



NEWSBRIEFS

Football cities

With Super Bowl LVIII just days away, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its Super Bowl LVIII By The Numbers infographic together with its report on 2024's *Best & Worst Cities for Football Fans*, as well as expert commentary. To determine the best places for enjoying America's favorite sport, WalletHub compared more than 240 U.S. cities with at least one college or professional football team based on 21 key metrics. The data set ranges from the number of NFL and college football teams to stadium capacity to fan engagement. El Paso was rated 173 in the report. Make sure to check out the infographic for cool stats about the biggest sporting event of the year. Best vs. worst:

- The Kansas City Chiefs' performance level, is 2.6 times better than the performance level of the Carolina Panthers.

- Glendale, Arizona, has the lowest average ticket price for an NFL game, which is 1.7 times less expensive than in Las Vegas, the city with the highest.

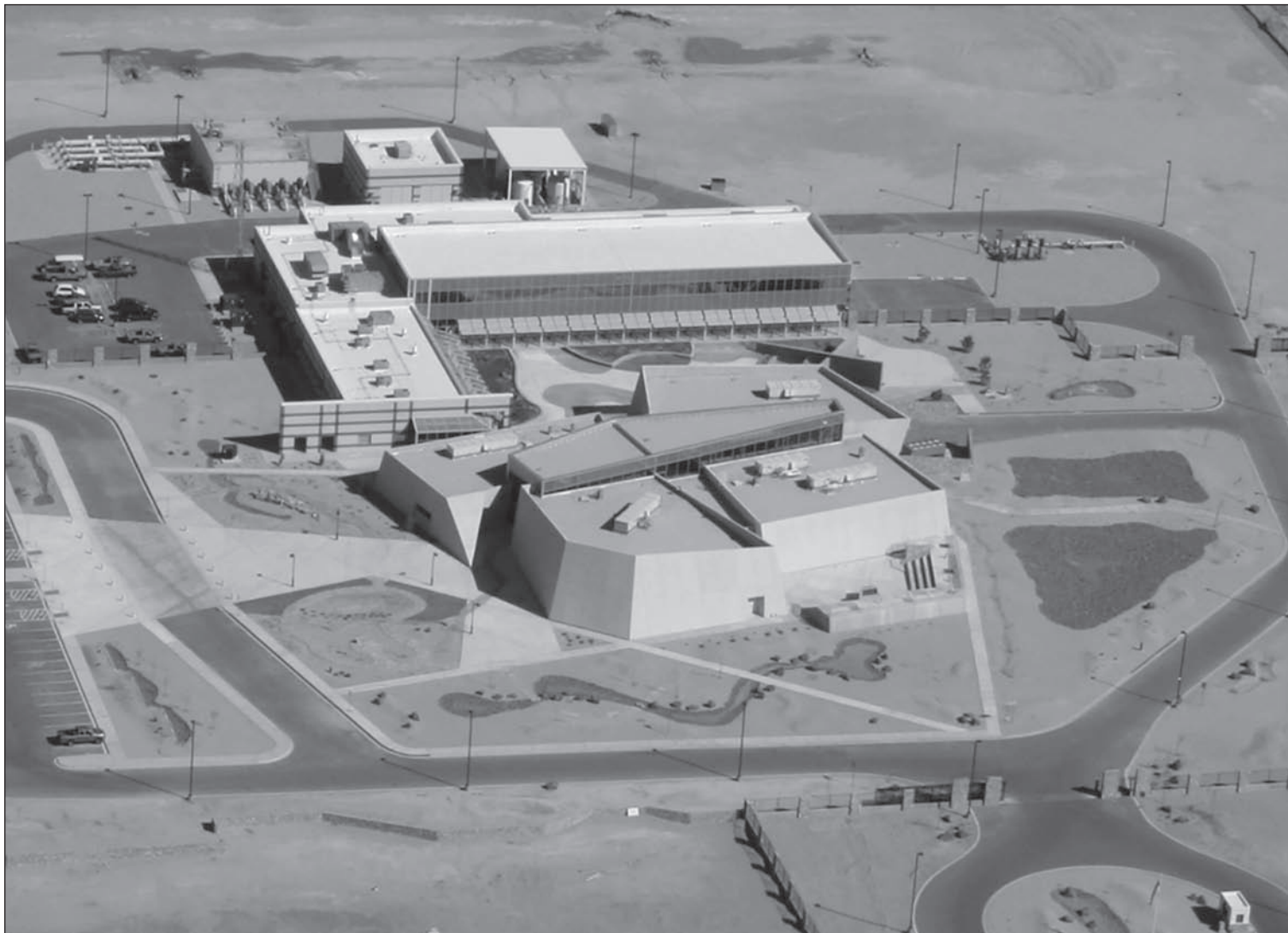
- Green Bay, Wisconsin, has the highest engagement of fans for an NFL team, which is 71.6 times higher than in New York, the city with the lowest.

"Football fans are intensely loyal to their favorite teams, especially when a team comes from their hometown. Deciding the best football cities ultimately comes down to a combination of how successful the cities' teams are, how easy it is for spectators to enjoy games, and how dedicated the local fanbase is. The best city for football fans is Pittsburgh, largely due to the success of its NFL team, the Steelers. The Steelers have won six Super Bowls, tied for the most wins with the New England Patriots. Pittsburgh has some of the most loyal and most engaged football fans in the country, too. Many fans gather to watch both NFL and NCAA games at Acrisure Stadium, which seats over

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Troubles are like babies – the more you nurse them, the bigger they grow.

– Quips & Quotes



– Image courtesy El Paso Public Service Board

WATER WORKHORSE – Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant, above, located off Montana Street in El Paso County's east side, filters underground brackish water and produces about 27.5 million gallons of potable water each day.

Water bills to increase to pay for desalination plant expansion

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – For more than 15 years the largest inland desalination plant in the world, the Kay Bailey Hutchison desalination plant in El Paso County's eastside, has been converting tens of millions of gallons of brackish groundwater that's too salty to drink into potable freshwater.

And as the future of the El Paso region depends on an abundant and affordable supply of water, El Paso water utility officials are planning to convert millions of gallons more of the salty groundwater that pools in an underground aquifer into drinkable tap water.

Since 2007, El Paso's water utilities service has operated the largest inland water desalination plant in the world, which supplies around 5 percent of the roughly 40 billion gallons of water that area residents use annually.

Now, the utility is planning to boost the average household water bills by \$3.54 per month starting this year, and it plans to use some of that extra cash from customers to fund a big expansion at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant. The project would boost production capacity up to 33

million gallons of potable water per day from 27.5 million gallons today, according to El Paso Water utilities officials.

