



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Quitters

With Americans quitting their jobs at record rates during the so-called “Great Resignation,” even in the face of high inflation, WalletHub has released its updated report on 2023’s *States With the Highest Job Resignation Rates*, along with expert commentary. WalletHub ranked the 50 states and the District of Columbia based on how frequently people are leaving their places of employment. Below, you can see highlights from the report. Texas was rated 20th highest in the report with a resignation rate for latest month of 2.80% and 3.04% in the past 12 months. Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-with-highest-job-resignation-rates/101077> for the full report

– Diana Polk

### A rare bongo

The Potter Park Zoo in Lansing, MI described the bongo as “one of the most majestic and endangered members of the antelope family” in its announcement of the rare, recent birth of a female eastern bongo calf. How rare are bongos? According to the zoo, only about 100 eastern bongos remain in the wild and about 300 bongos are protected in accredited zoos; “their ornate horns and vibrant orange coat make them a target for hunting and poaching.”

– John Grimaldi

### Innovation

With the U.S. spending over \$600 billion per year on R&D, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2023’s *Most & Least Innovative States*, as well as expert commentary. In order to give credit to the states that have contributed the most to America’s innovative success, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 22 key metrics. The data set ranges from share of STEM professionals to R&D spending per capita. Texas was rated 15th in the report, ranking (1-Most Innovative, 25-Avg.):

- 18th – Share of STEM Professionals;
- 16th – Projected STEM-Job Demand by 2030;
- 25th – Eighth-Grade Math and

See BRIEFS, Page 4



– Photo by Scott Cutler

**COMING ATTRACTION** – The newly designated Castner Range National Monument will be open to public access once the area is sufficiently remediated and declared safe. Located along the Franklin Mountains within the Fort Bliss Army base, the range served as a training and testing site during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The Army closed it in 1966.

## Public will have access to Castner Range

*National monument designation will offer unique opportunities to experience, explore nature*

By Alfredo Vasquez  
*Special to the Courier*

EL PASO COUNTY – It’s official... Castner Range in El Paso County has been designated a national monument. President Joe Biden made

the announcement during the recent White House Conservation in Action Summit.

Advocates propound that this action will protect the cultural, scientific and historic objects found within the monument’s boundaries; honor veterans and current military service

members; pay homage to local Native American tribes; and eventually provide access to the public land for outdoor recreational activities.

The designation encompasses more than 6,600 acres along the Franklin

See CASTNER, Page 4

## O’Donnell DI teams head for Kansas City



– Photo courtesy Fabens ISD

**PROBLEM SOLVERS** – O’Donnell Intermediate School, in the Fabens Independent School District, is riding high after sending three Destination Imagination (DI) teams to Arlington, TX last week (March 24 and 25). The STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) competition was the Lone Star Finals State Tournament for 2023. Two of the three teams – The *Kung Fu Panda Pops* coached by Rebaca Marquez (back row, right) and *Tron Squad* coached by Richard Fraire (at right) – advanced to the Global Finals competition in May. That event will be held in Kansas City, MO and will feature top DI teams from around the world.

– Sofia Maciel

*It’s a mistake to believe Uncle Sam can open his pocketbook and let you keep yours closed.*

– Quips & Quotes

# Alvin Bragg prepares to cross the Rubicon

How much does a mug shot mean to you? To Alvin Bragg, it apparently means quite a lot. All signs point to Bragg, the progressive prosecutor in Manhattan, indicting Donald Trump for his 2016 hush-money payment to Stormy Daniels. The old Karl Marx line is that history repeats

itself first as tragedy, then as farce. This historic first-ever indictment of a former president of the United States would skip straight to farce.

First, there's the tawdry and relatively trivial subject matter. Trump stands accused by his critics on the left of fomenting an insurrection to overthrow the Constitution and the criminal offense they are going to get him on stems from a dalliance with a porn star in 2006.

Then, more importantly, there's the question of the merits. Unless Bragg has something unexpected on Trump, this appears to be a prosecution in search of a legal theory.

Everything indicates that Bragg is more interested in subjecting Trump to the humiliations attendant to getting charged (turning himself in, getting fingerprinted and photographed)

and the grinding distraction of defending himself against a criminal charge than the cogency of the case itself.

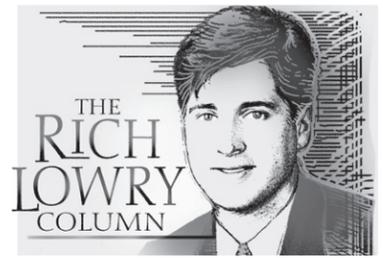
As The New York Times put it last week, the Bragg case "hinges on an untested and therefore risky legal theory involving a complex interplay of laws, all amounting to a low-level felony."

In other words, exactly what you want to indict a former president on.

The difficulty in making a case against Trump owes to the fact that hush payments are sleazy but legal. So, the Bragg case involves the bookkeeping around the payment.

There's a reason why Bragg's predecessor, Cyrus Vance, passed on the Stormy Daniels matter. It looked like Bragg was going to pick up a broader business case against Trump instead. When the district attorney dropped that, his progressive supporters were outraged. Now, lo and behold, he has brought things full circle back to Daniels.

As president, Trump inveighed against his political enemies and demanded that they be arrested. This



See LOWRY, Page 7



**View from here** By John Grimaldi

## Suicidal veterans need our help

As President Calvin Coolidge put it, "the nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten." It's why we take the time to remember the selfless sacrifices of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines on Veterans Day. But is one day of remembrance in November enough of a commemoration. Not only have valiant service men and women given their lives to protect our freedom, bear in mind that each year thousands of former service men and women commit suicide due to

service related trauma.

According to the American Addiction Centers (AAC), "suicide rates have been historically high among young veterans and older veterans as well. In the 20 years between 2001 and 2020, the suicide rate among veterans between the ages of 18 and 34 increased by 95.3%. During that same time period, the suicide rate among veterans between the ages of 55 and 74 rose 58.2%. From 2019-2020, however, the suicide rate for older veterans

decreased while the suicide rate among veterans in the 18-34 age group increased."

The AAC report explains that the chief causes of veteran suicides are depression, social problems, money troubles and engaging "in impulsive, high-risk behaviors." Mental disorders and substance abuse, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and traumatic brain injury (TBI) also can play a role.

