



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Fattest states

With November being National Diabetes Awareness Month and Americans collectively spending nearly \$237 billion per year on obesity-related health costs, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2018's *Fattest States in America* as well as accompanying videos, along with interesting stats about diabetes in its *Facts & Statistics* infographic. To determine which states contribute the most to America's overweight and obesity problem, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 25 key metrics. They range from share of overweight and obese population to sugary-beverage consumption among adolescents to obesity-related health care costs. Texas was the 10th fattest state in this study, ranking:

- 30th – Percent of Overweight Adults;
- 24th – Percent of Obese Adults;
- 2nd – Percent of Obese Children;
- 16th – Percent of Physically Inactive Adults;
- 14th – Percent of Adults with High Cholesterol;
- 28th – Percent of Adults Eating Less than 1 Serving of Fruits/Vegetables per Day;
- 10th – Percent of Adults with Type 2 Diabetes; and
- 25th – Percent of Adults with Hypertension.

Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/fattest-states/16585/> for the full report.

Diabetes Facts & Statistics

- \$327 Billion: Estimated cost of diabetes in the U.S. in 2017 (\$237 billion in direct medical costs, • \$90 billion in nonmedical costs).
- \$9,600: Average annual diabetes-related health care costs for patients.
- 2.3: Number of times by which a diabetes patient's health care costs increase.
- 14 & 18 Years: Reduction in the average male and female type 1 diabetes patient's life expectancy, respectively.

Visit <http://wallethub.com/blog/diabetes-statistics/41253/> for the full infographic.

– Diana Polk

### Equine mischief

A horse at the famed French racetrack,

See BRIEFS, Page 2

*You can never get much of anything done unless you go ahead and do it before you are ready.*

– Quips & Quotes

## School districts' final financial accountability ratings released

By Alfredo Vasquez  
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – Texas Education Agency (TEA) released recently the final 2017-2018 financial accountability evaluations for more than 1,200 school districts and charters across the state, with five of El Paso County's nine school districts receiving an 'A', three earning a 'B', and one receiving a 'F' ratings.

Created by the 77th Texas Legislature in 2001, the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) is designed to encourage public schools to better manage their financial resources to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes, TEA officials explained.

The local school districts that received an 'A', or Superior, rating were Anthony ISD, Clint ISD, San Elizario ISD, Socorro ISD, and Ysleta ISD, according to TEA reports. Earning a 'B', or Above Standard, rating were Canutillo ISD, Tornillo ISD, and El Paso ISD. The lone district to receive a 'F', or Substandard Achievement, rating was Fabens ISD.

The FIRST ratings are calculated using 15 financial indicators, such as administrative cost expenditures; the accuracy of a district or charter's financial information submitted to TEA; and

any financial vulnerabilities or material weaknesses in internal controls as determined by an external auditor, TEA officials stated.

Ratings for 2017-2018 are based on annual financial reports provided to TEA by districts and charters for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The financial accountability system requires TEA to review the audited financial reports from all districts and charters.

A school district or open-enrollment charter is assigned one of four possible letter grades (A, B, C or F), as well as a coinciding financial management rating (Superior, Above Standard Achievement, Meets Standard, or Substandard Achievement).

There are five critical indicators that

result in an automatic F or Substandard Achievement rating should a school district or open-enrollment charter fail in that specific category – regardless of overall score, TEA officials cited.

In addition, FIRST ratings for charter schools operated by a public institution of higher education (IHE) are being assigned for the first time. Based on seven indicators, IHEs are assigned either a Pass or Fail rating. For 2017-2018, every public institution of higher education operating a charter school (7) received a FIRST rating of Pass.

For IHEs, there are two critical indicators that result in an automatic Fail rating should an IHE fail in that specific category – regardless of the overall score.

All school districts and charters are required to report information and financial accountability ratings to parents

See RATINGS, Page 4

### School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST)

Statewide, 99 percent of all Texas school districts and charters earned a successful final rating for 2017-2018. The most recent FIRST ratings are as follows:

Final Rating	Districts	Charters	Total	Pct.
A – Superior	846	118	964	81%
B – Above Standard Achievement	110	23	133	11%
C – Meets Standard	62	16	78	7%
F – Substandard Achievement	4	8	12	1%
Total	1022	165	1,187	100%

## Loya Primary getting new parking lot

By Hector Gonzalez  
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO – Construction is underway for more parking spaces at Lorenzo G. Loya Primary School.

