



NEWSBRIEFS

ACA registration help

The Federal government recently established a “Special Enrollment Period” for the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Feb. 15 to May 15. Project Vida Health Center will help enroll El Pasoans in new, renewed or revised ACA health insurance coverage. In-person appointments must be scheduled by emailing Maria Elena Fernandez at m.fernandez@pvida.net. Bi-lingual “navigators” are available to answer questions. Enrollment or revisions may be done by phone. For more information on how to apply, or to see a tutorial on how to complete an application, visit www.pvida.net. Checking eligibility or enrolling in Affordable Care Act coverage also may be done by visiting www.healthcare.gov. For more information on Affordable Care Act enrollment at Project Vida Health Center, contact Maria Elena Fernandez at (915) 207-4475 or m.fernandez@pvida.net.

— Joyce Davidoff

Steer clear of water

Texas is famous for its ever-changing weather, including flash floods that can make driving treacherous in low-lying areas and on water-covered roadways. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is reminding drivers to heed this important life-saving warning: “Turn Around, Don’t Drown!” Flash floods are the leading cause of weather-related deaths in Texas, and about 60% of flood-related deaths in our state involve motor vehicles. Floodwaters also may be hiding dangers such as debris, tree branches, power lines, or damage to the road that can seriously damage a vehicle and harm or even kill drivers and passengers. State law requires drivers to heed barriers blocking low water crossings or flooded roadways, or face a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to 180 days in jail. Motorists who tamper with or remove a roadway warning sign or barricade are subject to a fine of up to \$1,000, up to two years in jail, or both. TxDOT advises motorists in areas experiencing heavy rain or flooding to follow these safety tips:

- Never drive through still or moving flood waters.
- Reduce your speed, drive to conditions, and turn off cruise control.
- Be very careful driving at night. It can be harder to see flood dangers.
- If your vehicle stalls in flood waters, if you can do so safely, leave it and move to higher ground.

— Jeff Salzgeber

Many people believe in law and order as long as they can lay down the law and give the order.

— Quips & Quotes

Hoff is new U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

WEST TEXAS – Ashley Chapman Hoff has replaced Gregg Sofer, who was appointed in October and resigned when the new Democratic administration took office, as the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas, and it could not come at a more critical time.

With the current divisive social and political climate in the United States, recent studies indicate that law enforcement is in a downward spiral with fewer qualified officers answering the call to public duty. Reports show that the ranks of law enforcement are experiencing record levels of retirements, lower levels of recruitment, and increased crime rates in cities throughout the country.

Despite the difficult challenges ahead, Hoff wants West Texas residents to know that law enforcement is still out there, protecting them, their property, and their

loved ones from those who would take all that they have.

“It is truly the honor of a lifetime to serve as the United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas, and I am grateful to the Court for the appointment. I acknowledge and embrace the immense responsibility of this position,” said U.S. Attorney Hoff. “I am privileged to work alongside the incredibly talented and dedicated women and men of this office, who give their all every day to protect the public, defend the Constitution, and represent the United States of America.”

As U.S. Attorney, Hoff is the chief federal law enforcement officer in the Western District of Texas. She is responsible for prosecuting violations of federal law and representing the federal government in civil litigation where the United States is a party.

The Western District of Texas includes 68 counties spanning about 93,000

See HOFF, Page 6



— Photo courtesy Office of U. S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas

Ashley Chapman Hoff is the new U. S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas. U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman recently administered the oath of office to Hoff at the federal courthouse in Austin.

EPCC recognized for Hispanic graduation rate

El Paso Community College awards the most degrees to Hispanics for 16th straight year

By Jim Heiney
Special to the Courier



— Photo courtesy District of Texas

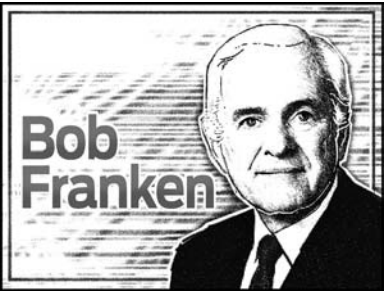
COVER GIRL – An unidentified EPCC graduate from the 2019 50th anniversary class graces the cover of *The Hispanic Outlook on Education*.

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) is known as “The Best Place to Start & Finish” and is the first choice for thousands of first-time students as well as individuals looking to re-train or upskill. The focus on student success has paid off once again as EPCC is listed on the index of Top Community Colleges for Hispanics and now holds the distinction of awarding the most degrees to Hispanic students for 16 years in a row.

The Hispanic Outlook on Education magazine announced in the February issue that EPCC is number one in the nation for granting associate degrees to Hispanic students by two-year schools. For more than 50 years EPCC has been committed to creating a quality academic experiences to better serve students and improve student outcomes. The college Faculty and staff are passionate about eliminating barriers and ensuring that students are able to complete their degrees.

EPCC President Dr. William Serrata is proud of the distinction. “Students are the reason behind everything we do at EPCC. We want students to start and complete their degree so that they are on a trajectory of reaching their goals, whether it be getting the job they want or

See EPCC, Page 3



There’s a word for the great pleasure derived from someone else’s misfortune: schadenfreude. Ted Cruz, normally known as a royal pain, is once again winning the contest for schadenfreude poster boy. He is... well, let’s call on his famous associates to describe him:

Former Speaker of the House John Boehner said Ted Cruz is “Lucifer in the flesh.” Boehner spit out those words sometime after freshman Sen. Cruz had pretty much single-handedly caused the government shutdown in 2013 over his plan to get the White House to strip funding from

Cruz control

Obamacare, despite leadership’s efforts to block the maneuver. By that time Cruz had established a reputation as a backstabbing (even for Washington), smarmy (even for Washington), unlikable (ibid) political figure from braggadocio Texas. Lone Star State swagger doesn’t help.