The desalination plant's expansion is part of the local Public Service Board's (PSB) goal to create a larger "drought-proof" supply of water. El Paso's usual water sources include two underground aquifers on either side of the Franklin Mountains, and water that originates in the mountains of southern Colorado and flows into the Rio Grande.

At the desalination plant, operators first flow water through two sets of micron-scale mesh filters that screen out objects as small as a human white blood cell. After that, the system pushes the water through metallic pipes into dozens of cylinders, which house the "membranes" that chemically pull salt from the minerals in the salty water that have a positive charge, and the paper-like membrane material is also positively charged. The membrane expels the minerals in the water, similar to how two magnet ends pushed together repel each other, explained Hector Sepulveda, the superintendent of the desalination plant.

Sepulveda explained that if you drill deep enough into virtually any aquifer, you're likely to find salty water. El Paso

El Paso County's desalination facilities named after Texas' first female U.S. Senator

Kay Bailey Hutchison, born in 1943, was the 22nd U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO from 2017 until 2021. As a Republican, she also was a U.S. Senator from Texas from 1993 to 2013.

Born in Galveston, Hutchison is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin. Prior to entering politics, she was an attorney and legal correspondent at KPRC in Houston. She was a member of the Texas House of Representatives from 1972 to 1976.

After a brief business career, she returned to politics in 1990, when she was elected Texas State Treasurer. In 1993, she was elected to the U.S. Senate in a special election and became the first female senator in Texas history.

Hutchinson was re-elected to the Senate in 1994, 2000, and 2006. She was the most senior female Republican senator by the end of her tenure in 2013, and the fifth most senior female senator overall. In 2017, Hutchison was nominated by President Donald Trump and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to be the next U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO.

has an abundance of brackish water (which is about one-tenth as salty as seawater) largely because of the local geology. Near the Franklin Mountains, the ground is made up of lighter sand and gravel making for less salty water. Further east, however, the ground has

See PLANT, Page 2

What Democrats will never do to defend democracy



Joe Biden went to Valley Forge to give a big speech telling us how much he cares about defending democracy against the threat represented by Donald Trump. How much does President Biden care? Enough to give a speech defending democracy, one of what's sure to be many if Trump is his opponent.

Biden's alarm about the precariousness of the American system, though, will never translate into actions he wouldn't otherwise want to take.

To wit, if Joe Biden were, as a matter of the principle, devoted to defending democracy at all costs, the first thing he would do would be to step aside for some younger, more capable, less radioactive Democrat with a much better chance of beating Trump.

Biden taking this step would be politically

electric, underlining how seriously he takes Trump's challenge to the republic and perhaps proving to some skeptics that his rhetoric about defending democracy is more than simply rhetoric.

Biden made much in his hackneyed speech – it probably could have been written by a precocious eighth-grader in an AP government class – of a painting in the U.S. Capitol of George Washington resigning his commission.

Biden correctly calls it a sublime act, because Washington, who could have been tempted to leverage his position after the Revolution for personal and political gain, gives up power in the service of his ideals instead. Biden makes the contrast between the statesmanship depicted in the painting and Jan. 6, which is fair enough.

It probably doesn't even occur to him, though,

that if a supremely talented military and political leader in his prime could step aside for the good of the whole, it should be much easier for a hack politician who is increasingly rickety and unpopular to make a selfless sacrifice for his party and, as he sees it, his country.

No? No. Of course not.

Biden's defense of democracy has to end with him in the White House again, not some other Democrat who might vanquish Trump easily. (Granted, Kamala Harris would complicate a Biden-stepping-aside scenario, but if the republic is at risk, perhaps

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Plant

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more clay that impedes the flow of groundwater.

The Horizon Regional Municipal Utility District also operates a smaller reverse osmosis plant off of Horizon Boulevard that treats brackish water. It's been operating since 2000, and voters there in 2012 agreed to issue bonds to expand the plant, which today has the capacity to produce up to 3.3 million gallons of freshwater each day, according to the Texas Water Development Board.

But while desalination provides another key source of potable water in El Paso, it comes at a relatively high cost. For the El Paso water utilities company, non-salty groundwater is the cheapest, simplest source of water to access.

When utility operators pump fresh groundwater, which

accounts for over half of the city's water supply, most of the time the water requires little treatment beyond adding some chlorine. As a result, El Paso Water spends a rate of 46 cents per 1,000 gallons of treated non-brackish groundwater that it produces.

Water that flows through the Rio Grande into El Paso provides about 40 percent of the region's supply, but it requires more treatment to remove bacteria or animal matter that enters the water from the riverbank, for example. It costs El Paso Water about 92 cents to treat 1,000 gallons of river water, about double the cost of producing non-brackish groundwater, water officials reported.

Producing desalinated water costs EP Water about \$1.53 per 1,000 gallons, which is 66 percent more expensive than river water. That's a major reason why other arid cities, such as Tucson or Albuquerque, haven't built

their own desalination water treatment plants, Scott Reinert, water resources manager for El Paso Water, stated in a recent news story.

Nonetheless, desalinated water is far cheaper than El Paso Water's alternative long-term option of importing water from Dell City, which is about 90 miles east of El Paso County. That endeavor would cost about \$9.20 per 1,000 gallons, water officials surmised.

Sepulveda stated that one of the biggest issues of building a desalination plant to this scale is what to do with the concentrate. "You just can't put it out there because it's going to affect the environment," he said.

El Paso Water pumps brackish groundwater into the desalination plant, and it converts 83 percent of that volume into fresh water. The rest is an extremely salty effluent, which the utility pipes 22 miles away from the plant to a facility in northeast El Paso County, where it injects the salty waste underground.

Local utility officials stated that they are exploring new ideas for how to handle the

brine. At a facility next door to the Hutchison plant, different private companies have tried for nearly a decade to take some of the concentrate waste from the desalination plant and produce from it minerals to sell, such as gypsum, as well as any freshwater that it can sell back to El Paso Water.

The nearby facility, which is now run by a company called UWCMC, is scheduled to re-start operations in 2025, and if the company can get the site up-and-running it could sell one billion gallons of freshwater annually to El Paso Water at a rate of \$2.75 per 1,000 gallons.

"From our standpoint, when they take whatever portion of our concentrated brine and make products out of it, and then they return the drinking water back to us, that becomes part of the water supply," John Balliew, CEO of El Paso Water, said in a recent interview.

However, he called the venture "experimental" and said that the utility is waiting to see if the process works. "If this program is successful, then it would help



- Internet

Named after Kay Bailey Hutchison, above, El Paso's desalination plant opening in 2007 marked the end of a 15-year project to design, fund, and build the facilities. Hutchinson was Texas' senior U.S. senator at the time. She helped secure nearly \$30 million in federal money for the plant's construction.

not only El Paso, but other communities, who want to do desalination plants, have some mechanism of dealing with this concentrate. So, to the extent that it works, we'll take advantage of it," Balliew asserted.