"The need for additional parking became a priority for Loya Primary when the City of San Elizario passed an ordinance that prohibits vehicles from parking adjacent to any public school extending 50 feet passed the school property line," said George Luevano, Director of Support Services at San Elizario ISD. "This means parents can no longer park on the side of the road near or across the primary school. Those who refuse to abide by this ordinance are subject to citations and fines."

To help ease the matter, district personnel met with San Elizario ISD's Board of Trustees and proposed adding more parking to the primary school. After much consideration and review, the Board gave the green light to proceed with the construction project of more parking spaces.

"Approximately 100 new spots will be available for parents," Luevano said. "It is going to cost about \$420,000 and



– Photo courtesy San Elizari ISD

**MORE ACCESS, SAFETY – Parents will soon be able to use a new lot for parking when attending the needs of their children at Lorenzo G. Loya Primary School.**

this money comes from bond savings realized from the original bond projects that were approved by community voters in November 2014."

Ruby Martinez is the mother of a child who attends Loya Primary and she says more parking spaces will make things much easier for her and other parents.

"Every time the school has an awards

assembly, parent-teacher conference, or any other school celebration, parking gets extremely full and it sometimes takes us several minutes trying to find a place to park," Martinez said. "With the upcoming parking lot, we will no longer have to park our vehicles far and make the long walk."

The project is expected to reach completion February of 2019.



# Seniors are targets for telescammers

*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.*

**The office will open again on Monday, December 31, 2018.**

– *John Gramaldi*

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# Why Trump should fear Joe Biden in '20

Joe Biden is a gaffe-prone 75-year-old Washington veteran – who is exactly what Democrats need.

The suburbs have turned against Republicans, but Donald Trump’s working-class base is still with him in a geographic and demographic stand-off that will – absent a game-changer – define the 2020 election.

The play for Democrats should be obvious: Make a serious appeal to Trump’s voters, take back the Blue Wall states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania, and win the presidency. In other words, go with Joe Biden or someone like him with a Midwestern or working-class sensibility (newly re-elected Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota come to mind).

His gruff manner, Catholic faith, Irish ethnic background, union-friendly politics and upbringing in Delaware via Pennsylvania make him as close as the contemporary national Democratic Party gets to a working-class match for the Great Lakes states that Trump stole from it in 2016.

From this juncture, those

states again look absolutely crucial. If the rest of the electoral map stays the same, Democrats need to win all three of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania to take back the White House. Even if they pick off 2016 red states Arizona and Georgia, they still need Michigan or Pennsylvania to get over 270.

Conversely, it’s hard to see where Trump goes and wins new territory to make up for the loss of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Trump didn’t win those three states by much, by about 80,000 votes collectively. More than anything, he depended on running against a Democratic candidate who was unacceptable to working-class whites. Right now, it looks like he needs a repeat performance by the Democrats, and he may well get one.

The Democrats don’t usually do old and familiar, at least not when they win. The last three Democratic presidents, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, were fresh-faced newcomers on the national scene.

And then, there are the party’s



new obsessions. Class has been trumped by race and gender, and as a white male Biden is 0-2. Inequality is now less of a motivator than intersectionality, economic privilege less of a concern than white privilege. This was a stumbling block for the class-obsessed Bernie Sanders last time, and would surely hamper Biden and Sherrod Brown in today’s even more fevered context.

The Democrats are not set up to go with, in the derisive phrase, stale, pale and male. Perhaps they can find another Barack Obama-type candidate who lights up the base while having just enough draw for working-class whites. There also is more than one way to win back the Blue Wall – higher black turnout could make the difference.

But there’s a good chance that Democrats will get consumed by the hot-house dynamic of their nominating process, and select someone who, like those defeated progressive darlings of the midterms – Beto O’Rourke,