However, the Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP) says it also has a lot to do with relationship problems, legal issues and workplace troubles. The CDP notes that "other medical conditions that are associated with an increased risk for suicide include traumatic brain injury (TBI), chronic pain, and sleep disorders. These conditions can contribute substantially to increased suicide risk in affected individuals. The most common method for suicide in the DoD is firearms,

accounting for over 60 percent of all suicide deaths in the military." The CDP also notes that while veterans are only 8.5% of the U.S. population, they account for about 18% of all adult suicides. "This means that approximately 20 veterans die each day by suicide (or about 7,300 veterans a year). Like Service members, the most common method for suicide among U.S. veterans is firearms, accounting for over two-thirds of all veteran suicides."

Active duty military personnel are also experiencing high levels of suicide. Executive Director, Elizabeth Foster, of the Pentagon's Force Resiliency Office reported a few months ago that year-to-year active duty suicides have dipped. She reported that the active duty suicide rate fell by 15% between 2021 and 2020. However, as she put it, "while we are cautiously encouraged by the drop in these numbers, one year is not enough time to assess real change. The year-to-year trend provides helpful preliminary insight, but there is still a gradual increasing trend for suicide in the military

over a 10-year period, and we need to see a sustained long-term reduction in suicide rates to know if we're really making progress."

If you have a friend or family member with mental issues, they may be in need of professional care. But, says Seamus Callahan at the White Light Behavioral Health, "one of the most important ways that friends, family members, and communities can support veterans in recovery is by advocating for access to quality mental health and addiction care. Unfortunately, many veterans face significant barriers to accessing care, including long wait times, lack of resources, and bureaucratic obstacles within the VA system."

For more information about dealing with this critical issue confronting veterans at risk, organizations such as the Association of Mature American Citizens can also help. The AMAC Foundation's dedicated Veteran Outreach Program provides online access to resources available for the men and women who have served our nation.

1973  
**50**  
Years  
2023

## WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

SERVING ANTHONY, VINTON, CANUTILLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLIVE, FARENS, SAN ELIZABO AND TORNEILLO

---

**PUBLISHED:**  
Published each Thursday (minimum 50 issues) by Homesteader News, Inc. Office open Monday through Thursday.

**COPYRIGHT:**  
Entire contents © 2023 Homesteader News, Inc. Individual authors retain all rights. Pictures, drawings and written material appearing in the West Texas County Courier may not be used or reproduced without written permission of Homesteader News, Inc.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:**  
Letters must not be more than 250 words in length. They should be dated, must be signed and have an address and daytime phone number. Only the name and city will be printed with the letter. The West Texas County Courier reserves the right to edit or reject letters to the editor or other submitted material it considers inappropriate.

**AD DEADLINE:**  
Friday 4 p.m. for the next Thursday.

**CLASSIFIED RATES**  
\$15 for 25 words, \$20 for 40 words. Ad must be in writing and pre-paid. The West Texas County Courier reserves the right not to publish advertising it considers inappropriate.

**DISPLAY RATES:**  
Open rate — \$40 per column inch. Call for more information or to set an appointment. The West Texas County Courier reserves the right not to publish advertising it considers inappropriate.

**MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS:**  
Minimum 50 issues for \$50. Delivery via 1st class mail.

**MAIL:**  
15344 Werling Ct.  
Horizon City, TX 79928

**Phone:** 852-3235

**E-mail:** wtcc@wtcc.com  
**Website:** wtcc.com

**Publisher**  
Rick Shrum

**Contributors**  
Alfredo Vasquez  
Steve Escajeda

**Homesteader**  
Est. 1973  
**News, Inc.**

If you're not covered, you'll be discovered.

An estimated 1 in every 5 vehicles on our Texas roads has no automobile insurance, but that's about to change. • TexasSure Vehicle Insurance Verification matches vehicle registration information to insurance policy data to immediately tell law enforcement officers and tax assessor-collectors who's driving without insurance. • So, if you're not covered, better get insured! • To learn more, visit: [www.TexasSure.com](http://www.TexasSure.com)

TexasSure catches drivers without insurance.

Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

# Trump and Daniels: Hush money doesn't work

An ongoing saga continues to surround Former President Donald Trump and porn star Stormy Daniels. Will it never end? Trump may or may not be indicted by the time you read this but who knows? Who isn't tired of hearing about an alleged sexual encounter between these two?

Former President Trump has denied the encounter ever occurred but Daniels has said it did occur. Who is telling the truth? Who should we believe? Is there proof of this alleged "affair" or sexual encounter?

Does anyone have a video of the Trump and Daniels encounter? Apparently, Daniels is big on videos for money participating in encounters that most of us really do not want to see. I'm sure some people do since pornography an international addictive problem that destroys more lives than we will ever know. Even if it existed, we certainly do not want to see any such "encounter" between Daniels and Trump. Even. So, how do you prove such an event took place? We are back again to "he said, she said."

President Trump has had his feet to the fire because he is alleged to have paid \$130,000 to Daniels to keep quiet about the "encounter." The problem is unclear. Is he alleged to have paid the money out of campaign funds raised for his Presidential bid in 2016? Or, is this about being an amount of

money beyond the legal campaign donation cap and how could it ever be considered a campaign donation? Does any of it make sense? As much money as Trump has, would he not have just paid her out of his petty cash fund? If Daniels and Trump had a dispute then how is it illegal to have settled a dispute? People do it every day.

Trump made millions just from his reality television show The Apprentice on NBC. I always figured this is one reason NBC hates Trump so much. He made them a lot of money and the show was still making major money when he quit to run for President. Money and greed color everything.

Why don't they just produce the check written to Daniels? Michael Cohen, Trump's former attorney who served time in prison, allegedly gave the money to Daniels and was reimbursed by Trump. Did he write a check from his personal account? How did Trump reimburse Cohen? Did he go to the bank and get a cashier's check? Just go back and do an audit. How credible is Cohen? Does Cohen know for sure which account the money came from?

