



NEWSBRIEFS

Fabens ISD receives top finance rating

Fabens ISD has been awarded an A plus by the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) for the 2022-23 school year. The district has earned a perfect score of 100 for the third year running for financial integrity. FIRST is the state’s system governed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for grading school financial responsibility, which serve to ensure makes public schools are held responsible for the caliber of their financial management processes.

– Sofia Maciel

Coffee cities

With National Coffee Day around the corner and Americans consuming 491 million cups of coffee every day, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2023’s *Best Coffee Cities in America*, as well as expert commentary. Alongside that report, WalletHub also released its list of top coffee deals and discounts offered by retailers during the holiday. To determine the best local coffee scenes in America, WalletHub compared the 100 largest cities across 12 key indicators of a strong coffee culture. The data set ranges from coffee shops, coffee houses and cafés per capita to the average price per pack of coffee. El Paso was rated 79th in the report. Best vs. Worst:

- Raleigh, NC has the lowest average price for a pack of coffee, \$3.54, which is 2.4 times lower than in Honolulu, HI, the city with the highest at \$8.59.
- Fremont, CA has the highest average annual spending on coffee per household, \$229.62, which is 3.5 times higher than in Hialeah, FL, the city with the lowest at \$65.06.
- Gilbert, AZ has the highest share of households that own a single-cup/pod-brewing coffee maker, 31.51 percent, which is 1.9 times higher than in Hialeah, FL, the city with the lowest at 16.51 percent.
- Orlando, FL has the most coffee shops, coffee houses and cafés (per square root of population), 0.4360, which is 5.5 times more

See BRIEFS, Page 3

You can tell it’s an old movie when the doctor tells the patient, “You’re as sound as a dollar.”
– Quips & Quotes



– Internet

CULTURE – Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual observance that heralds Hispanic history and culture across the United States. El Paso marks the occasion at the Downtown San Jacinto Plaza with a special art exhibit, above, among other special events throughout El Paso County.

Hispanic Texans highlight population growth during Hispanic Heritage Month

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – As the United States celebrates National Hispanic Heritage Month, which spans from September 15 to October 15, Hispanics in Texas are highlighting recently released Census data that shows Hispanic Texans now make up 40.2 percent of the state’s population eclipsing the non-Hispanic white Texan count of 39.8 percent.

With the new figures released by the Census Bureau, it confirmed that Hispanics have made up the largest share of the state’s population since at least July 2022. The updated estimates capture a landmark moment in Texas’ demographic evolution as the data show Hispanic Texans now outnumber white Texans by nearly 130,000 residents.

Texas had a white majority from at least 1850 until 2004, when white persons’ share of the state population dropped below 50 percent. Consequently, people of color, Hispanics in particular, have been increasing the state’s population and

reshaping the state’s cultural landscape for decades.

The state’s Hispanic population growth, which seems evenly split between natural increase and net migration including both domestic and international, has brought diversity to parts of the state that were once nearly all white and is transforming classrooms and workforces throughout Texas.

And Hispanic Texans are expected to make up a majority of the state’s population in the decades to come with more Texas children being Hispanic, according to demographers. Census estimates showed that 49.3 percent of Texans under the age of 18 are Hispanic. They pointed out that it has been more than a decade since Hispanic students first came to make up a majority of Texas public school students.

The newly reached demographic milestone underscores the urgency with which the state must buy into its future, Texas educators of Hispanic descent stressed. “We have to push hard to educate our Hispanic children,” stated Lilia Martinez, a retired bilingual education specialist

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage in the U.S.A.

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Hispanic Heritage Week proclamation 55 years ago. President Ronald Reagan expanded it to a month in 1988. The annual observance recognizes contributions made by Hispanic Americans, the fastest growing racial or ethnic minority in the United States, according to the Census. Hispanic Americans are people whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

from El Paso. “We have to approach this by encouraging higher education goals for all our children,” she said.

“We have to invest in institutions and organizations that will train and equip them with the skills that they need to obtain high-demand jobs, living wages, access to food, housing, and other essentials that will allow them to participate in the state’s economy,” Martinez added.

Studies indicate that economic and political gains have not kept up with this population growth as Hispanics living in Texas are disproportionately poor and are less likely to have reached the higher levels of education that offer social mobility and the opportunity to succeed in a flourishing Texas economy.

Hispanic Texans are more than twice

See HERITAGE, Page 3

No, we aren't Rome

An op-ed in *The New York Times* warns, as the headline puts it, that “America is an empire in decline,” and finds a precedent in imperial Rome.

The piece, written by the co-author of a new book, *Why Empires Fall: Rome, America, and the Future of the West*, shows that the cottage industry in comparisons between the United States and Rome is as robust as ever.

It is an irresistible temptation to superimpose the history of Rome and especially its decline and fall – an enduring subject of fascination – on top of our own experience and future.

Both conservatives and progressives are prone to their own versions of this narrative, tending to emphasize either moral decline or imperial over-

stretch respectively.

But the most important thing to know about us and our supposed imperial forbear is that we aren't Rome and aren't experiencing any of the most direct, spectacular causes of its fall.

It's become fashionable among some scholars to argue that there was no fall. There were no barbarian invasions. There was no material decline. Nothing to see here – simply evolutionary change.

It is true that Rome's fall – a long, messy process – didn't unfold with the pleasing cinematic simplicity that the popular imagination might believe; the extent of the barbarian population transfers has been exaggerated and the Eastern half of the empire lived on for another 1,000 years.

Still, the Western Roman Empire unquestionably fell, with disastrous consequences for a long time. It's just that dragging us into it is wildly off base.

Rome tore itself apart with constant assassinations,

usurpations, and civil wars. It weakened itself economically and militarily, while confronting challenges from armed bands on its borders that it became incapable of handling as it steadily lost its territory and sources of financial support to barbarian groups.

At the same time, it had to grapple with the Persian Empire to the East.

Is this happening to the United States? Well, an armed contingent of Quebecers isn't (like the Visigoths) wandering throughout the United States, fighting periodic battles with the U.S. military



See LOWRY, Page 7



– Photos courtesy Canutillo ISD

ALL SMILES – Canutillo ISD staffers and students are all too happy to receive new footwear courtesy of the District's Workers' Compensation Program.

