114 Crow relative
 - 115 Phenyl ender
 - 116 FWIW part
 - 117 Ore- _ (food brand)
 - 118 Meteor tail?
 - 119 Scots' "no"

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59	60	61			62														
66					67				68	69				70	71				
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106																			
109																			
120																			
123																			

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



Does hole on heart increase stroke risk?

DEAR DR. ROACH: Articles on strokes or TIAs rarely mention that they can be caused by a congenital heart defect. I had a family member with a patent foramen ovale, found at age 54, after he'd had several strokes. He had surgery to repair it and has been well ever since. I would like to know why a PFO isn't often mentioned or considered. When I see an obituary for a young person who died suddenly, I wonder if there was an undiagnosed hole in the person's heart. One in 6 people has a hole in the heart; that is a high percentage. I think the public should be educated and made aware of this congenital condition. — J.R.



A patent foramen ovale (which literally means “open oval-shaped window”) is a remnant of our embryology. The foramen ovale is a small open flap that is necessary to send oxygenated blood from the placenta to the body of the developing fetus. In about 25 percent of people (that's 1 in 4, even higher than you thought), the “hole” doesn't completely close. PFO is the most common of the “holes” in the heart (ventricular septal defect and atrial septal defects are the other common ones).

A stroke is caused by the death of brain cells. PFOs are certainly implicated in strokes. In general, the younger and healthier the person, the more likely it is that a “cryptogenic” stroke (one with no obvious cause) may be due to a PFO. What is likely is that a blood clot can pass through the foramen ovale and go to the brain's blood vessel, blocking off blood supply to an area of the brain, causing a stroke.

The absolute increase in stroke risk is hard to quantify. For people who have never had a stroke, it is generally not recommended to close the PFO. This surgery has risks, and these risks probably outweigh the small potential benefit. For people who have had a stroke, the risk of recurrent stroke from PFO is higher. One group has created a model (the RoPE score) to help predict the likelihood of recurrent stroke. This can help the clinician examine the benefits of surgical repair of the PFO. Surgery is most likely to benefit younger people without traditional risk factors for stroke.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I heard that letting vinegar touch your skin causes arthritis. Is there any danger in using vinegar as a

See HEALTH, Page 8

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Health

From Page 7

cleaning agent? – N.J.A.

I often get asked whether apple cider vinegar cures arthritis (it doesn't) or can help relieve symptoms (it might, but there is no good evidence that it does), but I have never heard anyone ask about vinegar touching the skin causing internal problems. Vinegar is a mild acid (most are about 5 percent acetic acid), which normally isn't particularly irritating to the skin, and shouldn't be absorbed. Even if it were, acetic acid is found in the

body (it's an important molecule in several metabolic pathways), and your body can use it as an energy source. There is no reason to be concerned about being exposed to household vinegar.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. To view and order health pamphlets, visit www.rbmamall.com, or write to Good Health, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2018 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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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: R equals H

KRUK CJZ LHDNO'K DUK ODUQSZ
 UN EJTR QHJCRUCD UN RD
 TSUBEN. RD'N LDGBOBKDSZ U
 GBFDQ GBFFDQ.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

2				8				3
		3	6			4		
	6				9		7	
		2	7					6
4				5				2
	1				3	9		
	5		3			7		
		1		6			4	
3		9			8			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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Homelessness down, but still a problem



by Freddy Groves

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) says that overall veteran homelessness is down 5.4 percent this year, half of what it was in 2010. That still leaves a lot of veterans without a place to call home.

In some states the homeless rate has actually increased. Montana, for example, saw a rise of 20 percent in the past two years. New Mexico was up a whopping 35.5 percent, and New Hampshire rose 16.3 percent.

Not only is homelessness among veterans not completely fixed, but winter is here. Consider whether you can help. Even though most large towns have homeless shelters, not all veterans want to stay in one. Or perhaps the shelter rules say they must leave during daytime hours.

Your first step is to call local shelters. Ask about their veteran population and join up with crews that go out into the community seeking veterans

who need help. Assistance can include bringing them in from the cold during daytime hours, hooking them up with veterans services, giving them warm coats and blankets, or even handing out hot coffee and sandwiches.

You might run into objections to going into a shelter. Example: Maybe a veteran has a dog. Finding a rescue foster home for the dog might convince the veteran to go into a shelter where he or she will be closer to available services. Your argument can be that the sooner the veteran gets stable housing, the faster he can be reunited with his pooch.

If you want to help homeless veterans, keep these two websites handy: The Homeless Assistant (www.thehomelessassistant.com) and Homeless Accommodation (www.homelessaccommodation.com). Their info is accurate and helpful for my state and town, so ideally it's just as accurate for yours. Keep this number in your wallet: Homeless veteran services at the VA 1-877-424-3838.

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

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

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
 ★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		×		24
×		×		×	
	-		×		15
+		-		+	
	÷		+		12
26		26		14	

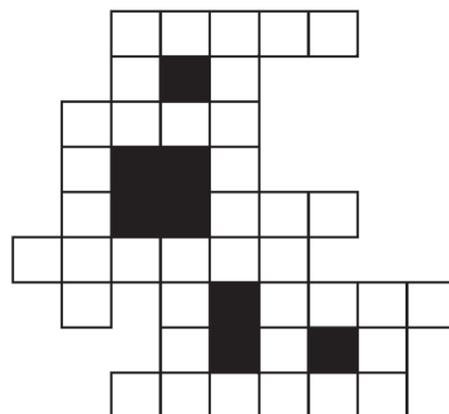
1 2 3 3 4 5 6 8 9

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Answer Page 4



- OXL
- ♥ LOSMER
- ♥ LEMBA
- FSLE
- LIXFUN
- OAD
- NOAX
- ♥ ELSEA
- ♥ ELE
- PAMIAL
- ♥ MERDA
- ABRO



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.



• "We have a cookie-making party every year, and we serve a nice lunch before launching into the cookies. This year, we decided to be very festive and used cookie cutters for napkin rings. They were raved about!"

– B.L. in New Jersey

• "Keep a stack of blank notecards and a pen wherever you like to sit around, like the kitchen table or the end table in the living room. This will make it really easy for you and your kids to write notes to relatives or thank you notes for gifts. A text message or Facebook post is great, but everyone likes a handwritten note."

– T.R. in Ohio

• Jazz up your cookie game with these add-ins: butterscotch morsels, coconut flakes, toasted pine nuts, sea salt, malted milk balls, caramel chunks, salted or honey-roasted peanuts, sour candies, hot chocolate mix, instant coffee granules, crushed cookies or graham crackers.

• "World's Best Mitten Tip: Here's how my mom keeps us in mittens for more than five minutes during the winter. Measure a piece of string or yarn that is as long as your arms' length – with arms stretched out to the sides, fingertip to fingertip, plus 12 inches or so. Secure a mitten to each end of the string – you might have to make a small hole if your mittens are not woven. Now thread them through the sleeves of your favorite coat so that the mittens hang from the arm holes. Secure the middle point of the string to the coat's tag. Now, when you put your coat on, your mittens are there at your hands. If you don't want to wear them, you can tuck them back up in the sleeve. You will not lose them and they stay together."

– M.R. in Minnesota

• Bring back the life of a washable marker that's been dried out. Run the tip under a slow stream of tap water for 60 seconds, then wrap the tip in plastic and cap it. Let sit for an hour.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2018 King Features Synd., Inc.

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