



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Crystal Shield

Attorney General William P. Barr and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Acting Administrator Timothy J. Shea announced the results of Operation Crystal Shield, the DEA's six-month-long effort targeting the command and control elements of Mexican cartels that operate major methamphetamine "transportation hubs" in the United States. Operation Crystal Shield generated a total of more than 750 investigations, resulting in nearly 1,840 arrests and the seizure of more than 28,560 pounds of methamphetamine, \$43.3 million in drug proceeds, and 284 firearms. In the DEA El Paso Division alone, which covers West Texas and New Mexico, the DEA conducted 101 investigations, made 176 arrests, and seized 919 pounds of methamphetamine, \$1,165,777 in drug proceeds, and 19 firearms. "In the months leading up to the launch of Operation Crystal Shield, communities across the United States experienced a surge of methamphetamine," said Acting Administrator Timothy J. Shea. "The COVID pandemic locked down many communities and impacted legitimate businesses, but the drug trade continued." The DEA launched Operation Crystal Shield on February 20, after identifying nine major methamphetamine trafficking hubs: Atlanta, Dallas, El Paso, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Phoenix, San Diego and St. Louis. Together these nine cities accounted for more than 75 percent of methamphetamine seized by DEA in 2019.

— Carlos A. Briano

### Vaccinated states

With multiple companies racing to develop an effective COVID-19 vaccine but 1 in 3 Americans saying they wouldn't get vaccinated, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2020's States that Vaccinate the Most, as well as accompanying videos. In order to find out which states vaccinate most, WalletHub analyzed the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 18 key metrics, ranging from share of vaccinated children to share of people without health insurance to flu vaccination rate among adults. Texas ranked 48th in this report, ranking (1-Best; 25-Avg.):

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*A college education never hurt anybody that was willing to learn after they got it.*

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo courtesy National Park Service

**PRICKLY** – The Chihuahuan Desert, above, is considered a hotspot for conservation and the epicenter of cacti diversity with 318 species of the 1,500 species found worldwide.

## Chihuahuan Desert Fiesta goes virtual

By Alfredo Vasquez  
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – This year's Chihuahuan Desert Fiesta, which is slated for Saturday, September 19, is going to be quite different than the previous fifteen other annual celebrations. Due to a surge in COVID-19 infections, fiesta planners have decided to offer a virtual fiesta as a precaution for the health and safety of the borderland communities.

"The main goal of the event that was held 15 years in a row at Franklin Mountains State Park, has been to encourage people to connect with and appreciate the Chihuahuan Desert," stated Rick LoBello, one of the fiesta's organizers. "This year's 16th annual fiesta on Saturday, September 19th will be no different in offering a variety of virtual educational experiences that highlight the flora and fauna of the Chihuahuan Desert, the largest and least known desert region in North America," he said.

Chihuahuan Desert Fiesta enthusiasts are being asked to save the date and to visit [chihuahuandesert.org](http://chihuahuandesert.org) for the events schedule that is posted on the website.

Presentations this year will include a virtual tour of the El Paso Zoo's new Chihuahuan Desert Exhibit; two different opportunities to learn more about current efforts to save critically endangered Mexican wolves including an effort to return the wolf to Texas; and presentations with live animals from the Chihuahuan Desert that are living at the local zoo.

Also, among the fiesta virtual offerings will be a special presentation by Pam Agullo, Mrs. Texas Earth 2020, on the impact of people on the environment and wildlife. As Mrs. Texas Earth 2020, a pageant she won in April, Agullo stated on her website that she is committed to bringing awareness to and

making an impact on environmental causes.

For the past three years, Agullo has worked with the El Paso Zoological Society and serves on its board of directors. The 501c (3) non-profit group is governed by a volunteer board that is supported by local donors.

Agullo stated that during her tenure, society volunteers have been able to incorporate social media platforms and

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— Map courtesy National Park Service

**LARGE FOOTPRINT** – This National Park Service map of the Chihuahuan Desert shows that all West Texas is situated within the desert's vast terrain.



— Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

Anthony Lopez-Waste

## Lopez-Waste named finalist for 2021 Texas Teacher of the Year

By Liza M. Rodriguez  
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – One of the top teachers in Texas is an educator in Canutillo ISD.

Anthony Lopez-Waste, a Canutillo High history teacher and the Region 19 Secondary Teacher of the Year, today was named one of six finalists for the 2021 Texas Teacher of the Year program. He is one of only three secondary school teachers to represent their areas at the state level in the recognition program to honor the state's most outstanding teachers.

The finalists were selected from the 40 Texas

Regional Teachers of the Year. On August 29, 2020, a panel of judges composed of representatives of Texas teacher associations and last year's Texas Teacher of the Year finalists selected the finalists – one elementary and one secondary teacher from each of the 20 Texas Education Service Center regions.

"I live in Canutillo. This is my community. This is my school. This is where my kids graduated from, so just being able to represent Canutillo and the City of El Paso is special enough," said Lopez-Waste, who served in the U.S. Army for 20 years prior to becoming a

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Here is why I believe the gist of the Atlantic magazine article that President Donald Trump called American troops “losers,” “suckers” and much more: Trump denies it.

By now we have learned that Donald Trump is capable of lying. He does it all the time. About everything. His denials have gotten pretty meaningless, particularly when he uses terms like “fake news” or a “hoax,” or both. He usually responds on Twitter:

“You work so hard for the military, from completely rebuilding a depleted mess

## Shattered credibility

that was left by OBiden [sic] (Obama/Biden), to fixing a broken V.A. and fighting for large scale military pay raises, and then a slimeball reporter, maybe working with disgruntled people, makes up such a horrible charge.”