Canutillo employees, students receive safety shoes

1973
50
Years
2023

WEST TEXAS COUNTY
COURIER

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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.

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Homesteader
Est. 1973
News, Inc.

By Gustavo Reveles
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – In an effort to promote safety in the workplace and prevent accidents that can negatively impact teaching and learning, the

Canutillo Independent School District Human Resources Division has distributed safety footwear to qualifying auxiliary personnel.

District employees in the Facilities & Transportation, Child Nutrition, Technology,

See SHOES, Page 3



Heritage

From Page 1

as likely as white Texans to be living below the poverty level and less than half as likely to have graduated from college with bachelor's degrees or higher, according to Census data.

Recent estimates show that 95 percent of white adults in Texas have at least a high school diploma, compared with only 70 percent of Hispanic adults. Hispanics also fall behind on income- the median income in 2021 was \$81,384 for a white household but just \$54,857 for a Hispanic household.

These persistent disparities remain even as the state's population has grown and transformed so significantly. "Although Hispanics are now a minority-majority in Texas does not mean things have changed or will change for the better," remarked Jaime Mercado, a local educator. "Those with the money will still be in power, and they still call the shots when it comes to Hispanic advancements," he surmised.

But in a state where opportunity and life outcomes so closely correlate with identity for Texans of color, policymakers say the new census estimates demand an emphasis on the state's Hispanic growth.

However, Texas is coming off a series of legislative sessions dominated by Republican-led initiatives that raised concerns for their potential to harm Hispanics. That included an effort to restrict how current events and the country's history of racism can be taught in Texas schools.

Texas Republican lawmakers also redrew the state's political maps in a manner that gave voters of color less say in who represents them in districts across the state. And the

state Legislature banned diversity, equity and inclusion offices in public universities. Furthermore, lawmakers are expected to take up a debate over public school funding that includes vouchers, or school choice, in the coming weeks.

"When you have individuals who have not walked in our shoes refusing to acknowledge that racism exists, that there have been historical barriers in our state, to me, it's a very coordinated attempt to hold onto their power for as long as possible and refusing to acknowledge that we are the state's destiny," claimed State Representative Victoria Neave Criado, a Dallas Democrat who chairs the Mexican American Legislative Caucus.

Meanwhile, Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations will continue despite the political pushback.

For "We have to know and share our true history; we have to be aware of what happened in the past, so that we don't let the discrimination, racism, and marginalization of Hispanics continue to happen," asserted, Ralph Briones, an El Pasoan and retired regional administrator for the state agency formerly known as the Texas Department of Human Services.

Briefs

From Page 1

than in Laredo, TX, the city with the fewest at 0.0793.

- Portland, OR has the most coffee and tea manufacturers (per square root of population), 0.0209, which is 20.9 times

See BRIEFS, Page 5

Shoes

From Page 2

Custodial Services, Police Services and the CISD Warehouse received special safety footwear designed to facilitate their work duties.

The shoes were funded through CISD's Workers' Compensation Program.

"The District is committed to giving each employee the tools they need to do their job efficiently," said Superintendent Dr. Pedro Galaviz. "This includes providing them with the correct shoes they need to be safe and ready to serve our students."

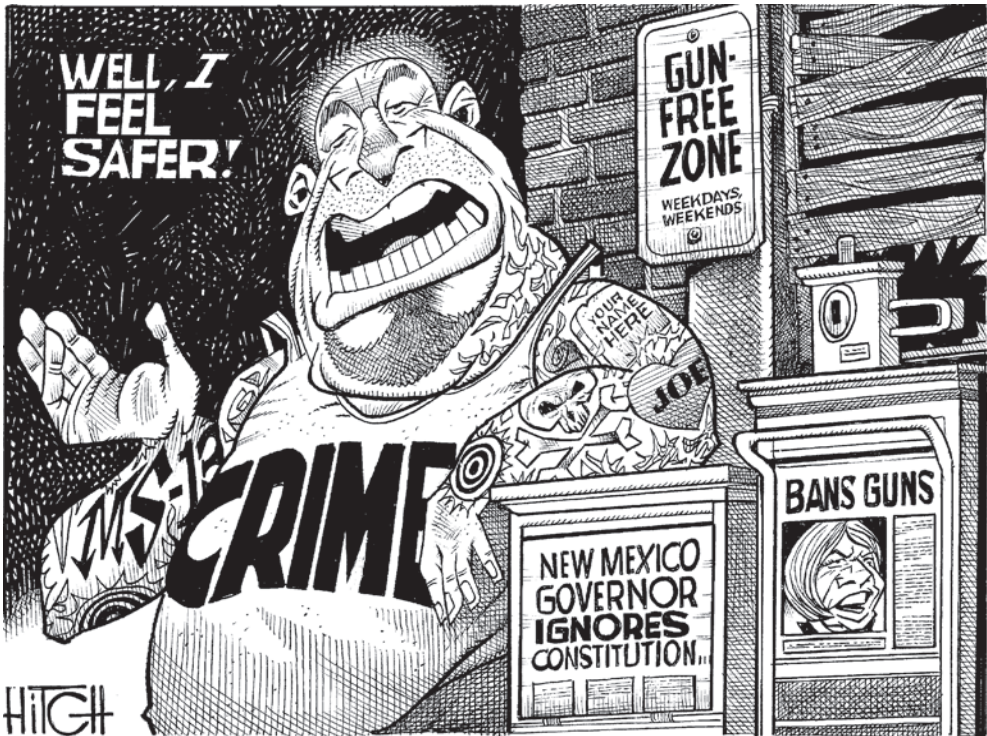
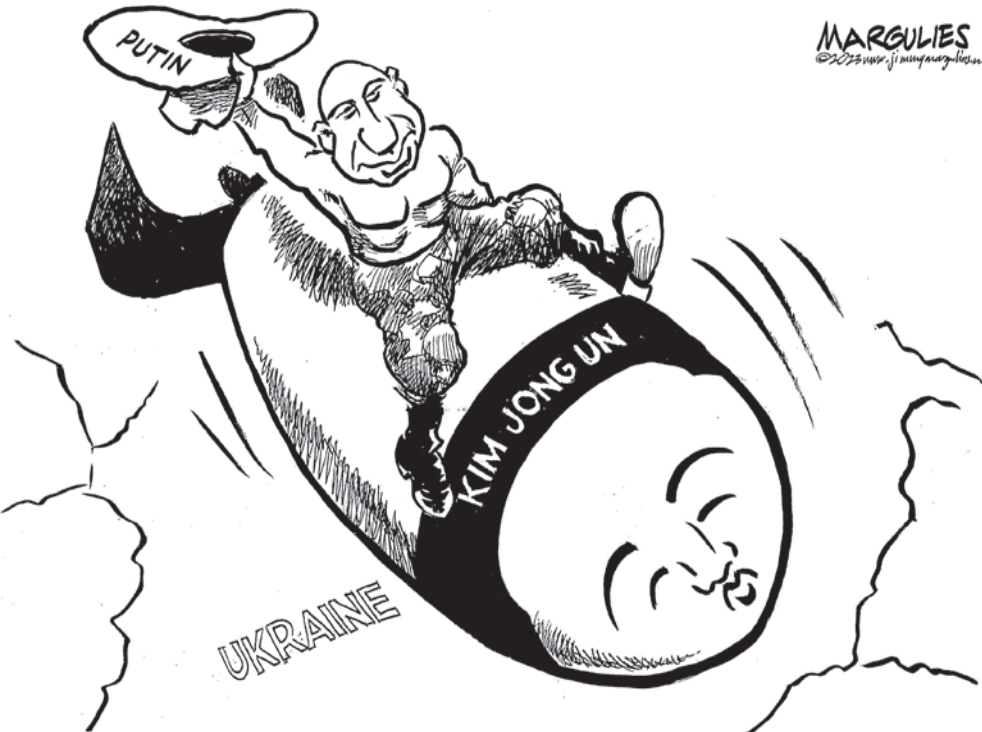
This year, the program was expanded to include footwear for security-in-training personnel that is part of Canutillo High School's Criminal Justice P-TECH Program. The students assist CISD Police Services in providing patrolling services throughout the District and during special events.