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— Photo courtesy Fabens ISD

COMMUNITY SUPPORT – Fabens High School mariachi Los Gatos Salvajes will be heading to state competition after earning a Division 1 all-around at the West Texas UIL Region Mariachi Contest held at Eastwood High School on Saturday, January 27, 2024. Members of the community got together with the group to show off the trophy.

Mariachi los Gatos Salvajes going to Seguin

By Sofia Maciel
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Fabens High School mariachi Los Gatos Salvajes will be heading to state competition after earning a Division 1 all-around at the West Texas UIL Region Mariachi Contest held at Eastwood High School on Saturday, January 27, 2024. The mariachi group was established eighteen months ago.

Mariachi director Natalie Carrasco stated she is very honored to work with such dedicated students. “They showed up every day and made sure to learn from it, and their hard work paid off. This win is

about them and how hard they were willing to work for it,” she added.

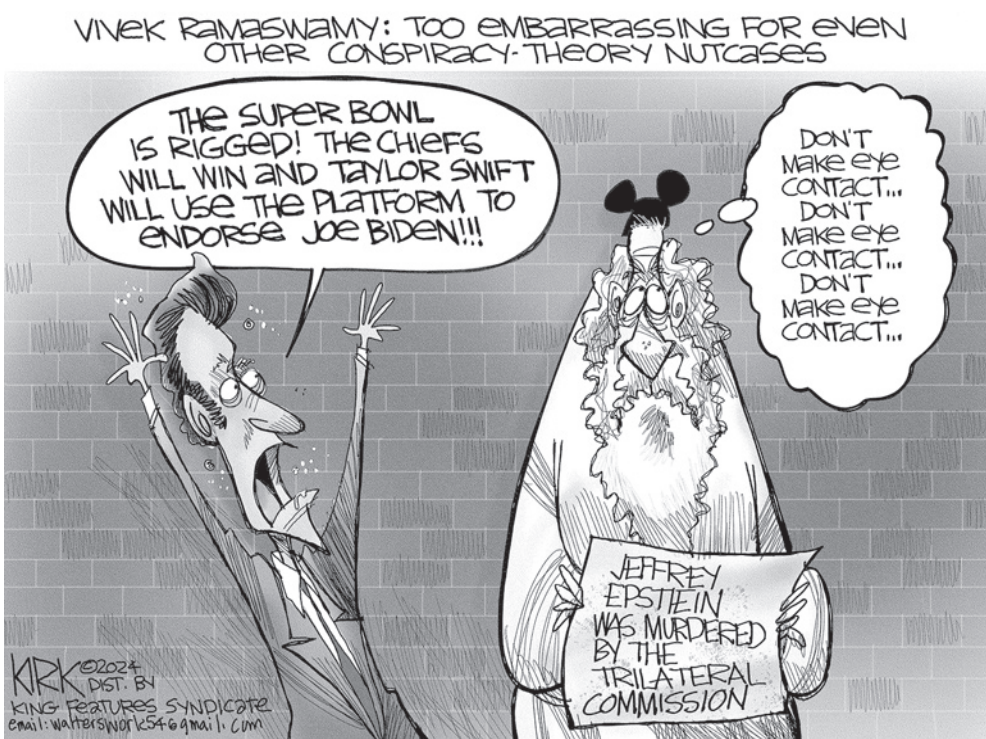
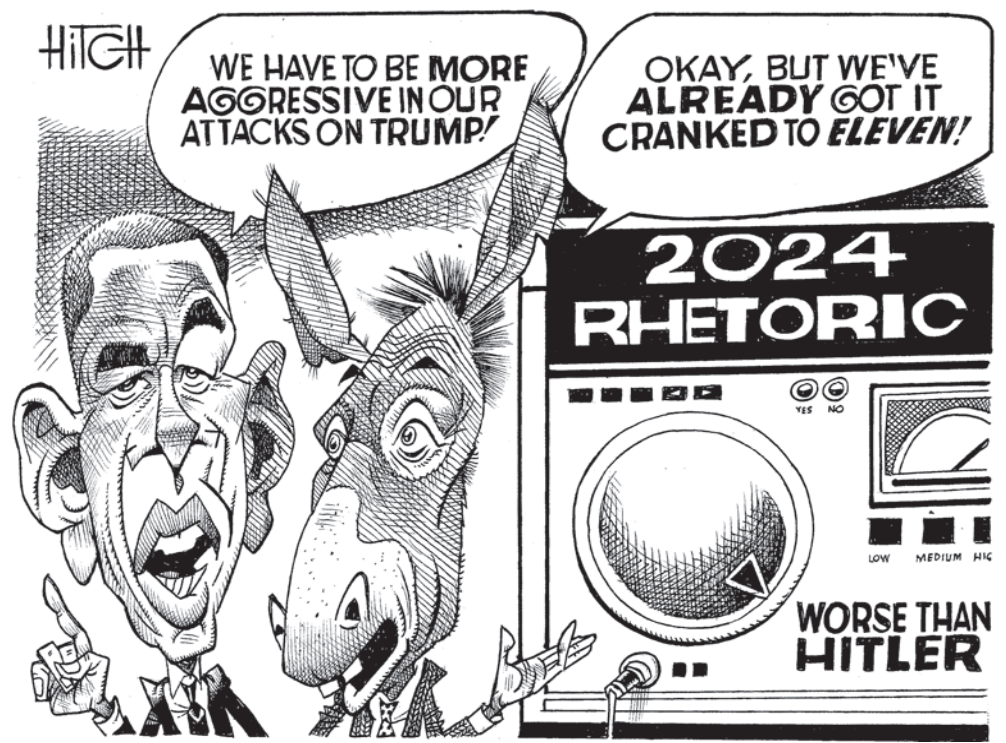
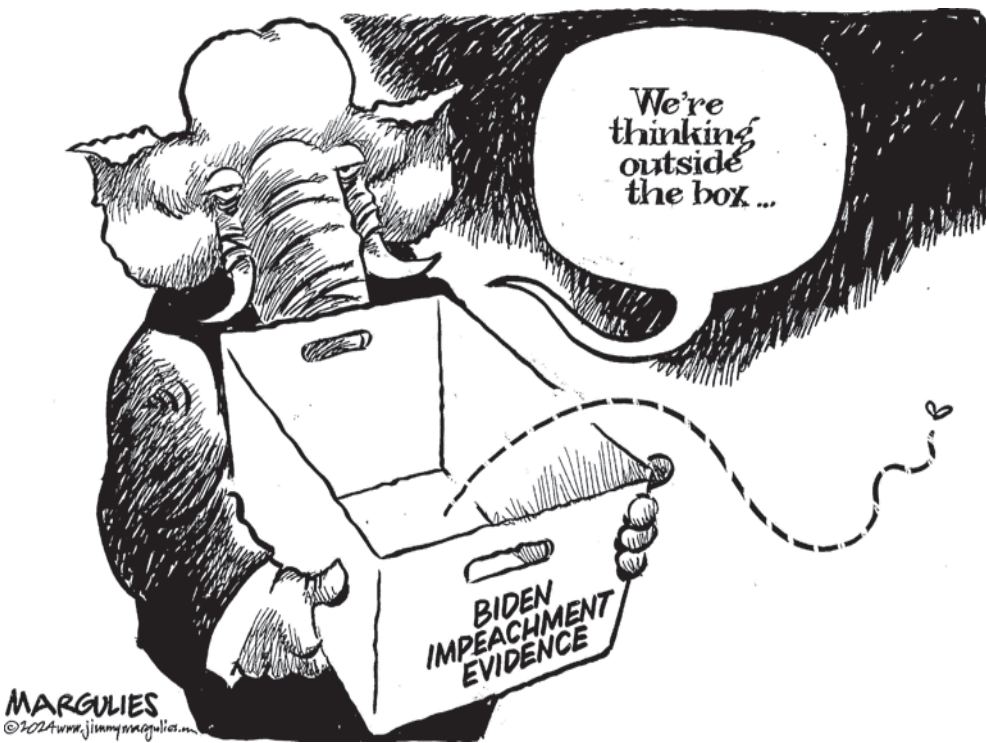
Los Gatos Salvajes president Rene Montañez (senior) said, “Today was a perfect presentation, everything was in perfect synchrony, the movement on stage was good, the voices were in tune, harmony and melody played with confidence and skills. The mariachi did what they were told and more. Obviously, there are things we can improve on, but I think we have enough time to make those small adjustments and improve even more. The state competition this year looks very promising.”

