



NEWSBRIEFS

SISD's arts

The Socorro Independent School District was one of 14 school districts in the state recently awarded the Texas Thespians Premier Communities for Theatre Education Award. The award recognizes and honors school districts that provide theater programs with the resources to achieve above standard, as rooted in the Educational Theatre Association's Opportunity to Learn Standards, Texas Theatre Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts (TEKS), and support of International Thespian Society Troupe involvement. "We are honored to be recognized by Texas Thespians for our commitment to providing our students a high-quality fine arts education," said SISD Fine Arts Director Armando Martinez. "This award validates Socorro ISD's dedication to offering students ample opportunities to showcase their talents in the performing arts across the region and beyond."

— Christy Flores-Jones

The Primary

the New Hampshire held the first primary election in the U.S. on January 23, and the state's primary having predicted 82% of past Republican nominees, the personal finance website WalletHub compared the Granite State's demographic characteristics and public opinions with those of the U.S. to determine *How New Hampshire Voters Resemble U.S. Demographics in 2024*. Our data set of 22 key measures includes sociodemographic, economic, educational and religious metrics as well as public stances on certain issues. 82% of New Hampshire-primary winners have won the Republican party nomination and 55% have won the Democratic party nomination. New Hampshire least resembles the U.S. in terms of race (41.10% similarity); religious composition (60.28% similarity); importance of religion in one's life (64.00% similarity); and wealth gap (76.90% similarity). New Hampshire most resembles the U.S. in terms of the average workweek length (99.74% similarity); gender (99.20% similarity); unemployment rate (98.90% similarity); and party affiliation among adults (96.00% similarity). Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/new-hampshire-us-resemblance/18589/> for the full report.

— Diana Polk

Economy size means large in laundry detergent and small in automobiles.

— Quips & Quotes

Primary voters to decide who runs for government posts in November

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Last day to register to vote in the upcoming primary elections is February 5.

In the March 5 primary election, El Paso County voters will be narrowing candidates for elected offices within the Democratic and Republican parties. The candidate who wins more than half of the votes in a race will face candidates from other parties in the November general election.

Primary voters will decide whom they trust to run the government successfully. If no candidate gets a majority of votes in a race, the top two vote-getters will head to a May 28 primary runoff election.

The Green and Libertarian parties select their candidates through a series of local conventions beginning March 12 and a state convention that each party needs to announce by then. In Texas, voters can only vote in one party's primary and runoff or in a third party's convention.

In El Paso County, numerous candidates have announced that they will seek office for judicial and law enforcement elected seats. The 2024 primary elections will see several competitive races in law enforcement and judicial circles, including for El Paso County district attorney, El Paso County sheriff, El Paso County attorney, and the 65th District Court judicial seat.

Voters in the Democratic Primary will decide 17 local races, while the majority of the voters casting ballots in the Republican Primary will not have any locally contested races.

The local Republican ballot will only feature two contested races, and those are for a congressional district and a state representative district that stretches from San Antonio to El Paso. The other local Republican races are unopposed, including for district attorney.

The local Democrat ballot will feature several races with multiple candidates, including the sheriff's race with five candidates, the district attorney race with three candidates and a state representative race with four candidates.

The Republican candidates who will face off in the U.S. representative, District 23 primary election include Incumbent Tony Gonzalez going against challengers Frank Lopez, Victor Avila, Julie Clark, and Brandon Herrera. And in the State representative, District 74 race will be Robert Garza versus John McLeon.

Republicans running unopposed in March are Bill Hicks, El Paso County district attorney; Irene Armendariz Jackson, U.S. representative, District 16; Minera Torres Shelton, county sheriff; Claudia Rodriguez, county commissioner, Precinct 1; and Osvaldo Carrasco Jr., county constable, Precinct 4.

Facing opposition in the Democratic Primary are Incumbent Congressional District 16 Representative Veronica Escobar, who is being challenged by Leeland White. In Congressional District 23, Lee Bausiner is running against S. Limon.

Democrats seeking the district attorney's office are Nancy Casas, Alma Trejo, and James Montoya. For the county attorney's office, candidates are Christina Sanchez and Sergio Saldivar.

And running for county sheriff are Ryan Urrutia, Oscar Ugarte, Robert "Bobby" Flores, Raul Mendiola, and Michael P. Gonzales. And Democrats running for county tax assessor-collector are Ruben P. Gonzalez (incumbent)

versus Art Lujan Seelig.

Democrats in the county commissioner's race, Precinct 1, are Jackie Arroyo Butler against Pete Faraone. In the county commissioner, Precinct 3, race, the incumbent Iliana Holguin is being challenged by Virginia Rodriguez.

Democrats in the State representative, District 77 race, are Alexsandra Anello, Vincent M. Perez, Norma Chavez, and Homer Reza. The 65th District Court candidates are Omar Carmona and Selina Saenz. In the 383rd District Court, running are Lyda Ness Garcia and Mike Herrera. In 388th District Court, candidates are Marlene Gonzalez and Joy Degenhart. The County Criminal Court 1 candidates are Linda Noelle Estrada and Linda Susan Perez.

Democrat candidates for Constable, Precinct 1, are Frank Almada, Saul Gutierrez, Andrea "Andi" Baca, and Tony San Roman. Constable, Precinct 2, candidates are Jeremiah Martin Haggerty and Danny Zamora. Constable, Precinct 3, candidates are Hector Bernal and Eileen Lopez.



— Photo courtesy El Paso County

SHOO-IN – Current El Paso County District Attorney Bill Hicks, above, is unopposed in the upcoming Republican Primary. He was appointed to the office by Governor Gregg Abbott in 2022. Meanwhile, the race among Democrats is expected to be competitive as multiple candidates announced their bids for the top law enforcement position, District Attorney for the 34th Judicial District which oversees El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson counties.

Constable, Precinct 4, candidates are Luis "Louie" Aguilar and Robert M. Lopez. Constable, Precinct 5, candidates are Manny Lopez and Rito Rubio. Constable, Precinct 6, candidates are Rafael Chavez III and Javier Garcia.

Democrat primary candidates running unopposed include Cesar Blanco, state senator, District 29; Claudia Ordaz, state representative, District 79; Joe Moody, state representative, District 78; Mary Gonzalez, state representative, District 75; Eddie Morales, state representative, District 74; Bill Moody, 34th District Court; Annabel "Anna" Perez, 41st District Court; Paty Baca, 346th District Court; Patrick Garcia, 384th District Court; Samuel Medrano Jr., 409th District Court; and Sergio Enriquez, 448th District Court.