"We are thrilled to be able to include our students this year," said Jose Barraza, Assistant Director of Human Services. "As key members of our safety efforts, it is imperative that they, too, have the right equipment to do their job."

PUBLIC NOTICE TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

The West Texas County Courier
office is closed.

The office will open again on
Wednesday, October 11, 2023.





– Photo courtesy EPSO/Disney

A BOX OFFICE FORCE – From left, Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker with Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia and Harrison Ford as Han Solo starred in the first released *Star Wars* movie. The franchise went galactic and continues to inspire new spin-offs and story lines after 40-plus years.

EPSO performs to screening of ‘Star Wars: A New Hope’

By Rosemary Flores
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – The El Paso Symphony Orchestra is excited to present the *Star Wars: A New Hope In Concert* featuring a screening of the complete film with Oscar-winning composer John Williams’ musical score performed live to the film. The concert will be led by conductor James O. Welsch.

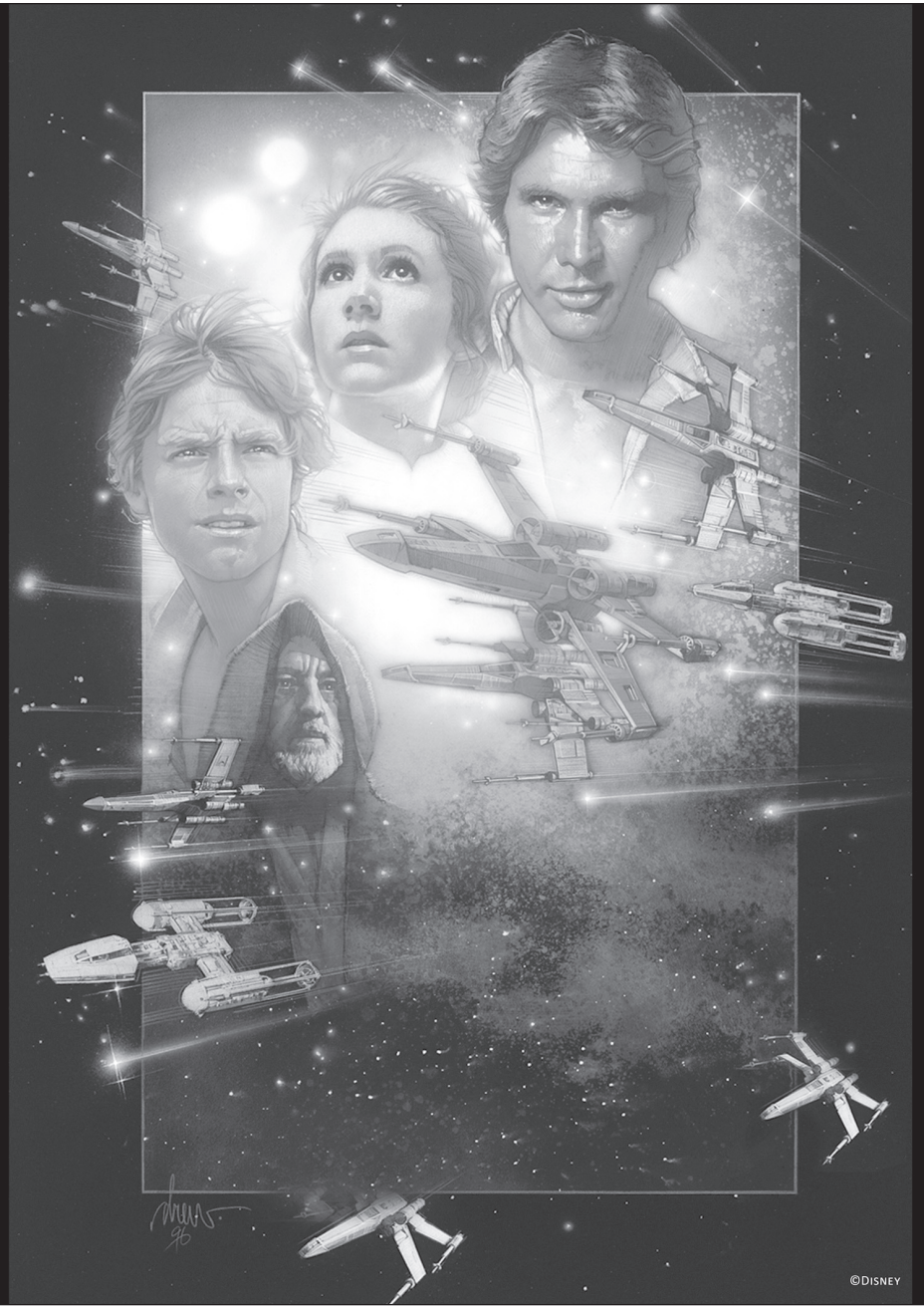
Since the release of the first *Star Wars* movie over 40 years ago, the *Star Wars* saga has had a seismic impact on both cinema and culture, inspiring audiences around the world with its mythic storytelling, captivating characters, groundbreaking special effects and iconic musical scores composed by Williams.