It should be pointed out that since becoming president Donald Trump has told more than 20,000 lies, as documented by fact checkers.

That’s also why I believe the accusations in Michael Cohen’s new book “Disloyal: A Memoir.” Cohen was Donald Trump’s personal lawyer and fixer, calling himself Trump’s “designated thug.” Cohen describes the president in the book as “a cheat, a liar, a fraud, a bully, a racist, a predator, a con man.” Michael Cohen was imprisoned

for various lies himself and was released to house arrest, so he’s not the most reliable of sources, he admits.

Donald Trump’s lying has become routine, and what’s that old saying... “Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me”? What does it make the people he has lied to more than 20,000 times and still believe him and plan to vote for him again?

How about his performance in the COVID pandemic, where Trump has so frequently gone off on some misleading tangent that has resulted in the loss of so many Americans’ lives? It stated with his initial dismissal of the coronavirus and moved to his embrace of ineffective pharmaceuticals that he should have known were useless. It

continues with his predictions that a vaccine “probably” will be created in October, which happens to be right before Election Day.

Ask yourself: Would you or your family take a vaccine that Trump and his pliant underlings have certified “safe and effective,” just before Election Day?

It would be interesting to see how Joe Biden, his Democratic challenger, would handle that very plausible scenario. Biden’s campaign mainly consists of waiting for Donald Trump to get caught in still another lie. Or say one more thing that is so outrageous that it turns off anyone who is not a mindless supporter.

Trump has now cast himself as the “law and order” candidate, backing law enforcement, opposing any reform and paying little attention to the complaints

of minorities who are tired of this country’s empty promise for equality.

Back to the Atlantic magazine charges that he has disparaged members of the military. Trump’s denials include a promise to “swear on whatever” that he is telling the truth. How about swearing on that Bible he held up in June for a photo op after clearing away peaceful protestors from near the White House so he could make his way to the church across the street?

He can swear on anything and most Americans won’t trust him. But he still has a chance of winning against Joe Biden, by hook or crook, mainly crook. As astounding as that may seem, believe it.

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### View from here By Marilyn M. Singleton, M.D., J.D.

## Only in America

What a great country we are! Where else do we have immigrants from around the world who stood in line for years or risked their lives to be part of the U.S. and also mobs of people who want to overthrow the government that brought the world individual liberty, due process under the law, and the right to peacefully protest? These violent mobs are burning down Black-owned small businesses

in the name of improving Black lives. The most liberal city in America, blessed with a socialist congressperson, boasts an angry horde chanting the Iranian mullahs’ favorite saying, “death to America” as they vandalized private property. While Black lives are clearly as precious as anyone else’s, supporters should beware. Black Lives Matter’s co-founder describes herself as a “trained

*Black Lives Matter’s co-founder describes herself as a “trained Marxist” and its manifesto rejects private ownership, individuality and the traditional family.*

Marxist” and its manifesto rejects private ownership, individuality and the traditional family.

Only in America can we have an internationally acclaimed, Princeton and Harvard law school-educated, over-paid hospital administrator, wife of a former two-term Black president, who lives in a lily white neighborhood in a \$12 million, 7,000 square foot, 29 acre beachfront estate, cast herself the poster child for aggrieved Black victims of evil white people? Obviously, Mrs. Obama has nothing in common with the hapless Black folks caught in the crabs-in-the-barrel, anti-education mentality that drives them to quit school, or worse, commit crimes and run from the police and wonder why

things do not end well. This privileged person relishes in telling a story of someone who cut in front of her in line, concluding it was fueled by racism. No, it was a rude person who likely always cuts in line. This screed is a well-known tactic among radicals: create an enemy and demonize him at every opportunity.

It is vexing to see privileged people emphasizing their tribal identities (e.g., race, gender, sexual preference) and embracing critical race theory that preaches that American government and culture is racist (sexist, homophobic), that oppressed people can never overcome the racism (sexism, homophobia), and that even people who are not racist are racist because they like

America. Thus, America must be reformed into a Marxist utopia. Fact alert: Thomas More’s Utopia, written in 1516, was political satire. “Utopia,” derived from the Greek, literally means “nowhere.”

In the march to a collectivist society, we’ve entered the phase of erasing history. Despots through the ages have airbrushed their enemies out of photographs and history books. Mobs and woke politicians initially toppled statues of offensive historical figures. Now, no historical figure is safe: the mayor of Washington DC wants to take down or “contextualize” the Washington monument and the Jefferson Memorial.



Ray Bradbury’s Fahrenheit 451 presciently depicted an American society where books (representing history and culture) are outlawed and burned. First, our statues, next our books. As George Orwell wrote in 1984, “Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered... History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.” A submissive, compliant populace drugged by government largesse or simple apathy is a recipe for a massive societal shift. Censorship by the news media and taking down websites and social media posts are the polite 21st century version of exiling the enemies of the state.

Generally, 2020 was going

### PUBLIC NOTICE TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

The *West Texas County Courier* will publish one edition early. The October 8, 2020 issue will go to press on Tuesday, September 29, 2020.

All material for this publication must be submitted to the *West Texas County Courier* no later than Thursday, September 24, 2020.

The *West Texas County Courier* office will close beginning Wednesday, October 1, 2020. The office will open again on Monday, October 12, 2020.