“I don’t like him,” said Bob Dole, who likes everybody.

And former Republican Congressman Peter King of New York, who has always maintained the New Yorkers’ approach to personality, said, “I’ll take cyanide if he ever got the nomination.”

There are actually two points here. First, Ted Cruz is running for president. He has before; he will again.

Second, Cruz wants to be despised. That’s the only

explanation for his continuing exploits, the latest of which is Cancungate. More about that in a moment. Apparently, he’s developed a master plan where the premise is that Americans will vote for someone they hate for being a snake, slithering against the political world, speaking with forked tongue, and overall playing the wretched villain. My nickname for him is “Snidely Whiplash.”

Which brings us to his Cancun adventure.

What ambitious politician in his right mind would leave his state where millions of its residents are freezing because of a massive electric power failure in historically cold winter weather and take his family for an escape to Cancun? Who would be so blatant about it? He was caught, which wasn’t

difficult, since he was easily recognizable in the Houston airport rolling a cutesy little suitcase combo onto the plane, and then in sunny Mexico wearing an ill-fitting golf shirt.

So let’s see here. We have an insensitive-to-his-desperate-constituents United States senator who is entitled, who thinks he’s smarter than everybody else and makes no bones about it, who almost got beaten by a no-name Democrat (gasp!) and who has antagonized everyone from Texas to Washington. Yup, that certainly seems like presidential material to me. Donald Trump, called him “Lynin’ Ted,” and nobody along the many stops on the Ted Cruz life’s highway objected, no matter how accomplished he’s been.

Lindsey Graham said, “If you killed Ted Cruz on the floor of the Senate, and the trial was in the Senate, nobody would convict

you.” Obviously, Ted Cruz doesn’t care (well, he cares about the killing part). He believes that the path to success is littered with enemies, and he may be right.

It is routinely littered with people who pretend to be your BFFs. As Harry S. Truman said, “If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog.”

But Ted Cruz doesn’t even pretend to be your friend. He’s a misanthrope if there ever was one. He doesn’t bother to hide it. Actually, it’s downright refreshing. He wants everybody to understand the unvarnished truth about him and his hateful but unorthodox election campaigning style. Next up he’ll be running for mayor of Cancun.

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Write stuff

Dear Editor:

The Inspector General for the Social Security Administration (SSA) has designated March 4, 2021 as National “Slam the Scam” Day – an outreach campaign to raise public awareness of government imposter telephone scams. This is part of National Consumer Protection Week, February 28 – March 6, 2021. We are asking you to share information about “Slam the Scam” Day with your clients, friends, and family.

In 2020, the Federal Trade Commission received over 178,000 complaints of government imposter scams. Of those, 10% said they lost money to a scammer – a total of \$174.2 million. To prevent further losses,

we urge everyone to exercise caution when receiving calls from someone claiming to be from a government agency. To prevent further losses, we urge everyone to exercise caution when receiving calls from someone claiming to be from a government agency.

Our consumer protection message is simple:

- Hang up on suspicious calls from “government officials” calling about a problem with your Social Security number or account.
- NEVER make payments with gift cards, wire transfers, or by mailing cash.
- Report Social Security scams to [OIG.SSA.GOV](https://oig.ssa.gov).
- Report other scams to reportfraud.ftc.gov.

We have an outreach kit with the following resources you can

use in your communications:

- Details of National “Slam the Scam” Day events on Twitter and Facebook;
- A Social Security phone scam awareness flyer you can email or print;
- Facebook and Twitter content that you can customize or use as is;
- Infographics you can disseminate or print as bookmarks, coasters, stickers or

labels, or card stock; and

- A list of resources and information about government imposter scams to use and share.

With your continued support, together, we can help protect your clients, friends, and family from losing their hard-earned money.

Most SSA business can be done online. Before calling, please visit our website to see our list of convenient and secure

self-service options. Save time and go online. You can speak with a representative by calling your local Social Security office or our at 1-800-772-1213. Local office phone numbers are available online at our Social Security Office Locator.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Buckner
Associate Commissioner
Office of Strategic and Digital Communications

Romero lands TMEA scholarship

By Christy Flores-Jones
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – With a longtime focus on refining his musical talents, Pebble Hills High School choir singer Raul Romero has earned a duo of highly sought fine arts accolades during his final year of high school.

Romero, who is a senior, was named as a Texas Music Education Association All-State choir member for the fourth year in a row and he is a recipient of the TMEA Past Presidents Scholarship.

Both achievements are highly notable feats for high school musicians that require immense practice and dedication in and out of the classroom.

“Being able to represent not only myself, but Pebble Hills high School, my director, the district, and El Paso overall is rewarding,” Romero said.

“It really makes me feel like I’ve done something important with these past four years of hard work on my music.”



Raul Romero

pandemic TMEA did not host the live concerts this year.

Still, Romero was humbled and honored to earn the prestigious All-State spot for four consecutive years, acknowledging the hours of work necessary to accomplish that success.

“The experience (at state) is very fun, rewarding, and fulfilling,” Romero said.