Dr. Aguayo, Fabens High School principal, said “Our students continue to shine, demonstrating what it means to be #SmallTownTough (district hashtag).

The commitment to the mariachi program from all stakeholders to include our teachers, students, their parents, trustees, and superintendent is what drives the success we witnessed today. Because of their efforts each and every day, we can hear them #WildcatsROAR (Fabens High School hashtag).”

Interim superintendent Martin Torres was present in support of the Wildcats. “I am so proud of all their accomplishments. It is a great pleasure to have served them every step of the way and an even greater one to watch them perform,” he said.

Los Gatos Salvajes will compete at the 2024 UIL State Mariachi Festival on Thursday, February 22, through Saturday, February 24, at the Seguin HS Performing Arts Center in Seguin, TX.



SO WHAT ARE THE ODDS WE'RE GOING TO USE A.I. RESPONSIBLY?

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Daily step counting

How many daily steps do we really need for optimum health? Ten thousand steps seems to be the gold standard in most of what we read to keep diabetes and high blood pressure (as well as several other conditions) at bay. And how do we keep track of all our steps?

Before you decide on a target number of steps per day, call your medical provider and ask how many you should be doing. You might learn that with an otherwise active, healthy life, several thousand steps per day might be enough, rather than the whole 10,000.

How to count those steps is the tricky part. I have several of those little clip-on step counters, and unfortunately, they all come up with different results. I have no way of knowing which are accurate.

There is a popular tracker called Fitbit, a fancy step counter that looks like a watch. Each model has pros and cons, per thousands of online reviews. Some do more

than just count steps; they also keep tabs on your location with GPS, your pace and how far you've walked, your sleep profile, your heart rate and your stress level. They can be pricey, especially if you want to unlock all the features and sign up for Fitbit Premium to see all your data on the dashboard.

Your best bet is to Google "best step counters for seniors" and wade through a few dozen choices. You'll find Apple Watch, 3DTriSport Walking 3D Pedometer, Garmin Vivofit 4 activity tracker and so many more. If you have a subscription to Consumer Reports, check their reviews on activity trackers for seniors.

Before you opt for an expensive tracker, visit a store where they are sold and try them out. A watch font might be too tiny to read, or a clip-on might not stay clipped on.

Bonus: Several Medicare Advantage plans provide either free or reduced-cost Fitbit devices.

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Canutillo Independent School District Public Notice

Canutillo Independent School District will hold a public hearing to discuss the District's 2022-2023 Annual Educational Performance Report, including TAPR, as part of a regular School Board meeting which is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at the Canutillo Administrative Offices Board Room, 7965 Artcraft, El Paso, TX 79932.

The annual report will also be available for review after the hearing within the Canutillo ISD Testing and Accountability webpage:

www.canutillo-isd.org/departments/testing___accountability___research_department/TAPR_Report

For more information, call 915-877-7481.

Distrito Escolar Independiente de Canutillo Junta Pública

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Canutillo llevará a cabo una audiencia pública para discutir el "Reporte de Rendimiento Académico de Texas" 2022-2023 del Distrito, incluido TAPR, como parte de una reunión regular de la Junta Escolar que está programada para las 6:00 p.m. martes, 27 de febrero de 2024, en la sala de juntas de las oficinas administrativas de Canutillo, 7965 Artcraft, El Paso, TX 79932.

El informe TAPR también estará disponible para su revisión después de la audiencia dentro de la página web de Canutillo ISD Testing and Accountability:

www.canutillo-isd.org/departments/testing___accountability___research_department/TAPR_Report

Para mas información, llamar al 915-877-7481.

WTCC: 02-08-24

Briefs

From Page 1

68,000 people."

– Cassandra Happe
WalletHub Analyst

Commentary

What are some strategies for fans to enjoy watching football (at home, in a bar, at the stadium) without breaking the bank?

"It is easy to get caught up in the excitement of the game and in so doing we may be enticed to spend more freely than we had anticipated. So, when entertaining at home if you have a big group coming you might want to share the hosting costs by creating a potluck where other guests bring dishes to share. If catering yourself, take advantage of the sales that many of the grocery stores will hold in the lead-up to the Super Bowl. Think about the number of people and buy accordingly, rather than having too many leftovers. If going out to a bar to watch the game, take advantage of any specials the bar may be offering on drinks and food. Also, sharing appetizers and larger portions will help spread the cost. But do not forget to save enough to tip your wait staff!"

– Heather J Gibson, Ph.D.
Undergraduate Coordinator
Department of Tourism,
Hospitality and Event
Management
University of Florida

"For fans looking to enjoy football without breaking the bank, organizing watch parties with friend groups and family can be a cost-effective way to share the experience. This will also



Moments in time THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Feb. 5, 1922, DeWitt and Lila Wallace self-published and marketed the first Reader's Digest magazine, designed to provide abridged articles on a wide variety of subjects for easy reading. It eventually gained a circulation of more than 10 million copies in the U.S. and is still believed to be the best-selling consumer magazine in the country.