Fans will be able to experience the scope and grandeur of this beloved film in a live symphonic concert experience when *Star Wars: A New Hope In Concert* debuts on Saturday, October 7, 2023, 7:30 p.m. in the historic Plaza Theatre.

Tickets are available at www.ticketmaster.com, at the Plaza Theatre Box Office or (915) 532-3776, information at www.epso.org.

“The Force is strong with this one...”

Set 30 years after *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*, *Star Wars: A New Hope*, the fourth episode of the saga, returns to the desert planet of Tatooine. A young Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill)



– Image courtesy EPSO/Disney

CLASSIC ART – The box office poster for *Star Wars: A New Hope* featured, from left, Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Harrison Ford and Sir Alec Guinness as Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- In 2003, a community in New Jersey experienced an animal-related electrical outage. Such occurrences were certainly not rare, but this incident was notable for being the first time an osprey was known to be involved – or, rather, a fish: The bird had dropped its scaly prey on the power lines.
- Slovenia boasts a most impressive 28,000 wineries, amounting to one winery for every 75 persons in the country.
- Ever hear “things that go bump in the night” at your house? Before you call an exorcist, keep in mind that several cases of residential “paranormal activity” have actually turned out to be the result of carbon monoxide poisoning, which can cause hallucinations and feelings of dread.
- The Mamenchisaurus sinocanadorum dinosaur’s neck measured 50 feet – six times longer than that of a giraffe!
- When he was in his 50s, Steven Spielberg re-enrolled at California State, Long Beach to finish his B.A. degree three decades after dropping out. The school awarded him three course credits in paleontology for making “Jurassic Park.”
- Japan’s “gyoza cider” is a soda designed to taste like gyoza dumplings.
- In 2018, one of Stephen Hawking’s older wheelchairs was auctioned off for \$387,000, with proceeds donated to his favorite charities.

• New York-Presbyterian Hospital has created a Spotify playlist called “Songs to do CPR to,” featuring hits by artists ranging from the Bee Gees to Justin Bieber.

Thought for the Day: “Every day we should hear at least one little song, read one good poem, see one exquisite picture and, if possible, speak a few sensible words.”
– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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CryptoQuip
Answer

Why was the plain veggie
salad in a particularly
vulnerable state?
Because it was undressed.

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Sept. 25, 1890, Sequoia National Park in central California, famed for some of the tallest and largest trees in the world, was established by the U.S. Congress as the country's second national park. It receives more than 1 million visitors per year.

• On Sept. 26, 1738, Scottish philosopher David Hume signed a contract to publish the first two volumes of "A Treatise of Human Nature," widely considered to be his most important work and one of the most influential in the history of philosophy.

• On Sept. 27, 1927, "Father of the Blues" William Christopher "W.C." Handy, a skilled band leader from Northern Alabama, self-published "Memphis Blues," considered the first blues song and described by Handy as "A Southern Rag."

• On Sept. 28, 1978, Pope John Paul I died of a heart attack at age 65, just 33 days after being elected pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, making his reign one of the shortest in papal history. Discrepancies in the Vatican's account of his death also led to a number of conspiracy theories about it.

• On Sept. 29, 1997, a number of American servicemen got themselves arrested in Turkey due to their salty vocabulary, namely, shouting profanities during an argument with locals at a bar despite the country's ban on cussing in public places. The soldiers were released with just a warning.

• On Sept. 30, 2005, a United National health expert responsible for coordinating the response to the recent southeast Asian bird flu outbreak, or avian influenza, warned that it could kill up to 150 million people. Since 2003, the illness has killed both large numbers of birds and more than 60 humans in Asia.

• On Oct. 1, 2013, the U.S. government ceased all nonessential operations when Congress failed to reach a deal on the national budget, resulting in the closure of museums and national parks, and leaving hundreds of thousands of workers stalled at home. The shutdown ended shortly after midnight on Oct. 17.

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Briefs

From Page 3

more than in Tulsa, OK, the city with the fewest at 0.0010. Visit <http://wallethub.com/edu/best-cities-for-coffee-lovers/23739/> for the full report.

– Diana Polk

A golden party

They came from all corners of the earth to attend a birthday party at Guisachan House in the village of Glen Affric in the Scottish Highlands recently. The event was held to celebrate the birth of the first litter of Golden Retrievers 155 years ago. The event attracted 466 dogs and their owners. According to the Golden Retriever Club of Scotland, "the Golden as we know it today was bred at Guisachan, Glen Affric, near Inverness, the Scottish Estate of Lord Tweedmouth, from a series of matings which commenced by mating a good looking yellow coloured Flat Coated Retriever with a Tweed Water Spaniel called 'Belle' (a breed now extinct but believed to be a small liver coloured dog with a curly coat)."

