



NEWSBRIEFS

Wright sworn

Jim Wright was sworn-in as the 51st Railroad Commissioner of Texas on January 4, 2021. The lifelong South Texan joins a three-member Commission in leading an agency that is more than a century old. The RRC plays a major role in oversight and regulation of the oil and gas industry – an industry that has been the backbone of the state economy and plays a vital role in keeping energy costs low for Texans while also helping pave the way for the nation’s energy independence. “Oil and natural gas will make up the majority of our nation’s energy for decades to come and it is best for our state, our nation and the world if that energy is produced right here in Texas,” said Wright. “As commissioner, I will work to streamline enforcement and increase transparency at the Commission, with the ultimate goal of creating a sustainable and dependable lifestyle for all Texans supported by our state’s abundant natural resources.”

– Kate Zaykowski

Boy wonder

Kids can do the darndest things? Take the six-year-old in Ahmedabad, India who just officially became the world’s youngest computer programmer. The folks at Guinness, who keep track of world record holders, recently verified that Arham Om Talsania took the Microsoft certification exam for the Python programming language and passed the test. Talsania says that his father, who is a software engineer, taught him the basics of programming. The boy explained that he’s been using computers since he was two years old.

– John Grimaldi

Flying rats?

In New York City they call them “flying rats” because they are considered a nuisance but in Belgium they train pigeons to race and the best of the breed can fetch big bucks. Last year a Belgian pigeon, by the name of Armando, was sold at auction for more than \$1.4 million. And now another Belgian pigeon, New Kim, has been auctioned off for the tidy sum of \$1.89 million. They’ve been breeding pigeons for racing for more than 200 years in Belgium and they are, obviously, good at it.

– John Grimaldi

Time is what we want the most and what we use the worst.

– Quips & Quotes

El Paso County’s new state senator pre-files healthcare, gun safety bills

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – With the 2020 elections finally over and the 2021 Texas legislative session slated to start January 12, state lawmakers last month were given the chance to pre-file bills outlining the policy visions for Texas. And many lawmakers took that opportunity, with more than 530 bills filed on the first day of pre-filing, according to a recent report.

Among those lawmakers is newly elected State Senator Cesar Blanco, the El Paso-based lawmaker who in November won an election to replace popular State Senator José Rodríguez. Rodríguez last year announced he was retiring after a decade in office.

Blanco beat out Republican candidate Bethany Hatch by garnering more than 67 percent of the votes in the race for District 29 that includes the counties of El Paso, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio.

Prior to his recent state senate election, Blanco was the state representative for House District 76 since 2015. Blanco noted in a recent statement that while in the Texas House he led initiatives to strengthen West Texas’s workforce, economy, and border infrastructure while also working to improve the quality of life for all the border communities.

Now as a member of the state senate, Blanco has pre-filed at least nine bills, with many of them on higher education, gun safety, and healthcare. That first batch of pre-filed bills focuses on “common-sense gun safety reforms, school safety, relief for college students, improving healthcare, and increasing renewable energy goals,” Blanco’s office said in a

news release.

On state gun policy, Blanco has proposed a variety of reforms. He wants to require instant universal criminal background checks with certain gun transfers and tighten rules around making false statements to acquire a firearm.

In a statement, Blanco paid homage to the victims of a mass shooting at a Walmart in El Paso last year, which claimed 23 lives. Authorities have called that shooting a hate crime, with the accused shooter travelling across the state to stop what he called an “invasion” of Latinos.

“I owe it to the 23 souls we lost, the dozens injured, and their loved ones to fight for needed reforms to ensure this does not happen again,” Blanco said in his statement. On a related note, Blanco also wants to create new guidelines that will “protect students’ well-being” in re-designing active-shooter drills at schools. “Certain school safety drills for active shootings can also have a detrimental impact on students,” he asserted.

Blanco has also pre-filed several bills to make higher education and healthcare more accessible and affordable. He wants to limit the amount of tuition public universities can charge people, criticizing “sky-rocketing tuition” rates and students who are “being saddled with large debt.” He also wants to make it easier for students to drop classes without being punished, citing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On healthcare, Blanco also pre-filed bills to cap co-payments on insulin at \$25 for a 30-day supply and to ensure that Medicare providers are properly reimbursed.

Again, citing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Blanco wants to



Newly elected State Senator Cesar Blanco is active in the El Paso community as a member of the American Legion and American G.I. Forum Paso Del Norte Chapter; an executive committee member of the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization; a member of the Rio Grande Council of Governments; a former board member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Paso; and an honorary board member of the Medical Center of the Americas Foundation in El Paso. On the national stage, Blanco worked at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Democratic National Committee, and was the political director and interim executive director of Latino Victory Project.

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Photo courtesy San Elizario ISD

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE – Jose Aleman applies social distance markers for students in a locker room.

San Eli ISD stays vigilant

By Jeannie Meza-Chavez
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO – In the San Elizario Independent School District (SEISD), the support services department has taken

extensive measures to add very noticeable reminders for all to social distance. All the measures enacted have one focus in mind, which is to help mitigate the pandemic while students and staff are on campus. Aside from the maintenance of all district buildings, the department personnel engaged in looking at support services from a whole different perspective.

Jesus Martinez, the Director of Support Services, attributes the department’s success to Dexter Harman, the Supervisor for Support Services & Transportation, Joe Gomez, the Supervisor for Warehouse, and Jose Cardona, the Security Supervisor. “The supervisors have a great working relationship where they always come together for one goal, which is to serve the students and staff of SEISD,” Martinez said.

During the pandemic, everyone’s efforts have been instrumental in leading crews in preparing facilities to ensure

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You might be asking yourself why the members of Congress always wait until the last minute to make their deals on vital legislation, the kind that they should have passed weeks or months ago, for instance, to

Drama kings and queens

rescue the American people from homelessness and starvation. There are several reasons, but the main one is because politicians are inherently drama kings and queens. It’s insidious but true that these people who rule our lives want to make sure they each get their moments of glory by lining up to present obstacles that could have been avoided. To be fair, a few of them

actually have principled concerns about what the unprincipled ones are trying to slip past them, but for the most part it’s making sure they get their sliver of the spotlight. Or they want to pull a fast one and do favors for their own special interest campaign contributors – read “legalized bribers” – by taking care of them when there is a rush to pass legislation, no matter how larded it is with pork.