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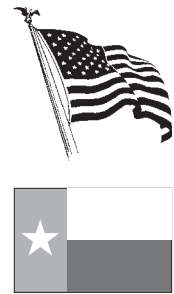
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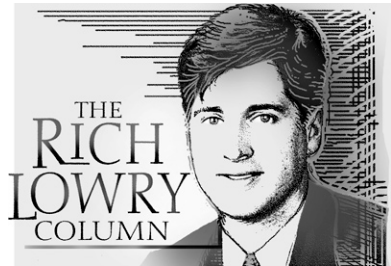


# Hollywood’s shameful kowtow to Beijing

Hollywood is accommodating a new era of McCarthyism, imposed this time by Red China. It involves everything that Hollywood tells us that it hates – censorship, pressure to conform and blacklists. Yet the studios have seamlessly absorbed China’s dictates into their operations. This most iconic American business is now, literally, an agent of Chinese influence. The latest outrage is Disney’s live-action remake of the animated movie from the 1990s, “Mulan,” based on Chinese folklore about a girl enlisting in the army. Disney filmed parts of the movie in China, and in its credits, thanks Chinese propaganda departments as well as a public security bureau in the province of Xinjiang, where Beijing is carrying out its hideous campaign against the Uighurs. If you think Hollywood would be sensitive about associating itself with an ongoing atrocity, you haven’t paid much attention

to its priorities lately, which are all about pleasing Beijing. Hollywood hasn’t dared to make movies offensive to Beijing in more than two decades. A trilogy of such movies came out in 1997, most famously “Seven Years in Tibet,” starring Brad Pitt. Ever since, Hollywood has considered kowtowing to Beijing the better part of valor. In a chilling report released a few weeks ago about Hollywood’s subordinate relationship to Beijing, PEN America described

the forces that have given China the whip hand. First, there’s sheer market power. China went from having a market about the size of Peru in the late 1990s to a behemoth box office. Money talks, even if it is the money of a country hostile to the United States. Then, there’s China’s comprehensive system of censorship that very much applies to foreign movies. It is rare that a studio or producer says “no.” To his credit, Quentin Tarantino refused to cut a comic scene featuring Bruce Lee from “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood.” Otherwise, the changes are exacting. “Mission: Impossible III” cut a scene where tattered clothes hung from a clothesline in Shanghai. Chinese villains are out of the question. Notoriously, Paramount changed the invaders in a remake of “Red Dawn” from Chinese to North Korean. Since Beijing can delay the release date of a movie or demand that a scene be reshot, and studios don’t want to deal with the uncertainty, Hollywood preemptively accedes to Beijing’s wishes. PEN America notes that producer David Franzoni has said, “They have a lot of power so you want to try to be sure you have it all down the first time.”



Paramount removed patches with the Japanese and Taiwanese flags from Tom Cruise’s bomber jacket in the sequel to “Top Gun.” As PEN America points out, the changes had already been made when the trailer was released, meaning Paramount didn’t wait for Chinese censors to object. The director of “Seven Years in Tibet,” Jean-Jacques Annaud, subsequently released a letter expressing slavish regret. He “solemnly declared” that he never supported Tibet independence and never had contact with the Dalai Lama. “Moreover,” he added, “becoming friends with him is out of the question.” The upshot is that Hollywood is much more comfortable criticizing the United States than one of the most reprehensible regimes on the planet. The repression of the Uighurs? As far as Hollywood is concerned, it doesn’t exist and, at this rate, never will. Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2020 by King Features Synd., Inc.

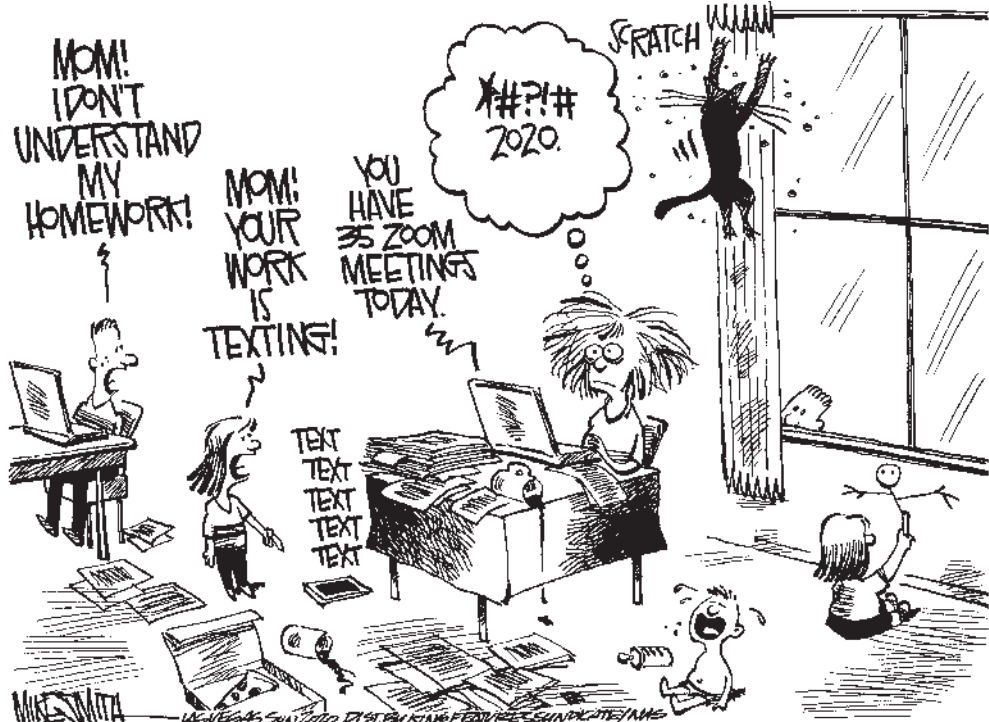
## Food for thought By John Girmaldi

### The benefits of childish antics for seniors

Want to remain young at heart as you get on in years? According to the experts, there’s a “silly” way that could help you grow old gracefully, with a smile on your face. Rebecca Weber, CEO of the Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC), says that “a good laugh, a playful prank and other such ‘silly’ behavior once in a while doesn’t just lift your spirits and relieve stress; it can also have a positive physical impact on your health.” Weber admits that until she started researching the notion that laughter is the best medicine as we age, she didn’t know the depth and breadth of the scholarly studies related to the topic. “I didn’t know, for example, that there are serious, scientific journals devoted to the subject of humor out there that publish the results of well-