“Especially, considering how long it takes, it is not just something you do in a month, it takes months if not years. It is a part of your school life, and more so your life is embedded into fine arts.”

Romero’s success has been celebrated by Joe Estala, choir director at Pebble Hills High School, the SISD Fine Arts department and the entire district.

“Congratulations to Raul Romero from PHHS on being named a 4-year TMEA All-Stater and being awarded the TMEA Past Presidents Music Scholarship!” the SISD Fine Arts department posted on their Twitter feed.

“#TeamSISD is extremely proud of you!”

Estala had the honor of informing Romero that he won the \$12,500 TMEA scholarship and has been guiding Romero along the way to his continual All-State achievements.

“I have been blessed to be a part of his life for 4 years,” Estala said. “In that time, the greatest reward has been watching the beginnings of a great future music educator take shape through this young man.”

Romero was selected among more than 145 high school candidates from across the state for the highly coveted scholarship. It will assist

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48
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Press swapped the script on Cuomo vs. DeSantis

Throughout the pandemic, the press has been excoriatingly harsh on a governor who was slow to act, unnecessarily endangered the lives of the elderly, alienated experts and cooked the numbers.

It just thought the governor in question was Florida’s Ron DeSantis rather than New York’s Andrew Cuomo.

After it has become clear that Cuomo’s handling of the pandemic was not just criminal in the metaphorical sense, but perhaps in the literal sense, the press has begun, only reluctantly and belatedly, to abandon its long-running Cuomo hagiography.

It never made any sense to lionize Andrew Cuomo at the expense of Ron DeSantis, except that one had a “D” after his name and the other didn’t, and one hated Trump and the other didn’t. The national media also labors under the assumption that New York must be competent while the Sunshine State is the preserve of the embarrassingly boorish “Florida Man.”

Finally, the media loved the way Cuomo talked about the pandemic at his take-charge press conferences. This was taken as the opposite of Trump’s approach, which it was – Cuomo talked a good game, while utterly

botching the substance of the response, while Trump talked irresponsibly about the pandemic, while handling the substance pretty well (or, certainly, not as badly as advertised).

All this meant that the press made both Cuomo and DeSantis into something they were not – a hero and a villain, respectively – when it should have been obvious all along that this wasn’t remotely justified.

From the outset of the pandemic, New York state has had the highest number of deaths of any state and still does (47,000), and the second highest deaths-per-million of anywhere in the country. In contrast, Florida is right around the national average for deaths-per-million. Journalists brushed right by these top-line numbers in the interest of their tendentious narrative-building.

They erupted in outrage when DeSantis was allegedly slow to close the beaches last March, but didn’t dwell much on Cuomo saying, when the virus was already spreading throughout his state: “The facts defeat fear. Because the reality is reassuring.”

They accused DeSantis of unnecessarily endangering seniors when the Florida governor

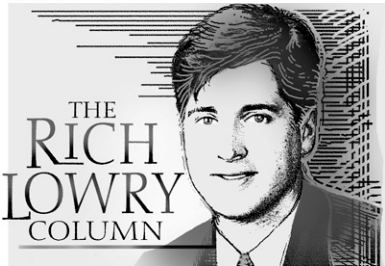
took steps to protect the nursing homes, and Andrew Cuomo, infamously, ordered nursing homes to accept COVID-19 patients.

They claimed DeSantis was rejecting the “science” by, among other things, pushing to reopen the schools, an approach that has proved out. Meanwhile, experts have fled the New York public health bureaucracy in response to Cuomo’s highhandedness.

They bought the bogus story of a Florida data manager who was supposedly persecuted for blowing the whistle on the state’s manipulation of its COVID numbers, when, of course, this is exactly what Cuomo was doing.

And so, the media’s anointed hero of the pandemic – who wrote a book on his own exemplary pandemic response, who won a Grammy, who was

elevated to an authority with the standing to comment on how the country was handling COVID-19 – is facing calls to resign or face impeachment and is the subject of multiple



See LOWRY, Page 7

EPCC

From Page 1

continuing their education,” Serrata said.

“I chose EPCC because as a first-generation college student it was the best opportunity to obtain my degree and I knew I would be supported by people who are always willing to guide their students towards success,” EPCC student Alex Martinez said.