So it is with the massive bill to keep the federal government open, combining it with the lifesaving financial pipeline that barely keeps American families off the streets – people who are innocents except for living in a country whose leaders so badly botched the pandemic response that normal citizens face a choice of risking death or hunger. But there’s that added factor. The wheels of our government

have ground to a halt because those in the Capitol building are bargaining with those in the White House, who flit around an emotionally disturbed chief executive who has less than a month to go before he loses all his massive power to destroy the world. We are into the New Year – actually, the passing of an old year that was historically awful. The dates for all that are Dec. 31 and Jan. 1. But they are not the

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View from here By Robert Charles

The First Amendment is under siege – and most Americans know it

First, digital conversations on “matters of public concern,” legally the centerpiece of First Amendment jurisprudence, were consistently blocked by partisan social media operators throughout the 2020 election cycle. That alone is arresting; it has changed public access to information and calls for action. Social media moved from offering a “public forum” (with concurrent legal duties, including openness) to a “content editor” (typically imposing higher liability, such as for defamation), then into the unseemly, otherworldly role of kingmaker. By appearances, they know exactly what they are doing – no apologies. Second, critical information – official, damning, highly material, and verifiably accurate information concerning Joe Biden’s son, apparently under investigation for months, was blocked by these social media giants, potentially affecting the election. The nub is that this information not only reflected poorly on the Democrat presidential candidate – now president-elect – but implicated him. Only after the election did we learn that data blocked could be objectively disqualifying. If members of Joe Biden’s

family, close for years, are under investigation for trading access for money, who is the “him” guilty of offering access? It takes to two to tango, as they say – and Joe Biden is one of the two. All this becomes even more insidious, objectionable, and arguably unconstitutional – when explicit and implied financial assistance, political advocacy, and campaign-tipping support is aligned with the Democrat Party. In effect, political actors – soon running the federal government – have been assisted in shutting out the truth, in order to acquire power – and this power, in turn, serves the personal, financial and political agenda of those who control the social media giants. The time has come to separate mass power over information and the Democrat party. More, the time has come to open these social media giants to antitrust actions, public and private, and end the now-absurd notion that they should be immune from civil lawsuits – because they must be nurtured. They have been effectively nurtured into monster-hood, a societal overlord position that allows dominance, controls critical information, shuts off information

flow essential to a free, open, and properly informed republic. What power do these players have? Beyond the ability to distort public dialogue on “matters of public concern” – including blocking a December AMAC podcast discussing election lawsuits – these giants have become sources of mass dependence. Thus, by way of example, on Monday, December 14th, social media users around the globe personally and professionally suffered the impact of a mass access outage, shutting off access to dialogue, but also to mass databases. That downtime impacted everything from business communications, internet website accessibility, data access, and distance learning – shutting schools. The outage also illustrated how much dependence has arisen – on these information-controlling outlets. Paired with political manipulation, the outage raises serious questions about the role, responsibility, and regulation of these huge, largely uncontrolled social media and high-tech companies. In a nutshell, the time has come to open these oligopolistic companies to civil liability – beginning with a repeal

of section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, then aggressively regulate, deconstruct, break up, reduce the influence of and de-politicize (and hold accountable) these digital behemoths. Theodore Roosevelt – famously patriotic, pro-commerce, and pro-free enterprise – was among the first to call out the abuse of power by monopolies and oligopolies, and to push not only the Sherman and Clayton Antitrust Acts, but also to come down hard on the abusers of public trust – in the marketplace and the marketplace of ideas. His example is a shining one – and should make these big social media and data-manipulating giants shiver. The influence of big tech on America – our social harmony, mental health, basic human interactions, decision-making, political stability, institutional and political accountability, commerce, and contentment – in short, their manipulation of the public mind – is working at cross-purposes with democracy. It has become a threat to the free flow of information vital for sustaining a free republic, not only teaming with powerful

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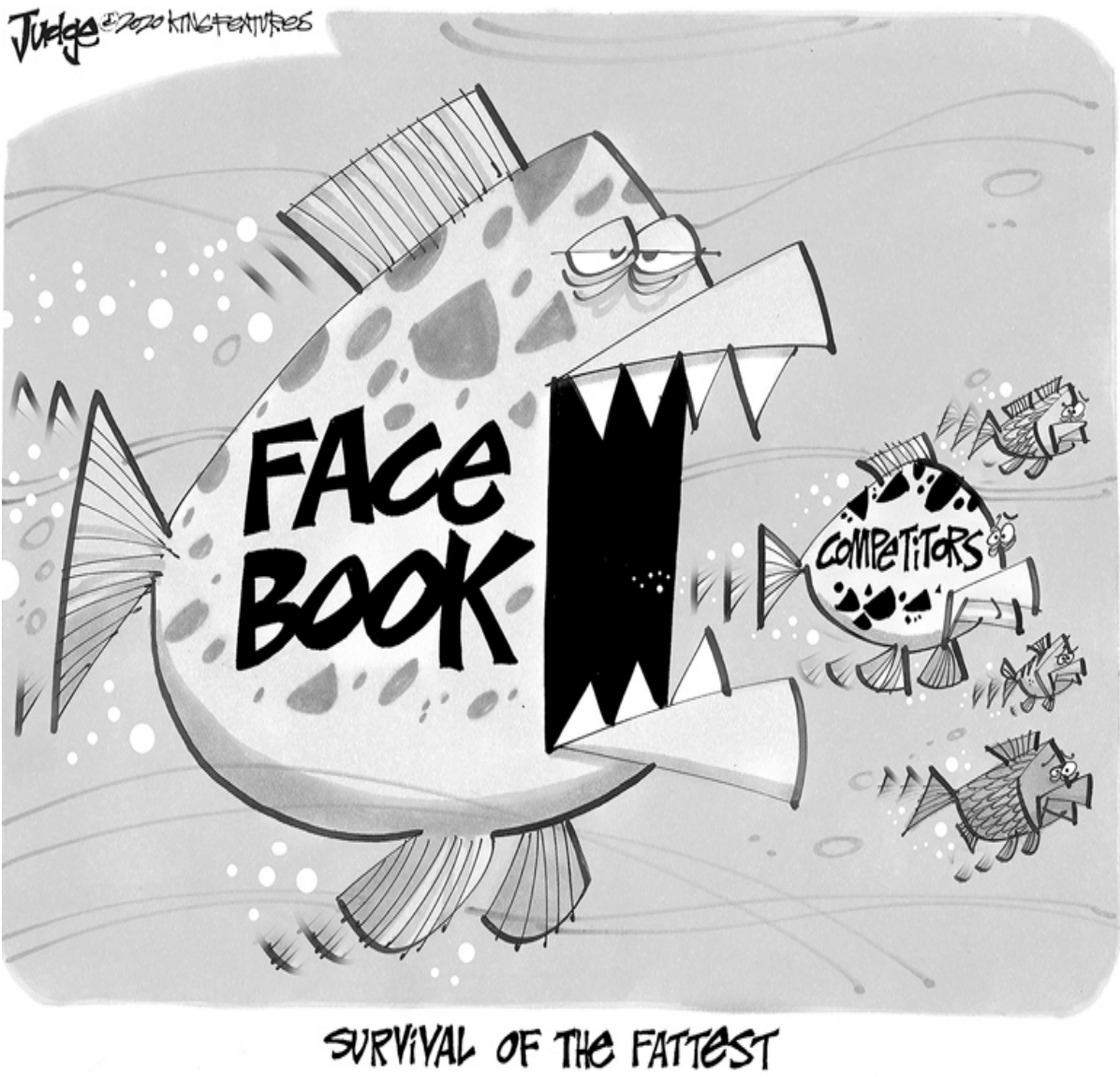
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Behold, the delivery revolution