Also running unopposed in the Democratic primary are Lisa Soto, 8th Court of Appeals Place 2; Gina Palafox, 8th Court of Appeals Place 3; Maria Salas Mendoza, 8th Court of Appeals Chief Justice; Diane Navarette, Criminal District Court 1; Carlos Carrasco, County Criminal Court 3; Jessica

Primary Voting Dates

- Feb. 5 – Last day to register to vote;
- Feb. 20 – Early voting starts;
- Feb. 23 – Last day counties can receive mail-in ballot requests;
- March 1 – Early voting ends; and
- March 5 – Election Day.

Confession of a public-health expert

The public-health officials are getting around to admitting the fallibility of public-health officials.

The former head of the National Institutes of Health during the pandemic and current science advisor to President Joe Biden, Francis Collins, has noted that he and his colleagues demonstrated an “unfortunate” narrow-mindedness.

This is a welcome, if belated, confession.

Not too long ago, anyone who said that epidemiologists might be overly focused on disease prevention to the exclusion of other concerns – you know, like jobs, mental health and schooling – were dismissed as reckless nihilists who didn’t care if their fellow citizens died en masse.

Now, Francis Collins has weighed in to tell us that many of the people considered close-minded and anti-science during COVID-19 were advancing

an appropriately balanced view of the trade-offs inherent in the pandemic response.

“If you’re a public-health person and you’re trying to make a decision, you have this very narrow view of what the right decision is,” Collins said at an event earlier this year that garnered attention online the last couple of days.

This is not a new insight, or a surprising one. It’s a little like saying Bolsheviks will be focused on nationalizing the means of production over everything else, or a golf pro will be monomaniacal about the proper mechanics of a swing.

The problem comes, of course, when public health, or “public health,” becomes the only guide to public policy. Then, you are giving a group of obsessives, who have an important role to play within proper limits, too much power in a way that is bound to

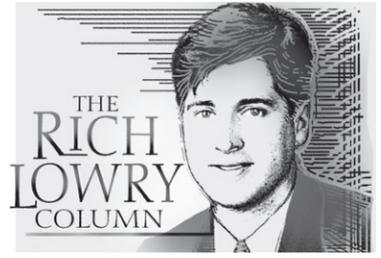
distort your society.

Francis Collins, again: “So you attach infinite value to stopping the disease and saving a life. You attach zero value to whether this actually totally disrupts people’s lives, ruins the economy, and has many kids kept out of school in a way that they never quite recover from.”

True and well said, but that’s an awful lot of very important things to attach “zero value” to.

He also admitted to having an urban bias, driven by working out of Washington D.C. and thinking almost exclusively about New York City and other major cities.

If Francis Collins and his cohort got it wrong,



See LOWRY, Page 7

Socorro ISD holds ROBOCOM X; showcases tech, creativity

By Celeste Reyes
Special to the Courier

SOCORRO ISD – Sun Ridge Middle School earned the top team Inspire Award at ROBOCOM X, the Socorro Independent School District’s annual robotics competition that took place Jan. 6 in the main gym at Pebble Hills High School.

First through third place team winners also emerged at the competition in three categories -- innovation, robot games and robot design.

During the competition, students took on the robotics challenge going head to head with their robots that they programmed and trained with during months of work in the classroom and after school.

The competition allowed elementary and middle school students to immerse themselves in real-world



– Photo courtesy Socorro ISD

2024 ROBOCOM X WINNERS – Inspire Award: Sun Ridge Middle School, ST34Mers; **Innovation:** 1st Place – Eastlake Middle School, Raven-Tech Robotics; 2nd Place – John Drugan School, Dragon Knights; and 3rd Place – Bill Sybert School, Showstopping Scorpions; **Robot Games:** 1st Place – Eastlake Middle School, RavenTech Robotics; 2nd Place – Capt. Walter E. Clarke Middle School, CVR; and 3rd Place – John Drugan School, DragonBots; **Robot Design:** 1st – Benito Martinez Elementary School, Robotgination; 2nd Place – Sun Ridge Middle School, ST34Mers; and 3rd Place – Dr. Sue A. Shook Elementary School, RoboRattlers.

science and technological challenges, as per FIRST LEGO League (FLL) rules.

The theme of the 10th annual districtwide robotics contest was “Masterpiece,” which challenged student teams to present projects that showcase how technology and art can intertwine to support hobbies.

“We’re really excited to be celebrating our 10th year of

ROBOCOM,” said Stephanie Carrasco, coordinator for Advanced Academics in SISD. “Today’s focus is on the integration of the arts, hobbies, and technology and how together they can be combined to increase the enjoyment for others. We

are happy to have the whole community come together to support our kids and give them opportunities to move forward in STEM.”

More than 40 teams from SISD elementary, PK-8

See SISD, Page 4

1973 51 Years 2024 WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

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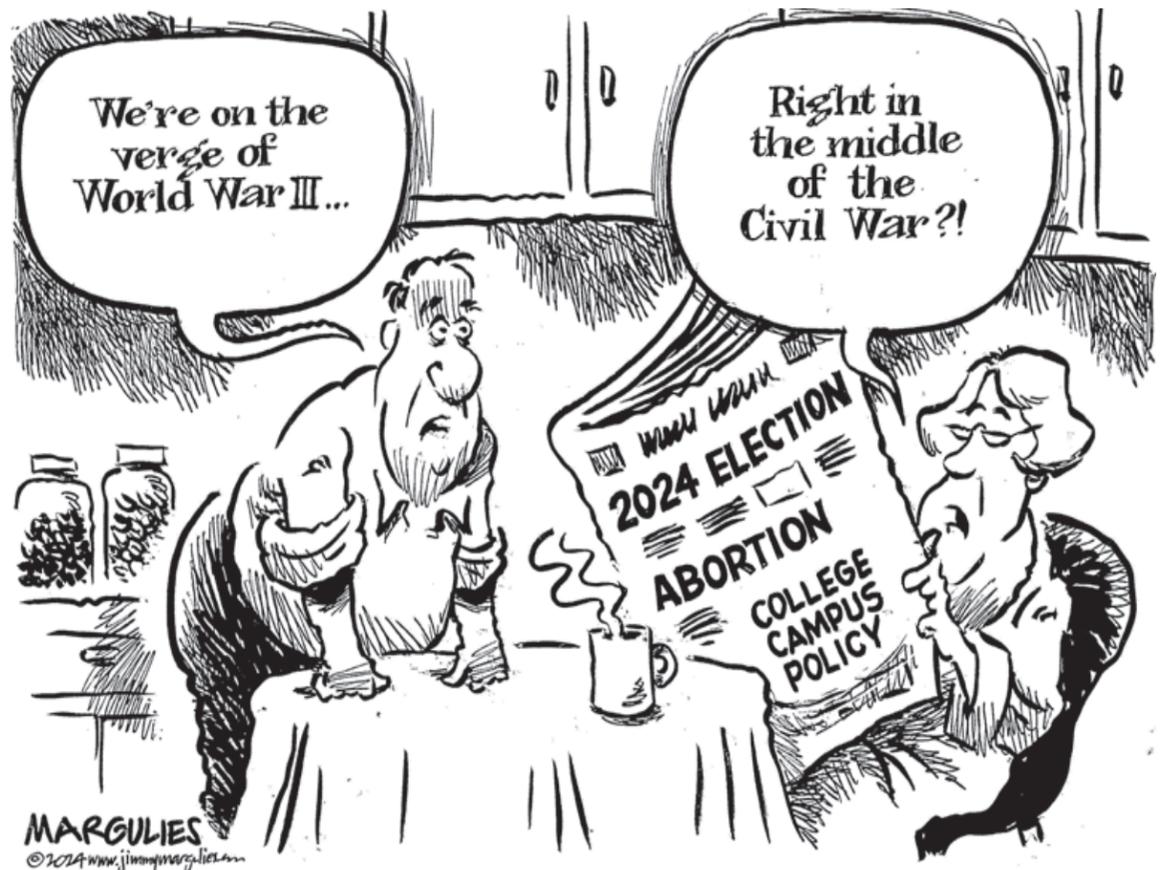