Back in 1974 Jerry Springer, (yes, the TV reality show star) resigned from the Cincinnati City council because he had written two checks to two different prostitutes in Northern, Kentucky. The

controversy took over his life but he was later reelected to the city council and even later served as mayor. In one of his commercials, that I remember seeing, he said, "I made a mistake. I paid a prostitute with a check." He actually wrote two checks. One was for \$50 and the other was for \$25. He would go on to serve as Cincinnati's mayor from 1977-1978. But wait, he admitted to it and he didn't pay it from campaign or government funds.

Looks like if Trump could get in trouble for paying for an "encounter" with Daniels. Then wouldn't she be in trouble for prostitution? But wait, she didn't collect money for an alleged encounter with Trump. She got

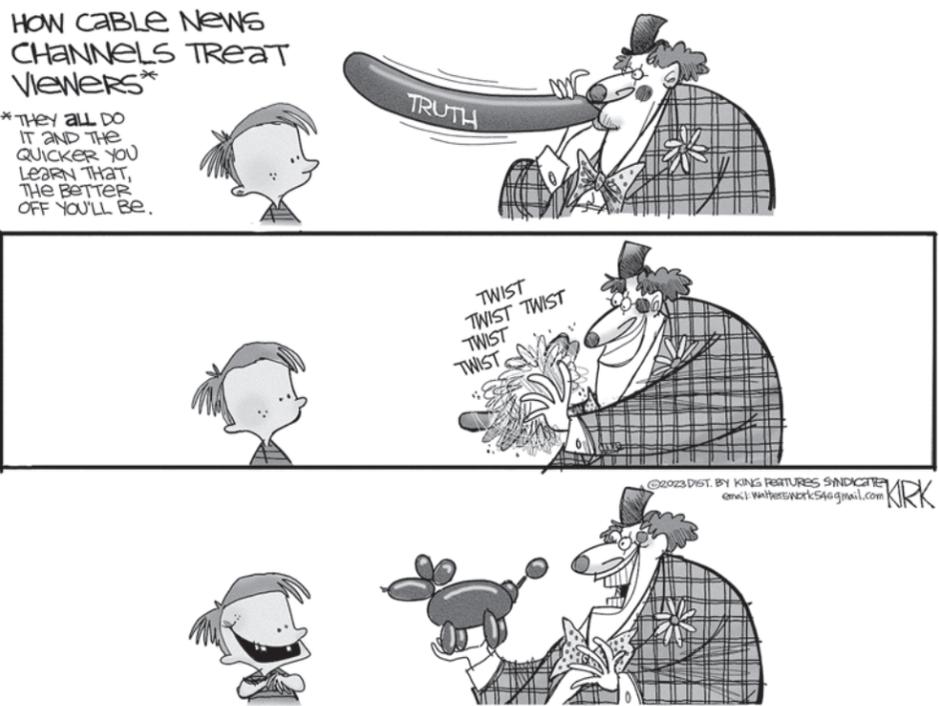
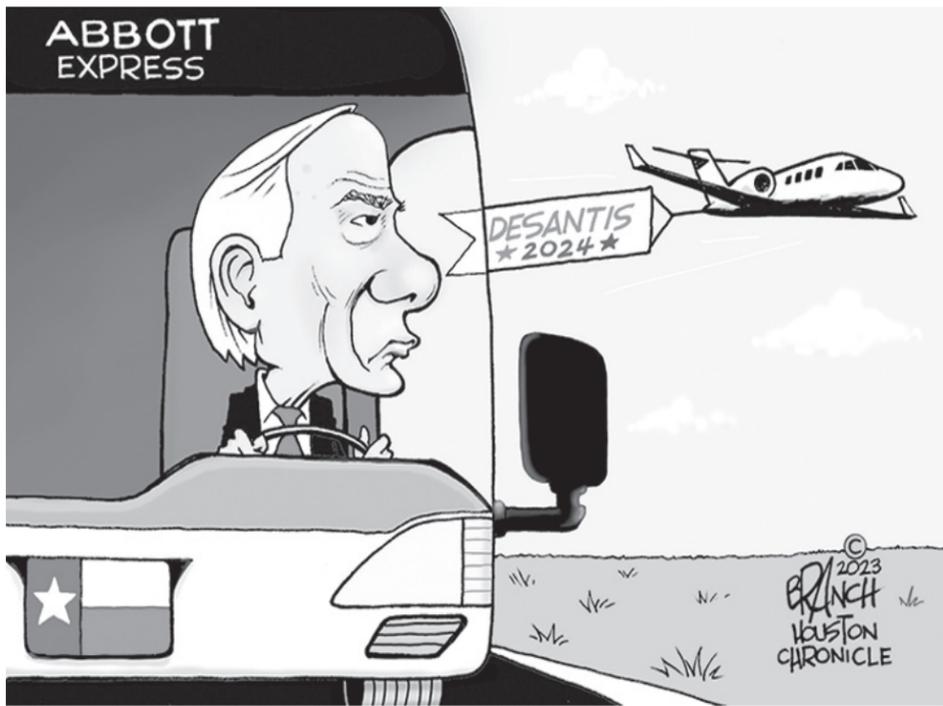
money to be quiet about the encounter with Trump. Is this not blackmail? Are there not any consequences for blackmail? Apparently, there is more money to be made from being quiet about encounters than actually selling oneself for an encounter. She did reportedly receive a handsome book royalty check to talk about her life. And her attorney, Michael Avenatti, stole it. He is now serving time in prison for defrauding clients and tax evasion.

There is probably more that will be said about this alleged encounter. This proves it doesn't work to pay porn stars hush money. They just take the money and still tell everybody.

## WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

### To Our Readers

From time to time we carry ads from large, well known product and service providers. If you are considering using these products or services, please call them using the phone numbers in the Courier. The numbers are associated with an account for the West Texas County Courier. Thanks for picking up the Courier.





– Internet

**OPEN SPACES** – Castner Range remains an area of high biodiversity for desert species in America, including spring blooms of the Mexican Poppy, above. In addition to the poppies, this section of the Franklin Mountains also contains a high concentration of natural springs.

## Castner

From Page 1

Mountains’ northeast foothills that once served as a U.S. Army artillery firing range. Borderland preservation advocates have been pushing for this designation for over 50 years.