It's been a terrible year for the American worker, with a notable bright spot courtesy of one of the tech firms in the crosshairs of regulators and lawmakers.

If someone had said early in 2020, "A company is going to hire hundreds of thousands of non-college-educated workers during the pandemic at well above the minimum wage," you'd think there'd be huzzahs all around.

That's what the online retailer Amazon has done, but it still gets brickbats for how it pays and treats its workers. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said the other day that Amazon jobs are a "scam."

If so, a swath of the American workforce is falling for the grift. Since July, the online retailer has hired 350,000 workers, and now employs 1.2 million people globally. This is a historic hiring binge. According to *The New York Times*, "the closest comparisons are the hiring that entire industries carried out in wartime, such as shipbuilding during the early years of World War II."

On top of this, the company provides work for roughly half a million truck drivers.

It overwhelmingly hires high school graduates. It doesn't ask for a resume, gives its workers about a day of training, and then puts them on the job in its fulfillment centers.

The difficulty of the work shouldn't be underestimated – it is taxing, repetitive and highly regimented. Yet, we've long complained about losing assembly line jobs for non-college-educated workers. Amazon is hiring people for what is the 21st-century equivalent of such jobs.

Amazon began paying its workers \$15 an hour in 2018. If that rate rings a bell, it's the number for the federal minimum wage that Sen. Bernie Sanders and AOC have long been lobbying for, to little effect (it remains \$7.25 an hour).

It's hard to review what Amazon has done over the last year and consider it the work of a corporate monster. The company had an unlimited unpaid time off policy for its workers when the pandemic began.

It hired temporary workers to replace them and deal with the surge of business, then kept most of them on and began hiring on top of that.

It's been offering signing bonuses of up to \$3,000, and

hiring in places in the country where no one else is.

According to the research of Michael Mandel at the center-left Progressive Policy Institute, Amazon fulfillment center jobs pay 31% more than retail jobs at brick-and-mortar stores, where pay has basically been stagnant for three decades.

Mandel points out that it's wrong to simplistically think of Amazon and other e-commerce outfits as replacing brick-and-mortar stores.

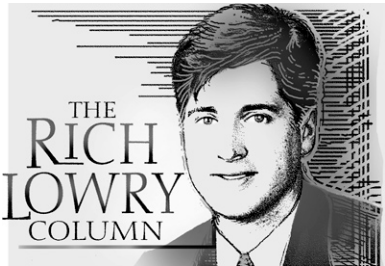
What they are really replacing is the labor that consumers undertake on their own to shop for goods – driving to a store, walking up and down the aisles, making the selection, loading it, and taking it home. Someone making a purchase through Amazon essentially hires a network of workers to do all of that for him.

What Amazon, and e-commerce more broadly, is doing is selling goods to consumers at low prices, while giving them more convenience than ever before (rapid delivery to their doorsteps, with the possibility of easy returns) and creating new jobs in the process.

By all means, jawbone the company to treat workers better, but don't lose sight of the scale

of its achievement – and how many Americans are employed because of it.

Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*. (c) 2021 by King Features Synd., Inc.



Fabens Independent School District Public Notice of Meeting

Fabens Independent School District will hold a public hearing to discuss the District's 2019-2020 Annual Report. The virtual meeting will be held at 6:30 P.M. on Wednesday, January 20, 2021. Please visit Fabens ISD website www.fabensisd.net to access the meeting under Fabens ISD announcements.