documented methodical studies of the benefits of silliness. No kidding!” For example, the European Journal of Humor reports that one such study found that playful behavior can “trigger positive emotions” and, in turn, those positive emotions “can be helpful in facilitating physical resources such as coordination, strength, or cardiovascular health.” Perhaps the most definitive study of laughter to date is the research conducted by Dr. Robert R. Provine, a behavioral neurobiologist at the University of Maryland in Baltimore. His book, Laughter: A Scientific Investigation, is based on a massive, often amusing ten year examination

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**Strange  
BUT TRUE**

**By Lucie Winborne**


- In 2015, Godzilla was made an official resident of the Shinjuku ward of Tokyo. The “King of Monsters” was not only given Japanese citizenship, but also appointed as the ward’s tourism ambassador.
- Knowing they might never return safely from the moon, Neil Armstrong and the Apollo 11 crew worried about the prospect of leaving their families without financial support, but couldn’t take out life insurance policies due to the extreme risks of their mission. Instead, they signed hundreds of autographs to be sold if they didn’t make it home. Thankfully, those weren’t needed, but still show up in space memorabilia auctions today, going for as much as \$30,000.
- Only two sports have been played on the moon – golf and the javelin throw.
- At a NOAA conference in 1972, civil and women’s rights activist Roxcy Bolton proposed naming hurricanes after senators instead of women. She also preferred the term “him-i-canes.”
- Hot air balloons can’t be used in the rain because the water would boil from the heat, destroying the fabric.
- A donkey will sink in quicksand, but a mule won’t.
- Like to lie back and watch puffy clouds drift lazily by in the summer sky? Bet you’d never guess that a single one weighs about 1.1 million pounds! Researchers calculated that staggering amount by multiplying a cloud’s water density by its volume. So how do they manage to float? Simple: The air below them is even heavier.

Thought for the Day:  
“Instead of letting anxieties and uncertainties fence off your life, they can become signposts showing you where to turn to do what really matters to you.”

– Mark Freeman

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# Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Sept. 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key pens a poem that is later set to music and in 1931 becomes America’s national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The poem was written after Key witnessed Fort McHenry being bombarded by the British during the War of 1812.

• On Sept. 15, 1954, the famous picture of Marilyn Monroe, laughing as her skirt is blown up by the blast from a subway vent, is shot. The scene infuriated her husband, Joe DiMaggio.

• On Sept. 16, 1893, the largest land run in history begins with more than 100,000 people pouring into the Cherokee Strip of Oklahoma to claim valuable land. Towns like Norman and Oklahoma City sprung up almost overnight.

• On Sept. 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States is signed by 38 of 41 delegates present at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. It would not become binding until it was ratified by nine of the 13 states. Nine months later, New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify the document.

• On Sept. 18, 1793, George Washington lays the cornerstone to the United States Capitol building. It would take nearly a century to complete, as architects came and went, the British set fire to it and it was called into use during the Civil War.

• On Sept. 19, 1969, President Richard Nixon announces the cancellation of the draft calls for November and December. He reduced the call-up by 50,000 men as part of his program of turning the war over to the South Vietnamese.

• On Sept. 20, 1973, in a highly publicized “Battle of the Sexes” tennis match, top women’s player Billie Jean King, 29, beats Bobby Riggs, 55, a former No. 1 ranked men’s player. Riggs had boasted that women were inferior, and that even at his age he could beat any female player. King beat Riggs 6-4, 6-3, 6-3.

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## Briefs

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- 27th – Influenza Vaccination Rate in Children Aged 6 Months to 17 Years Old;
- 41st – Share of Teenagers Aged 13-17 with Up-To-Date HPV Vaccination;
- 38th – Share of Teenagers Aged 13-17 with MenACWY Vaccination;
- 38th – Flu Vaccination Coverage Rate Among Adults;
- 32nd– Share of Adults with Tetanus Vaccination;
- 38th – Share of Adults Aged 60 and Older with Zoster Vaccination;
- 33rd – Share of Children

19-35 Months old Living in Poverty with Combined 7-Vaccine Series;

- 51st – Share of Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population without Health Insurance Coverage; and
- 46th – Share of Children Under6YearsOldParticipating in an Immunization Information System.

Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-that-vaccinate-the-most/66237/> for the full report.

– Diana Polk

### Credit paydown

With the economy showing signs of life despite the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic, WalletHub’s new

Credit Card Debt Study revealed that U.S. consumers paid down \$118 billion in credit card debt during the first half of 2020 – an all-time record. This record reduction in credit card debt has been driven largely by generous unemployment benefits and household austerity measures stemming from the pandemic, and the result gives us at least a bit of a silver lining to point to from 2020. WalletHub now projects that U.S. consumers will end the year with a slight reduction in credit card debt for the first time since the end of the Great Recession in 2009. Not all areas of the country will fare as well as others, however, judging from the most recent data. WalletHub

compared how credit card debt levels changed across all states during Q2, and you can see the best and worst finishers below. Texas was rated 2nd in the report, behind only California. The average household in Texas owes \$9,343 in credit card debt, following a \$550 Q2 decrease. U.S. consumers paid down \$58.1 billion in credit card debt during Q2 2020 – a record for the second quarter of a year. That followed a record first-quarter paydown of \$60 billion. Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/cc/credit-card-debt-study/24400/#average-debt-decrease-by-state> for the report.