The range sits on land that offers several natural springs and serves as a habitat to numerous wildlife species, like the American peregrine falcon, Golden eagle, mountain plover, Texas horned lizard, Black-tailed prairie dog, Baird’s swallow, coyotes, and the Western burrowing owl.

The newly declared monument is home to spring blooms of the Mexican poppy, which along with creosote brush vegetation, pervades the mountain slopes. Also, the endangered Sneed pincushion cactus and a host of other rare plants inhabit this region. Additionally, the range houses more than 40 archeological sites, such as living structures, hearths, remnants of pottery and tools, as well as a myriad of petroglyphs.

According to White House officials, Castner Range National Monument (CRNM) will be placed under the control of the U.S. Army, which is the first time since the 1930s that a national monument will be managed by the military branch.

Previous designated national military sites were handed over to the National Park Service.

Plans are for the Army to begin a land management process over the next 60 days and include public engagement. Officials related that the Army would work with community members and organizations, as well as with local Native American tribes, to ensure public access in the various phases. Castner Range is part of a mountain landscape that was once home to various Native American tribes including the Apache and Pueblo people, the Comanche Nation, the Hopi Tribe, and the Kiowa.

Advocates anticipate that the designation will help protect and remediate the land in order to expand public access to the space. They hope that it will also help protect elements that hold various cultural and historical significance.

“Texans need more nature and this area is a great example of land we can both enjoy and share with wildlife, including threatened species such as the western burrowing owl,” Luke Metzger, executive director of Environment Texas, said in a recent statement. “Cleaning up unexploded ordnance and opening up the Castner Range for recreational opportunities including hiking, camping and biking will be good for the El Paso

community and good for Texas.”

U.S. Representative Veronica Escobar, of El Paso, who vigorously pushed to protect the Castner Range, said in a statement that she is thrilled about the designation. “This historic announcement has been decades in the making,” Escobar stated. “Generations of activists have dedicated countless hours and resources toward achieving this once seemingly impossible goal. It brings me such joy to know that El Pasoans will soon be able to enjoy the beauty of this majestic, expansive landmark for years to come.”

Eric Pearson, CEO of El Paso Community Foundation, who helped push for the recognition and was at the summit when the president made the declaration, said in a recent interview that this designation reflects the will of the community, as the coalition delivered nearly 137,000 letters from community members to the president calling for the designation.

The push for its designation is a culmination of efforts by groups like the El Paso Community Foundation, the Frontera Land Alliance, Nuestra Tierra Conservation Project, Hispanic Access Foundation, Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition and Conservation Lands Foundation, Pearson acknowledged.

## Briefs

From Page 1

- Science Performance;
- 21st – Share of Science & Engineering Graduates Aged 25+;
- 13th – Share of Technology Companies;
- 31st – R&D Spending per Capita; and
- 18th – Venture-Capital Funding per

Capita. Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-innovative-states/31890> for the full report

– Diana Polk

### A rare catch

Fishing guides Dylan Wier and Blaine Kenny knew that the fish they had hooked on Orange Beach, Alabama on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico was an abig one. They thought they

might have a tiger shark on their hook. About a half an hour later they, indeed, found themselves reeling in a shark but it wasn’t a tiger shark; it was an eleven foot great white shark, a species that is rare for the Alabama coast. In fact, the state’s Department of Conservation and Natural Resource, believes it might just be the very first great white caught off the Alabama coast.

– John Grimaldi

## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- What’s in a gut bacterium? Possibly more than you might expect: Studies have shown that the types and amounts of such bacteria might influence your appetite, your food preferences and even the way nutrients are processed and stored in your body.

- While fish can cough, they don’t sneeze.

- Michael Jordan was nicknamed “Magic” in high school after Los Angeles Lakers icon Magic Johnson.

- In June 2022, the New York Public Library donated half a million books to kids under 18 so they could start their own personal book collections. Collecting and reading books has been found beneficial to learning, stress relief and even future success.

- And speaking of libraries, they’re not always just for books: The Buffalo Tool Library in Buffalo, New York, allows members to take out tools for home improvement, gardening and repair projects.

- Provincial law in Quebec prohibits a woman from taking her husband’s surname after marriage.

- Actor Morgan Freeman, after serving in the U.S. Air Force, got his first paid job in show business as a dancer at the 1964 World’s Fair.

- After having a double mastectomy in her senior years, the ever-outspoken Alice Lee Roosevelt Longworth, eldest child of President Theodore Roosevelt, took to referring to herself as “Washington’s only topless octogenarian.”

- Dolbear’s Law, which states the connection between air temperature and the rate at which crickets chirp, is accurate to within about one degree Fahrenheit for the field cricket.

- The Chinese video sharing and streaming site Bilibili used 1,500 drones to create a light show celebrating the first anniversary of the release of mobile game Princess Connect! Re:Dive, which was followed by a huge QR code to download the game.

Thought for the Day: “A champion is afraid of losing. Everyone else is afraid of winning.”

– Billie Jean King

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



# Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On March 27, 1909, fingerprint evidence was used to solve a murder case for the first time. The world's first official Fingerprint Bureau had already been created in Scotland Yard in 1901, while the first Fingerprint Bureau debuted in Calcutta, India, in 1897.

• On March 28, 2000, racial tensions showed no signs of abating in the African country of Zimbabwe as President Robert Mugabe pushed forward with his plan to remove Zimbabwean farms from white ownership. The latest death occurred when a white farmer was shot by squatters occupying his land.

• On March 29, 1943, Americans who had already been subjected to the rationing of gasoline were given books allowing them to purchase only set amounts of meat, cheese, butter and cooking oils per month as well.

• On March 30, 2011, Peru welcomed the return of hundreds of Inca artifacts with a lavish ceremony after they'd been out of the country for nearly a century. The items were taken from the ancient site of Machu Picchu and held at Yale University, prompting the Peruvian government to launch an extended campaign against the school, insisting the artifacts had only been on loan.

• On March 31, 1943, Rodgers and Hammerstein's first musical, "Oklahoma!" (originally titled "Away We Go"), debuted on Broadway. Based on the 1931 play "Green Grow the Lilacs" by Lynn Riggs, the beloved theatrical staple about a young farmgirl named Laurey and her two suitors continues to be produced across the country.