• On Feb. 6, 1911, Ronald Reagan was born in Tampico, Illinois. Reagan spent 30 years as an entertainer in radio, film and television before winning the California governor's seat in 1966. Elected as America's 40th president in 1980, he survived an assassination attempt and became the most popular president since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

• On Feb. 7, 1301, King Edward I of England gave his son Edward (later King Edward II) the title of Prince of Wales. Edward I had conquered Wales and ordered the execution of David III, the last native Prince of Wales, in 1283. To this day the title "Prince of Wales" is reserved exclusively for the heir apparent to the British throne.

• On Feb. 8, 1983, a 5-year-old thoroughbred stallion named Shergar was stolen from a stud farm owned by the Aga Khan in County Kildare, Ireland. Worth a stunning \$13.5 million and commanding stud fees of approximately \$100,000, the animal was never seen again. No ransom was paid and the case was never solved.

• On Feb. 9, 2008, Turkey's parliament approved two constitutional amendments easing the ban on women wearing Islamic headscarves in universities. While the government claimed the ban would result in many girls being denied an education, the secular establishment saw it as a step in allowing a more prominent Islamic influence on the state.

• On Feb. 10, 1942, Glenn Miller became the first artist to win a gold record award, for his single "Chattanooga Choo Choo." The tune was featured in the 1941 movie "Sun Valley Serenade" and inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1996.

• On Feb. 11, 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from a South African prison after serving 27 years of a life sentence on charges of attempting to overthrow the apartheid government. Four years later, he was elected president in the country's first all-race elections.

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enhance social bonding among friends and family. Additionally, splitting the cost of season tickets among friends and family can make attending games more affordable."

– Jason C. Pappas, Ed.D.
Teaching Professor
Experiential Learning
Coordinator, Department of
Sport Management
Florida State University

Does hosting the Super Bowl economically help or hurt the host city?

"A Super Bowl creates an incredible economic impact for a city based on the number of unique visitors who come to the city for the event. The Super Bowl is no longer a sporting event but a social event. It is no longer a day, it is a week and the unique visitors extend beyond fans to include global media, vendors, and non-football stakeholders. It is an event that is used by major corporations for client entertainment and the NFL has done an amazing job of merging sport and entertainment into the event. It is an incredible commercial

for the city for those who visit and for those who get to see the glamour shots of the city on the pregame shows all week to the day of the game."

– Dr. Matthew J. Robinson
Director of Community
Engagement Initiative
Professor, University of
Delaware

"Hosting the Super Bowl can economically benefit a host city, primarily if the city invests in creating a memorable experience for businesses, fans, and sponsors. The economic impact can be significant, but success depends on effective planning, infrastructure, and collaboration between the host city and the NFL. Also, various intangible aspects like the destination image of the city, brand equity of the stadium, and tourism favorableness are important factors that help cities organize the Super Bowl."

– Jason C. Pappas, Ed.D.

Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-cities-for-football-fans/9691> for the full report.

– Diana Polk



By Lucie Winborne

• Ever wonder why your kitty tries to play or even fight with its own reflection in a mirror? Animal specialists believe felines don't realize that their image isn't another animal because it has no scent.

• And speaking of scent, the Odeuropa research project has created an online encyclopedia dedicated to the history of smells.

• Vomitoriums in ancient Rome weren't actually spaces for gastronomic feasting and purging, but an architectural feature in stadiums that allowed for more efficient crowd exits.

• ChatGPT can easily be convinced it's wrong, even when it's right.

• Irving Berlin dedicated all royalties from "God Bless America" to a fund of the same name, specifically for the benefit of such youth organizations as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in New York City. To date, more than \$10 million has been raised.

• Researchers at Dublin City University found that soccer goalkeepers process both visual and auditory cues more efficiently than other players, as well as non-players, which could be the clue to their speedy reactions during games.

• By 2027, Sweden plans to boast a city made entirely of wood.

• The last U.S. conviction for blasphemy went to atheist activist Charles Lee Smith in 1928, after he rented a Little Rock, Arkansas, storefront and put a sign in the window reading: "Evolution Is True. The Bible's a Lie. God's a Ghost." Because, as an atheist, he couldn't swear the court's usual oath to tell the truth, he also couldn't testify in his own defense.

Thought for the Day: "If people are doubting how far you can go, go so far that you can't hear them anymore."
—Michele Ruiz

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SISD Mariachi groups advance to UIL State Competition

By Laura Acosta
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY - Five Socorro Independent School District high schools are heading to the 2024 UIL State Mariachi Festival after earning Division 1 ratings at the annual UIL Area Mariachi Festival on Jan. 27.

Americas High School Mariachi Los Pioneros, Eastlake High School Mariachi Falco, El Dorado High School Mariachi Azteca, Pebble Hills High School Mariachi Los Guerreros, and Socorro High School Los Gavilanes will be among 15 schools from the El Paso region to compete at the State Mariachi

Festival on Feb. 23 and 24 in Seguin, Texas. Montwood High School Mariachi Sangre Mexicana did not participate in this year's area festival.

"SISD is proud to have some of the finest high school Mariachi ensembles in the region," said SISD Fine Arts Director Armando Martinez. "The success of these high schools is a testament to the amazing work and dedication of our teachers and students, who strive to perform the best Mariachi music. We look forward to seeing our students showcase their talent at the state level."

In 2023, the Mariachi groups at Americas High School and Pebble Hills High School won Superior Rating Division 1 trophies at the Texas UIL State Mariachi Festival.