– Diana Polk

## Antics

From Page 3

of what makes people laugh. But, Provine believes that more research needs to be done to determine precisely the benefits of laughter, not because he doesn’t believe that a little fun in your day is not beneficial. As he put it, “When we laugh, we’re in a happy place [and] that’s always a good thing.”

Haley Burress is a Recreation Therapist and she offers these helpful hints on how seniors can brighten their days and their lives:

- Start morning exercise with a joke;
- Gain attention by blowing into a kazoo or honking a bicycle horn before an activity;
- Wear a t-shirt or sweater with a witty expression on it;
- Listen to comedy radio shows; or
- Have a Comedy Movie Night monthly.

So, try and have yourself a giggle at least once a day, suggests AMAC’s Weber. “Remember that master jokester, Bob Hope, lived to 100 years of age, as did mister one-liner, himself, George Burns. As Hope put it: ‘I’ll tell ‘ya how to stay young: Hang around with older people.’ Burns had a one-liner that went like this: ‘I don’t worry about getting old. I’m old already. Only young people worry about getting old’.”

## Teacher

From Page 1

teacher. “At the end of the day this honor is shared with our students because this doesn’t happen without the kids. It’s really an honor to represent the city because there are thousands of teachers that could and should be sitting in the same chair.”

The six finalists were interviewed September 12, 2020, by a panel of judges composed of representatives of educational leadership associations, community and business leaders,

a member of the State Board for Educator Certification, a member of the State Board of Education, and prior Texas Teachers of the Year.

The panel will select two state-level winners – Elementary Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year – and designate one to represent Texas in the National Teacher of the Year program. The winners will be announced during the virtual TASA/TASB Convention, September 30, 2020.

“Mr. Lopez-Waste is a champion in life and in the classroom,” Galaviz said.

“His story of perseverance in his career and his passion for sharing his experiences with students is what makes him an inspiration to our students. That outstanding example is what makes our teachers among the best in the region, the state and even the nation.”

The Texas Teacher of the Year program has honored excellence in classroom education since 1969. The program, facilitated by TASA since 2011, annually recognizes and rewards teachers who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and excellence in teaching.

## El Paso County Emergency Services District #1 Horizon Fire Department sets budget for 2020-2021 year

El Paso, Texas – El Paso County Emergency Services District #1 (ESD) No. 1 has announced its budget for the 2020-2021 year. The budget is set at \$3,924,805.00 and will help first responders in El Paso County ESD #1 protect property and lives in the communities they serve. ESDs are a political subdivision of the state of Texas similar to a school district or hospital district. Each ESD provides fire protection and emergency medical response in its local community.

“El Paso County Emergency Services District #1 is dedicated to the protection and preservation of property and life within our community,” said Chief Kris Menendez. We are confident the brave men and women that serve as first responders will continue to have what they need to fulfill their mission.”

ESDs are on the cutting edge of fire and EMS response and provide emergency services while spending anywhere from one third to one half of what municipalities spend when providing services of similar scope. If a resident in the ESD needs fire or EMS services, it is the ESD/Horizon Fire Department who will be providing the service rather than the city, county or state.

Funding for ESDs is constitutionally limited to the collection of property taxes – capped at 10 cents per \$100. In turn, this money is invested locally in fire engines, and fire stations, as well as personnel.

“We are working to keep our first responders and the communities they serve safe,” Cliff Avery, executive director for the Texas State Association of Fire and Emergency Districts (SAFE-D), said. “ESDs offer incredible value to taxpayers and deliver high quality emergency services across Texas. COVID-19 and its impact has emphasized the importance of health and safety and this new budget will help us keep our promise to our communities.”

SAFE-D is the association supporting Texas ESDs and their first responders. SAFE-D member districts serve an estimated eight million Texans through emergency services across 251 districts. SAFE-D supports these ESDs with the mission of making Texans safer. Visit [www.epcesd1.com](http://www.epcesd1.com) to learn more.

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# NBA’s final four is a mix of favorites and surprises

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

It’s been quite a different kind of season for the National Basketball Association. First they played a regular season that was going along about as normally as any other season, then the coronavirus pandemic hit. Like everything in our society, heck,

like everything in our world, the virus put a stop to it all. In the middle of the season, teams had to stop playing basketball and all they could do was wait and see if they’d ever get a chance to finish what they had started. The NBA was finally able to get back on the court, play a few remaining games, and put together the weirdest professional playoff system ever devised. They got the 16 playoff teams together

in front of no fans, in one city, with fake cheering, and somehow they’ve managed to pull it off. Of course some fans have been put off by the digitized fans in the stands, the piped-in audio fan noise and the constant social justice messages. But the league has kept it going. Though the TV ratings have been miserable, the league has kept it going. And now the playoffs are down to the final four teams, there are some interesting and surprising matchups to enjoy.

In the west, everyone figured it would be the battle of Los Angeles with the Lakers taking on the Clippers. And that’s exactly what we have. The two teams that share an arena in L.A., will share the spotlight to see which one advances to the finals.

In the east, everyone figured it would be the team with the best regular-season record, the Milwaukee Bucks, against the team with the second-best record, the Toronto Raptors. Guess what? Neither team made it that far.

In the east, the surprising Boston Celtics and the Miami Heat will battle it out to advance to the finals against one of the teams from L.A.

With the Bucks and the Raptors out of the running, you would think the L.A. teams are battling for the NBA title right now. I mean whoever wins, the Lakers or the Clippers, are certainly going to roll over either team from the east.