• On April 1, 1999, David Smith was arrested and charged with originating the "Melissa" email virus, which infected more than a million computers worldwide and caused more than \$80 million in damage.

• On April 2, 1992, mob boss John Gotti, aka the "Teflon Don," was finally convicted in New York of racketeering, murder, obstruction of justice, hijacking, illegal gambling, extortion, tax evasion and loan sharking, thanks largely to the testimony of a former high-ranking Mafia member. Gotti received a life sentence without the possibility of parole, and died in prison in 2002.

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

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

**Smile Luv**  
Richard Bandley, D.M.D.

**Full Family Dental**

- Evenings & Weekends
- Orthodontics
- Medicaid
- Some Medicare Plans
- PPO Insurance
- Se habla Español

**(915) 260-8666**  
14010 Horizon Blvd.  
Horizon City  
[www.mysmileluv.com](http://www.mysmileluv.com)

MOM	COBRA	TSAR	STOOLS
IDO	ARIAL	HATH	CANNOT
DONAMECHE	RUBY	ALICIA	
ORATE	MELINAMER	COURI	
REMORAS	ELATES	NEER	
IDINAMENZEL	STIES		
BREE	TIM	END	VIA
PROHIBITION	AMENDMENT		
IRANI	LAV	CHA	YENTL
COROLLA	ADORNER	IDEA	
EVE	TIJUANAMEXICO	ENS	
MIFF	MALCOLM	NANETTE	
ANEED	NAV	ODE	ESTOS
SCANDINAVIAN	AMERICAN		
SET	ART	ECU	MLLI
WYATT	DINAMERRILL		
ANDI	REMAIN	ON	VIDEO
BARCELONAMETRO	PATHS		
ROOKIE	SCAN	IGOTANAME	
AMPERE	ERIC	POLAR	GAT
MISTER	DONE	ADARK	SNO

2	x	9	+	8	26
+		-		+	
3	x	4	+	6	18
x		x		+	
5	x	4	+	7	27
25		20		21	

**CryptoQuip Answer**

What could you call the overhead money needed to maintain a moving stairway?  
Escalating costs.

S	N	A	C	K			
I		A					
C	O	T		I	N	C	H
K		N		N		O	
	P	I	S	T	O	L	
P	U	P		A		O	
	L			K	I	N	
	S	A	K	E			
E							

**Send Your Newsbrief To:**  
[wtxcc@wtxcc.com](mailto:wtxcc@wtxcc.com)

# FREEDOM. TO BE YOU.

If you think oxygen therapy means slowing down, it's time for a welcome breath of fresh air.

Introducing the Inogen One family of portable oxygen systems. With no need for bulky tanks, each concentrator is designed to keep you active via Inogen's Intelligent Delivery Technology.® Hours of quiet and consistent oxygen flow on a long-lasting battery charge enabling freedom of movement, whether at home or on the road. Every Inogen One meets FAA requirements for travel ensuring the freedom to be you.



- No heavy oxygen tanks
- Ultra quiet operation
- Lightweight and easy to use
- Safe for car and air travel
- Full range of options and accessories
- FAA approved and clinically validated



Call **1-855-401-5401** for a free consultation.

MKT-P0240

**To Advertise Call 852-3235**  
**Archives: [www.wtxcc.com](http://www.wtxcc.com)**

# Consumer Cellular®



**Off First Month of New Service!**  
USE PROMO CODE: **GZ590**

**CALL CONSUMER CELLULAR 888-695-3086**

© 2023 Consumer Cellular Inc. Terms and Conditions subject to change. New service activation on approved credit. Cellular service is not available in all areas and is subject to system limitations. Enjoy \$25 off your first month! Customers who sign up before April 15, 2023 get up to \$25 off their first invoice. This offer is for new and existing customers, and can be redeemed only at an account level, line levels excluded. This offer is good for \$25 off the first invoice, and any remaining credit from offer is forfeited if not used during this period. If account becomes inactive for any reason prior to receiving the full amount, any remaining credits will be forfeited. Customer must use a printed promo code to redeem offer. This offer is not stackable with other promotions, see website or store associate for details. Offer not redeemable for cash, has no cash value and is not transferable or refundable.

# El Paso has many connections with this year's Final Four

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

As the NCAA basketball season wore on it became obvious that there was no true super team out there.

In the past you could always count on a Kentucky or UCLA or Duke or Kansas or North Carolina or Michigan State or Louisville or Villanova or Arizona to dominate a season.

But this year, although almost every one of those teams had a good season, none of them had the kind of year they're used to having.

With that being said, this year's NCAA Tournament figured to be more maddening than March Madness has ever been.

And that's exactly what has happened.

In the first round, the East's #1 seed Purdue lost to unknown Farleigh Dickinson 63-58. In the second round, the West's #1 seed Kansas lost to Arkansas 72-71.

In the third round, the other two top seeds fell.

The South's #1 Alabama lost to San Diego State and the Midwest's #1 Houston was knocked off by Miami.

So, for the first time in the history of the Big Dance, there were no top seeds advancing to the Elite Eight. Which means, none in the Final Four.

This has truly been the most wide-open tournament in NCAA history, especially when you look at the four teams left.

No one in their right mind thought that San Diego State, Florida Atlantic or Miami would make it. UConn was expecting to win a couple games, but maybe not more than that.

And yet, here they are.

And one of the coolest things about this year's Final Four matchups: The ties to El Paso.

Florida Atlantic was by far the best team in UTEP's league, Conference USA. The Miners played the FAU Owls twice this season, losing a tough 67-59 decision in El Paso and then they were pummeled 75-49 in Boca Raton.

Florida Atlantic has an outstanding 35-3 record and has given Conference USA a little credibility, which it has lacked forever.

FAU will take on the San Diego State Aztecs (31-6), who have a long history with the UTEP Miners going back to their days together in the Western Athletic Conference.

For 21 years, the Miners and the Aztecs battled each other before SDSU left for the Mountain West and

UTEP ended up in CUSA.

In 44 meetings, UTEP has a commanding 32-12 advantage over the Aztecs, who find themselves in the Final Four next weekend for the very first time.

The UConn Huskies (29-8) are playing the best of all the remaining teams, thanks in part to their point guard, Burges High School graduate Tristen Newton.