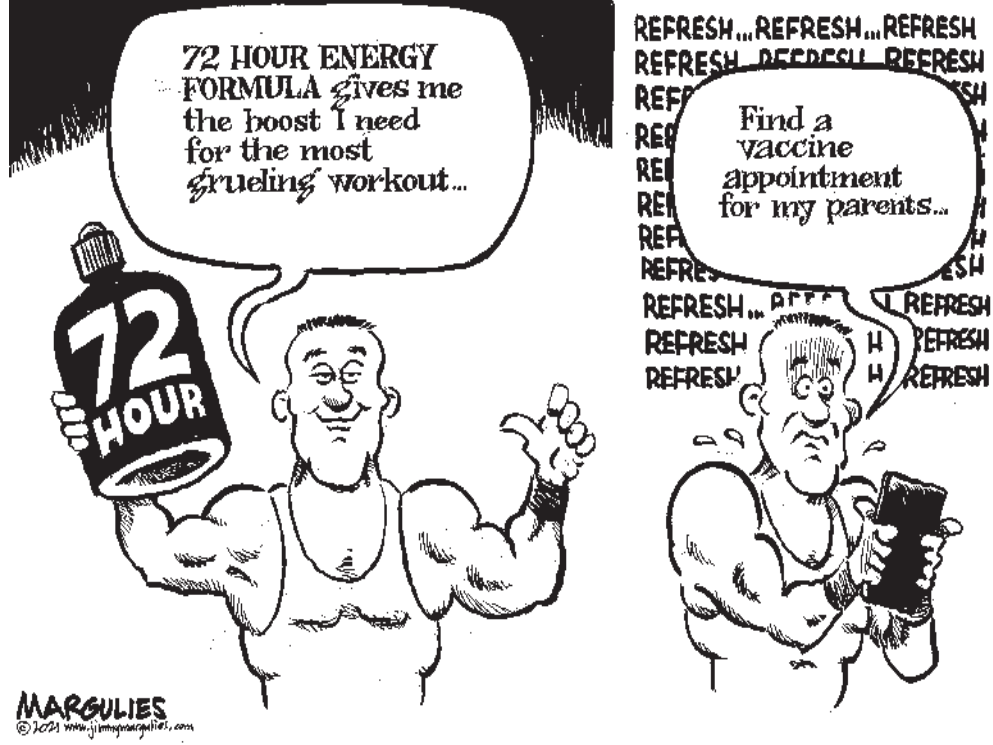
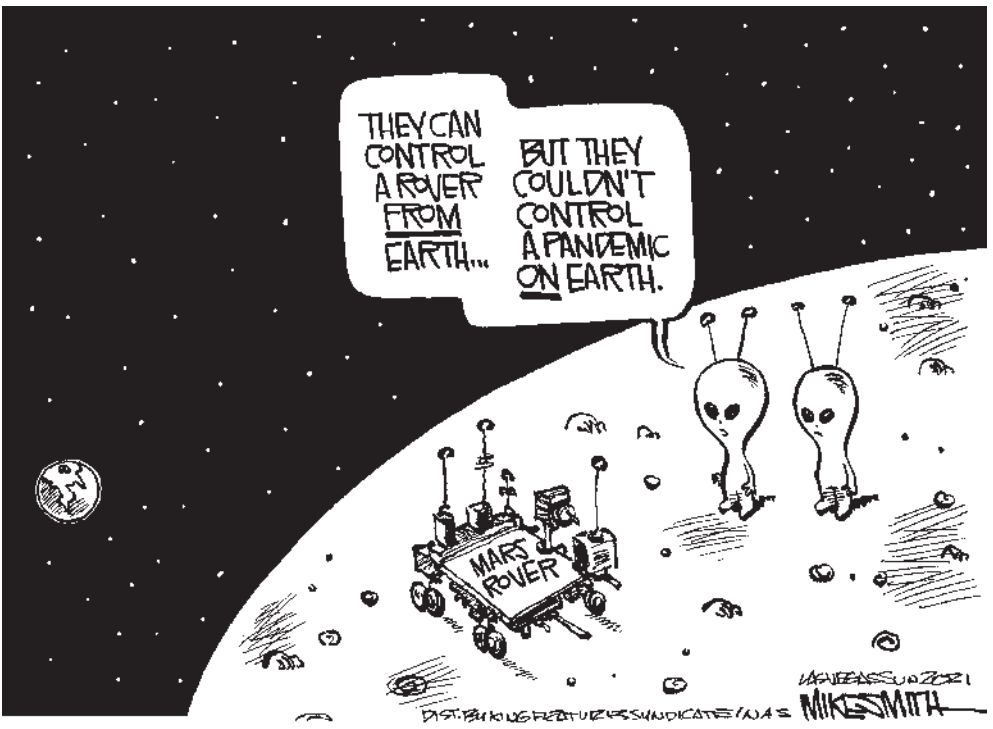
Other students echo similar sentiments. Olga Montoya says EPCC provided her an opportunity and experience she feels she couldn’t have gotten elsewhere to get her degree. “EPCC has given me an opportunity to start and finish at my own pace,” Montoya said. “I’ll be the first college graduate in my family, giving the example to my children that when you want something, you can do it.”

For many students, EPCC is a pathway to continuing their studies to a baccalaureate or higher degree. Chris Rodriguez came to EPCC not knowing what he wanted to do for his future career. He said the college helped him discover his passion for computer science and he plans to transfer and continue his studies at a four-year institution. “I’m grateful to have had the experience I’ve had at EPCC with talented professors and peers alike,” Rodriguez said.

The college is prepared to help individuals who need to reskill and upskill in order to change or advance their careers. “I went to EPCC to change careers and pursue my passion,” said Kristin Lawson who completed her Associate of Applied Science last fall and plans a new career as a Physical Therapy Assistant.

Visit www.hispanicoutlook.com/education-magazine/february-2021 to see the February issue of *The Hispanic Outlook on Education*.

Archives: www.wtxcc.com



EPCC recognized for work with military, veterans

By Jim Heiney
Special to the Courier

Paso Community College (EPCC) was recognized with a 2021-2022 Military Friendly School Silver designation by EL PASO COUNTY – EL VIQ TORY. Now in its 11th year,



the Military Friendly Schools list has come to set the standard for higher education institutions to provide the best opportunities for veterans and their spouses. “EPCC is committed to providing targeted support to veterans, military members and their families including clearing roadblocks to registration, developing clear pathways for degree or program completion, enhancing career exploration and improving networks for course acceptance and transfer,” Dr. William Serrata, EPCC President, said. EPCC proudly serves over 3,000 service members, veterans and their families. The college mission is to serve students in the most effective and efficient way possible so they may achieve their educational goals. For more information about EPCC’s Veterans Resource Center visit <https://www.epcc.edu/Services/Military-Veterans/veterans-resource-center>.