– John Grimaldi

Diverse states

With Hispanic Heritage Month in full swing and women holding more than 10% of Fortune 500 CEO positions for the first time, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on *2023's Most & Least Diverse States in America*, as well as expert commentary. To determine where the most idea and identity exchanges have occurred at the highest level in the U.S – and where the population is relatively more homogeneous – WalletHub

compared the 50 states across six key categories: socio-economic, cultural, economic, household, religious and political diversity. Texas was rated 2nd in the report. Diversity in Texas (1-Most Diverse, 25-Avg.):

- 17th – Income Diversity;
- 9th – Educational-Attainment Diversity;
- 4th – Racial & Ethnic Diversity;
- 3rd – Linguistic Diversity;
- 27th – Birthplace Diversity;
- 2nd – Industry Diversity*;
- 20th – Occupational Diversity*;
- 26th – Worker-Class Diversity*;
- 4th – Household-Size Diversity; and
- 3rd – Religious Diversity.

*Includes civilian employed population aged 16 and older. Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-least-diverse-states-in-america/38262> for the full report.

– Diana Polk

EPSO

From Page 4

begins to discover his destiny when, searching for a lost droid, he is saved by reclusive Jedi Obi-Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness). A civil war rages in the galaxy, and Rebel forces struggle against the evil Galactic Empire, Luke and Obi-Wan enlist the aid of hotshot pilot, Han Solo (Harrison Ford). Joined by the quirky droid duo R2-D2 and C-3PO, the unlikely team sets out to rescue Rebel leader Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) and make use of the stolen plans to destroy the Empire's ultimate weapon.

In a legendary confrontation, the rogue group mounts an attack against the Death Star for a climactic battle with the evil Sith Lord Darth Vader.

Legendary composer Williams is well known for scoring all nine of the *Star Wars* saga films to date, beginning with 1977's *Star Wars: A New Hope* for which he earned an Academy Award® for Best Original Score. His scores for *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Return of the Jedi*, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* were each nominated for Best Original Score.

Archives: www.wtxcc.com

Classified Ads

LEGALS

VILLAGE OF VINTON, TX

PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS #09-19-23

The Village of Vinton, Texas, is requesting proposals for:

Health and supplemental insurance, to include health, dental, vision, life, short-term and long-term disability and AD&D, for eligible employees and their dependents.

GENERAL INFORMATION
The Village of Vinton currently contributes 100%

of the employees cost for all products. Employees cover dependents at their costs.

Current employees have open enrollment period in December. The Village is requesting that benefit plans be matched. Carriers are to clearly indicate deviations from current plan designs.

Submission packages can be obtained through the City Secretary's office at 436 E. Vinton Rd., Vinton TX 79821 or the Village website <https://vintontx.gov/office2.com/otheropportunities>

Sealed proposal must be delivered to: (late, faxed or

emailed proposals will not be accepted): Village Administrator, Village of Vinton, 436 E. Vinton Rd., Vinton, TX 79821. Should be clearly marked: Village of Vinton. Sealed Proposal. Health, Dental, Vision and Life Insurance #09-19-23. Delivered no later: 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 16, 2023. Bids will be open at City Hall (436 E. Vinton, RD. Vinton, TX 79821) at 10:00 a.m. on October 17, 2023. Proposals must include 3 hard copies and 1 digital copy via thumb drive.

A complete request for proposals is available on our website: <https://vintontx.gov/office2.com/>

other opportunities

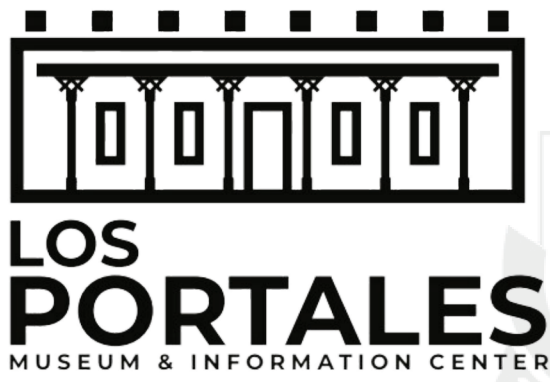
The City Council may select one or more firms. The Village reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to accept any proposal deemed advantageous to the Village.

Please submit any questions you have in writing to the Village of Vinton or email to acarrillo@vintontx.us. All eligible questions will be answered in writing through email. Addendums or changes will be posted on the City's website.

Andrea N. Carrillo
Village Administrator


WTCC: 09-28-23
10-05-23

VISIT SAN ELIZARIO



LOS PORTALES

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WWW.LOSPORTALESMUSEUM.ORG
WWW.SANELIZARIOGENEALOGY.ORG

OCTOBER

Oct 6th-15th: Spooky Activities at the Museum

Oct 21st: Dia De Los Muertos Exhibit Opening

Oct 28th: Trunk or Treat

NOVEMBER

Nov 11th: Veteran's Day Parade

DECEMBER

Dec 2nd: Posada Exhibit Opening

Dec 16th: SEGHS Luminaria, Posada and Bike Raffle

The Chicago Bears are awful, and they play bad football

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The NFL season just started a few weeks ago and we can already identify teams that will end up having a long, long losing season.

There is very little hope for the Arizona Cardinals or the Houston Texans or the Carolina Panthers to do much of anything this year.

And then there are teams like the New York Giants and the New England Patriots and the Denver Broncos and the Los Angeles Rams, that will need a miracle or two to get anywhere near the playoffs.

But the one thing that all these teams have in common is that they can all proudly declare, “at least we’re not the Chicago Bears.”

The Bears, at least for now, may be the most dysfunctional pro team in all of sports.

A lot of people may think that it’s only because they have turned into a perennial loser.

For example, last year they started the season with a not-so-bad 3-4 record. They went on to lose their last 10 games of the season.

And by starting 0-3 this year, the Bears have lost 13 games in a row.

But wait, there’s more.

I guess you could say all the Bears’ current problems started in 2017.

That was the year the Chicago Bears were set to pick their quarterback of the future with the second overall pick in the draft. They had a few solid

quarterbacks to choose from including Deshaun Watson and a guy you may have head of by the name of Patrick Mahomes.

Of course with the Bears being the Bears, they chose Mitchell Trubisky.

Over the last four seasons, the Bears have put up a record of 25-40. Over that same period, Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs are 51-14, they’ve played in three Super Bowls and won two of them.

Since then, Chicago has chosen their next quarterback of the future, Justin Fields.