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

Data Control Codes		General Fund	ARP ESSER III	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:					
5700	Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 2,325,241	\$ -	\$ 272,695	\$ 2,597,936
5800	State Program Revenues	7,662,615	570,506	518,001	8,180,616
5900	Federal Program Revenues	1,211,150	-	803,191	2,584,847
5020	Total Revenues	11,199,006	570,506	1,593,887	13,363,399
EXPENDITURES:					
Current:					
0011	Instruction	5,099,434	464,675	586,396	6,150,505
0012	Instructional Resources and Media Services	99,051	7,830	76,501	183,382
0013	Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	55,321	-	75,122	130,443
0021	Instructional Leadership	406,656	4,140	36,277	447,073
0023	School Leadership	738,604	9,196	7,647	755,447
0031	Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	302,121	1,022	98,520	401,663
0033	Health Services	65,281	2,029	67,112	134,422
0034	Student (Pupil) Transportation	403,030	5,237	87,195	495,462
0035	Food Services	784,412	9,937	98,911	893,260
0036	Extracurricular Activities	425,616	29,300	990	455,906
0041	General Administration	933,127	9,321	4,111	946,559
0051	Facilities Maintenance and Operations	1,104,372	14,354	188,225	1,306,951
0052	Security and Monitoring Services	176,050	9,633	38,555	224,238
0053	Data Processing Services	450,799	3,577	-	454,376
0061	Community Services	307	255	49,240	49,802
Debt Service:					
0071	Principal on Long-Term Liabilities	31,074	-	355,000	386,074
0072	Interest on Long-Term Liabilities	4,131	-	122,175	126,306
Intergovernmental:					
0099	Other Intergovernmental Charges	28,662	-	-	28,662
6030	Total Expenditures	11,108,048	570,506	1,891,977	13,570,531
1100	Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	90,958	-	(298,090)	(207,132)
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):					
7913	Proceeds of Right-to-Use Lease	83,599	-	-	83,599
7949	Proceeds of SBITAs and Other Resources	25,157	-	-	25,157
7080	Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	108,756	-	-	108,756
1200	Net Change in Fund Balances	199,714	-	(298,090)	(98,376)
0100	Fund Balance - September 1 (Beginning)	4,197,288	-	533,543	4,730,831
3000	Fund Balance - August 31 (Ending)	\$ 4,397,002	\$ -	\$ 235,453	\$ 4,632,455

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CryptoQuip Answer

The guy working out at the gym wouldn't take the time to talk to people. He had too many pressing concerns.

5	÷	1	+	6	11
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Chiefs and 49ers go at it again in the big game

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It's finally here, the biggest game of the year. The Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers will go at it this Sunday in the 58th Super Bowl in Las Vegas.

It's not only the biggest football event of the year, it's probably the biggest American event of the year.

Families and friends will get together to enjoy the game, the halftime show, the commercials, the food, the drink, and Taylor Swift.

Whether it's chicken wings, burgers, pizza, nachos or plain old chips and dip, there are no losers when it comes to snacking on Super Bowl Sunday.

However, on the field there will be a winner and a loser. Let's find out who that will be.

The Chiefs, counting this Sunday, are the team that has played in four of the last five big games. So, they know what it's all about and there shouldn't be any nerves on their sideline. The 49ers were also there recently, playing the Chiefs in the 2020 Super Bowl, so they should be ready as well.

In fact, it was the 49ers who were dominating the Chiefs for most of that game before Patrick Mahomes finally got hot and led Kansas City to what would be his first of two Super Bowl championships.

The 49ers were playing with a different quarterback then as Jimmy Garoppolo, who is no longer with the team, led the Niners to a 20-10 lead midway through the fourth quarter, only to lose it 31-20.

Once again, the Chiefs are led by the combination of quarterback Mahomes and tight end Travis Kelce. I know, I know, people like to think the team is led by Mahomes and Taylor Swift, but to be honest, it's not really Mahomes and Kelce... or Swift... it's the defense.

Over the years when NFL fans thought of the Chiefs, it was Mahomes completing pass after pass for touchdown after touchdown. The defense didn't really matter because the Chiefs were going to score a ton of points anyway.

But that hasn't been the case this season. Mahomes has lost a bunch of receivers over the last couple of years and the new ones, even Kelce for a while this year, kept dropping pass after pass. They haven't been in rhythm all season.

This is Mahomes' sixth season as the starting quarterback for the Chiefs. In his first five years the Chiefs averaged scoring 35, 28, 29, 28, and 29 points a game. This year, Kansas City only averaged 21 points a game.

But because the defense stepped up and allowed only 17.3 points per game, the Chiefs are back in the Super Bowl.

The 49ers have been riding high since Brock Purdy took over as their quarterback last season.

The final player picked in the final round of the 2022 draft has shocked everyone with his outstanding play.

If you're not sure how rare it is for a "Mr. Irrelevant" (the final player picked in the draft) to do what he's done, consider this.

Purdy has become the first out of 48 Mr. Irrelevants (since they started calling them that in 1976), to simply complete a pass, start a game at quarterback (in the regular season or playoffs) and make a Pro Bowl.

With guys to throw to like Deebo Samuel, Brandon Aiyuk and George Kittle, the 49ers offense presents a lot of problems for that improved Chiefs defense. And we haven't even talked about the NFL's top rusher, the 49ers' Christian McCaffrey, who

gained 1,459 yards and scored 21 total touchdowns (14 rushing, 7 receiving).

When comparing Mahomes' and Purdy's regular season you may be surprised. Purdy threw 153 fewer passes than Mahomes, but threw for more yards (4,280-4,183), more touchdowns (31-27) and had a higher completion percentage (69.4-67.2).

The 49ers had a better season than the Chiefs and come into Sunday's game a 2.5-point favorite.

So naturally, I'm predicting that the Kansas City Chiefs will win their third championship in the last five years.

The reason? Very simply, Patrick Mahomes.

Something tells me that guy will do whatever it takes to lead the Chiefs to a 24-20 win.

He'll win the MVP, but his defense will be the real reason they'll raise the Lombardi Trophy.