IF YOU THINK PICKING UP DOG POOP IS UNPLEASANT, TRY DRINKING IT.

Pet waste washes into storm drains, polluting our rivers, lakes and drinking water sources. Get the scoop.

The Town of Horizon City Storm Water Management Team would like to remind our residents how very important it is to keep our storm drains and ponding areas trash free.

Town of Horizon City Storm Water Management Program
14999 Darrington Road • Horizon City, Texas 79928
(915) 852-1046 • Fax (915) 852-1005 • www.horizoncity.org

Fabens Independent School District
PUBLIC NOTICE

The Fabens Independent School District Special Education Department will be destroying confidential student information on special education students who have graduated, moved or were dismissed in 2013. Parents of these students may come to the Special Education Department located at 603 NE Camp Street. in Fabens on Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to claim their child’s file. The remaining files will be destroyed as per state directives 30 days from the date of this notice. If you have an questions, please call (915) 765-2690.

AVISO

El Departamento de Educación Especial del Distrito Escolar de Fabens va a destruir los archivos confidenciales de estudiantes que estaban en el programa de educación especial que han graduado, se han movido, o fueron despedidos en el año escolar de 2013. Los padres de estos estudiantes pueden venir a la oficina del Departamento de Educacion Especial del Distrito Escolar de Fabens en 603 NE Camp Street, de lunes a viernes de 8:00-4:30 de la tarde a recoger los archivos de sus hijos. Los archivos que no sean recogidos van a ser destruidos como manda el estado en 30 días después de este aviso. Si tienen preguntas, llamen al teléfono (915) 765-2690.

WTCC: 03-04-21

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- In 2003, Rapper Pusha T wrote the famous McDonald’s jingle “I’m Lovin’ It,” but does not own any of the publishing rights. After wisely learning from that multimillion-dollar mistake, he now owns 40% of the publishing rights for the “We have the meats” campaign from Arby’s.
 - Baked beans aren’t baked. They’re stewed.
 - After he seized power in Cuba, Fidel Castro banned the board game Monopoly and ordered every set to be destroyed.
 - Researchers have found that there are 19 different types of smiles, but only six occur when we’re having a good time. The rest happen when we’re in pain, embarrassed, uncomfortable, horrified or even miserable!
 - Genoan sailors were known colloquially as “Genes” and wore cotton pants, which is where we get the word “jeans.”
 - A singing birthday card has more computer power than the entire Allied Army of World War II.
 - There is a spacecraft graveyard in the Pacific Ocean. Known as “Point Nemo,” it is the farthest place on Earth from land and is home to over 300 spacecraft and associated space debris, including the Russian MIR space station, the first object assembled in planetary orbit.
 - Horroremeister Stephen King has triskaidekaphobia (fear of the number 13) and won’t stop writing if he’s on the page number is 13 or a multiple of it.
 - OMG, the popular acronym for “Oh my God,” was first used in writing in a letter to Winston Churchill in 1917, by John Arbuthnot Fisher, a retired Admiral of the British Navy, who said, “I hear that a new order of Knighthood is on the tapis, O.M.G. (Oh! My God!).”
- Thought for the Day: “Most heroes live quiet, unassuming existences. They lend a hand and help, without any expectation of gratitude or fanfare.” – Ray Madaghiele

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Moments in time THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On March 1, 1966, Venera 3, an unmanned Soviet probe launched from Kazakhstan, collides with Venus, the second planet from the sun. It was the first spacecraft to reach the surface of another planet.
- On March 2, 1904, Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, the author and illustrator of such beloved children’s books as “The Cat in the Hat,” is born in Springfield, Massachusetts. Geisel used his middle name (which was also his mother’s maiden name) as his pen name.
- On March 3, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln signs a bill creating the Freedman’s Bureau. The federal agency oversaw the transition of African Americans from slavery to freedom. The bureau was given power to dispense relief in the South, provide medical care and education, and redistribute “abandoned” lands to former slaves.
- On March 4, 1918, the first cases of the deadly Spanish flu pandemic are reported in soldiers at Fort Riley, Kansas. The virus soon traveled to Europe with U.S. soldiers heading to aid the Allies in France. The flu would eventually kill 20 million to 50 million people around the world.
- On March 5, 1770, a mob of American colonists gathers at the Customs House in Boston and begins taunting the British soldiers guarding the building. The protesters, who called themselves Patriots, were protesting the occupation of their city by British troops.
- On March 6, 2001, Napster begins complying with a federal court order to block the transfer of copyrighted songs over its peer-to-peer network. Some 60 million users around the world had freely exchanged digital mp3 files using Napster, which folded three months later.
- On March 7, 1923, The New Republic publishes Robert Frost’s poem “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” which begins with the famous line “Whose woods these are, I think I know.”

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Send Your Newsbrief To: wtxcc@wtxcc.com

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CryptoQuip Answer

I imagine a cross between a cannon and a bell would be dubbed “the boomerang.”

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March Madness will look different this year

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It’s nearly impossible to believe that the NCAA Tournament starts in just two short weeks.

This year, because of covid, things will be a little different.

Though the same number of 68 teams will participate, they won’t have to travel as far.

Instead of the first two weeks being played in venues all over the country, the entire event will be played in the state of Indiana, with most of the games being played in the city of Indianapolis.