In case you didn't know, Newton finishing his career at Burges with an impressive 3,266 points, 853 rebounds, 472 assists and 334 steals. As a senior, he averaged 37.2 points (first in Texas, sixth in the country).

Newton is averaging 10 points and nearly five assists a game this season and he'll need a big game against his Final Four opponent, Miami.

The only real tie the Miami Hurricane have with El Paso is the Sun Bowl football game. The Hurricane have been chosen to play in three of the last 12 Sun Bowl games. I say "chosen" because they were supposed to play in last year's game but decided not to

come because of a Covid outbreak on campus.

If Texas had beaten Miami, the El Paso connection would have been complete with former UTEP head coach Rodney Terry leading the Horns, but they'll have to wait until next year.

Anyway, talk about fresh faces in the Final Four with Florida Atlantic, San Diego State, UConn and Miami.

So which team is going to win it all?

I saw Florida Atlantic up close and personal. They are a machine. They are so disciplined and confident and I have a feeling they are going to advance to the championship game in a close win over San Diego St.

Miami has pulled upset after upset, but UConn may be too hard a mountain to climb.

In the title game, my heart would love for FAU to take the crown for all the little guys out there, but my head says that Tristen Newton and the UConn Huskies will raise the championship trophy.

## Senior moment By Matilda Charles

### The Covid numbers

How does it feel when you're the only one in the whole grocery store who's wearing a mask? Or when you get three phone calls from the senior center asking if you're interested in signing up for the monthly ladies lunch, after you've already said no?

Do you feel tempted to explain to the young person who gives you the eye in the dairy aisle? Or worse, apologize to the senior center staffer who no doubt voted to dispense with all masks months ago?

Don't. Don't explain. Don't apologize. Just keep doing what you've been doing for three years now, which is taking care of yourself as best you can.

Depending what source you read, you might be tempted to believe that Covid is no longer a problem, that it's safe to go to lunches where everyone is sitting inches from each other, that it's perfectly fine to go without the mask in stores.

However, if you look at graphs and charts and follow the progress of Covid, you'll see that it's still very much among us. Data taken from The New York Times Covid stats indicates that for a two-week period in February, there were in excess of a half million positive Covid cases in the U.S.

Individual states are doing better or worse than the average. In my state, the 14-day change has gone up 50%, and we're not even in first place.

Those positive Covid numbers are from people who were tested at a facility that reports their statistics. How many millions of people are using those at-home test kits and never see the inside of a doctor's office and therefore don't have their results reported?

None of us has a crystal ball to see when Covid might leave us for good. While it's still here, take care of yourself. And yes, keep washing your hands.

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

Send Your Newsbrief To: [wtxcc@wtxcc.com](mailto:wtxcc@wtxcc.com)

## Super Crossword

- INTERNAL ACROSS**
- 1 Pop's partner
- 4 Hooded serpent
- 9 Bygone ruler
- 13 Tavern seats
- 19 Nuptial promise
- 20 Popular typeface
- 21 Possesses, in the Bible
- 22 Is unable to
- 23 "Cocoon" co-star
- 25 Red gem
- 26 Singer Keys
- 27 Talk formally
- 28 "Never on Sunday" star
- 31 Suckerfishes
- 34 Tickle pink
- 35 \_do-well (idle sort)
- 36 She voiced Elsa in "Frozen"
- 39 Pigpens
- 42 "Desperate Housewives" character
- 43 Dickens' "Tiny" lad
- 46 Conclude
- 47 By means of
- 50 18th Constitution addition
- 57 Tehran dweller
- 58 Restroom, informally
- 59 "\_ching!"
- 60 1983 Streisand title role
- 61 Popular Toyota model
- 64 Person decorating
- 68 Brain product
- 69 Eden woman
- 70 It's south of San Diego, California
- 74 "Nunnery" has three
- 75 Tee off
- 77 Political activist \_ X
- 78 "No, No, \_" (old musical)
- 80 "Find \_ and fill it"
- 82 Of a maritime mil. branch
- 83 Lofty poem
- 86 These, to Gabriela
- 87 Swede transplanted to the U.S., say
- 93 In position
- 94 Tycoon Onassis
- 95 Olympic code for Quito's country
- 96 Roman 2,051
- 97 Earp of Tombstone
- 99 "Desk Set" actress
- 106 Me, myself \_
- 109 Stay
- 112 Way to watch a film at home
- 113 Rapid transit system of a large Spanish city
- 118 Footways
- 119 First-year athlete
- 120 Use a wand reader on
- 121 Jim Croce hit that's apt for eight answers in this puzzle
- 124 Current flow
- measure
- 125 Comic Idle
- 126 Arctic
- 127 Gun, in slang
- 128 Magoo's title
- 129 Concluded
- 130 "It was \_ and stormy night..."
- 131 \_cone (cold treat)
- DOWN**
- 1 Figure skater lto \_
- 2 Having a smell
- 3 French for "my friend"
- 4 Shutterbug's shooter
- 5 Metal deposit
- 6 Pen brand
- 7 2011-19 Chicago mayor \_ Emanuel
- 8 Away from the wind
- 9 Feel great excitement from
- 10 Basking box
- 11 Baseballer's turn to hit
- 12 Poetry devices
- 13 Wound mark
- 14 Soft powder
- 15 Big Mac components
- 16 As if scripted
- 17 Longest French river
- 18 Step
- 24 Heaps
- 29 Spike of film
- 30 Lauder of perfumery
- 32 Prefix with -dextrous
- 33 Certain Slav
- 37 Pop singer Diamond
- 38 Greek Z
- 40 Small hotel
- 41 Small vortex
- 44 Shared, as interests
- 45 Phil of skiing
- 47 Bitter feud
- 48 Determined to do
- 49 Map books
- 50 Division of Canada
- 51 Very unusual achievement
- 52 Yoko of the avant-garde
- 53 Sword handle
- 54 Ana who won the 2008 French Open
- 55 Cat with no tail
- 56 "Tell \_ was dreaming!"
- 57 Glacier or floe
- 62 Maximum or minimum: Abbr.
- 63 Steely Dan album with the hits "Peg" and "Deacon Blues"
- 65 NFL's Cowboys, on scoreboards
- 66 German "a"
- 67 Hitachi rival
- 71 Arm bone
- 72 Living in \_ (oblivious to current events)
- 73 "Dedicated to the \_ Love"
- 76 Swampy area
- 79 PC key
- 81 6/6/44
- 84 Accurse
- 85 Austen novel
- 88 Lyricist Gershwin
- 89 Part of TNT
- 90 Group of spectators
- 91 "Tickle Me" Muppet
- 92 French for "nothing"
- 97 Arch used in croquet
- 98 Tightened up
- 100 QB's error: Abbr.
- 101 Area for mobile campers
- 102 Johnson who directed "Star Wars: The Last Jedi"
- 103 Pets' jinglers
- 104 Gaffer Tom who won the 1996 British Open
- 105 Be beaten by
- 106 James \_ Garfield
- 107 Actress Watts
- 108 Rain units
- 110 PC shortcut
- 111 With full force
- 114 St. Pat's isle
- 115 Satyrical look
- 116 TV host Kelly
- 117 Psalm starter
- 122 Suffix with pay or boff
- 123 Road goo