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DEA moves on fentanyl

By Carlos A. Briano
Special to the Courier

NATION – In 2023, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration marked its 50th anniversary as the only federal agency dedicated to fighting deadly drugs and drug-related violence. This milestone celebrated a half century of dedication to fighting drug trafficking in the United States and around the world, which threatens the public safety, health, and national security of our country. DEA also ushered in a transformation of DEA's organization and strategy to meet this extraordinary moment in time as the United States confronts the deadliest drug threat our country has ever faced – fentanyl.

Today, fentanyl is the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45. In calendar year 2023, DEA seized more than 77 million fentanyl pills and nearly 12,000 pounds of fentanyl powder. This is the most fentanyl seized by DEA in a single year. It amounts to more than 386 million deadly doses of fentanyl – enough to kill every American.

The DEA El Paso Field

Division, which covers West Texas and New Mexico, seized 1.5 million fentanyl pills and nearly 165 pounds of fentanyl powder in calendar year 2023.

The fentanyl we see today is even deadlier than before. Fentanyl pills today are more potent. DEA laboratory testing in 2023 showed that 7 out of 10 pills tested contain a potentially deadly dose of fentanyl. This is an increase from 4 out of 10 pills in 2021 and 6 out of 10 pills in 2022. A potentially deadly dose is considered just two milligrams of fentanyl, which is approximately the amount that fits on the tip of a pencil.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is predicting record numbers of drug poisonings for 2023, with their latest estimate for the 12-month period ending June 2023 at 112,323 American lives lost. Nearly 70% of these drug poisonings are from fentanyl.

The DEA has responded to this unprecedented threat with unprecedented action. The mission is to save American lives by defeating the two cartels that are responsible for

See DEA, Page 4

Election

From Page 1

Vasquez, County Criminal Court 4; and Angie Sommers, Constable Precinct 7.

Additionally,

Woodcraft will be running unopposed as a Libertarian candidate in the Commissioners Court Precinct 1 race.

To qualify to vote in Texas, the applicant must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the county

where he or she submitted the voter registration application and be at least 18 years old on Election Day. For more information on the upcoming primary elections, visit the El Paso County Election Department website.

San Elizario Independent School District Public Notice of Meeting

San Elizario Independent School District will hold a public hearing to discuss the District's 2022-2023 Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR). The meeting will be held at 4:00 P.M. on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 in the San Elizario ISD Central Office Board Room, 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd., San Elizario, Texas, 79849.

The public is invited to attend. For more information, call (915) 872-3900.

Junta Pública

Distrito escolar independiente de San Elizario celebrará una audiencia pública para discutir el informe de rendimiento académico 2022-2023 Texas del distrito (TAPR). La reunión se celebrará a las 4:00 p.m. el martes, 8 de febrero de 2024 en la sala de juntas de San Elizario ISD, 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd., San Elizario, Texas, 79849.

El público está invitado a asistir. Para obtener más información, llame al (915) 872-3900.