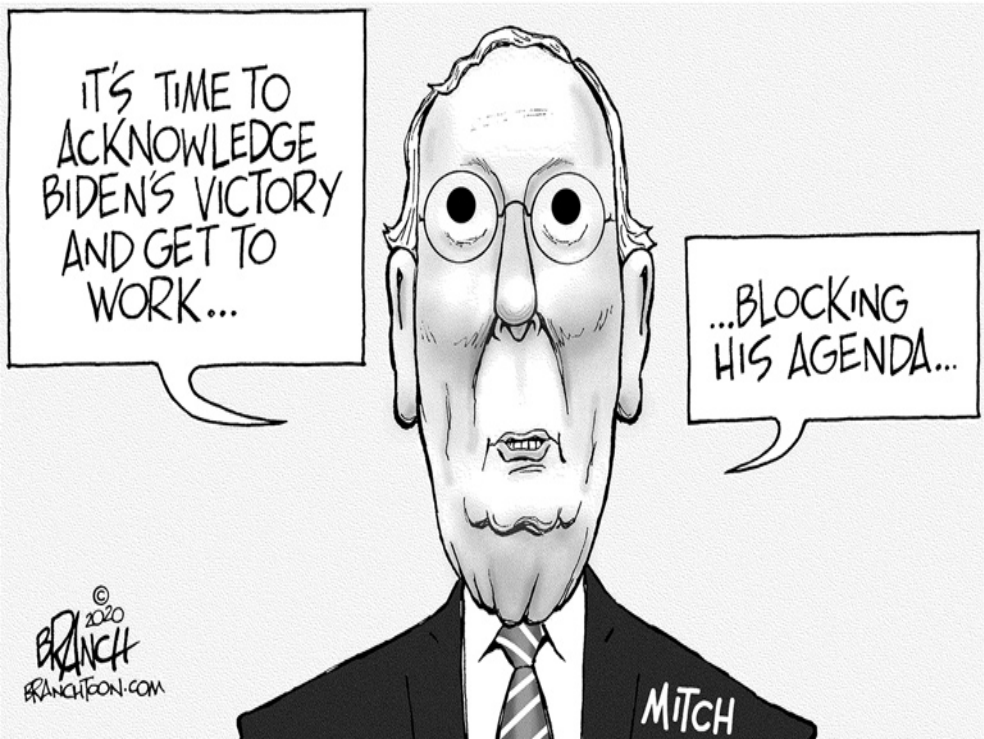
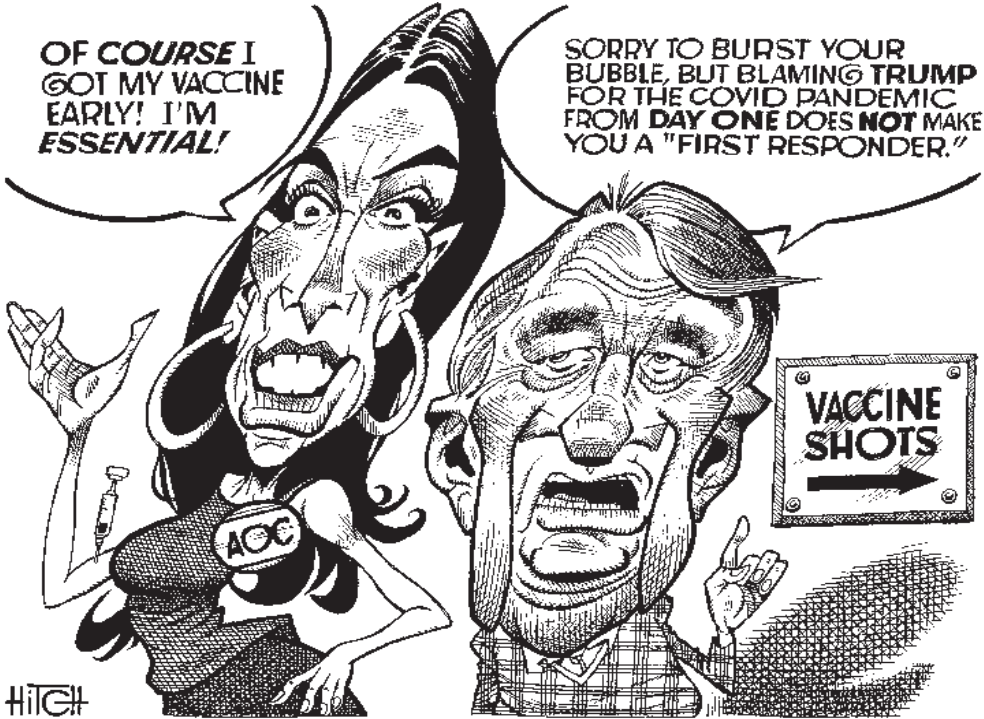
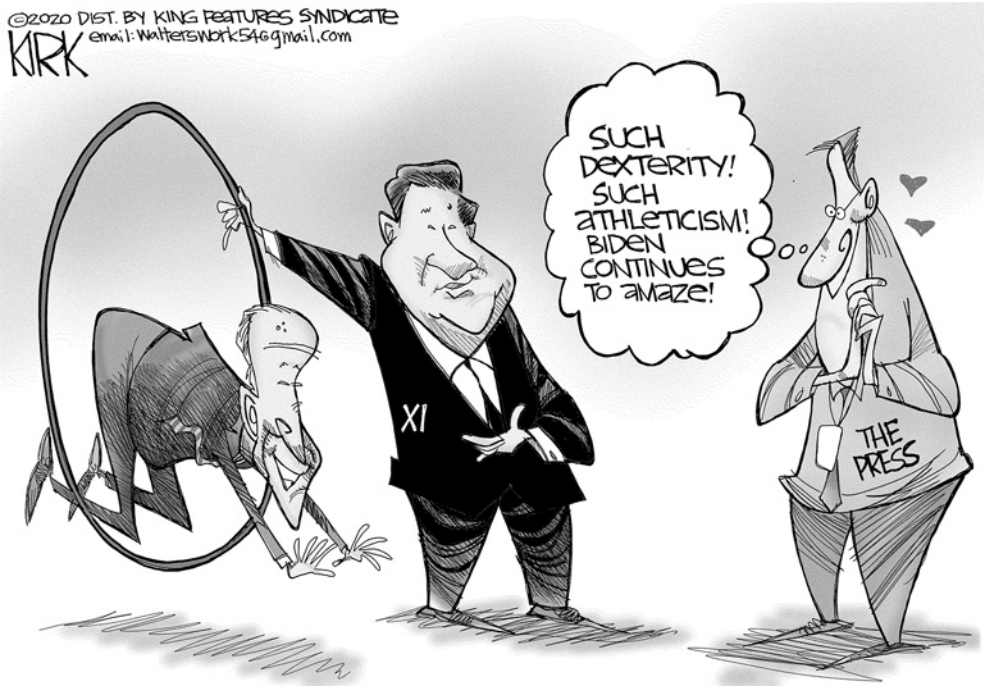
The public is invited to attend virtually. For more information, call (915)765-2600, x 2102.