Not so fast, the Celtics are a very deep, young team with plenty of guys who can score around the basket and from 3-point range. Guys like Jason Tatum, Jaylen Brown, Kemba Walker, Gordon Hayward and Marcus Smart can fill it up on any given night.

The Celtics also play an

aggressive style of defense that can give any team fits. The Miami Heat are made up primarily of Jimmy Butler and a whole bunch of no-names that are playing over their heads. Guys like Tyler Hero, Bam Adebayo, Goran Dragic and Jae Crowder are quietly making believers of fans across the country. This series is almost guaranteed to go seven games. Neither team was supposed to make it this far and you can bet they’re going to fight and claw every single game.

Of course the glamour matchup is the Lakers and the Clippers. Hollywood vs. Hollywood. This is basically billed as LeBron James and Anthony Davis for the Lakers, against Kawhi Leonard and Paul George for the Clippers.

Obviously both teams have a bunch of talent coming off the bench. The Lakers have guys like Rajon Rondo and Dwight Howard who give them some veteran talent. The Clippers probably have the best bench in the league, bringing in multiple-time Sixth Man of the Year winner Lou Williams, and this year’s Sixth Man of the Year winner, Montrezl Harrell.

The Lakers are seen as the glitzier team that can score at will while the Clippers are more the hard-working defensive squad that makes you work for everything. So which teams are going to advance to the championship round? Many fans are hoping for another matchup between the Lakers and the Celtics.

And why not, this would bring us memories of Magic Johnson, Jerry West, Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Shaquille O’Neal and Kobe Bryant against Bill Russell, John Havlicek, Kevin McHale, Larry Bird, Kevin Garnett and Paul Pierce. I believe the Celtics will advance, but I think it’s the Clippers who will make it. And in the end, the Clippers will win it all.



## 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanics:  
BE PROUD OF YOUR PAST *and* Embrace the Future

**September 16** Hispanic Heritage Month Kick-off  
Online - 12:00 to 1:30 pm

**September 25** Hispanic Heritage Mentors' Recognition  
Online - 12:00 to 1:30 pm

**September 30** READ -- Ins  
Online - 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

**October 15** Hispanic Heritage Month Scholarship  
Online - 12:00 to 1:30 pm

**September to October** Virtual Art Show  
El Paso Art Association

For links to our events, please go to our web page:  
<https://www.epcc.edu/Services/Diversity>

### 2020 Hispanic Heritage Month Mentors



**Dr. Carmen Olivas-Graham**  
EPCC Board of Trustees  
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**Dr. Carlos Amaya**  
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Arch, Arts, Math, Science



**Hector I. Ocaranza,**  
M.D., MPH, FAAP  
Pediatrics



**The Best Place to Start *and* Finish!**

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## Super Crossword

**ELEMENTAL RECOMPOSITION ACROSS**

1 Like Pisa's famed tower

8 On the mark

16 Dangle

20 Adequate for the job

21 1974 Billy Joel hit

22 Pastiche

23 Phone alert sound whose waves travel best through element #7?

25 Refuse to

26 Expert

27 Submission encl.

28 Disney sci-fi film of 1982

29 Ukulele's kin

30 Exams

33 Skyscraping

36 Instrument whose pipes are filled with element #18?

39 Opening bits

41 Classic Fords, briefly

43 Peddle

44 Mistake while trying to mine element #55?

46 Bargain on the export of element #82?

50 What some cuts do

51 Make cherished

53 City on the

Alabama

54 With 32-Down, nobody

57 Home of the philosopher Zeno

59 Oven knob

61 Swiss peaks

62 \_ Gay

64 Sideshow barkers peddling element #33?

69 Munich loc.

70 I-75, e.g.

73 Heavy winds

74 Binary base

75 Expert

76 Cigar holder made from element #45?

80 It may follow "Long time"

82 Chaplin of "Game of Thrones"

83 Sort of sword

84 Zero

87 Not as much

88 \_-Grain cereal bars

90 Harangue

94 Peyotes, e.g.

96 Dark film about people who forge element #26?

98 Internal body parts that have absorbed too much of element #47?

103 Floor cover

104 Tilting type

105 Crooked

106 Clog-clearing stuff found to have element

#86?

110 Reach over

112 Poets' Muse

113 Old Apple laptop

114 Impact noise

116 Floor cover

118 Mean dog

119 A.J. of Indy

120 Half-moon-shaped deposit of element #34?

126 Deanna on the USS Enterprise

127 Collectors of lots of stuff

128 Dutch painter Jan

129 Flabbergast

130 Rates

131 Unity

**DOWN**

1 Really absurd

2 Not gendered, as a noun

3 Vouches for

4 "... \_ a lender be"

5 Bit of NYSE news

6 Pesterns a lot

7 Wonderful

8 IRS filing mo.

9 Nero's 102

10 Is unable

11 Not marked, as an exam

12 Turbine parts

13 In a crowd of

14 Earthy shade

15 Austin-to-Atlanta dir.

16 1991-2003 Vermont governor

17 See 42-Down

18 Masked warrior in black

19 Boarded

24 "How clever"

29 Links

31 Like clans

32 See 54-Across

34 16-oz. units

35 Pet pests

37 Be hammy

38 Pro-learning org.

40 "Hook" pirate

42 With 17-Down, scram

45 Actor Gibson

46 Secular

47 Orbital curve

48 Current units

49 Rodeo ropes

52 Vitascoper inventor

54 Cocktail of gin, vermouth and Campari

55 Sixty minutes

56 Ontario's capital

58 Person quarreling

60 Enactment

63 Meyers of "Think Big"

65 Raimi of film

66 Yale alum

67 Actor Sparks

68 Politico Paul

71 Voting day, often: Abbr.

72 More devoid

77 "Heck yeah!"