WTCC: 01-25-24

www.wtxcc.com

LEGALS

PUBLIC NOTICE

El Paso County Emergency Services District #1

Notice of Location

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

Katherine Ames
Administrator

WTCC: 01-25-24

PUBLIC NOTICE

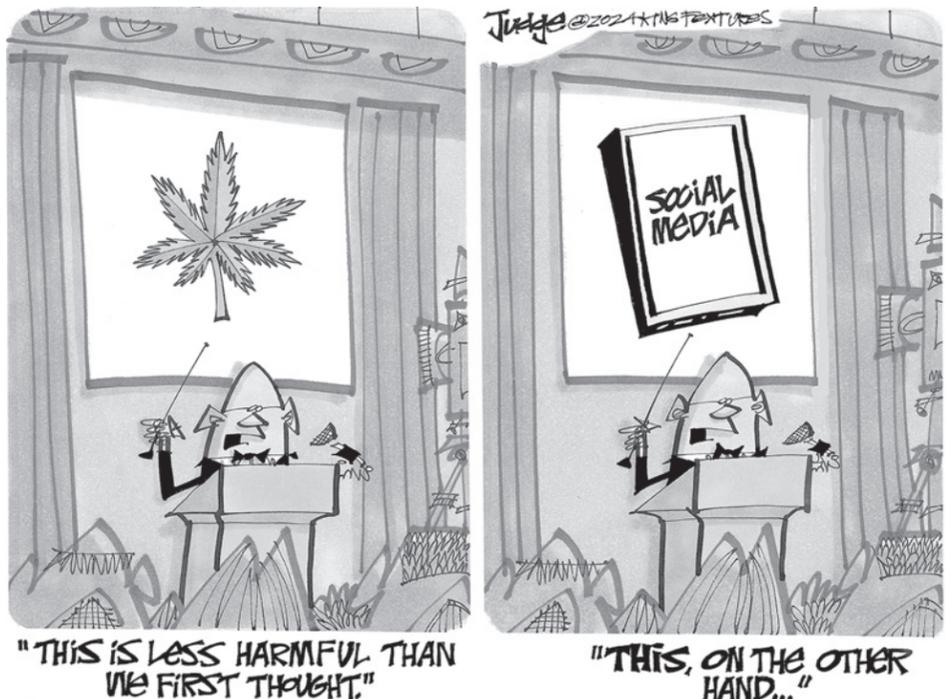
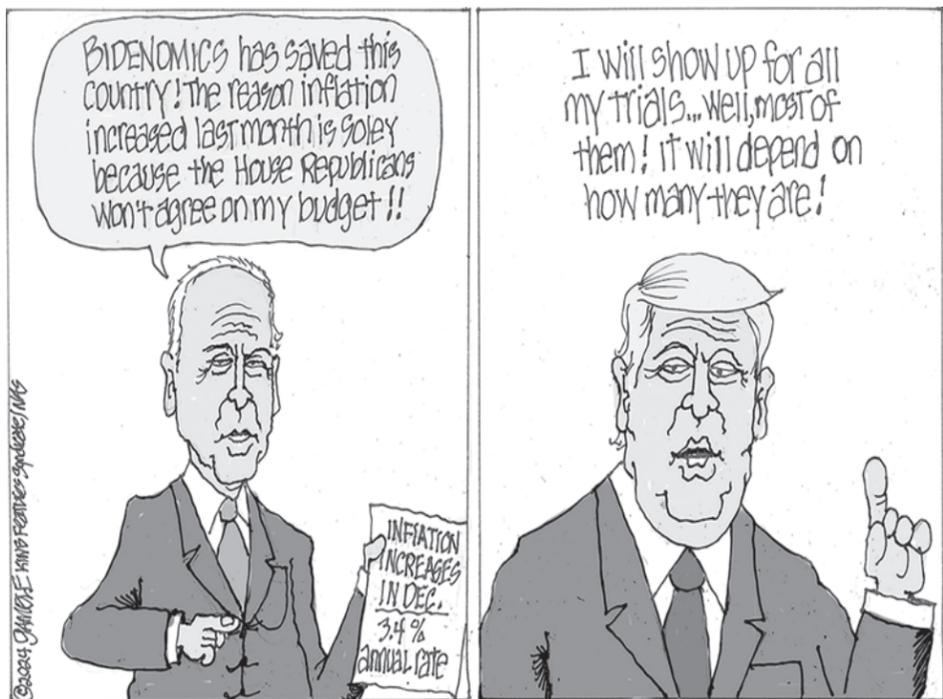
El Paso County Emergency Services District #2

Notice of Location

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

Mariana Navarrete
District Administrator

WTCC: 01-25-24



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SISD

From Page 2

and middle schools participated, and all high schools had students supporting the event serving as referees and contest starters. Different teams competed in the six rounds of the competition.

Twenty-five teams from ROBOCOM X have advanced to the regional competition hosted by UTEP on Jan. 27. The teams will have the opportunity to be invited to different invitationals across the country and/or advance to the state competition.

DEA

From Page 3

the vast majority of fentanyl that is flooding our country: the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco Cartel. The DEA has built a new strategic layer of Counter Threat Teams to focus on each cartel and the illicit finance networks that fund them both. These Counter Threat Teams draw on the intelligence from our 334 offices around the world to map the cartels' global networks and to identify targets for investigation and prosecution.

While the cartels' operations are based in Mexico, the DEA has identified more than 50 additional countries where these criminal networks operate. The DEA has also traced the cartels' global

supply chain around the world. The cartels purchase chemicals from companies in China, mass produce the fentanyl in Mexico, and then traffic and distribute finished fentanyl widely throughout the United States. In 2023, the DEA took actions to disrupt every step of this fentanyl supply chain – from bringing the first-ever charges against Chinese chemical companies and their owners for supplying precursor chemicals, to charging and extraditing leaders, enforcers, and associates of the cartels in Mexico, to tracking down the criminal organizations and individuals in our communities responsible for the last mile of distribution of fentanyl on our streets and on social media.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Fireflies are the most efficient producers of light in the world.

- Tong Aonan solved 840 Rubik's cubes, then used them to create a portrait of his crush and declare his love for her. Sadly, she rejected him

- A runaway tortoise in Putnam County, Florida, covered a span of five miles in three and a half years before ending up at Florida's Wildest Animal Rescue, where a staff member was able to determine its identity and reunite it with its owners.

- Snake Venom, the world's strongest beer, has an alcohol level of 67.5%.

- Breton, a great white shark, created a self-portrait of sorts with its GPS tracker on its travels through the Atlantic Ocean. What made the mapped outline remarkable was its resemblance to a great white shark!

- Anuptaphobia is the fear of being single forever.

- Sixteen-year-old Titanic survivor Katherine Gilnagh didn't understand the ship's dire situation until she made it safely to New York, but thought that being put into lifeboats and picked up by the Carpathia was part of the voyage.

- Asian hair grows 30% faster than Caucasian hair.

- The soft drink Mountain Dew was created in Tennessee in the 1940s as a mixer for whiskey, hence its name (a slang term for moonshine).

- A bookstore in Australia wraps its volumes in paper with short descriptions attached so potential buyers won't "judge a book by its cover."

Thought for the Day: "How wonderful is it that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

– Anne Frank

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**Clint Independent School District
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance
Governmental Funds
For the Year Ended August 31, 2023**

Data Control Codes	10 General Fund	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:			
5700 Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 23,236,809	\$ 8,459,968	\$ 31,696,777
5800 State Program Revenues	90,046,552	7,500,677	97,547,229
5900 Federal Program Revenues	15,023,360	19,663,887	34,687,247
5020 Total Revenues	128,306,721	35,624,532	163,931,253
EXPENDITURES:			
Current:			
0011 Instruction	65,776,069	12,719,049	78,495,118
0012 Instructional Resources and Media Services	1,141,874	11,550	1,153,424
0013 Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	2,105,388	3,963,146	6,068,534
0021 Instructional Leadership	2,739,337	1,322,380	4,061,717
0023 School Leadership	7,260,843	471,318	7,732,161
0031 Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	3,576,253	1,505,446	5,081,699
0032 Social Work Services	211,598	4,098	215,696
0033 Health Services	1,380,926	131,854	1,512,780
0034 Student (Pupil) Transportation	4,217,762	175,288	4,393,050
0035 Food Services	10,181,792	131,827	10,313,619
0036 Extracurricular Activities	3,752,537	3,202	3,755,739
0041 General Administration	4,558,684	113,588	4,672,272
0051 Facilities Maintenance and Operations	15,681,216	903,055	16,584,271
0052 Security and Monitoring Services	1,940,397	208,549	2,148,946
0053 Data Processing Services	2,792,345	136,459	2,928,804
0061 Community Services	116,670	427,379	544,049
Debt Service:			
0071 Principal on Long-Term Liabilities	143,316	6,547,813	6,691,129
0072 Interest on Long-Term Liabilities	9,490	5,842,667	5,852,157
0073 Bond Issuance Cost and Fees	-	6,500	6,500
Capital Outlay:			
0081 Facilities Acquisition and Construction	3,896,197	1,284,984	5,181,181
Intergovernmental:			
0099 Other Intergovernmental Charges	424,510	-	424,510
6030 Total Expenditures	131,907,204	35,910,152	167,817,356
1200 Net Change in Fund Balances	(3,600,483)	(285,620)	(3,886,103)
0100 Fund Balance – September 1 (Beginning)	84,684,288	5,686,205	90,370,493
3000 Fund Balance – August 31 (Ending)	\$ 81,083,805	\$ 5,400,585	\$ 86,484,390