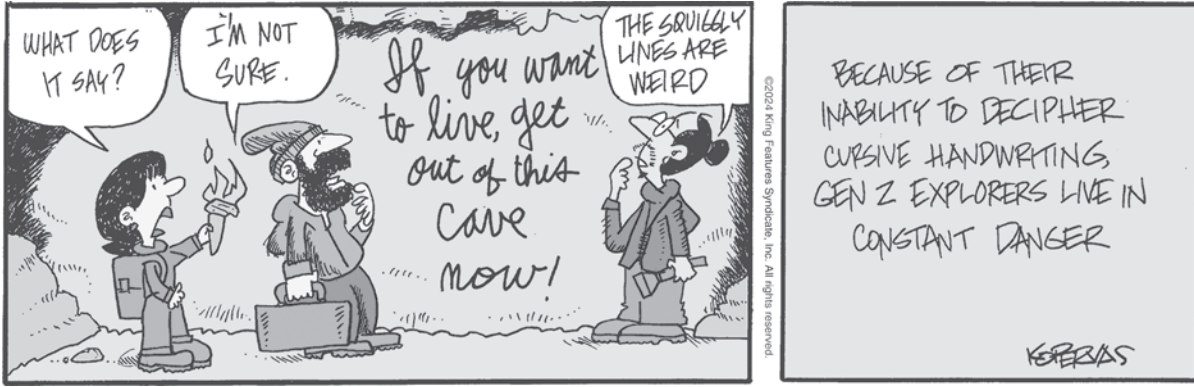
- SILLY SAILING**
- ACROSS**
- 1 Grappler,
 - backwoods-style
 - 8 Skylit courts
 - 13 Astronaut Wally
 - 20 "The Stranger Beside Me" true-crime writer
 - 21 Flowers in the iris family
 - 22 Some sweatshirts
 - 23 Swift warship for law enforcement?
 - 25 Finales
 - 26 Makes mother's milk
 - 27 Comic Radner
 - 29 "How about that!"
 - 30 Lugosi of "The Raven"
 - 33 Hefty books
 - 34 Defectively built flat-bottomed boat?
 - 36 Pumpkin's color
 - 38 Resident of Tehran
 - 40 Makes a choice
 - 41 Light, speedy boat transporting Oreos?
 - 45 Just barely
 - 48 Indian state known for silk
 - 49 United
 - 50 In a smoothly elegant way
 - 53 Neon, e.g.
 - 56 French mime master
 - 59 High-sterned ship orbiting Earth?
 - 61 "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" star Andy
 - 65 Central Canadian
- DOWN**
- 1 Jay-Z's music sayin', man?"
 - 2 Year, in Portugal
 - 3 NBC skit show, in brief
 - 4 Indian Ocean island nation
 - 5 _ Brasi (role in "The Godfather")
 - 6 One voted in
 - 7 Book page opposite a verso
 - 8 Severe
 - 9 Samples something
 - 10 Singer Diana
 - 11 With 13-Down, thick glacial mass along a polar shore
 - 12 BB shooter
 - 13 See 11-Down
 - 14 Magazine publisher Nast
 - 15 Wannabe surfer with lots of mollusks attached?
 - 16 Exiled Amin
 - 17 Key into a cash register
 - 18 Acting king
 - 19 Good traits
 - 24 He-sheep
 - 28 "_ may be so bold..."
 - 30 _ Raton
 - 31 Lovers' deity
 - 32 Neighbor of Thailand
 - 126 Bert's pal
 - 127 Introductions
 - 128 In clothes
 - 129 Actors O'Neal and Reynolds
 - 130 Says "OK"
- 34 Clayey fertilizer
 - 35 Herd of seals
 - 37 "_ a break!"
 - 39 Gave a new interior design to
 - 42 Welsh canine
 - 43 Mom's bro
 - 44 Ball supporter
 - 45 Org. for cavity fillers
 - 46 Doc's warm treatment
 - 47 "For" votes
 - 51 Like thrift store goods
 - 52 _ facto
 - 53 Sly deception
 - 54 Prices to play
 - 55 Variety of trapshooting
 - 57 Spot's noise
 - 58 Etching liquid
 - 60 Husband of Eva Peron
 - 61 Actress Keanan
 - 62 Enthusiasm
 - 63 Gold-fancying king
 - 64 Boxers' event
 - 66 Waffle brand
 - 70 No, to Nikita
 - 71 Torres with 12 Olympic swimming medals
 - 72 Antique item
 - 73 "Hooray!"
 - 76 "Guilty" or "not guilty"
 - 79 Onetime TV host Philbin
 - 81 Debut on Wall St.
 - 82 Zippo
 - 84 Woofing pet
 - 85 Actor Vigoda
 - 88 Olympic skier Mahre
 - 91 Meeting building regulations
 - 92 Tater
 - 93 Head, in Metz
 - 94 Mining strikes
 - 95 Big inits. in SUVs
 - 97 Certain deer leather
 - 98 Hamlet's duel opponent
 - 99 Peace treaty
 - 100 Shutter piece
 - 101 Fidgetiness
 - 102 Valuable rock
 - 103 Long, loose outerwear
 - 106 Nitpickers split them
 - 107 Olympic skier Mahre
 - 108 Sprayed, with "down"
 - 110 Mining strikes
 - 111 Downed
 - 112 Electric car producer
 - 116 Sicilian resort city
 - 117 Investments for later yrs.
 - 119 Home: Abbr.
 - 121 Suffix with budget
 - 122 _ and yang
 - 123 Doc for head colds
 - 124 Blog feed format inits.

Super Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
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125										126						127					
128										129						130					

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



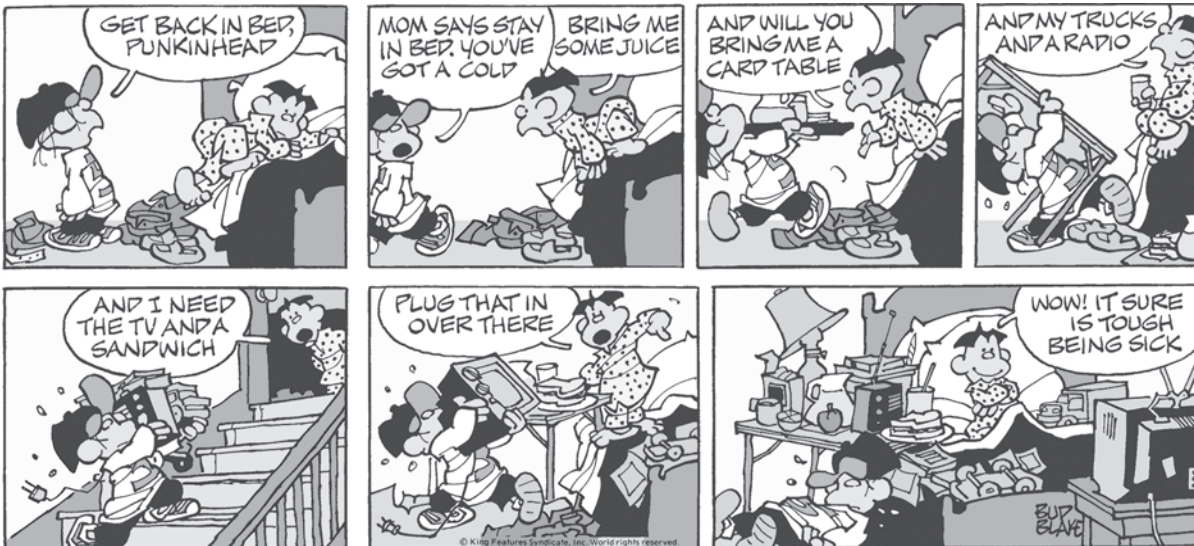
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

Democrats could also be honest about how dreadful Harris is and nominate someone else – although now we are really entering the realm of fantasy.)

OK, so Biden isn't voluntarily going anywhere. But if the stakes this November are so world-historical, surely the defense of democracy should include some moderation on progressive causes that are easy political targets for Trump.

Consider the chaos at the border, which, if Trump makes it back to the White House, will be one of the major reasons. Would saving the republic make it worth going beyond whatever border deal might be in the offing with congressional Republicans and admitting that the Trump policies worked and should be restored immediately? Or is allowing millions of illegal immigrants into the country more important than increasing the odds that democracy itself survives beyond 2024?