78 Prince, e.g.

79 500 vehicles

81 Literary Twist

85 Women's patriotic gp.

86 Org. for free speech

89 Using a pen

91 Flabbergasts

92 Jorge's "day"

93 Some annexes

95 Part of a fork

97 Obsolete

99 Bigwig

100 One fleeing a flood, maybe

101 Adjusts the pitch of again

102 Noisy sleepers

104 Cry after "Psst!," perhaps

106 Fissures

107 Cal off, as a mission

108 "What \_ mean?"

109 Rand McNally reference

111 Jorge's "new"

115 Goes kaput

117 Fed. agents

120 "Na Na" preceder

121 Canon camera line

122 Suffix with strict

123 Orig. copies

124 State of fury

125 K-O center

Answer Page 4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15		16	17	18	19
20								21									22			
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113							114			115			116		117			118		
119						120	121				122	123				124	125			
126						127								128						
129						130								131						



Comix

OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



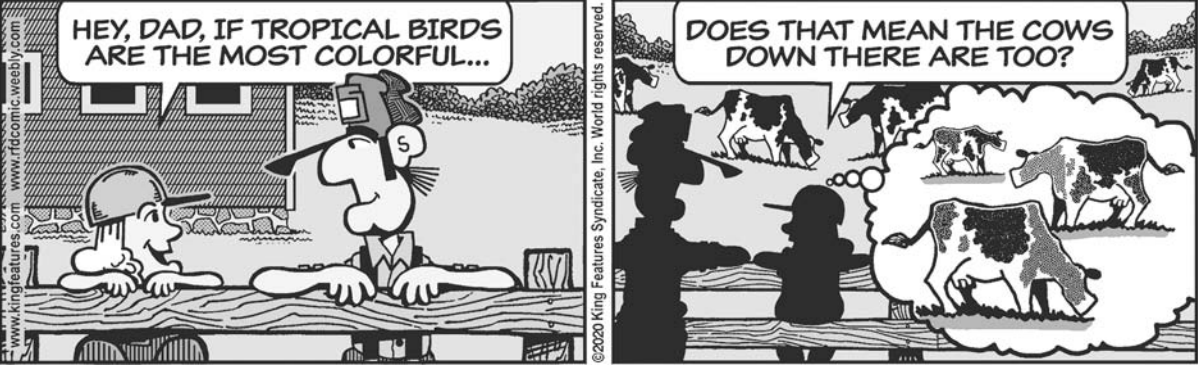
THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



TIGER

By Bud Blake



America

From Page 2

well with high employment rates, rising salaries, and racial harmony. Along came coronavirus. Those who want to fundamentally change America knew fear was an effective tool to drive us to acquiesce to unreasonable government demands. Some governors confined us in our homes

indefinitely, unable to attend funerals or religious services to have our moral principles reinforced. Wearing masks that prevent flashing a friendly smile to strangers of all colors while strolling down the street fosters distrust.

By the time more was known about the new virus's low probability of death for the average person and about the uselessness of lockdowns, we were raw and susceptible to

emotional manipulation. The drumbeat of social justice über alles is pounded into our psyches. In what sane world would anyone swallow the leftist swill that looting is justified as reparations for slavery?

How does labeling some Americans the "oppressors" and others the "oppressed" based on skin color advance societal harmony? How does having employers force Caucasians to take classes to learn that they

Vitamin D deficit after gastric bypass

*DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 72-year-old woman in fair health. I had strong bones until I had gastric bypass surgery. Within two years, I developed osteoporosis. In 2016 my parathyroid hormone level was found to be elevated. However, it has come down over the past year or two from 97.76 to 68.95 pg/mL. The endocrinologist now has me on 8,000 IU of vitamin D-3 per day. My calcium was 9.3 and ionized calcium was 5.0. Meanwhile, the rheumatologist treating my osteoporosis has prescribed Reclast infusions once per year. I just received my second one this month. This summer I broke a toe on my right foot with no known trauma. In October I sustained a stress fracture of my left heel bone, again without any known trauma. I am very worried about what all this means to my future bone health. – L.M.J.*



I suspect you had vitamin D deficiency due to the gastric bypass surgery, which prevents your body from absorbing it efficiently. Without vitamin D, your bones cannot take up calcium as effectively. The parathyroid hormone often will increase in this situation, and this is called "secondary hyperparathyroidism."

It's important to note that both your total and ionized calcium levels are normal. Ionized calcium is the active form – some calcium binds to albumin, a major protein in blood. In secondary hyperparathyroidism, the calcium is never high. A high calcium and high parathyroid level always means primary hyperparathyroidism, which almost always comes from a tumor of the parathyroid gland. Unfortunately, I have seen people whose doctors have confused this point and missed the diagnosis.

With replacement of your vitamin D (at a high-enough dose, you can absorb enough), the PTH level is settling back down to normal, and it would be expected that your bone strength would start going up as well. I would expect your endocrinologist or rheumatologist to follow your bone density through a DEXA scan.

The Reclast (zoledronic acid) is an intravenous bisphosphonate, and it slows down reabsorption of your bone. Between the higher vitamin D and the Reclast, your bones should get better and your risk of fracture will decrease, but it will take time.