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

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TOURER ONENESS OOZIER
APPEALBOARDS TUNE
LION ANISE TWINDCON
GENT AUR FIRMHANDSHAKE
CLASSA ERR TALIA
ENSCONCE SNO SPAMMER
RAINMAKER MOUNTAIN
GENOA TOAT GELT NERO
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CryptoQuip Answer

If a drill sergeant commands soldiers to rise to their feet, I'd call that a standing order.

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Moments in time
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Jan. 22, 2006, Evo Morales became Bolivia's first indigenous president, with a primary focus on fighting poverty and reducing the influence of transnational corporations. As more than half of the country's population identified as indigenous at the time, political analysts drew comparisons with the election of Nelson Mandela to the South African presidency in 1994.

• On Jan. 23, 1986, the first musical artists were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, including Elvis Presley, James Brown and Ray Charles. Generally, the number of inductees each year ranges from about a half-dozen to a dozen.

• On Jan. 24, 1908, the first Boy Scout troop was organized by cavalry officer Lieutenant General Robert Baden-Powell in England, who had also written a book called "Scouting for Boys." Two years later, Baden-Powell went on to organize the Girl Guides as a separate entity.

• On Jan. 25, 2005, more than 300 people died in a stampede at the Mandher Devi Temple in India during the annual Kalubai Jatra pilgrimage, which takes place during the first full moon of January and is marked by animal sacrifices to the goddess Kalubai. The pilgrimage attracts over 350,000 Hindus every year.

• On Jan. 26, 2014, two white "Peace" doves released by Pope Francis were attacked by a seagull and crow shortly after they were set free. Thousands of people witnessed the attacks, as they had been observing the Pope's Angelus prayer.

• On Jan. 27, 1944, following the loss of hundreds of thousands of Russian lives, the siege of Leningrad was finally broken after 872 days, during which German forces had allowed no food or medical supplies to enter the country.

• On Jan. 28, 1917, U.S. forces gave up searching for Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa after nearly a year, following his massacre of 16 American citizens at Santa Isabel in northern Mexico and another 17 U.S. citizens in Columbus, New Mexico. President Woodrow Wilson had sent U.S. forces into Mexico with orders to capture Villa dead or alive.

Salas-Armendariz is new AISD head nurse

By Adriana Candelaria
Special to the Courier

ANTHONY, TX – Anthony ISD is pleased to introduce Lorena Salas Armendariz as the new District Nurse. She has more than 20 years of experience working with patients of various socio-economic backgrounds and ages in private and public health settings. Salas-Armendariz is no stranger to the pivotal role of a school nurse. She has 11 years of prior experience working as a school nurse at the elementary and middle school level.

"Parents can trust that their

children are in the hands of a seasoned healthcare professional who understands the unique challenges and considerations of the school environment," said Superintendent Dr. Oscar A. Troncoso.

Before becoming a nurse, Salas-Armendariz also worked as a registered dental hygienist from 2002 to 2009.

She is fully bilingual in English and Spanish.

"I'm thrilled to start as the school nurse at Anthony ISD. I'm especially excited to meet all the students and staff," Salas-Armendariz said.

"I look forward to supporting the students'



– Photo courtesy Anthony ISD

HOME ROOM – Lorena Salas-Armendariz in the AISD Nurse's Office.

health and being a part of their Nursing from the University of Texas at El Paso in 2009. Salas-Armendariz obtained She took her post with her Bachelor of Science in Anthony ISD on Jan. 4, 2024.

Fabens Independent School District Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance Governmental Funds For the Year Ended August 31, 2023

Data	10			98
	General Fund	ESSER II Fund	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES				
5700 Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 3,071,464	\$ -	\$ 937,866	\$ 4,009,330
5800 State Program Revenues	20,040,392	-	1,578,948	21,619,340
5900 Federal Program Revenues	2,172,684	3,142,402	3,905,001	9,220,087
5020 Total Revenues	25,284,540	3,142,402	6,421,815	34,848,757
EXPENDITURES				
0011 Instruction	12,239,137	1,373,876	3,283,190	16,896,203
0012 Instructional Resources & Media Services	256,443	58,149	5,135	319,727
0013 Curriculum & Instructional Staff Development	133,921	52,991	72,065	258,977
0021 Instructional Leadership	455,409	379,828	330,250	1,165,487
0023 School Leadership	1,228,570	74,216	12,326	1,315,112
0031 Guidance, Counseling & Evaluation Services	973,514	26,525	262,908	1,262,947
0032 Social Work Services	-	131,827	19,189	151,016
0033 Health Services	315,183	109,483	10,249	434,915
0034 Student Transportation	599,000	33,727	-	632,727
0035 Food Services	1,551,955	46,160	-	1,598,115
0036 Extracurricular Activities	894,812	5,073	18,992	918,877
0041 General Administration	1,389,593	25,100	-	1,414,693
0051 Facilities Maintenance and Operations	2,870,659	283,503	119,165	3,273,327
0052 Security and Monitoring Services	353,781	390,607	45,060	789,448
0053 Data Processing Services	409,102	11,404	-	420,506
0061 Community Services	31,631	4,517	47,217	83,365
0071 Debt Service - Principal	44,315	-	1,468,000	1,512,315
0072 Debt Service - Interest	6,541	-	729,256	735,797
0073 Other Debt Service Fees	-	-	3,250	3,250
0081 Facilities Acquisition and Construction	331,664	135,416	-	467,080
0099 Other Intergovernmental Charges	45,035	-	-	45,035
6030 Total Expenditures	24,130,265	3,142,402	6,426,252	33,698,919
1100 Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	1,154,275	-	(4,437)	1,149,838
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)				
7915 Transfers In	-	-	24,838	24,838
8911 Transfers Out	(24,838)	-	-	(24,838)
7080 Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(24,838)	-	24,838	-
1200 Net Change in Fund Balance	1,129,437	-	20,401	1,149,838
0100 Fund Balance - Beginning	13,362,662	-	66,269	13,428,931
1300 Prior Period Adjustment	(230,621)	-	-	(230,621)
3000 Fund Balance - Ending	\$ 14,261,478	\$ -	\$ 86,670	\$ 14,348,148

For those that love consistency, I present the Dallas Cowboys

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Did you ever wake up on Christmas Morning, or sit alongside your family at your birthday party, and open that big gift with your name on it only to say the words, "oh, you shouldn't have."