See LOWRY, Page 8

## NEW HOUSES

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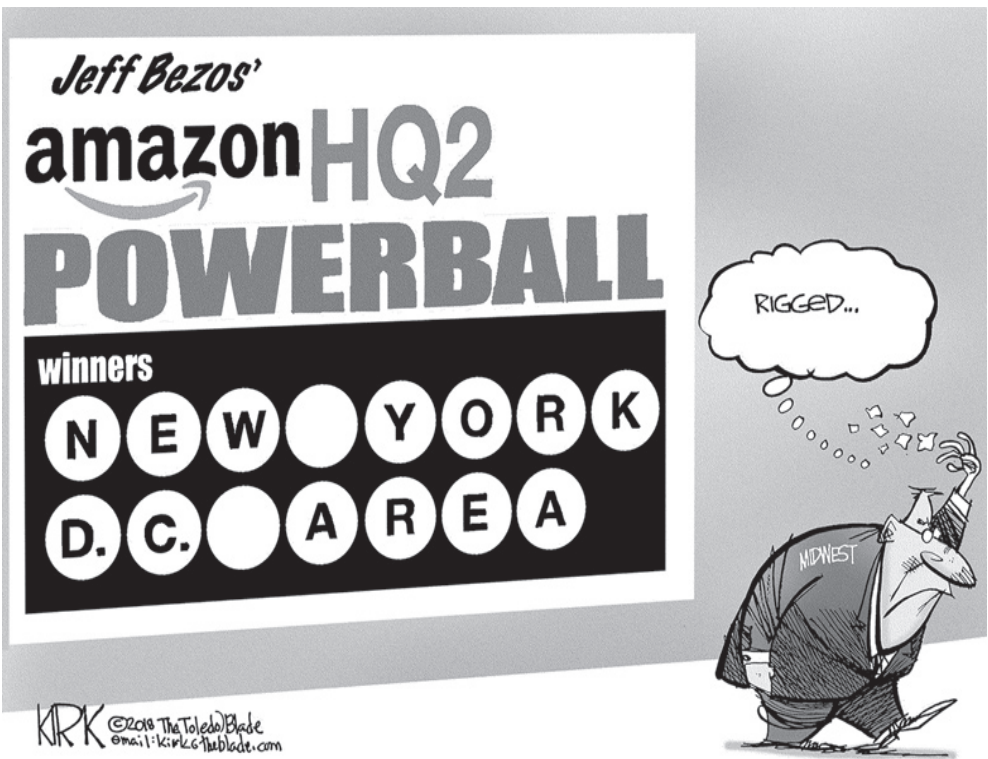


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# Ratings

From Page 1

and taxpayers. In addition, districts and charters must hold a public discussion or hearing regarding its financial report.

TEA formally notified school districts and charters of their preliminary FIRST rating in August. At that time, any district or charter that wished to appeal its rating had an opportunity to submit a written appeal with supporting evidence.

Forty-one school districts

submitted a request for an appeal of their preliminary FIRST rating. After a review of the submitted information, 13 appeals were granted. Additionally, six charters submitted a request for an appeal of their preliminary FIRST rating. After a review of the submitted information, two were granted, TEA officials reported.

For more information about the final 2017-2018 FIRST ratings for all districts and charters (plus view final FIRST ratings from previous years), visit the TEA website at <http://tea.texas.gov/index4.aspx?id=3864>.

# Strange BUT TRUE

**By Samantha Weaver**

- It was Hungarian psychiatrist Thomas Stephen Szasz who made the following sage observation: “If you talk to God, you are praying. If God talks to you, you have schizophrenia.”

- You might be surprised to learn that David Duchovny, best known for his role as Agent Fox Mulder in “The X-Files,” was just a dissertation away from being awarded a doctorate in English literature.

- Did you know that the world's most popular fruit is the banana? It's true: In the United States, people consume more bananas than apples and oranges put together.

• In 2009, a Saudi couple who had spent their honeymoon in Malaysia encountered difficulty on the return flight home. It seems that the groom felt the bride was taking too long in the airport restroom, so he boarded the flight back to Saudi Arabia before she did. When he allowed the plane to leave without her, she insisted on an immediate divorce.

- Most people don't realize that in 1938, Time magazine featured Adolph Hitler on the cover as its Man of the Year.

- Removing one's wedding ring is considered to be a no-no by many. However, one superstition holds that doing so is perfectly acceptable - as long as the ring is being used to ward off a witch.

- Ever wonder why magazine publisher Hugh Hefner chose a rabbit as the symbol of his Playboy magazine? Evidently, when the mogul was a small boy one of his treasured possessions was a blanket with bunnies all over it.

Thought for the Day: "I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat."