While it may seem a little weird not to see games played in different cities and not to have as many fans in the stands, it still beats what happened a year ago when

the entire thing was cancelled.

So other than the location of the tournament and a quieter arena than usual, the playoff event should look the same as usual.

Well, as far as the teams we watch on the court – things may look a little different.

This has been a weird regular season, not just for the fact that many games have been postponed or cancelled due to virus protocol, it’s been a little weird because many of the teams we normally see dominating college basketball – aren’t.

There are teams that are right on the border of making it, there are teams that are still winning but not in their usual dominant fashion, and then there are teams that are definitely out of March Madness unless they win their conference tournament.

There are mid-major teams like Cincinnati (9-8) and Butler (8-13), who are struggling.

There’s another mid-major that was probably the hottest team in the country going into last year’s event before it was cancelled, but Dayton is just 12-8 this year.

There are teams that we see in the tournament every year but not only did they not win enough this season, they actually have losing records. Teams like Miami (7-15) and Arizona State (10-11) and Utah (10-11) and Washington (5-20) and Marquette (11-13) and South Carolina (5-12) and Auburn (12-13) and Notre Dame (9-13) have suffered through a real tough 2021.

Then there are teams that are winning, but not nearly enough to get a spot in

the tournament. Syracuse (13-8) makes it to the tournament every year but will have to finish strong to prove it belongs.

UConn (12-6) is in the same boat, it will probably have to win its league tournament to qualify.

Maryland (14-10) and Indiana (12-12) will all have to win their conference tournaments to get invited to the big dance.

Even our friends down the road, the New Mexico State Aggies (7-6) will have to win their conference tournament to qualify.

The Aggies win their league every season, but the virus has played such a role with them off the court, that it’s affected their play on the court.

Then there are four teams that might be the most disappointing of the group. All four are not only traditional winning teams, but they seem to enter every season as a contender for the national championship.

Hoff

From Page 1

square miles. The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Texas employs more than 300 people and has staffed offices in Austin, Alpine, Del Rio, El Paso, Midland, Waco, and San Antonio.

Hoff has spent 26 years as a public servant and prosecutor, handling criminal cases in both state and federal court. She has been with the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Texas for more than 17 years. Since 2018, she has served as the First Assistant U.S. Attorney. In that role, she was responsible for the supervision of over 150 Assistant U.S. Attorneys and all aspects of the district’s criminal and civil practice.

Prior to being First Assistant U.S. Attorney, Hoff was the

Romero

From Page 2

with up to five years of undergraduate education.

When Estala informed Romero and his mother about the scholarship award, they both were excited and brought to tears of joy, Romero said.

“It was very rewarding,” he said. “It’s a great experience to know that I

was able to work hard in that sense not only with my singing, but also in highlighting my academics, my dual credit, and my work that I do after school and on the weekends to really push myself to look good for scholarships.”

He plans to study music education and has been accepted to four universities.

Romero said he will analyze his options carefully before settling on one.

Chief of the Austin Division from 2012 to 2018. Before becoming part of the District’s leadership, Hoff served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Austin Division for more than eight years, where she prosecuted a wide variety of federal offenses, including violent crime, drug trafficking, firearms violations, identity theft, health care fraud, and complex white-collar crimes, among others.

Before arriving in the Western District of Texas, Hoff was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of Texas, where she was responsible for handling national security investigations as part of a counterterrorism unit created after the events of September 11, 2001.

According to an U.S. Attorney’s office statement, Hoff began her federal prosecution experience in 2000 in the Houston Division of the Southern District of Texas as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Texas EXILE violent crime reduction initiative in which she prosecuted federal firearm offenses as one of eight specially designated prosecutors in the State of Texas. Texas EXILE was one of the models for the federal Project Safe Neighborhoods program, which remains an important federal violent crime reduction initiative nationwide.

Hoff began her legal career as an Assistant District Attorney in the Harris County District Attorney’s Office in Houston, where she served as a state trial prosecutor from 1995-2000, handling misdemeanor, juvenile, and felony matters.

Hoff, a native Texan who was born and raised in Sherman, graduated from Texas Christian University (TCU) in 1991 with a bachelor’s degree, majoring in Secondary Education with an emphasis in Government and Spanish. She received her law degree from Baylor University in 1994.

Super Crossword

AM TOO!

ACROSS

1 Kuwaiti rulers

6 Pin to hang a chapeau on

12 Clothes

16 "This is so frustrating!"

19 Maui porch

20 Single-celled creature

21 Old term for margarine

22 Sooner than, in sonnets

23 Incriminated dancer Ginger with false evidence?

25 Possible cause of sneezing

27 Petri dish gel

28 A handsome Greek god put half-and-half in his coffee?

30 Scholars' milieu

34 See 56-Across

35 Mini-plateau

36 Cornhusk-wrapped treats found in an underground vault?

43 Pizazz

44 Psychic glow

45 Volt-per-ampere unit

46 Stephen of film

49 Temporarily smiling broadly?

56 With 34-Across, "Green Eggs and

Ham" character

59 Sweetheart

60 Oklahoma city

61 Shoe retailer

62 Former flying inits.

63 Gas suffix

64 Tuscany city

66 Negative particle

67 Iowa's tree

68 Tony-winning musical performed in France's capital?

73 Graynor of "The Sitter"

74 Nabisco treats

76 Valleys

77 Wish to undo

78 Pince-__

79 6/6/44

80 Colonel North, briefly

82 Broadway star

84 Spokane-to-Boise dir.

85 Actor Ralph having reached a saloon's counter?

89 "-haw!"