And you really meant it. Or have you been excited for that first date with that person you'd been eyeing for weeks, only to realize as the night went on this person was a nightmare.

It's pretty upsetting when you're really looking forward to something great, only to be shocked and disappointed with the outcome.

Well, that's pretty much what it's like to be a Dallas Cowboys fan.

For years, the Cowboys have been one of the best teams in the NFL during the regular season. They always have some of the flashiest players, a good quarterback, they score a lot of points and are exciting to watch.

And then, for some reason, the playoffs come around and they look like they've never picked up a football before.

Year after year, Cowboys' fans have believed that this was the year. Just like this season.

The Dallas Cowboys fought hard to win the NFC East division and earn the second-seed in the playoffs. Well, it was mostly because the Philadelphia Eagles, who started the season 10-1, fell apart during the second half of the year.

Anyway, the Cowboys earned home field advantage in the playoffs and

played the last team to qualify for the postseason, the Green Bay Packers, who started their season 3-6.

So, it all looked like an easy win for Dallas. I mean, they couldn't fall apart in the playoffs again right? They were undefeated at home, averaging 37 points a game at home, beating their opponents by an average of 21 points at home.

How could they lose? I guess it can be summed up in three names, Aaron Jones, Jordan Love and Romeo Doubs.

El Paso's own Aaron Jones, who always kills the Cowboys, ran for 118 yards and scored three touchdowns. Love threw for 272 yards, three touchdowns and no interceptions while Doubs caught six passes for 151 yards and a touchdown.

Unbelievably, the Packers not only beat the Cowboys, but they embarrassed them, racing out to a 27-0 lead before winning it 48-32.

But the real question is, why do the Dallas Cowboys choke in the playoffs

every single year?

By now it's got to be a mental thing, right?

Dak Prescott had his best season as a pro, CeeDee Lamb was probably the best receiver in the league this season, Micah Parsons, DaRon Bland and the rest of the defense was as stingy as ever.

So what's the yearly problem? Everyone knows that the Cowboys haven't won a Super Bowl, haven't even been to a Super Bowl, since 1995.

How long ago was that? Bill Clinton was president, the O.J. Simpson trial was just starting and General Electric was bigger than Microsoft and Apple.

Since then, Dallas has had a lot of bad coaches, except for Bill Parcells, but they've had a lot of good players like Tony Romo, Dez Bryant, DeMarcus Ware, Terrell Owens, Ezekiel Elliott and so on, but they haven't even made it to the NFC championship game.

So let's look at current coach Mike McCarthy, who won a Super Bowl at Green Bay. He's led Dallas to three

straight 12-5 seasons, that's a great accomplishment.

McCarthy's 36 wins are only second to Andy Reid's 37. The only difference is that Reid and his Kansas City Chiefs have won two Super Bowls in that span. McCarthy hasn't even won two playoff games.

So is it McCarthy? Is it quarterback Dak Prescott? Is it defensive coordinator Dan Quinn? Is it owner Jerry Jones?

I guess the easiest answer is yes to all four.

Let's be completely honest, this team is close to being Super Bowl material. If not, we wouldn't have been so stunned at their loss to Green Bay. They need to get bigger up front to stop the run, they need better linebackers and they have to improve their own running game.

If they do that, next year at this time they will be in the playoffs and once again we'll feel like this is finally the year.

Just like two weeks ago.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Kittens versus senior cats

One of my easy-to-accomplish resolutions for 2024 was to adopt a kitten, maybe 2-3 months in age. After consulting the local humane society's website and seeing dozens of tiny cats listed, I paid a visit to the shelter's group kitten room.

Of course they were cute, swinging from the chandeliers, racing, climbing and tumbling. And of course they were completely uninterested in the humans in the room who were smiling and enjoying the chaos.

Giving the kittens time to wind down for naps, I made my way to one of the adult cat group rooms... wherein I was approached by not one, but two beautiful adult cats. I sat on the floor petting them as they milled around me, bumping me with their foreheads, purring, one of them reaching out with a soft paw to get my attention... and did I mention the purring? The intention of both was clear: You will get me out of this place and you will take me home.

I consulted the list of cat information posted on the wall. One was a boy, one was a girl. Both had been found on the streets, both unclaimed. And they were both 12 years old.

That was not at all what I had in mind.

I came home catless, and a week later I'm still undecided. Can I handle the potential expensive vet care for two older cats? And the possible need for pricey specialty cat food as they age even more? While living on Social Security when our annual increase for 2024 is a mere 3.2% and vet care has increased nearly 15%?

Owning a pet brings down our blood-pressure, reduces stress and keeps us active. It would seem that a senior human owning a senior pet would be a perfect match - except when it isn't because of the cost.

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LEGAL THRILLERS

- ACROSS**
- 1 Highest roll of a single die
 - 4 Peak in Thessaly
 - 8 Freaks out
 - 15 Subjective paper piece
 - 19 Never dying
 - 21 Kind of cherry named for its shape
 - 22 _sci. (coll. major)
 - 23 Scaled-down symphony group [1994]
 - 25 Mallorca, por ejemplo
 - 26 "King" primate
 - 27 Writer Ferber
 - 28 Anti-bias job agcy.
 - 29 Gown fabric
 - 30 Program interacting with a remote server [1993]
 - 34 Bygone times
 - 38 Nurtured
 - 39 Kids' song with French lyrics
 - 40 _to go (gung-ho)
 - 41 "It's ch-chilly!"
 - 42 Whimpered like a baby
 - 44 Place to disclose sins [2010]
 - 48 Coinage for something with no name
 - 53 Beginning on
 - 54 "To _ much is given..."
 - 55 Nantes' river
- DOWN**
- 1 Ailing
 - 2 Texter's "If you ask me"
 - 3 Mutant Marvel superhero
 - 4 Celestial ball
 - 5 Like a cold, hard gaze
 - 6 Manhattan eatery since 1927
 - 7 Isolated
 - 8 Ad _ committee
 - 9 Hatchet part
 - 10 Ram or ewe
 - 11 "The Fox and the Crow" storyteller
 - 12 Tabby's scratcher
 - 13 Bobby of hockey
 - 14 Venus Williams' org.
 - 15 Sedative drug
 - 16 Sticky little sheet