Junta Pública

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Fabens llevará a realizar una audiencia pública para discutir el Informe Anual 2019-2020 del Distrito. La reunión virtual se llevará a cabo a las 6:30 P.M. del miércoles 20 de enero de 2021. Visite el sitio web de Fabens ISD www.fabensisd.net para acceder a la reunión bajo los anuncios de Fabens ISD.

Se invita al público a asistir virtualmente. Para obtener más información, llame al (915) 765-2600, x 2102.

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First Amendment

From Page 2

political actors (including socialist ideologues and promoters of leftist violence), but undermining the currency of any democracy, the guarantee of citizen free speech.

So, looking back on history, the most heinous deprivations of individual liberty – including impairment of the God-given freedoms of worship, assembly, travel, protest, self-defense, confronting accusers, fair trial, no false imprisonment, harm to life or limb, fear of government – all begin with loss of free speech.

That is why the outrage of the moment – is a talisman of our future. If Americans will see and speak truth, enact laws that protect political, personal, and professional free speech – rather than empowering oppressors of free speech – we can rise above this. If we do not act, we will wish we had. The First Amendment is under siege

– and most Americans know it. We do not need more political violence. We need free speech, and protection of it. The time – if there ever was one – is now, to say so.

Robert Charles, National Spokesman for the Association of Mature American Citizens. He is a former assistant secretary of state for President George W. Bush, former naval intelligence officer and litigator. He served in the Reagan and Bush 41 White Houses and as congressional counsel for five years.

The 2.3 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country.

SEISD

From Page 1

the safety of all, keeping our district secure, and upkeeping the district’s 161 acres and 753,883 square ft. of building spaces ready and welcoming.

Over 4,000 social distancing decals meticulously applied to district hallways and numerous other areas. Other mitigation efforts include air quality improvement through needlepoint bi-polar ionization, hand sanitizing stations made readily available, desk shields for teachers district-wide, thermal scanners, reception area plexiglass shields, sneeze guards for elementary students, and more frequent cleaning and sanitizing of high touch areas to name a few.

The department also has additional duties such as collaboration in planning, preparing, and supporting events like the food bank distributions and the community COVID-19 testing site. The drive-thru flu shot clinics, and most recently a testing site for students and staff through the BinaxNOW, which is the recent rapid testing kits made available by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The department actively engaged to execute services support.

Many projects shifted and adjusted as a result of the growing pandemic situation in the region. The projects continue to evolve to provide a safe environment despite the current circumstances. “I am fortunate to work alongside them leading crews because of their character and integrity,” Martinezsaid.

The sense of urgency to address mitigation efforts districtwide were focused on getting teacher classrooms ready for the return of students and teachers. Every classroom where teachers and students are expected to be in have been thoroughly inspected. Martinez adds, “Having met those expectations shows the resilience which defines the department’s sense of purpose to serve.”

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Jan. 4, 1999, 11 nations adopt a single currency, the euro, and “locked in” their exchange rates relative to each other and to the euro. At midnight, their currencies officially ceased to exist.
- On Jan. 5, 1920, the New York Yankees announce the purchase of heavy-hitting outfielder George Herman “Babe” Ruth from the Boston Red Sox for \$125,000. Ruth had played six seasons with the Red Sox, leading them to three World Series titles.
- On Jan. 6, 1936, Porky Pig makes his world debut in a Warner Brothers cartoon, “Gold Diggers of ‘49.” When Mel Blanc joined Warner Brothers the following year, he became the famous voice behind Porky as well as Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Sylvester and Tweety.
- On Jan. 7, 1789, Congress sets today as the date by which states are required to choose electors for the country’s first-ever presidential election. A month later, on Feb. 4, George Washington was elected president by state electors and sworn into office April 30.
- On Jan. 8, 1966, ABC’s rock and roll TV variety show “Shindig” airs its last episode. The show had debuted in September 1964, featuring acts including the Everly Brothers, the Rolling Stones and The Beach Boys.
- On Jan. 9, 1972, a fire breaks out aboard the lavish Queen Elizabeth, and by the next morning the world’s largest passenger ship lies in a wreck on the bottom of Hong Kong harbor. Launched in 1938, the Queen Elizabeth steamed across the ocean as a troop transport during World War II.
- On Jan. 10, 1901, a drilling derrick at Spindletop Hill near Beaumont, Texas, produces an enormous gusher of crude oil, signaling the advent of the American oil industry. The geyser flowed at an initial rate of 100,000 barrels a day. Today, only a few oil wells still operate in the area.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Adult mayflies have no functional mouth. Because of this, they die of malnutrition. This is an evolutionary occurrence that happens so aging mayflies don’t pass on genetic defects to the next generation.
- Steven Spielberg, who executive-produced the film “Gremlins,” requested the effects team make Gizmo’s fur orange and white to match his beagle, Chauncey.
- If you do a Google search on the word “askew,” the resulting content will tilt slightly to the right.
- St. Lucia is the only country in the world named after a woman. Originally called the Island of the Iguanas by early Carib settlers, the name was later changed after French seamen were shipwrecked there on Dec. 13, the feast day of St. Lucy.
- Ever noticed how some mass-produced ballpoint pens, such as the Bic Cristal, have a hole in the cap? No? Well, in case you someday do, now you’ll know why – it’s not just to prevent leaks, but choking as well. Lots of folks like to chew on pen lids, and in the event they accidentally swallow the cap, the hole ensures it won’t completely block their airway.
- After an 8.0 magnitude earthquake hit Mexico City in 1985, nearly all newborn babies survived a collapsed hospital for seven days without nourishment, water, warmth or human contact.
- Major League Baseball umpires are required to wear black underwear while on the job in case they split their pants.

Thought for the Day: “Beginning today, treat everyone you meet as if they were going to be dead by midnight. Extend to them all the care, kindness and understanding you can muster, and do it with no thought of any reward. Your life will never be the same again.”