But like Trubisky, Fields hasn’t exactly been setting the NFL world on fire. And naturally, that can make a quarterback feel a little frustrated.

So frustrated that Fields took to the microphone to answer questions from reporters last week. One question had to do with why he thought they were off to such a bad start?

“You know, could be coaching, I think. At the end of the day, they are doing their job and giving me what

to look at, but at the end of the day, I can’t be thinking about that when the game comes.”

So Fields decided to take no personal responsibility and throw his coaches under the bus.

Of course later in the day, Fields went back and tried to say his words were taken out of context.

If that wasn’t bad enough, on the same day, Bears defense coordinator Alan Williams resigned to focus on “my health and my family.”

There have been all kinds of rumors surrounding the “real” reason he suddenly resigned, including one that the FBI had raided his home for some reason.

I know, I know, this sounds more like an HBO drama or a fictional best seller, but this is the world of the Chicago Bears.

And just when you thought things couldn’t get much worse, they lost more than their credibility last week.

The Chicago Bears announced that \$100,000 in equipment was stolen

from Soldier Field.

Wait, what?

Yes, some guys actually broke into the Bears stadium and stole 100-grand worth of equipment, but the equipment wasn’t even football related.

It turns out that staff members said one or more burglars tore down a security fence overnight and drove multiple pieces of equipment out of a garage, including John Deere gators and riding lawn mowers.

“Murphy’s Law” states that everything that can go wrong, will go wrong. But even Murphy has to be amazed at the amount of bad luck going the Bears’ way.

So, if you’re a fan of the awful Arizona Cardinals or back the terrible Houston Texans, just be thankful, be grateful, that you aren’t a Bears fan.

At least all your teams do is lose, you don’t have to deal with all that other stuff.

UTEP may have a terrible football program too, but at least we keep our equipment locked up.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Food prices

The Bureau of Labor Statistics issued a food prices report comparing this summer to the summer of 2022. While they acknowledge that prices of food are continuing to rise, they claim that the rate of that increase has slowed. They say that the cost of groceries went up only 4.9% from last year.

I’d like to know where, exactly, they do their shopping – because I’ll go there.

We can point the finger of blame in several directions, per the nightly news – the war in Ukraine, wildfires, droughts, avian flu – but I point that finger in one additional direction: greed.

I have a thick stack of grocery receipts, batched by date, so it’s easy to check the prices that I paid a month ago, six months ago, a year ago, etc. Along with a handy online calculator, I can see that one particular item I commonly

buy rose in price from \$4.27 to \$5.95 just in the past several months. That equates to a 39% increase in price. It’s not even a fancy cut of meat – it’s bread.

I have to wonder if the food companies don’t watch the news and decide to see just how much we’ll put up with, like the frog in the pan of increasingly heated water. How long before we jump out?

By “jump out,” I mean refuse to buy. Granted, we can’t avoid buying food, but we can refuse to pay for higher priced items. For example, I’m experimenting with a way to cut my grocery bill that is simply this: I buy whatever brand is the cheapest. If I want a can of beans, maybe the store brand is the cheapest, maybe it’s a flavor I haven’t tried before, maybe it’s on sale. Whatever it is, I buy the cheapest.

Eventually the food companies will wise up and realize that we won’t be held hostage by their high prices.

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Send Your
Newsbrief To:
wtxcc@wtxcc.com

NATIONAL DATA

ACROSS

1 Bumper-car
carnival ride

7 TV title alien

10 Garden pond fish

13 Cause to blunder

19 Cook too long

20 Ned of NASCAR

22 Ned of "The D.A."

23 Appear gradually,
as a scene

24 "No, seriously!"

25 Surrounded by

26 Mountain laurel

29 Clumsy type

30 Stocking stuffer

31 It's charged

32 Alternative to
ChapStick

37 "Old Folks at
Home"

44 Vital artery

45 Spellbound

47 1989-2007 senator
Trent

48 Stein fillers

49 Blue spruce

53 Propose a date to

55 Author Ferber

56 Pro _ (in
proportion)

57 "_ a customer"

59 Joe of
"GoodFellas"

60 Clinton aide Myers

62 Susan of
"Goldengirl"

64 Eurasian animal
with antlers

66 "North to the
Future"

70 Used up

74 118-Across was
one

75 Printing goofs

80 Humdinger

81 Reformer Ralph

84 "OK" from Tom
Sawyer to Aunt Polly

86 Workplace welfare
org.

87 Fuddy-duddies

89 Topaz

92 Relative of a lutz

93 Bullfight yells

95 Israeli airline

96 Right wrongs

97 Cactus wren

101 Went in

103 To the _ power

104 Savings acct.
accrual

105 Hail, basically

106 Some legislators
(or the theme of this
puzzle?)

117 Arrived by plane

118 Opera legend
Pavarotti

119 Make a comment

120 Response to
"You'd never do that!"

121 Ill-fated NASA
mission of 1967

122 And others, to
Ovid

123 Dwelt

124 Round bread of
India

125 Subj. for some
immigrants

126 Passable

DOWN

1 Tip politely, as
one's hat

2 Human face's
shape

3 Whoop-_
(extravagant fanfare)

4 Expanded

5 Sedgwick of
Warhol films

6 Marilyn of
"Niagara"

7 In _ (pronto)

8 Desktop illuminator

9 No longer being
detained

10 Sax celebrity

11 Soulful Redding

12 Really tiny

13 "Saturday Night
Fever" star

14 Hard Italian
cheese

15 "Sure, put me
down"

16 Toenail treatment,
informally

17 Astral bear

18 Coffee holder

21 Rambled

27 Mexican city due
south of Dallas

28 Elevate

32 Waiting with _
breath

33 2013 Grammy

winner for "Royals"

34 Dunne of classic
films

35 Lieu

36 Chinese ideal

37 California county
whose seat is Fairfield

38 Sign word after
"Ye"

39 Stocking stuffer

40 Worked on a leaf
collection?

41 "You beat me"

42 Tennis tie

43 Up and about

46 Gained access to

50 Refrigeration fluid

51 Workers with
shingles, maybe

52 Kofi, once of the
U.N.

54 Caveman's
weapon

58 Scrub nurses'
sites, in brief

61 Be hammy

63 Tribal pole emblem

65 _ Mountain
(Vermont ski resort)