- 57 Sets of points on graphs
- 58 Shallowest Great Lake
- 60 Waltz or tango [1997]
- 63 Itinerant band member, say
- 66 State after wedlock
- 68 Having more seepage
- 69 Panels that may reverse decisions [2008]
- 71 Melody
- 72 Jungle roarer
- 73 Ouzo flavorer
- 74 Exact lookalike
- 76 Brand of rodent killer
- 80 Horse-man of myth
- 83 Greeting act conveying confidence [1991]
- 86 First-rate
- 88 Flub it up
- 89 Actress Shire
- 90 Plant snugly
- 94 _cone
- 95 Junk email sender
- 97 Samoan peak famous for trapping clouds [1995]
- 101 Italian port
- 102 Exactly
- 103 Money won in a game of dreidel
- 104 Claudius I's successor

- 108 Getting the job done
- 109 What the first word of each of seven answers in this puzzle is, when preceded by "The"
- 113 Stun with a charge
- 114 Canceled by crossing off
- 115 Revising, as text
- 116 Bishops' jurisdictions
- 117 Prescription amounts
- 118 Berlin article
- 119 Meadow

- 17 "Mama" Cass
- 18 Actress Wiest
- 20 Texter's "Yikes!"
- 24 Bolted to escape
- 29 Riyadh native
- 30 Sugar source
- 31 Shore flier
- 32 "Not yet sure what my answer is"
- 33 Director Joel or Ethan
- 34 Killer whale
- 35 Neighbor of Myanmar
- 36 Early James Bond foe
- 37 Not similar
- 41 Dust jacket write-up
- 42 Demi and Dudley
- 43 Departs
- 45 Cupcake flourish
- 46 That lady
- 47 Less spicy
- 49 Honey-coated Easter entree
- 50 Anderson of "WKRP in Cincinnati"
- 51 Cicero's "Lo!"
- 52 Cake layer
- 56 ICU workers
- 59 Actor Stephen
- 60 Iran's former name
- 61 Ball-shaped
- 62 Put on, as an outfit
- 63 After-bath powder
- 64 Andy Taylor's boy
- 65 Sitting atop
- 66 Suffix with ball
- 67 Innocent types
- 70 President before

Super Crossword

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							61	62							
63	64	65					66	67					68								
69							70						71								
72							73					74	75			76	77	78	79		
80							81	82			83					85					
							86				87					89					
90	91	92	93								94				95	96					
97									98	99				100							
101									102					103				104	105	106	107
108																		112			
113																					
116																					

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

the likes of Florida governor Ron DeSantis and Georgia governor Brian Kemp – and the renegade scientists and doctors who supported their more modulated approach to the pandemic – got it right.

It's always worth remembering that the pandemic was a once-in-hundred-years event and initially, we had very little information and very few means to prevent and treat the disease. It is inevitable that decision-makers are going to make mistakes in such a crisis, and adjust as they go.

That said, the scientists who were in positions of authority could have shown more modesty. They could have welcomed debate. They could have distanced themselves from – or better yet, denounced – the campaign of moral bullying carried out in their name.

Many people wanted to outsource their thinking to the experts and then, with a great sense of righteousness, rely on arguments from authority to demonize their opponents

and shut down every policy dispute.

Francis Collins, one of the most eminent scientists in the country and a subtle thinker who dissents from the orthodoxy that science and faith are incompatible, would have been an ideal voice to counter the propaganda campaigns that aimed to suppress unwelcome views and even unwelcome facts. Instead, he stuck with his tribe.

It's progress, though, to realize that scientists, too, are susceptible to group-think, recency bias and parochialism; that the experts may know an incredible amount about a very narrow area, while knowing little to nothing about broader matters of greater consequence; that point of views considered dangerous lunacy may, over time, prove out, so they shouldn't be censored or otherwise quashed.

It's not just that the scientists acted like blinkered scientists during the pandemic; they tolerated, or participated in, agitprop that was inimical to the scientific spirit and to good public policy.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. ©2024 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Hot flashes return after operation, cancer

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 81 and had a thyroidectomy in 2017. My whole thyroid gland was removed. I also had a little bit of cancer. I have started to get hot flashes again. I had originally been on thyroid medicine before and after surgery. Then I was put on levothyroxine and decided to try NP Thyroid. I was doing better on NP Thyroid, then started getting the hot flashes again. At this point, for several reasons, I would rather stay on NP Thyroid for the time being. I was wondering if there is anything I can take for hot flashes? Years ago, in my 50s, I took estrogen, which helped, but this is a different time. I have spoken with other people who are also having hot flashes again. – Anon.



Hot flashes are common – about 75% of women in North America will experience them around the time of menopause. It's not uncommon for hot flashes to go away, then return, but I personally haven't seen them recur after 30 or so years. I'd be concerned that there may be another cause for them, which brings me to your thyroid.

Elevated levels of thyroid hormone can cause sensations very similar to hot flashes. One reason that I, along with most endocrinologists, recommend against products like NP Thyroid is because most of those products come from pigs. There are two thyroid hormones: thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3). Humans have a different ratio of T3 and T4 than pigs do, with T4 getting converted into the active form, T3. T3 is then quickly broken down, so if it's used, it needs to be dosed twice daily.

As a result, if a person takes NP Thyroid, their thyroid levels are too high during one part of the day and too low during another. This isn't good for anyone; the "high times" not only cause hot flashes, but also predispose people to atrial fibrillation. But it's particularly a problem in a person with a history of thyroid cancer, where we want the thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH, the hormone in the pituitary gland that regulates the activity of the thyroid gland) to be on the lower side.

If the thyroid blood levels get low in the afternoon/evening when the T3 in NP Thyroid is gone, that can theoretically increase the risk of cancer recurrence as the TSH rises in response. So, in my opinion, you should be on levothyroxine, not NP Thyroid. (I do have a handful of patients who take levothyroxine and also take T3 twice daily. Some people are unable to convert T4 to T3 efficiently.)