– Rebecca West, author  
and journalist

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**San Elizario Independent School District**  
**Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance**  
**Governmental Funds**  
**For the Year Ended June 30, 2018**

Data Control Codes		General Fund	ESEA Title I Part A	Capital Projects	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:						
5700	Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 2,869,518	\$ –	\$ 98,113	\$ 446,761	\$ 3,414,392
5800	State Program Revenues	32,648,008	–	–	1,798,003	34,446,011
5900	Federal Program Revenues	3,965,079	2,267,741	–	1,318,458	7,551,278
5020	Total Revenues	39,482,605	2,267,741	98,113	3,563,222	45,411,681
EXPENDITURES:						
Current:						
0011	Instruction	19,263,640	1,022,165	214,881	1,318,696	21,819,382
0012	Instructional Resources and Media Services	478,807	20,729	–	384	499,920
0013	Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	141,857	983,497	–	324,752	1,450,106
0021	Instructional Leadership	804,966	99,006	–	39,593	943,565
0023	School Leadership	2,325,232	4,924	–	3,372	2,333,528
0031	Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	1,234,376	922	–	513	1,235,811
0032	Social Work Services	176,956	1,340	–	–	178,296
0033	Health Services	507,776	84,602	–	–	592,378
0034	Student (Pupil) Transportation	1,802,852	–	–	–	1,802,852
0035	Food Services	3,398,558	–	–	70,261	3,468,819
0036	Extracurricular Activities	1,086,963	–	130,364	135,066	1,352,393
0041	General Administration	1,753,027	–	–	–	1,753,027
0051	Facilities Maintenance and Operations	4,663,187	–	358,467	–	5,021,654
0052	Security and Monitoring Services	1,057,412	–	7,440	–	1,064,852
0053	Data Processing Services	1,068,340	–	73,305	–	1,141,645
0061	Community Services	64,416	50,556	–	1,284	116,256
Debt Service:						
0071	Debt Service - Principal on Long Term Debt	851,000	–	–	495,000	1,346,000
0072	Debt Service - Interest on Long Term Debt	148,311	–	–	1,185,550	1,333,861
0073	Debt Service - Bond Issuance Cost and Fees	400	–	–	400	800
Capital Outlay:						
0081	Facilities Aquisition and Construction	–	–	3,486,933	–	3,486,933
Intergovernmental:						
0099	Other Intergovernmental Charges	32,714	–	–	–	32,714
6030	Total Expenditures	40,860,790	2,267,741	4,271,390	3,574,871	50,974,792
1100	Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	(1,378,185)	–	(4,173,277)	(11,649)	(5,563,111)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)						
7912	Sale of Real and Personal Property	35,882	–	–	–	35,882
1200	Net Change in Fund Balances	(1,342,303)	–	(4,173,277)	(11,649)	(5,527,229)
0100	Fund Balance – July 1 (Beginning)	16,435,832	–	9,066,344	838,797	26,340,973
3000	Fund Balance – June 30 (Ending)	\$ 15,093,529	\$ –	\$ 4,893,067	\$ 827,148	\$ 20,813,744

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

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# CryptoQuip Answer

If a legendary sea creature began using the doorbell more often, I'd say it's the Knock Less Monster.

8	+	7	×	1	15
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1	+	3	×	4	16
+		−		×	
9	−	6	×	5	15
17		15		20	







# The good and the bad go hand-in-hand with UTEP sports

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

As the common phrase goes, “I’ve got good news and I’ve got bad news.”

The good news is that mercifully, the 2018 UTEP football season came to a close last weekend.

The UTEP Miners lost to Southern Mississippi 39-7, to finish the season with a 1-11 record.

Sure it was a very disappointing season. What could anybody really expect? A vast majority of the players were returning from what all the experts considered to be the worst team in the country in 2017.

There was a lot of optimism, thanks to Jim Senter, UTEP’s new athletics director. But the reality is that going from worst-to-first (we’d even take worst-to-mediocre), takes time.

Turnarounds like that don’t usually happen from one year to the next. And it certainly didn’t happen this year.

But there’s no doubt that new coach Dana Dimel had the team playing better than last year. They may not have won many games, but they were far more competitive.

I think the first order of business for next season is to find a quarterback who can see a receiver down field and actually hit him in stride.

As we saw all season, the Miners couldn’t put any kind of offense together. And that’s too bad because the defense actually played very well.

Yes, the UTEP Miners have become the Cleveland Browns of college football, winning just 1 of their last 24 games. But most fans realize that better things are coming.

At least that’s what their hoping for.

Oh, I almost forgot, there was also some bad news.

The bad news is after sitting through a dismal college football season, UTEP fans are about to do the same for basketball.

Just like football, fans were very optimistic about the upcoming basketball season.

Because, c’mon, we all know that the UTEP basketball season is one of the most exciting things El Pasoans experience every year.

But just like football, basketball fans are going to have to sit through some very disappointing evenings.

And it’s not hard to see why. The Miners, who are only playing eight players consistently, are made up of one senior, three sophomores, and four freshmen.

The Miners lost to New Mexico State by 27 points and to Arizona by 33. And then they struggled to beat Div. II Eastern New Mexico 66-59.