67 Two fives

68 _ Marymount
University

69 Stadium's kin

70 Britcom of the '90s

71 Pope before Paul
V

72 Coors offering

73 Trade group

76 GPS calculation

77 1941 Oscar winner

Mary

78 Scottish title

79 Emitted a
contented sigh

82 Ending for golden
or New

83 Arnaz of TV

85 Decide on

88 Toned down

90 Outside clearance
event, of a sort

91 Quite chubby

94 Bert with lion lines

98 Not delayed

99 Diamond
substitute

100 Baseball pioneer
Buck

102 Came closer

105 One way to fry
food

106 Chunky slice

107 Garr of films

108 Spellbound

109 Flair

110 Cocooned insect

111 Son of Seth

112 Head, in Haiti

113 Classroom Apple,
often

114 Glen

115 Bard's Ireland

116 Revue sketch

117 Pill-OK'ing agcy.

Super Crossword

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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| 44 | | | | | | | 45 | 46 | | | | 47 | | | | | 48 | | | | | |
| 49 | | | | | | | | | | | 51 | 52 | | | 53 | 54 | | | | | | |
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| 97 | | | | | | 98 | | | | | 99 | 100 | | | | 101 | 102 | | | | | |
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| 117 | | | | | | | | 118 | | | | | | | | 119 | | | | | | |
| 120 | | | | | | | | 121 | | | | | | | | 122 | | | | | | |
| 123 | | | | | | | | 124 | | | | | 125 | | | | 126 | | | | | |

Answer Page 4

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



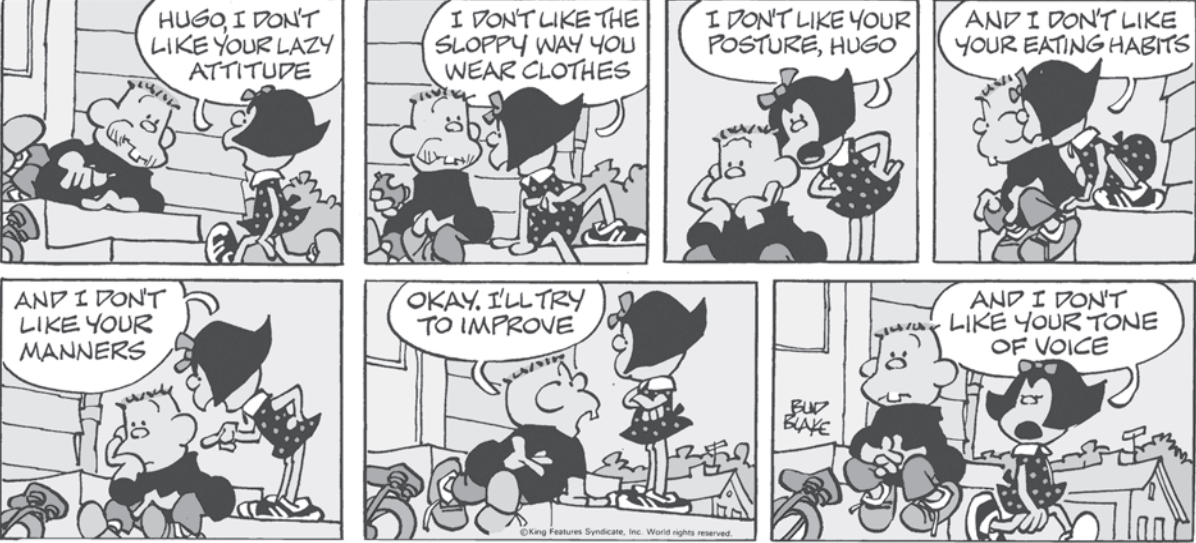
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

and seeking subsidies from the U.S. Senate before besieging – and eventually sacking – Washington, D.C.

Migrants to the United States don’t settle en masse in national groupings led by military leaders seeking power and preferment. They disperse throughout the country and take illegal jobs as busboys and the like.

U.S. presidents have to worry about declining poll numbers, a recalcitrant congressional opposition, and reelection campaigns.

They don’t, like Roman emperors, need to think all the time about potential assassinations and armed usurpers. They don’t need to worry that if they assign a general to take over, say, CENTCOM, he will use the position to muster the troops and resources to challenge for power himself. They don’t need to consider the positioning of military forces with an eye to checking internal enemies.

Jan. 6 was a disgraceful day but a blip hardly worth mentioning relative to the perpetual, large-scale internal disorder in

imperial Rome.

The 1st Infantry Division isn’t marching on Washington, D.C., from Fort Riley, Kansas, and fighting a pitched battle with the 4th Marine Division devastating to the countryside somewhere in Ohio.

None of this is to deny that the United States and the West may have entered a period of what will ultimately prove to be terminal decline or that rivals, most notably China, are on the rise. It is to say that unless our representative democracy degenerates into an unelected dictatorship with no reliable means of succession and Canada and Mexico begin to eat away at our territory, the story of our decline is not going to track closely with that of Rome, a vastly different polity, at a different time.

By all means, study the history of Rome for its own sake and for the insights it affords into human nature and the roots of the Western world. But the moral of the story needn’t be about 21st-century America.

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

Suspecting and diagnosing hereditary hemochromatosis

DEAR DR. ROACH: My husband was diagnosed with hemochromatosis 13 months before he died. I recommended that his blood relatives get tested so they can get treatment early, if necessary. Some doctors don’t know to check ferritin levels to make a diagnosis in a person with a family history of hemochromatosis. – C.G.



Hereditary hemochromatosis (HHC) is a genetic disease of iron overload. In a person with HHC, the intestines absorb as much iron as they can all the time, even if the body doesn’t need it, whereas a person without HHC will simply stop absorbing iron if it isn’t necessary. The iron can go into and damage many organs, especially the liver, heart, bone marrow, hormone-producing glands and skin.