Estrogen is the most effective treatment for hot flashes, but it increases the risk of heart disease when used by women more than 10 years away from menopause. I don't normally prescribe it to a woman in her 80s. However, there is a new medication called fezolinetant (Veozah), which is highly effective and reduced hot flashes by 93% in a trial. My only patient on it so far has reported 100% cessation of her hot flashes.

There are other rare causes of hot flashes, including tumors that secrete substances, such as carcinoid tumors, and tumors that secrete adrenalin-like hormones (pheochromocytomas).

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. ©2024 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION
of Texas

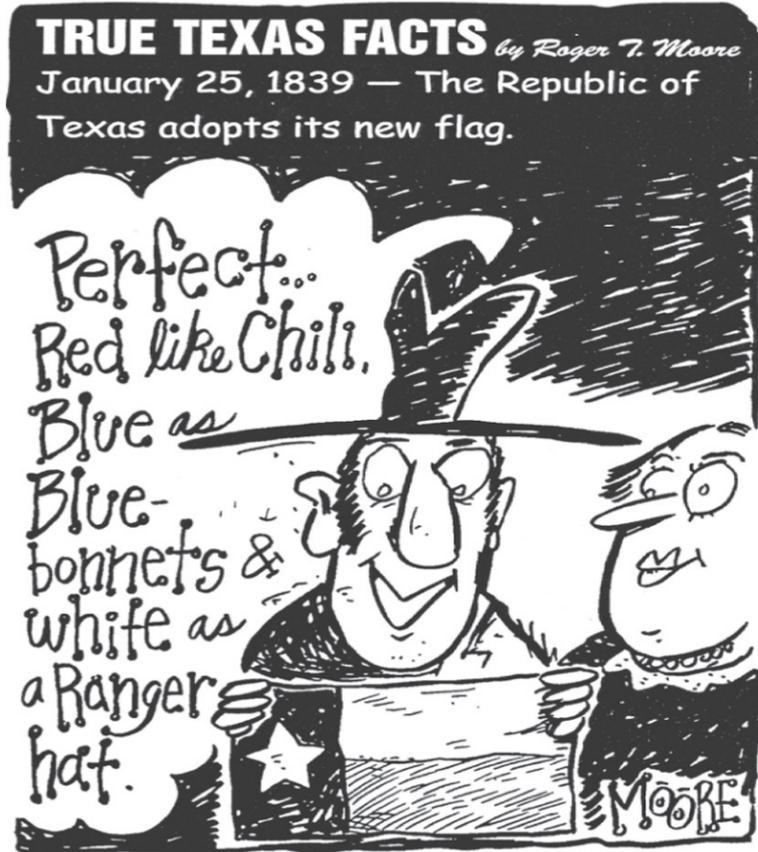
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VA to help avoid foreclosures



by Freddy Groves

Veterans with VA-backed mortgages who are in danger of facing foreclosure just got help from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The VA is asking mortgage servicers to do two things:

- Pause foreclosures through May 31, 2024, of VA-guaranteed loans, and
- Extend the COVID-19 Refund Modification program through May 31, 2024.

During the first step, veterans and the VA will work with those mortgage services to work out solutions.

For the second step, they are going to extend the COVID-19 Refund Modification program so veterans can obtain a zero-interest loan with deferred payments via the VA. Those loans will cover any missed payments and change the loan to come up with affordable payments during

the extension period.

During this extension, the VA is going to launch the VA Servicing Purchase (VASP) program. In that program the VA will purchase from mortgage servicers any defaulted VA loans, change the loans and put them in a VA-owned portfolio.

The goal, of course, is to keep veterans in their homes.

Meanwhile, if you're having trouble making mortgage payments, call 877-827-3702 to talk to a loan tech. There are a number of ways they can help you, including loan modification, repayment plans and getting more time to catch up on missed payments.

Or go to the VA Housing Assistance website (www.va.gov/housing-assistance). On that page, click on "Learn more about how to get help to avoid foreclosure." Read the whole page. You'll see information on being careful of offers to help you with your back payments (it might not be genuine), getting counseling help and the six ways you can avoid foreclosure. Note the part

about whether you would have to pay back your loan depending on when you closed on the loan (before or after Jan. 1, 1990).

At the bottom of that page note the advisory from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau about how to spot a foreclosure scam. Getting caught up in one of those is the last thing you need while trying to deal with a potential foreclosure.

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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: V equals L

FA J SQFVV ZBQYBJWR KCGGJWSZ
ZCVSFBQZ RC QFZB RC REBFQ
ABBR, F'S KJVV REJR J
ZRJWSFWY CQSBQ.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging

Answer Page 4

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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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

	÷		+		4
+		×		+	
	÷		+		11
-		÷		÷	
	-		×		2
10		2		5	

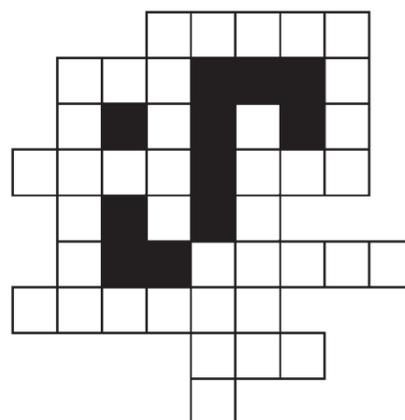
1 2 3 4 6 7 8 9 9

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By: rj johnson

- XSE
- TANUPE
- NUMSE
- MALO
- ATEGEM
- ♥RKI
- ♥NISP
- CLEEX
- ♥RMA
- OMESIP
- NEGIK
- MSKU



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.



• If you lose a contact lens, you can try turning off the lights and using a flashlight held perpendicular to the floor. They sort of reflect the light, and as you move the beam of light across the floor, it will flash. This has helped me many times. I am a little clumsy when I put my contacts in. Thanks! – R.E. in South Carolina

• I have a medicine that I take with every meal. Surprisingly, it's difficult to remember whether I took it already when I'm eating on the go or out with friends. I keep small containers in my purse labeled "lunch" and "dinner," each with one pill inside. Before I eat, I look in the container. If a pill is there, it means I forgot to take it. Then I refill the container when I get home and it's ready for next time.

• Last year, I had a large wall calendar at the office. It was a wet-erase calendar with the year on one side and a "planning space" on the back. When the year was over, I needed a new calendar, but the blank side was still usable. I took it home and cut it to fit inside my kitchen cabinets. I have a handy space to jot notes and such. – R.W. in Colorado

• This is a fun game for kids to play with cookies: Stamp the alphabet letters into the top of mini cookies, or use a kebab skewer to write words. Then let the kids spell out their name or make sentences or silly phrases. – B.D. in Mississippi

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

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