It looks like it’s going to be a struggle for the Miners to come up with double digit wins this

season. They don’t have the depth or the height to compete night-in and night-out with Conference USA members.

But that’s only temporary. New head coach Rodney Terry has the bulk of his better players coming in next season.

That’s when the Miners will have the depth and the strength inside to muscle with other league members. Right now the numbers just aren’t there.

We saw the Sun Bowl numbers dip to around 10,000 fans toward the end of the football season. That’s a little frightening.

Heck, even when Mike Price’s teams were hovering around the .500 mark, you could count on at least 32,000 fans to show up and watch a competitive game.

Of course when the Miners were contending for conference titles in basketball, the Don Haskins Center was either sold out or pretty close to capacity.

Either way, you could count on 10,000-11,000 Minner maniacs screaming their

lungs out.

This season, the average attendance at basketball games will be between 5,000-6,000 fans. That’s a far cry from the good old days.

But the best news of all is that it appears that the attendance numbers should be going up in the years to come.


Two reasons – first, there’s nowhere else to go; and second, recruiting has been good for both sports. Little by little, Dimel and Terry will start to create their respective teams in their own images.

And with wins, comes fans. But winning takes time.

UTEP fans will have to sit through a miserable basketball season before they can experience what they’re used to at the Haskins Center.

They say that patience is a virtue. With UTEP athletics, it’s a necessity.

And here’s another saying, “good things come to those who wait.”



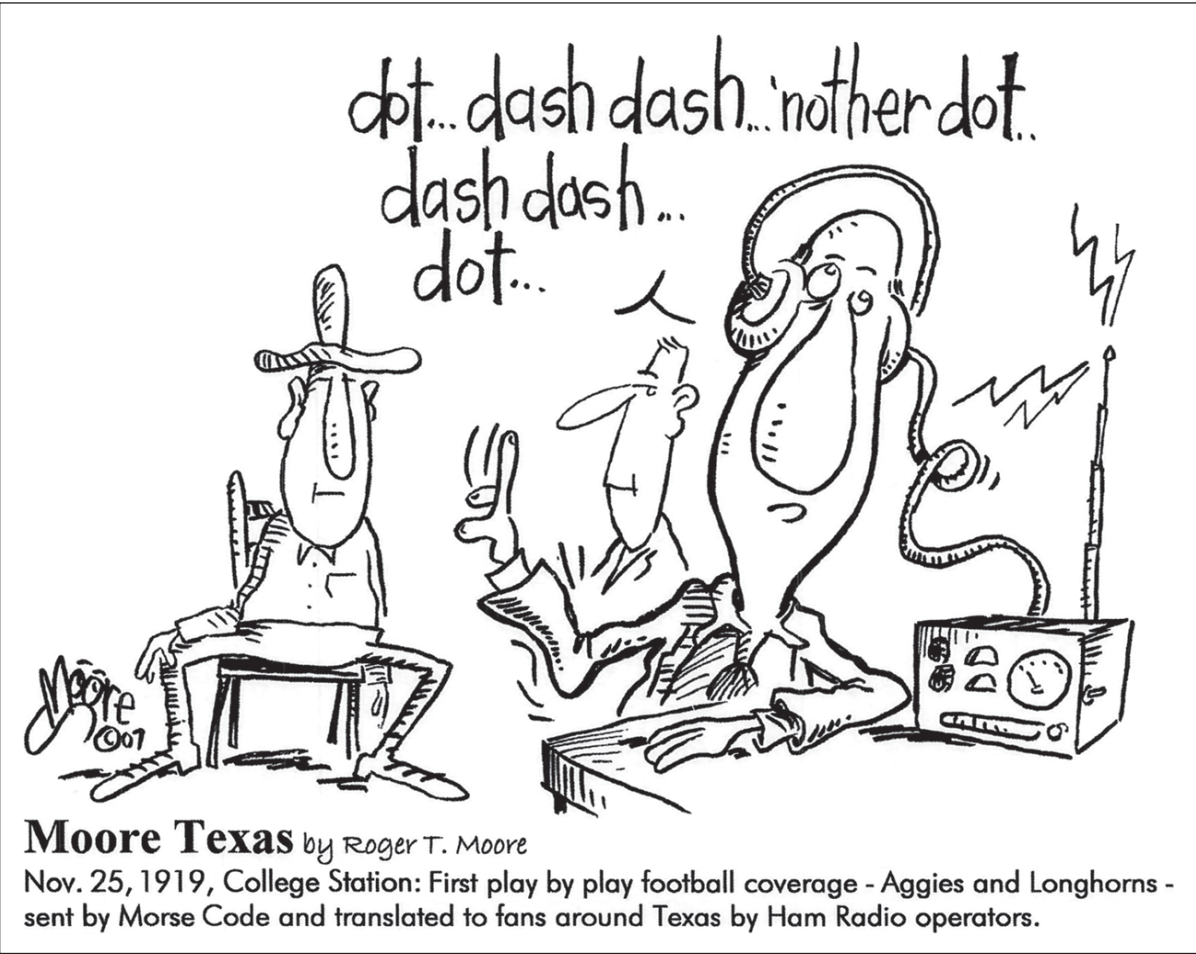
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## Super Crossword