The diagnosis should be suspected in close relatives of an affected person. Although checking ferritin levels is useful in making the diagnosis, iron tests, total iron-binding capacity tests and hemoglobin tests should also be ordered. If the family member has a recognized genetic mutation, such as C282Y homozygote or C282Y/H63D compound heterozygote, those genetic tests may also be useful in making the diagnosis.

The diagnosis should even be suspected in people with vague symptoms, such as weakness and fatigue. I teach my students and residents to consider the possibility of iron overload, as it is common, easily tested for, and easily treated with phlebotomy (blood removal). Symptomatic HHC is more common at an earlier age in men than women, but it still should be considered in younger women.

A clinician should also consider iron overload in people with enlarged livers or abnormal liver enzymes, diabetes, changes in skin tone (bronze or gray), heart failure and some kinds of arthritis. Most people with these conditions do not have HHC, but initial testing is cheap and easy.

Treatment can be done by donating blood. My first patient with HHC donated over 100 units of blood before his blood levels came down to the target range.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am one of the people who cannot take statins because of muscle pain. My cardiologist suggested Praluent, and it works fine – no muscle pain as well as very low HDL and LDL cholesterol levels for over two years now. However, I keep seeing articles about muscle pain and statins and never see Praluent referred to as an alternative. Why? – T.G.

Alirocumab (Praluent) is an antibody to a compound called PCSK9. This causes the liver to remove LDL cholesterol from the blood and lower the levels of this “bad” kind of cholesterol. In turn, this leads to a reduction in heart disease risk among those taking the medication. It does not cause muscle damage. PCSK9 inhibitors may be used alone or in combination with statins.

Unfortunately, the medication is expensive, about \$500 per month. It is most often used in people with known blockages in their heart, but some experts prescribe alirocumab in high-risk patients who do not have known blockages. Insurance coverage is not assured. Furthermore, it is given only as an injection, usually every two or four weeks.

PCSK9 inhibitors are an important tool in the fight against heart disease and are of special value in those at the highest risk or those who cannot tolerate a statin.

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.



Moore Texas by Roger MOORE
Early Texas pioneers drank lots of coffee believing it prevented fever and chills... must've had side effects!

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: F equals W

FZM FBA DZT NUBLH QTOOLT
ABUBK LH B NBSDLJWUBSUM
QWUHTSBRUT ADBDT?
RTJBWAT LD FBA WHKSTAATK.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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Disability claims lost since 2018



by Freddy Groves

As far back as 2018 there have been technical problems with uploading disability claims on the Department of Veterans Affairs' website, except nobody knew. There were no indications at the time that anything was going awry. But those claims weren't received.

When you hit the SEND button, it didn't go. Your disability claim has likely been sitting in that internet "dead zone," neither moving forward nor backward, unseen.

But somehow they found them, 32,000 claims sitting there unprocessed since 2018.

Now, having found those 32,000 claims in the dead zone, the VA is sending out letters to all the affected veterans. The problem was first reported by Military.com, when the spouse of one of their former employees received the letter about the

lost claims.

It brings up several questions:

Did veterans file alternate claims when they didn't hear back? Did they assume they'd been denied when they received no reply? Have the veterans, unfortunately, passed away? Do the surviving spouses know their veteran had filed? And are they due any money?

At this point you don't need to do anything, they say. All affected veterans whose claims were found stuck in the system will be notified and their claims hustled through. Claims benefits will be backdated to the "stuck" date.

Unless you decide to take charge of your situation and check it out. The VA's website gives this page of instructions to file disability claims: www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim. You can file your claim online, by mail using Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits (VA Form 21-526EZ), in person when you deliver your

application to a VA regional office or with help from a Veterans Service Officer.

That same instruction page says that it's taking 104 days to get a decision. You can also check the status of your claim from that page. Do that, just to make sure. And if you have trouble signing into your MyVA411 account, or creating one, you can call (800) 698-2411 for help.

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by Jo Ann Derson

• Be sure to comb the leftovers from back-to-school sales. Pick up supplies that will need to be replenished as the school years moves on. Also, there are many imaginative pencil cases that can double as travel jewelry and makeup bags. Often you can pick up several at a good price.

• "Just after Labor Day, our family starts to think about who will host holiday dinners and such. We do it in a lottery. Whoever just hosted is exempt if they want to be. The rest of those who'd like to host a holiday event put their names in a pot, and we pick out names. The events are the usuals, like Christmas and Thanksgiving, but also a cookie-making party and the children's party. It's better than one person always having to do it or always getting to do it." — E.D. in Massachusetts

• If you are getting your outdoor furniture ready for storage, here's a great cleaning idea. Load it all in the back of a truck, take it to a self-serve car wash and clean with the pressure hoses. Let dry, and it's ready.

• To remove stubborn contact paper from kitchen shelves, use a hair dryer set on low to loosen the adhesive. Peel away slowly.

• "Dust books with a vacuum assist! I put the leg of a pantyhose over my vacuum wand and secure tightly. Then I dust my bookshelves, holding the wand close by to suck up the dust that gets disturbed. It's less messy, I think. I still dust from the top down." — L.K. in Ohio

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.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult

★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 4

| | | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|----|----|
| | - | | x | | 25 |
| x | | x | | + | |
| | x | | - | | 23 |
| + | | + | | + | |
| | + | | + | | 15 |
| 29 | | 22 | | 22 | |

1 2 4 5 6 7 8 8 9

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EPI

LOR BEN

ATLID

♥ TBSU

♥ LAGISN

UTJ

♥ EPTA

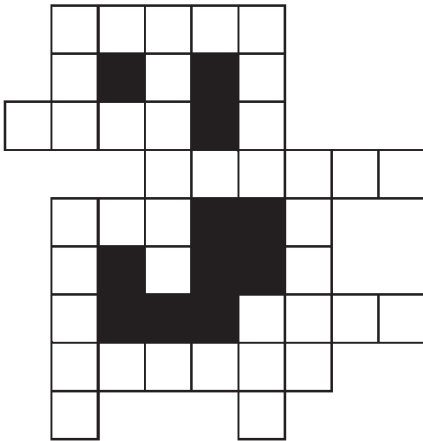
♥ LEPUS

♥ ATB

DUTSLE

IGJON

♥ TSOP



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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