90 Suffix with brilliant

91 Rod go-with

92 Memo starter

96 Group journey that has made everyone really hungry?

104 Memo starter

106 British rocker Brian

107 Cold carnival treats

108 Group of truck drivers who were once in the same college fraternity?

115 "After that..."

116 Belgium's capital

117 Doubled radius of a toy on a string?

122 Go astray

123 Intro studio course

124 By wagering

125 Plant used to make tequila

126 Hankering

127 Pony pattern

128 SEALs' mil. branch

129 Renowned

DOWN

1 Pixieish one

2 Damage a bit

3 _ funk (sad)

4 Ninth Muslim month

5 Gangster Bugsy

6 Singer Emmylou

7 "Yo te _"

8 Roman wrap

9 Small chirp

10 Spanish river

11 Illuminated like old streets

12 "Beat it, kid!"

13 Actor Guinness

14 Back area

15 Foreshadow

16 Some math specialists

17 French city

18 Ibsen's "_ Gabler"

24 Matriarch

26 Pitch a tent

29 "_-di-dah!"

30 Feasted

31 Nev. neighbor

32 Docs' org.

33 _ worse than death

37 Rhine feeder

38 Nev. neighbor

39 Yoga pad

40 Corn bases

41 Cronus' wife

42 Singer Sumac

47 Audience extras

48 Really suffer

49 Licked parts of envelopes

50 Actress Chaplin

51 KOA patron

52 Newsy bits

53 Tax-free bond, in brief

54 Israeli airline

55 Adult males

56 Supported

57 Oscar winner, e.g.

58 Not go right or straight while driving

64 Paper unit

65 Actor Ziering

66 Lend _ (listen)

69 Inuit-language word for "house"

70 Small error

71 Chi-Town daily paper

72 Let _ sigh

75 Popeye's gal

80 Old Dodge

81 Corrosive cleansers

82 Rice _ (cereal)

83 Assists

86 Archer's skill

87 Pt. of NATO

88 Ball balancer

92 In a single try

93 Wicked act

94 Wingtip tip

95 Walk-__ (small roles)

97 Santa _ (hot winds)

98 Entraps

99 Walk-__ (no-appointment customers)

100 "I meant someone else"

101 Real thing

102 Qatari port

103 "The _ Cometh"

104 Monks' home

105 _ Haute, Indiana

109 Despot of old

110 Architect Saarinen

111 Utah ski site

112 Ages on end

113 Meg of film

114 Japanese noodle

118 Actor Patel

119 Tit for _

120 Night before

121 Ruby, e.g.

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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104	105							106						107							
108					109	110	111				112	113	114		115						
116										117				118					119	120	121
122					123					124							125				
126					127					128							129				

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



Lowry

From Page 3

investigations, while his routine bullying of critics is now out in the open.

Not only are none of these things happening to Ron DeSantis, his policy of avoiding strict lockdowns, which occasioned so much criticism, has avoided the educational and economic downsides of Cuomo’s policies. According to Florida data, the state offers more in-person education than any other state and it has a lower unemployment rate than the national average and

other populous states. This matters greatly to the wellbeing of Floridians.

All of this said, the virus has presented enormous challenges and excruciating choices to policymakers around the country. It’s not healthy to be overly invested in red state versus blue state comparisons. But the media gleefully went all-in on this game – and managed to pump up the wrong governor and run down the wrong one, in a failure for the ages.

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

Vestibular migraines often include vertigo

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you shed light on how vestibular migraines are diagnosed and the best treatment? – J.H.

The vestibule of the ear is where the organ of balance is located, so vestibular symptoms relate to balance issues in general, but most commonly, it means vertigo. The term “vestibular migraine” means vestibular symptoms attributed to migraine.

Vestibular migraine thus includes migraine headache – not everyone will have headache with every episode, but most people with vestibular migraine will have headache with at least some of the episodes – and vestibular symptoms. These could include vertigo (a sensation of movement when still), unsteadiness or movement symptoms with a change in head position that persists long after the head has moved. Abnormal sensitivity to sound and vision are also prominent in vestibular migraine.



There is a similarly named condition, basilar migraine, that also has vestibular symptoms. However, basilar migraine has additional symptoms seen during the early, or aura, phase coming from the brainstem, deep in the brain, such as clumsy movements or confusion. These occur most commonly five minutes to an hour before the headache.

Making the diagnosis of vestibular migraine is challenging, since there are many clinical entities with similar symptoms. There is no conclusive laboratory or radiology tests to confirm the diagnosis. In practice, the diagnosis of probable vestibular migraine is made in people with recurrent migraine symptoms associated with vertigo. Often, treatment is begun when the condition is considered probable, and if the person does not respond well to treatment, a more thorough evaluation is considered.

Treatment for vestibular migraine is broken down into treatment for acute attacks and treatment to prevent attacks. Many neurologists use diazepam (Valium) and similar drugs for acute attacks. Preventive medicines come in many different families, and the choice of the best agent depends often on other conditions the person has. Everyone with migraine should try to find and avoid triggers. This includes eating on a reasonable schedule and good sleep hygiene.

If medications are needed, prescription choices include blood pressure medicines (beta blockers like propranolol and calcium channel blockers), antidepressants and seizure medicines. Over-the-counter options include riboflavin, magnesium, feverfew and coenzyme Q10, all of which have some but not conclusive evidence of benefit superior to placebo.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you tell me the possible causes of psoriasis? I have read that it is related to chronic inflammation. What type of inflammation might this be? – C.K.