*DEAR DR. ROACH: In a recent column, you discussed the effect of ibuprofen on men with an enlarged prostate. I am a 78-year-old who runs 15-20 miles per week, with benign prostatic hyperplasia and who also has reduced urinary frequency with occasional use of Advil. As a runner, I have been reluctant to make it a daily regimen because I have read that inflammation is part of the body's response to tissue damage, which is crucial to the healing process and is important for muscle growth. When ibuprofen's anti-inflammatory effect reduces symptoms, does it affect the healing process also? Can you comment on the pros and cons for runners? – B.M.*

High-dose ibuprofen was shown to inhibit muscle protein synthesis following weightlifting exercise. This led to a suspicion that it might impair the gains in muscle strength that are made with exercise. However, a Canadian study showed that moderate doses of ibuprofen (400 mg after exercise) did not impair muscle growth or gains in strength. Using ibuprofen for occasional muscle soreness or for the purpose of reducing prostate inflammation should not adversely affect your performance in running.

*Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. (c) 2020 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.*

are racists and how to repent for their "white privilege" engender warm feelings?

Instead of whining about the past, advocates for improving Black lives should march through the Black-on-Black violence-ravaged sections of Chicago and let people know that success – while not easy – is possible. And all liberty lovers must wake up from our fear-induced stupor and actively protect our freedoms and reject mob rule while treating our

fellow man with respect.

*Marilyn M. Singleton is a board-certified anesthesiologist. She graduated from Stanford and earned her MD at UCSF Medical School. She attended UC Berkeley Law School, focusing on constitutional law and administrative law. She teaches classes in the recognition of elder abuse and constitutional law for non-lawyers.*





**Moore Texas** by Roger MOORE  
In 1948 Raymond Ballew, a bootlegger with an extensive police record, ran for sheriff of Hall County.

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 W

KU RIRVPJMNPN YRVR GM  
QFKA F JEABZ MU YRKQZG,  
YMEXN GZFG JVKAQ ED  
FXX BXMDRV GMQRGZRV?

Answer Page 4  
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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Answer Page 4

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Failure of the VA



by Freddy Groves

With all the fanfare about the suicide prevention programs created to help veterans who are suffering, it would seem that all a veteran would need to do is present himself at the closest Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility and help would immediately be there.

Not necessarily so.

A veteran presented himself at a VA emergency room suffering from suicidal thoughts. He was in pain, suffered from withdrawal seizures and was on medication that had been tapered down until he had no more pills. Six days later he was dead.

At the ER the veteran asked to be admitted for inpatient detox. Instead they scheduled him for a same-day psych evaluation. A Veteran Experience Specialist took the veteran back to the ER and told them, again, that he'd asked for inpatient care.

The veteran was handed off to an outpatient psychiatrist who recommended either inpatient detox or inpatient psychiatry care, inpatient in either case. The psychiatrist also escorted the veteran back to the ER.

After multiple hand-offs, the veteran was told to go home. He refused to leave. Another physician accused him of malingering and called the police, who hauled the veteran out of the building. The veteran asked to go back to the ER for specific knee pain.

Back in the ER, multiple individuals heard the second ER physician say that the veteran could go shoot himself, and "I do not care." (The VA did not get rid of this physician for nine more months, despite a long history of verbal abuse.)

In all, within 12 hours, the veteran saw a total of seven medical providers. Five days later the outpatient psychiatrist finally made an appointment for a substance-use program, but no one told the veteran. He missed the appointment, of course, but no one followed up.

The next day, six days after his ER visit, the veteran was dead from suicide.

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by Jo Ann Derson

• Here's a budget stretcher: "Credit goes to my friend for this great butter extender. Whip 1 pound of softened butter and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Slowly add 1 cup of olive oil. Beat up to 5 minutes to add air and increase volume. Pour into two 1-pint containers and refrigerate. Economical, spreads like soft margarine, tastes great and you get the benefits of olive oil in a natural product." – S.B., British Columbia, Canada

• Mix a quarter cup of salt in with two tablespoons of bath wash for a sudsy, refreshing, skin-soothing salt scrub.

• "Before I go to the beach, I freeze an ice-cube tray full of lemonade. Then, we use the cubes in our travel cups. It keeps the lemonade cool, and as it melts (which tends to be quickly), it doesn't water down the drink." – K.H. in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

• Some tips for middle or high-school kids going back to school virtually: Have a designated workspace. This can be as simple as a large tray turned upside down and placed on the end of the bed with a storage ottoman to sit on. It will be better than trying to lay in bed and work.

• Mold on baked goods goes beyond what you can see. The mold puts out "feelers" that are invisible to the naked eye, so if you see mold on your muffin or bread, don't think that you can cut that part off and be done with it. To be safe, throw the whole thing away.

• "I needed an outlet on my porch, so I ran a long extension cord along the edge of the patio and fed it up into a piece of PVC pipe that was left over from a plumbing job. It holds the end of the cord at about outlet height. Whatever works!" – V.L. in Arizona

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2020 King Features Synd., Inc.

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!  
Answer Page 4

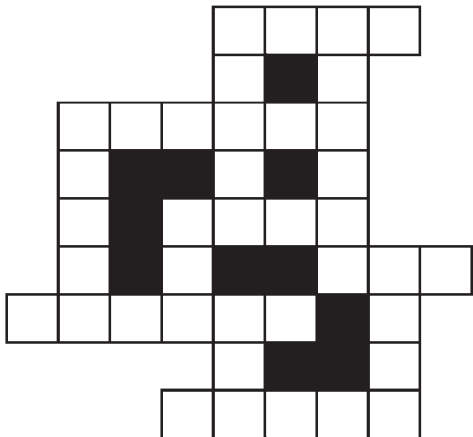
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–		×		×	
	×		–		26
×		+		–	
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2 3 4 5 5 6 7 8 9

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XPA  
DUESOX  
LOXET  
SABI  
RUBSAD  
♥USP  
♥ELID  
♥UGBED  
♥IBD  
SLEPUX  
♥DEISA  
♥ERPA



Answer Page 4

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

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