**NATURALLY SWEET**  
**MELANGE**  
**ACROSS**  
1 Temporarily trendy things  
5 Huge chasm  
10 Nile serpents  
14 Navajo neighbors  
19 "Oh, gotcha"  
20 Flip (out)  
21 Mets' old home  
22 Blue color of the clear 9-Down  
23 Eau de vie applied to a head injury to reduce swelling?  
25 Having the same figure as Sheriff Wyatt?  
27 Verb suffix in London  
28 Vast age  
29 Average golf scores  
30 Kindhearted  
31 Clutch, e.g.  
33 Sets of two  
37 Gyro holder  
39 "Fish Magic" painter Paul  
40 Drink you can only get by contacting someone by beeper?  
43 See 8-Down  
45 Her cow was notorious  
46 Bite slightly  
47 Q-V linkup  
49 Designer Schiaparelli and others  
54 Jethro \_ (rock band)

56 Strong Dutch gin that's inexpensive?  
59 "The gloves are off!"  
62 Like alfresco events  
64 Obedient dogs, maybe  
65 Rival of HBO  
66 Male bud  
67 Bert's bud  
69 14th-century Russian ruler  
70 Golf club for extremely long shots?  
74 Unit for measuring the force of some PC picture files?  
77 "I pass," in cards  
78 Cantina cooking pots  
82 Chast of cartoons  
83 The sun, e.g.  
84 Negatively charged, as an atom  
86 Banned diet-drug combo  
88 Major alarm  
90 Pie topping that originated in Edison's lab?  
92 Base for poi  
94 Lung, for one  
95 Mail, e.g.  
96 Lacerate  
98 Taking the middle out of  
102 Santa \_ (some hot winds)  
104 Surrounded by a spicy Indian condiment?

107 Grungy sort  
111 Fierce whale  
113 Tatum with an Oscar  
114 Post office gizmo  
115 Sushi condiment  
117 Like hand-me-downs  
119 Altar vow  
121 Vitamin no.  
122 Gusto shown by a wild Asian ass?  
124 Apt alternate title for this puzzle  
128 Did a fall yard chore  
129 "I concur!"  
130 Circus site  
131 Concept, in Soissons  
132 Clock parts  
133 Org. against dogfights  
134 Shindig  
135 Unhip type

### DOWN

1 Painter Fra \_ Lippi  
2 Predictably  
3 Split up, as a corporation  
4 Summer and fall mo.  
5 "Hair" hairdo  
6 Marlon of movies  
7 Appetite  
8 With 43-Across, tear-jerking tune  
9 Pilot's milieu  
10 Far offshore  
11 On the ball  
12 Soldiers on

13 Undermine  
14 Taunting cry  
15 County in Missouri  
16 Iris part  
17 Dunne of old Hollywood  
18 Bog plant  
24 Trip during a kegger, say  
26 Eye carefully  
29 Chi-omega link  
32 1954-77 treaty gp.  
34 Over there, old-style  
35 Wonderland visitor  
36 Wife of Niles on "Frasier"  
38 Feel  
41 1995-2013 Arizona senator Jon  
42 Free of fluid  
44 Capital of Suisse  
48 Bit of parsley  
50 Onetime TV legal drama  
51 Shelled out for  
52 Deduced, not observed  
53 Mil. draft inits.  
55 British noble  
57 Stirrup site  
58 Big name in ketchup  
59 Suffix with capital  
60 Paint diluter  
61 Going it alone  
63 \_ stick  
66 Obfuscate  
68 St. Pat's isle  
71 Virus in 2014 news  
72 Ryder of "Black