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
19			20						21			22							
23			24						25			26							
27							28	29				30							
31					32	33		34							35				
36							37	38				39	40	41					
					42				43	44	45	46			47	48	49		
		50	51	52	53			54			55				56				
57							58		59					60					
61					62	63		64	65			66	67	68					
69				70			71	72						73		74			
75			76		77							78			79				
80				81			82			83	84	85		86					
87					88	89			90			91	92						
93				94				95			96								
				97				98		99	100				101	102	103	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				130						131	

Answer Page 5

# Comix

## OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



## AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



## THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



## TIGER By Bud Blake



## Lowry

From Page 2

was shameful and disturbing stuff, although, obviously, there were no arrests.

Alvin Bragg is apparently about to do what Trump fantasized about, and what the entire left-of-center universe characterized as an abuse of power when the Republican merely mused about it.

The prospective Bragg prosecution is no different from what would happen if Sheriff Joe were still in office and somehow found a way to get an attenuated legal hook into Joe Biden. How would Democrats feel about that?

An argument in favor of Bragg's prospective move against Trump is that Trump is unique, and uniquely vulnerable to legal charges.

There is something to that, but both Bill and Hillary Clinton could have been prosecuted and they weren't. Same with Richard Nixon after a Gerald Ford pardon that is now considered statesmanlike and correct by nearly everyone.

No Democrat should be sure that Biden isn't implicated in the flow of sketchy money into his family, and we already know he violated the law in his handling of classified documents.

It's not that presidents and former presidents are above the law, but the old norm of forbearance is appropriate.

We shouldn't want to conduct an experiment in what happens when a presidential candidate with an intense following, keenly attuned to potentially unfair treatment, is subjected to a nakedly political prosecution.

That said, it should be Trump's responsibility not to inflame an already incendiary situation, but he is. That, though, is another foreseeable downside of going down this route with this particular case.

Trump's enemies never gave up on the idea that the "walls are closing in," and they've decided, where they have the power, to make it a reality. Once again, they feel justified in violating norms in response to Trump's threat to norms.

As most everyone agrees, a Bragg prosecution will help Trump in the GOP nomination fight, at least initially. If he's fortunate in his enemies, the country is not.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2023 by King Features Synd., Inc.

# Recreational use of tianeptine is dangerous

DEAR DR. ROACH: I've been hearing about tianeptine being sold at gas stations. Is it really dangerous? – S.F.

Like so many substances, tianeptine can be a useful drug when prescribed and taken correctly (it's used in several countries for depression), but it is indeed dangerous when used recreationally. Its use has been banned in several (unfortunately not all) states across the U.S. It is sold (yes, especially at gas stations) as a dietary supplement. Because it acts on the same receptor as morphine, when used at high doses far beyond the medically approved dose, it has potential for abuse and even overdose, with a handful of deaths ascribed to its use.



I recommend in the strongest possible terms against its recreational use and hope it is completely banned soon.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have severe pain in my right shoulder. I have seen two orthopedists and received X-rays, MRI scans and a cortisone injection, which didn't work. Both surgeons recommended a shoulder replacement. I am taking three adult aspirins each morning (I am allergic to NSAIDs), which makes the pain go away. Is this safe? I am 83 and otherwise healthy. – J.B.

Aspirin is a type of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug and has the toxicities common to all the drugs in that group, including an increased risk for bleeding and potential damage to the stomach and kidneys. But it has additional toxicities beyond NSAIDs like ibuprofen, especially at higher levels. I am very cautious about prescribing aspirin and generally prefer other anti-inflammatory medicines.

However, people have long taken aspirin – sometimes at much higher doses – usually without problems. The fact that you are taking it only once a day reduces the toxicity, but I have to say I am surprised the benefit is lasting all day.

The risk of toxicity is higher at older ages. At 83, you are at a significantly higher risk (seven times the risk) than younger people. Most of the data on exactly what your risk is comes from people taking low-dose aspirin (81 mg, not the 975 mg you are taking), so I can't give you an evidence-based answer. But, for men in their 80s taking low-dose aspirin, about 1.5% will have a serious bleeding event per year. Your risk will be significantly higher due to the much-larger dose you are taking. However, one has to consider both the benefits of the aspirin treatment (the pain being gone is the best possible outcome) and the toxicity of other possible treatments, such as surgery (which is very significant).

There are many classes of NSAIDs, with very different chemical properties, and it is likely there is another type of NSAID you could safely take, with a lower risk than the dose of aspirin you are currently on. On the other hand, you can't get any better effectiveness, at least in terms of pain, and the absolute risk is still fairly small, so I'm not sure I recommend you change. I am always very cautious about recommending surgery to someone in their 80s when there is an effective medication available to treat the issue.