– Og Mandino

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CryptoQuip Answer

I suppose you might call the person in charge of a robbery the commander-in-thief.

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Blanca Trout



Isela Torres



Greg Spence



Becky M. Romero



Angelica Rodriguez



Enrique Vega



Oscar A. Troncoso



Pedro Galaviz



Juan I. Martinez



Veronica Vijil



Jeannie Meza-Chavez



José Espinoza



Rosy Vega-Barrio

Superintendents

Thank You For Serving

Despite a year that covid raged, the NFL playoffs go on

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Now that we’ve all said goodbye to the nightmare that will always be known as 2020, we can begin looking forward to a healthier and happier 2021.

Of course, every New Year brings with it new possibilities – new attitudes and the belief that any goal can be achieved – like winning a Super Bowl.

That’s what 14 NFL teams begin their quest for this weekend.

After a year in which we saw professional baseball and basketball struggle after adjusting their seasons, NCAA football and basketball games being cancelled left and right and a number of sporting events cancelled or postponed; somehow,

someway, the NFL managed to get all its games in.

And even though games were played with limited fans, including many with no fans in the stadium, it all looked the same on TV. The best thing of all was that the play didn’t seem to be affected.

And that’s why the fans stayed interested in the games, unlike the other sports that saw their TV ratings drop drastically.

So, with the postseason starting this weekend, let’s take a look at who should at least make it to NFL’s conference championships; the NFL’s final four.

This year, there is only one team from each conference that will earn a first-round bye. The Kansas City Chiefs and the Green Bay Packers will enjoy the advantage of sitting back, healing, and getting ready for their second-round

opponent.

I think it’s a pretty safe bet that along with those two teams, the AFC favorites include the Pittsburgh Steelers, Buffalo Bills and Tennessee Titans. The NFC contenders are the New Orleans Saints and the Seattle Seahawks.

Are there any other teams that could surprise and upset their way to the conference championship games? Of course.

In the AFC, The Baltimore Ravens and Cleveland Browns could certainly advance to the title games. Lamar Jackson is playing his best football of the season and because of it, the Ravens are starting to look like the scoring machine they were last year. The Browns are up and down, but if they are up on a particular Sunday, they can beat anyone.

In the NFC, I don’t think anyone would be surprised if the Tampa Bay Buccaneers or the Los Angeles Rams advanced that far. Of course, whenever you have Tom Brady and Rob Gronkowski, the sky is the limit for the Bucs. Although Rams quarterback Jared Goff is inconsistent, Aaron Donald and that defense could lead the way to a couple of upset wins.

But in the end, it’s usually the big boys who make it to the conference title game and it looks like the same thing is going to happen this time around.

In the AFC, The Chiefs, Bills, Steelers and Titans are the odds on favorites to take the final two spots. One of those spots seems to be already reserved for the Chiefs, who have looked unbeatable at times.

That offense with Patrick Mahomes, Tyrek Hill, Sammy Watkins and Travis Kelce, can score often and from any place on the field.

So the real question is: Whom will the Chiefs play for a trip to the Super Bowl? The Steelers are not exactly playing their best football right now. The Titans are a little too week on defense.

The team that is playing their best right now and will challenge the Chiefs, is the Buffalo Bills.

Bills quarterback Josh Allen may be the third best QB in the NFL behind Mahomes and Aaron Rodgers, and he will lead Buffalo to the big game.

In the NFC, there is no clear-cut favorite. The Packers are good, but not great. The Saints are good, but have a bunch of covid issues heading into the playoffs. The Seahawks are good, but their defense isn’t what it used to be.

Because of all this, a team like Tampa Bay could sneak in, but it appears that it will be the Packers and the Saints in the title game.

But whatever happens in the NFL playoffs, the best news of all is that there will be NFL playoffs.

And in this past season of coronavirus cancellations and quarantines, that’s a huge upset victory for the NFL.

Classified Ads

LEGALS

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Public Sale of property to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale to be held at **Fabens Self-Storage at 16289 Alameda Ave, Fabens, TX 79838 on January 16, at 9:00 a.m.** Unit items sold for cash to the highest bidder. Seller reserves the right to withdraw the property at any time before the sale. Property includes the contents of spaces of the following tenants: Lorena Sifuentes, Maria G. Ontiveros, Terry Elligson, Vividiana Garcia, Veronica Perez, Steven A. Garcia, Adilene Soto, Lorenzo Portillo and Silvia Ruiz Ramirez: Items of units include tools, **furniture, and**

miscellaneous household items. Notice of Public Sale of property to satisfy a landlord's lien.

WTCC: 01-07-21
01-14-21

PUBLIC NOTICE

El Paso County Emergency Services District #1

Notice of Location

The El Paso County Emergency Services District #1 (Horizon Fire Department) is located at 14151 Nunda Ave., Horizon City, TX 79928. Phone (non-emergency): (915) 852-3204; E M E R G E N C Y : 911; Fax: (915) 852-8400.

Katherine Ames

Fiscal Administrator

WTCC: 01-07-21

PUBLIC NOTICE

El Paso County Emergency Services District #2

Notice of Location

The El Paso County Emergency Services District #2 is located at 16001 Socorro Rd., (mail: PO Box 265), Fabens, TX 79838. Phone (non-emergency): (915) 851-0304; E M E R G E N C Y : 911; Fax: (915) 851-9000; Ambulance (county): (915) 779-2111.

Mariana Navarrete District Administrator

WTCC: 01-07-21

Blanco

From Page 1

energy standards. Texas has not updated its renewable energy rules in almost 20 years, he pointed out. “As climate change continues to exacerbate weather conditions and challenge communities, more needs to be done to promote renewable energy to combat global warming,” Blanco said in a statement. The bill he filed on that issue would “study the feasibility of expanding Texas’ renewable energy generation to 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050.”

How successful the new Democrat state senator from El Paso will be remains to be seen, as the current Texas Legislature is still controlled by Republicans, who have been calling the shots in the state capitol for the past 20 years.

In the recent election, Democrats picked up just one Texas senate seat so will remain the minority party within the 31-member assembly. Sixteen senate seats were up for election in 2020, including 14 held by Republican incumbents, who were all re-elected.