Psoriasis, a chronic skin condition that can sometimes affect the joints, is indeed an inflammatory condition, but inflammation is a set of symptoms and observable signs, not an underlying cause or diagnosis. There are five cardinal signs of inflammation: redness, swelling, pain, warmth and loss of function.

Psoriasis appears to be a problem of a dysregulated immune system. It is unclear what triggers the body to begin responding with inflammation to the skin, but some proteins (called antimicrobial peptides) made by skin cells may start the process. These can be triggered by trauma to the skin, but also by some medications, alcohol, cigarette smoking, infections and stress, all of which can also act as triggers for people with psoriasis. These make the immune system cells specific to the skin become much more active.

Understanding the immune system issues in psoriasis has led to newer and more effective treatments, especially for more-severe psoriasis.

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.



Moore Texas by Roger MOORE
In the 1950s the Dallas Museum of Art removed paintings by Picasso because of his alleged communist leanings.

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: N equals B

Z ZDHQZEM VGHV H LBYXX
NMVSMME H LHEEYE HEK H
NMRR SYIRK NM KINNMK

“VGM NYDMBHEQ.”

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging

Answer Page 4

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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VA, Fitbit team up



by Freddy Groves

Do you have a Fitbit activity tracker? If so, the Department of Veterans Affairs has a free program for you.

The VA and Fitbit have hooked up to provide one year of free membership to eligible veterans who have the device. This couldn't have come at a better time, when we need more exercise, less stress and better sleep at night.

Up to 10,000 veterans (including caregivers and VA staff) can get one free year of Fitbit Premium, which includes a health metrics dashboard, guided programs and more. Plus, you'll have access to coaching. Check healthsolutions.fitbit.com.

Eligibility will depend on a few things, such as whether you already use Fitbit and where you are. A bonus for veterans who already use VA healthcare: You might qualify for a Fitbit Sense, which is the

Fitbit health smartwatch. If for some reason you can't get into the Fitbit program, you have other options for exercise and working out. Step one is to call the gyms closest to you and ask if they offer anything for veterans.

CrossFit, Gold's Gym, 24 Hour Fitness, OrangeTheory and numerous others offer discounts and special deals for veterans. Don't forget to try the non-chain locations. If you're eligible for Medicare, check into the Silver Sneakers program at local gyms; many Medicare plans will pay for that.

Near a base? If you're retired, are a MOH recipient or have a disability rating of 100%, you can qualify to use the gym on base.

For at-home equipment, if you're a Veterans Canteen Service (shopvcs.va.gov) member, check out the prices on equipment such as rowing machines and exercise bikes. Look online for a FreeCycle group in your area (freecycle.org), an online listing of items people are giving away. There are 5,300 groups across the U.S. Finally, don't forget

Craigslist.org for people selling equipment near you.

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• Line your veggie and fruit drawers with plain paper towels to avoid messes in the refrigerator. Check through produce daily to remove any spoiled items.

• “For grease stains on fabric, I don't reach any further than my kitchen sink. I saturate it with dishwashing liquid and throw it in the washer. it works better than any stain stick.” – W.D. in Pennsylvania

• “Everyone knows probably five uses for pantyhose with runs in them. Here's one I heard from a friend that I had never heard before. Scrunch one leg up and use it like a dusting mitt on upholstered furniture to get rid of cat hair. I guess it would work for all pet hair, but I do this every day now, and it's so easy.” – G.T. in Washington

• If you have a stinky sink problem, check your garbage disposal. The plastic insert in the drain will usually pull out to give you a better look. Sometimes, all that is needed is to clean the plastic insert – it can collect a nasty food slime on the disposal-facing side. You can also try running it for a few minutes with ice cubes, citrus peels or baking soda and vinegar.

• If you have many books on a bookcase, here's a tip that'll blow you away: Use a hair dryer on the cool setting to blow dust off the top of the books. Work from the top down, wipe the visible shelf with a microfiber cloth, then vacuum the floor.

• “In one of my pizza boxes, I noticed a sheet of plastic netting that keeps the pizza crust crispy during delivery. I saved it, thinking I would find a use for it. I did – in my dishwasher! I had several small plastic containers that kept flipping up and collecting water, so I lined them up and placed the netting over them. I laid a spatula on top to keep it in place. It totally worked.” – A.A. in Florida

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

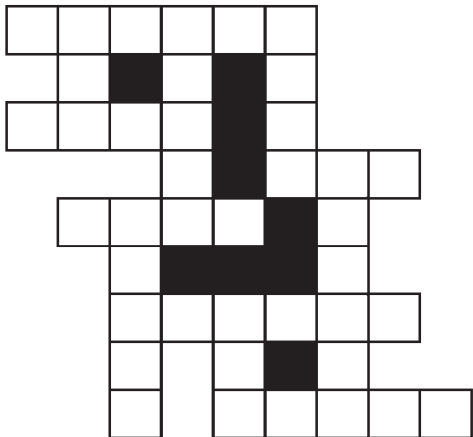
	-		x		27
x		+		-	
	+		x		32
-		x		x	
	-		x		25
20		30		35	

1 2 3 4 5 7 8 9 9

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FEL
MARSOG
♥ROLMA
MHRA
SOREOL
OTH
♥UREL
FRUME
♥MGU
RHAFOS
♥LOLAT
♥MEIT



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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