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) 2023 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION of Texas

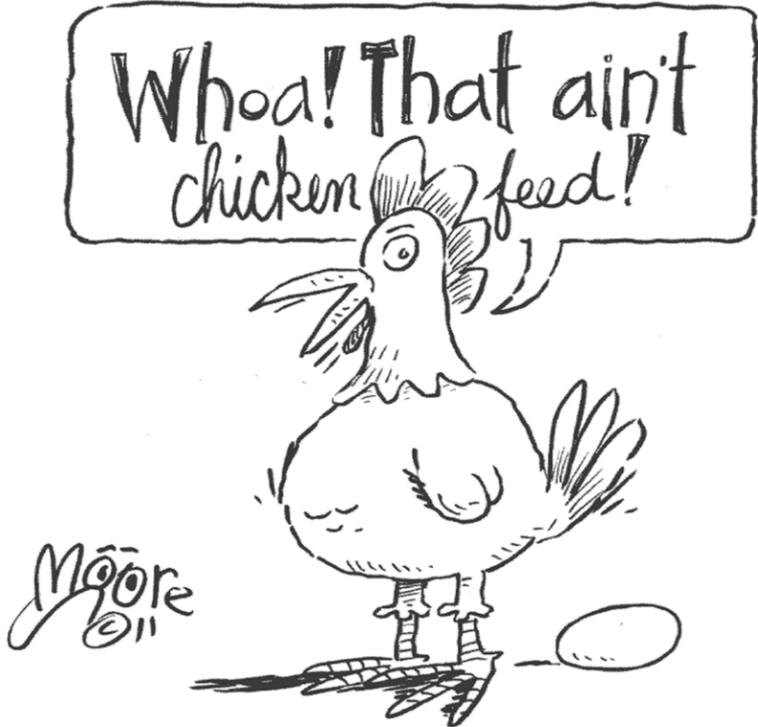
**YOUR Gift IS A WAY TO CONQUER LUNG DISEASE**

Find out how you can help ...

www.texaslung.org

When you lose someone dear to you — or when a special person has a birthday, quits smoking, or has some other occasion to celebrate — memorial gifts or tribute gifts made for them to your local American Lung Association help prevent lung disease and improve the care of those who suffer from it.

**1-800-LUNG-USA**



**Moore Texas by Roger Moore**  
 Inflation was so severe in 1839 Texas that a dozen eggs cost \$53 in today's dollars. Not cheap.  
 (Dollars adjusted to 2023.)

### 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: **G** equals **O**

FVQS HGWBC RGW HQBB SVK  
 GUKJVKQC ZGMKR MKKCKC SG  
 ZQTMSQTM Q ZGUTME OSQTJFQR?  
 KOHQBQSTME HGOSO.

Answer Page 5

©2022 King Features Synd., Inc.

### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆**

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging

Answer Page 5

◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

© 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

## VA Cemetery Association ranks high



by Freddy Groves

On the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) the Department of Veterans Affairs' National Cemetery Association was given the highest score ever received by any goods and services organization that ACSI covers. And not for the first time. This recent rating marks the seventh time in a row that the cemetery association has come in first in a survey covering over 400 U.S. corporations providing everything from utilities, health care and insurance to restaurants, travel and manufacturing... and cemetery services.

That's saying a lot. Given the nature of cemeteries in general and what they provide, for a cemetery association to be listed at the top of satisfaction surveys so many times is amazing, because there are many possible areas for unhappiness.

The VA's National Cemetery Administration provides services to the families of veterans at 121 locations. These services include burial, headstones and markers, medallions, military honors and more. In one year alone, last year, the NCA buried over 145,000 veterans and family members.

To determine if a veteran is eligible for VA burial benefits, go to [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov). Look for information on types of discharge, applying for a burial allowance and services provided.

If you've lost a veteran, are you familiar with the Veterans Legacy Memorial? It's a digital platform with over 4.5 million veterans listed where friends and families can post biographies, documents and photos of their veteran. Each individual bio includes branch of service, dates of birth and death, war period, rank and more. The profiles can also be emailed and posted to Facebook and Twitter. (Unfortunately, Arlington National Cemetery is not included in this memorial.)

To find the memorial, go to [www.vlm.cem.va.gov](http://www.vlm.cem.va.gov).

If you are a veteran who might be eligible for burial in a national cemetery, consider planning in advance. Search for "Pre-need eligibility" on the [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov) website.

An amusing note: While the NCA received a satisfaction score of 97%, the overall rate for all government agencies was 66%. The Department of the Treasury, of course, came in last.

(c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.



• Check your local newspaper or city/county government for programs that provide free or near free water barrels or trees. Many areas have a program, and they really do help keep your water costs down if you have flowers or vegetable gardens.

• "If you want same-size cookies, roll and freeze your dough for 10-15 minutes. Most doughs will harden enough to slice into perfectly uniform slices, and the freezing doesn't really affect cooking time too much. (Watch your first batch, though.)" – R.L. in Missouri

• If you are reattaching a button to shorts or pants, try using dental floss, the unwaxed kind. It's much stronger and can hold the button better than regular thread. Use a marker to darken it if the color is an issue.

• "Shaving cream can be used as a spot remover for many carpets. Use only a small amount, and follow up with a damp cloth." – D.L. in New Brunswick, Canada

• "To prevent a skin from forming on the top of a can of leftover paint, you can inflate a balloon and stick it in the can, cut a piece of wax paper to fit or store the can inverted, so that the skin will form on the bottom and stay there when you flip it." – W.B. in Alabama

Send your tips to *Now Here's a Tip*, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2023 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.

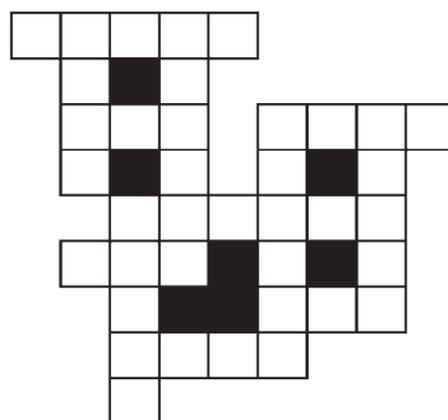
	x		+		26
+		-		+	
	x		+		18
x		x		+	
	x		+		27
25		20		21	

**DIFFICULTY: ★**  
 ★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
 ★★★ GO FIGURE!  
 Answer Page 5

©2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc.



- OTC
- KENTIA
- ONCLO
- EASK
- PANTIC
- ♥ NKI
- ♥ HICN
- ANKSC
- PPU
- ♥ PLOTIS
- ♥ LUSEP
- KICN



Answer Page 5

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.

©2023 King Features Syndicate. All rights reserved.