The only Republican incumbent to lose was State Senator Pete Flores, of Pleasanton. A Democrat from San Antonio, State Representative Roland Gutierrez, defeated Flores by 3.3 points in a race for District 19, which stretches from San Antonio to West Texas.

control the spread” of the virus.

Additionally, Blanco wants state lawmakers to investigate the further tightening of the state’s renewable

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Super Crossword

PUZZLING-LY ACROSS

1 Like many announcers' private side comments
8 Glistening
14 Give a cue to
20 Sounded like a frog
21 Durbin of old Hollywood
22 Worrier's cry
23 Deeper level of longing?
25 Walk like a little 'un
26 Coll. website suffix
27 Slandered really badly
28 "Uh-uh"
30 Legal claim
31 White water whereabouts
35 Give it a go
36 Place to bathe on the grass outside a house?
38 "Marvy!"
40 They cause actions
42 Really boring chairs, desks and tables?
47 Two-grid vacuum tube
52 Cry to a matador
53 Manning of the Giants
54 Far-off
56 Of charged

particles
57 Extreme type
59 Lysol target
61 What 1066 is famous as?
64 Territory split in 1889
66 Pertaining to
68 Bad, to Jules
69 Viral malady
70 "Allow me to provide a leavening agent, if nothing else"?
76 Blvds. and aves.
78 China's Long March leader
79 Aquatic bird
80 _ Leone
83 "Pray that I find some cool gross stuff!"?
88 Isle of Man man, e.g.
90 Scout unit
91 _ pittance (hardly any)
92 Garage job
94 Atop, to bards
96 Short snooze
97 Bit of voice mail
100 Hankerings to take pictures of small and distant objects?
103 Places for milk products
105 Bored feeling
106 Measure of how much a ship swerves off course?

110 2000-15 TV series
112 Facet
116 Horror film lab aide
117 With 108-Down, deteriorate
118 Pre-entree dishes
121 Lanai wreath
122 Join the club
124 Chatter that's engaging?
129 Entertainer
Uggams
130 Give kudos
132 Arms depot
131 Abides
133 Breadwinner
134 What vets provide

DOWN

1 Earthy color
2 Artist Kahlo
3 Mist over
4 _jongg
5 Mamie's man
6 Plunk lead-in
7 Haeagen-Dazs rival
8 Storied fireman
9 Microbe-ridden
10 Byway
11 Camelot wife
12 Raggedy _
13 _ opus
14 Road hazard
15 Sorority "P"
16 In a curious way
17 Word before circus or blitz

18 More ashen
19 Latest thing
24 Singer John
29 Be next to
32 Small hotel
33 Conquers
34 Writer Bellow
36 Connect with
37 Match well
39 Duo + one
40 Tally a total
41 1982 Disney cyberfilm
42 " _ better believe it!"
43 Penne _ vodka
44 Sloppy smooches
45 Wry twisting
46 _ Haute
48 Acuff of song
49 Like a swap
50 Radio tuner
51 Hose color
55 Otter's kin
58 "Bosh!"
60 Go extinct
62 Bub
63 " 'Tis so sad"
65 "You lookin' _?"
67 Nosh
71 Stable stock
72 Seamless transition
73 Von _ family ("The Sound of Music" clan)
74 _ oxide (anesthetic)
75 The, to Hans
76 Emulated a fish

77 1 p.m. is one
81 Horse color
82 iPad downloads
84 Oct.'s 744
85 Union general George
86 Darling type
87 Bodily joint
89 Aquatic bird
93 Lofty trains
95 Tall volcano in Sicily
98 Groups of geese
99 Dubliner's land
101 Model Klum
102 Dog's bark
104 Key in anew
106 Give in (to)
107 Nixon veep Spiro
108 See 117-Across
109 Dryly comical
110 In the vicinity
111 Not as risky
113 Kagan of justice
114 Romero of "Batman"
115 Work's name
118 Lasting mark
119 Related (to)
120 Take a pic of
123 _ Abner
125 Legendary coach Parseghian
126 Three, in Bari
127 D.C. winter hrs.
128 Remote button abbr.

Answer Page 4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13		14	15	16	17	18	19	
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122					123			124	125						126	127	128				
129								130							131						
132								133							134						

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



Franken

From Page 2

most essential ones: Jan. 5, 2021, [was] more important. That’s when the Senate runoff elections are held in Georgia. The results will determine if President Biden has a clear track to recovery from the devastation he’ll inherit from President Trump.

The next day, Jan. 6, is when Congress accepts the results of the

presidential election once and for all. Except there is no “once and for all” with the Trumpster. Assuming he and his accomplices don’t come up with some dangerous trickery to keep the United States on razor’s edge, it’ll be noon on Jan. 20 when our citizens can stop holding their breath.

Actually, we cannot. Trump will not go away. He’s made that clear. He has millions of devoted fans who cling to his promises like they were not broken promises.

They are not about to surrender their misguided allegiance. They are ready to follow him with every demagogic tweet he comes up with.

But even far more distressing is the violent power he has in his hands, small that they may be. It doesn’t take more than a few careless remarks by him to incite white supremacist terrorists to wreak terrible havoc on a country going through hard times. Meanwhile, let’s not forget the

Questions about COPD

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was diagnosed with COPD a year and a half ago and have several questions. I seem to be unable to get answers from my pulmonary doctor, as he is always busy and doesn’t have a lot of time to spend with me. How fast does COPD progress? I’m 78 years old, in reasonably good health and exercise regularly. I have chronic bronchitis with a slight amount of emphysema. I had been coughing a little during the day, had mucus in the morning and coughed at night for two to three hours after bedtime – to the extent of having to use a rescue inhaler to settle down and get back to sleep. After he put me on Trelegy, all of those symptoms disappeared, and I feel perfectly normal except for shortness of breath. My other question is what is the life expectancy of a person diagnosed with COPD? I’ve read about answers to this all over the map, from two or three years after diagnosis to 15 or more years. I would presume that it depends on other factors such as physical condition, exercise, weight, etc. But I would like some kind of guideline for someone in my condition. – T.J.