Swan"  
73 Puckish  
75 Courier, e.g.  
76 "Grimm" network  
79 \_ helping hand  
80 Film director Lee  
81 Goad  
84 "Ti \_" (Italian "I love you")  
85 French film award  
87 Poet Heinrich  
88 Bragging about  
89 Vena cava neighbor  
91 Cry for help  
93 Wilhelm's "Woe is me!"  
97 Links org. since 1916  
99 Trespass  
100 Less well-off  
101 Whirled  
103 Film genre  
105 In vogue, in the '60s  
106 Customer  
107 Fencing tool  
108 Oahu porch  
109 Port in Japan  
110 Deli nosh  
112 Good thing  
116 Nap spots  
118 Peak in Sicily  
120 Attack time in WWII  
123 Tase, e.g.  
124 Road guide  
125 Nest egg inits.  
126 Reagan-era teen, e.g.  
127 \_ Tin Tin

Answer Page 4

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128							129					130						131		
132						133						134						135		



Comix

OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



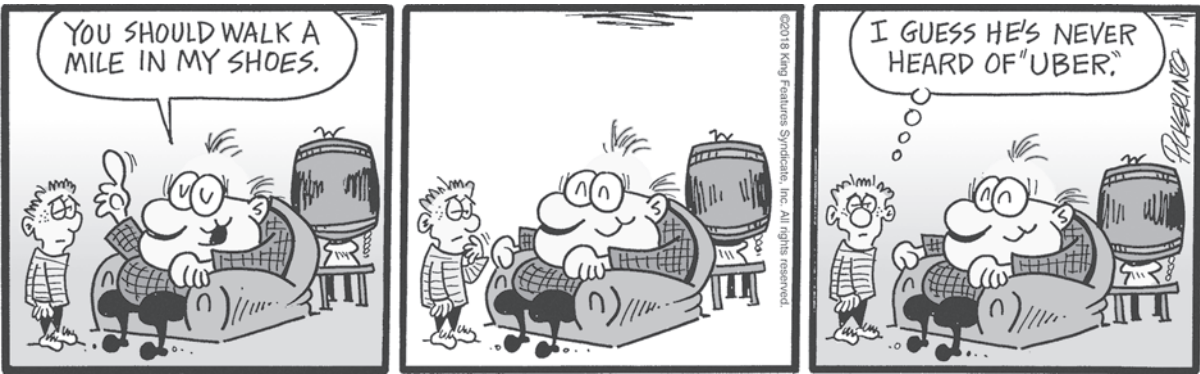
AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



Platelet donations

are perfectly safe

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am writing about platelet donations. As a way of giving back, I donate platelets. I was wondering if there is a time that a person should stop donating, based on age or difficulty. I am 61 years old, and the past three times I've donated, I felt uncomfortable in some way. Either my arm or wrist hurt, or I had a feeling of malaise during the donating process. One time, I was told that my platelet count was on the low side, but it was not any danger to my well-being. I feel well immediately afterward and do not have health issues, so my concern is whether this is somehow detrimental to my own health as I age. – S.B.



Platelet donation generally is a very well-tolerated procedure. The platelets are removed from the donor's blood via a process called apheresis; a centrifuge separates the blood into four components: plasma (containing proteins), platelets, white blood cells and red blood cells. For platelet donors, just the platelets are removed, and the rest of the blood components are returned to the donor.

In order to keep the blood from clotting inside the machine, sodium citrate is added to the apheresis machine. This reduces the calcium, which is needed for blood clotting. However, some people can develop symptoms of low calcium during the apheresis. This can be treated by slowing the rate of donation, or by taking some oral calcium before donating. More-severe cases might require giving intravenous calcium to the patient via another IV catheter.

The Food and Drug Administration recommends that people make no more than 24 donations per year, but there is good evidence that platelet donation is safe. I congratulate you on being a community-minded citizen, and I can reassure you that you have very little short-term risk and essentially zero long-term risk from donating platelets, whatever your age. Donate as often as is comfortable, and try taking a calcium supplement before donating.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have taken 5 mg zolpidem (Ambien) nightly for about three years. My doctor seems to think this is acceptable. I sleep five to six hours with this aid and function

See HEALTH, Page 8

CHOOSE YOUR RIDE.

Drink. Drive. Go to Jail.



## Health

From Page 7

normally in the morning. Recently I was told that this drug has a cumulative effect on the body. Would you verify this? Over-the-counter sleep aids have no effect, and this drug seems to be the only way I can sleep. – D.M.

to sleep without them. More importantly, they do increase the risk of falls and auto accidents, especially when used every day and in people over 65. I don't recommend them for the long term, and I have referred my patients who can't sleep without them to a sleep specialist, who sometimes (but not always) is able to find a better solution than daily Ambien.