There are two major types of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: chronic bronchitis, where the primary problem is productive cough; and emphysema, which is destruction of the small airways. Shortness of breath is a common feature of all types of COPD. The most prevalent cause is smoking.

I can’t answer your questions on rate of progression and overall prognosis without much more information, but it is certainly a good sign that many of your symptoms are well-controlled on treatment. The single biggest factor in rate of progression of COPD is whether you are a smoker, but not being able to exercise, being male and being very underweight are additional risk factors for faster progression.

Lung function falls inexorably over time. In people who have no lung disease, the normal decline with aging is never enough to cause symptoms during normal activity. In someone with COPD, the decline over months to years can cause symptoms to occur first with exercise, and then when at rest. Once people have severe symptoms at rest, the prognosis becomes quite poor.

No medication can reverse lung damage. Inhaled steroids reduce inflammation and can slow progression somewhat. Inhaled bronchodilators open airways and make breathing easier. Inhaled anticholinergics reduce secretions. Your medication, Trelegy, contains all of these medicines, and is appropriate for people with severe COPD or those who do not have good symptom control with a less intensive regimen.

An online calculator for prognosis can be found at <https://bit.ly/2N1UEoy>. It can be used if you know how far you can walk in six minutes and the results of your breathing test (specifically, the FEV1%).

DEAR DR. ROACH: After reading your recent column on mercury, I wonder how dangerous mercury amalgam for cavity fillings is. I’d guess that the amount of metallic mercury ingested is insignificantly small and of no consequence to overall health. But is it better to replace that type of filling with newer, less-toxic fillings? – J.G.

Many studies have looked at potential health harms to dental fillings using mercury-containing amalgam, and the consensus is that they are very safe, and that there is no good reason to remove them.

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) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

timid politicians making the best self-serving deals they can and, as usual, waiting until the very last minute.

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Send Your
Newsbrief To:
wtxcc@wtxcc.com



Moore Texas by Roger T. Moore
Jan. 1, 1819, Galveston Island: Jean Lafitte's pirates celebrate by writing "roasts" of each other.

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 B

L PCXXIPG FIC OLDNM
ESKK MNG XGHPIV LV ENSHDG
IR S HIUUGHF MNG
EIOOSVZGH-LV-MNLGR.

Answer Page 4
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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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VA expands video health care access



by Freddy Groves

Afraid to go into a doctor’s office right now because of COVID? You’re not the only one. Or maybe the nearest facility is far away, or transportation is a problem. The Department of Veterans Affairs knows this and is stepping up efforts to keep us connected to our health care team.

The VA has reopened five telehealth access points after being closed down since April due to the COVID outbreak. The Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations sites are part of a program to bring health care to veterans in rural areas or places without good internet access, the Anywhere to Anywhere initiative. ATLAS offers services that don’t require hands-on exams: social work, nutrition, clinical pharmacy, primary care, mental-health counseling and more.

The locations now reopened are at Walmarts in Keokuk, Iowa; Howell, Michigan; Asheboro, North Carolina; Boone, North Carolina and Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. In addition to Walmarts, the VA has collaborated with Philips North America (think: small appliances such as razors and soup makers), the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. What these locations offer is a private room and encrypted video broadband connection access for meeting with VA providers, two very valuable services. The VA had over 294,000 video appointments last year.

When you go to an appointment at one of those locations, an attendant will check you in and help solve any video technical issues, and then leave. They’re not VA employees, but they are trained to get you hooked up.

To learn more about ATLAS and see the full list of locations, go online to VA’s Office of Connected Care at connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas. You’ll find the town and state,

address, telephone, hours of appointments and the associated medical center. There’s also a list of future locations.

If you’re not able to stay at home for a health care video conference, these ATLAS sites are the next best thing

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• To save yourself some time and aggravation, make a safety set of keys that match your current set exactly. You will never have to go looking for your keys when you are in a hurry, and you won’t have to determine if the key you need is on the ring. It is!

• “Re: your recent tip about storing heirloom quilts in a cedar chest: No, no, a thousand times no! Nothing is worse for quilts – heirloom or otherwise – than storing them in cedar chests. Acids will not only stain them but break down the fabric over time.” – B.R. in Washington.

Thanks B.R. Although my grandmother did store quilts and other fabric items in her cedar chest, according to sources at the National Quilters Circle, the best place for an heirloom quilt may be on a bed. You can stack them, but rotate so that no quilt gets too much sun. – JoAnn

• “For squeaky door hinges, forget about graphite, WD-40 or any of those other messy lubricants that may last for only a few months. Pull the hinge pins, wipe them clean with a dry rag, and then apply a thin coating of Vaseline with your finger. Properly done, your hinges should remain free of squeaks for at least a year.” – F.B. in Colorado

• “If you live in a cold area where you might experience icy sidewalks and you have a dog or cat, don’t forget to protect your pet’s feet from the salt and/or chemicals that are frequently used to melt ice. Be sure to wipe down your pet’s feet after a walk outside.” – F.F. in Alaska

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2021 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

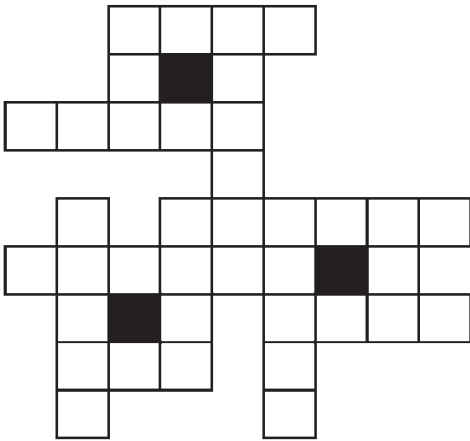
	+		×		13
×		÷		×	
	×		–		6
–		+		+	
	+		–		10
7		11		13	

1 3 4 5 6 7 8 8 9

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UCT
♥ CERPIE
♥ DRACE
♥ SPSA
FECDEA
♥ WLO
TUEL
♥ DESIL
♥ DSO
♥ CRESPA
NOFLE
DWRE



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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