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). (c) 2018 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Zolpidem and its cousins, eszopiclone (Lunesta) and zaleplon (Sonata), work for a relatively short time in the body before they are metabolized, so they do not build up in the body. They are mostly gone in the morning, and grogginess is not a problem for most people. However, people often develop a dependence on these medications; it becomes difficult

## Islands' claims appeals given top priority



by Freddy Groves

Maybe you didn't catch it on the news, but recently there was a Category 5 super typhoon in the Pacific Ocean that impacted the Northern Mariana Islands. FEMA declared it a disaster area, and the Department of Veterans Affairs just announced that they were prioritizing the appeals claims from veterans who live there.

My thought was: Veterans? In the middle of the ocean? If you want to find the Marianas – aka Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands – on a map, they are just north of Guam in the Philippine Sea. I wondered: Who are they? How many veterans are there?

According to the past census, the 15 islands had 685 veterans, with many more women than men. Half of them had been born there and were in effect going home after their service. Nineteen percent had a service

connected disability rating, higher than stateside, and most had served in Vietnam or the Gulf.

Of the FEMA assistance applications approved after this latest typhoon, the total dollars approved was just over \$700,000, nowhere near the millions and billions approved in other places.

The VA Pacific Islands Health Care System has loads of clinics, mental health services and telehealth, as well as primary care and visiting specialists. At last word, the health services were trying to keep going amid all the damage.

If you have a severe hardship while you're waiting for your benefits appeal, you don't have to wait for a typhoon. Bankruptcy, age 75 or older, serious illness and a number of other problems can qualify you to ask for your appeal to be advanced. Call your VA Regional Office or the main number (1-800-827-1000) and be sure to have your claim number handy.

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• Add a few drops of water to votive cups before adding a candle. The wax will float on the water, and when the candle burns down, it won't get stuck in the votive glass.

• Experts say: For every foot high your tree, you should plan for 9 feet of garland. So, a 7-foot tree would need about 63 feet of garland.

• Dropped a glass ornament? They leave tiny shards, don't they? To get the tiniest bits up, rely on a slice of white bread. Use it to sweep up after the large pieces have been cleared. The soft bread catches it all!

• Got build-up on your battery terminal? Add two tablespoons of baking soda to a large mug of hot water, then stir vigorously. Pour over the corrosion to foam it away, then rinse, rinse, rinse.

• Put on a bracelet with no help, with the aid of a paperclip! Unfold one end to create a long loop. Hook one end on the loop, and hold the other end of the paperclip in your hand, with the bracelet end on your wrist. You have only to loop the bracelet around and hook it.

• Glass doors in the shower can be cleaned with a dryer sheet. Simply wet and rub. In fact, the texture almost gives a scrub.

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

## 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: U equals L

MO C URJRFNCDA XRC VDRCZGDR  
YRJCF GXMFI ZKR NSSDYRUU  
WSDR SOZRF, M'N XCA MZ'X ZKR  
QFSVQ URXX WSFXZRD.

Answer Page 4

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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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## 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!

	+		×		15
÷		×		×	
	+		×		16
+		−		×	
	−		×		15
17		15		20	

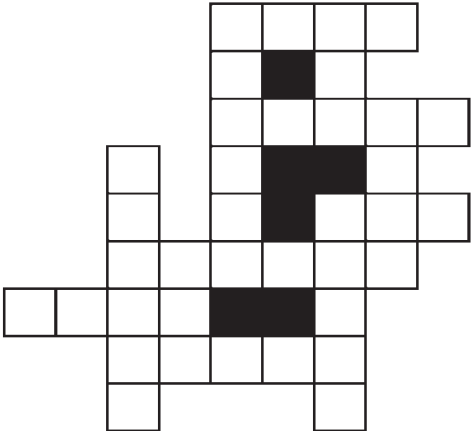
1 1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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Answer Page 4



ERV  
♥ SUNDEE  
♥ NESRT  
♥ EIRF  
TEOGHT  
NRO  
♥ OSER  
♥ REOVT  
EFI  
♥ STRUDE  
♥ ERRFE  
♥ TEVO



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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.

## Lowry

From Page 3

Stacey Abrams and Andrew Gillum – is better suited to going down in a blaze of glory rather than winning over an increment of Trump voters.

If so, Joe Biden will be one of the few people in American history who could have won two straight presidential elections – in theory.

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

## Drivers

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