Finally, if substantive concessions are too painful, there's always the possibility of

staking out some genuinely new ground in the democracy debate itself. Imagine if Biden said that democracy is so important that no one should be striking his probable opponent from the ballot. Or if he said he now realizes that he, too, let down the constitutional order by undertaking executive orders that exceeded his authority and that, on second thought, he needs to lead by example in complete faithfulness to the system.

Would that kill him? Evidently, yes.

Biden's position is that democracy is under such a threat that he – the man with abysmal approval ratings who most Americans believe can't possibly serve a second term – needs to run again to eke out a narrow, no-margin-for-error victory against the man who embodies the threat.

Faith in our system of government, patriotism itself, supposedly demands nothing else. And if Biden flubs it, which is a real possibility? Then, I guess it's, "Oh, well, democracy can always be saved again in the 2026 midterms."

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

Hashimoto's thyroiditis might require hormone replacement

DEAR DR. ROACH: Please explain Hashimoto's disease. I have heard that it is rare, but two colleagues have recently been diagnosed. We all work in a very high-stress field. – J.H.



Hashimoto's thyroiditis is not at all a rare disease. It occurs in up to 10% of the population and much more frequently in women than men. Although people can be diagnosed at a young age, it is more common at older ages. It is caused by an autoimmune reaction to different parts of the thyroid, with thyroglobulin and thyroid peroxidase antibodies commonly found. TSH receptor antibodies are found on occasion.

Hashimoto's thyroiditis most commonly causes low thyroid levels, although there may be a period of time early in the disease where thyroid levels are high. Not everybody with antibodies will develop low thyroid levels. The thyroid is sometimes enlarged, but a careful exam will usually show that the gland is firm, showing that immune cells have infiltrated the gland.

Treatment of Hashimoto's thyroiditis involves replacing the thyroid hormone that the gland can no longer make. The dose depends on body size to a certain extent, but needs to be adjusted based on lab results. Most people are treated with levothyroxine, also called T4, which is the primary hormone made by the thyroid.

T4 is converted to T3 (also called triiodothyronine, the active form of the hormone) in various tissues outside the thyroid. T3 only stays in the body for a short while before it is destroyed, so a once-daily treatment with T4, which lasts longer, allows the body to convert T4 to T3.

Most people do very well with T4 treatment. A minority of people cannot efficiently make the active T3 form, in which case-combination treatment can be considered. Unfortunately, T3 must be dosed twice daily.

It is thought that stress hormones play a role, since stress does seem to increase the risk of developing an autoimmune thyroid disease like Hashimoto's.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Huntington's disease runs in my family; my brother and sister started having symptoms in their early 60s. I am 80 and don't have any symptoms. Can I assume that I don't have it? I hear testing can be expensive. Are there any organizations that test for free? – S.B.

Huntington's is a progressive, degenerative neurological disease that causes abnormal body movements, psychiatric changes and dementia. The movement disorder, called chorea, is the first symptom. It can begin very slowly, and people may not be aware of it. A careful exam can show the characteristic findings. A movement disorder specialist is the ideal person to see in this case.

It would be very unusual to begin having symptoms at, or after, the age of 80, so it is very likely that you do not have the disease if you don't have any symptoms and have received a normal exam by an expert.

Testing should be performed only after careful consideration and counseling by an expert such as a genetic counselor. According to the Huntington's Disease Society of America (see tinyurl.com/HDgeneticstesting), testing can cost between \$315-\$1,500, but it is often covered by insurance. Free testing may be available as part of a research study.

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.

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Moore Texas by Roger Moore

February 6, 1879: The first Czech newspaper debuted... aptly named "THE TEXAN".

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: X equals C

GYN ZJT IFEMHDZ FJG RG GYN
 ZTU IFJCQD'G GRMN GYN GHUN
 GF GRCM GF LNFLCN. YN YRQ
 GFF URDT LENKKHDZ XFDXNEDK.

Answer Page 5

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging

Answer Page 5

◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Whom to trust?



by Freddy Groves

Wouldn't you get a sick feeling in the pit of your stomach if you wondered whether your treatment nurse had obtained a fake diploma?

Three owners of nursing schools in two states were found guilty, as well as several of their pals (for a total of 27 scammers), for a scheme that involved selling fake nursing diplomas they apparently got from two formerly genuine schools. Students who wanted to take the national nursing board exam could purchase from the scammers diplomas that would allow them to take the tests. The genuine schools were eventually closed because of their test failure rate. However, some applicants managed to pass the exam and used the fake documents to get jobs everywhere in the country. Over 7,000 fake diplomas were handed out.

What happens now, one wonders? Assuming there were records, will anyone go after any of the faux nurses and at least let their new employers (such as the Department of Veterans Affairs) know about the fake diplomas?

In another case, a man was sent to prison (not for long enough) for distributing over \$16 million in adulterated HIV drugs, as well as other medications, all around the country. The scammer and his pals actually set up businesses in multiple states from which they sold the corrupted drugs to wholesale drug suppliers, which then sold them to pharmacies, ensuring that the drugs were spread far and wide. The criminals had on hand enough drugs to net them at least \$25 million when sold.

In one gut-wrenching case, two nurses lied to investigators after a patient died at a VA hospital. They claimed they hadn't "paused" the patient's medication. They actually had. The patient died.

Curiously, one nurse was

given only three months in the federal slammer, and the other one got six months. Even more curious, the judge gave them both until January to turn themselves in at the prison, noting the "circumstances of the offense." What on earth does that mean?

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• File this one under safety AND energy smarts: Clean the dryer vent after every load. Clean the dryer vent screen monthly with a gentle soap and water bath. Rinse well and dry thoroughly before inserting back into your dryer.

• "I used to struggle with plastic wrap every time I tried to use it. But now, it's a breeze since I learned to do these two things: One, keep plastic wrap in the freezer. It unrolls evenly, not one side or the other. Two, use a serrated knife to cut it instead of relying on the metal strip down the side of the box. You lay it out on the counter, and just run the knife down the edge you want to cut. Works like magic, and it's no longer frustrating." – G.S.

• Store an apple or two with your potatoes to keep them from sprouting. Be sure to check them often.

• Cut cotton pads in half to double your supply. They are typically big enough for two uses, and you can always use two halves if you need a whole.

• "Make a cream lipstick last longer and stay cleaner by using a makeup brush to apply. Your skin picks up more of the lipstick than necessary, one reason why we blot our lips afterward. But the brush uses only what you need. And there's less bacteria transfer." – Y.R. in Massachusetts

• Studies have shown that you spend more and make worse decisions when grocery shopping at peak hours. To be a saver on the family food bill, pick a time to shop when you're not rushed; have a list; know the sales ahead of time; and eat before you go.

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

	÷		+				11
+		+		-			
	+		÷				3
÷		÷		×			
	×		-				2
6		3		4			

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult

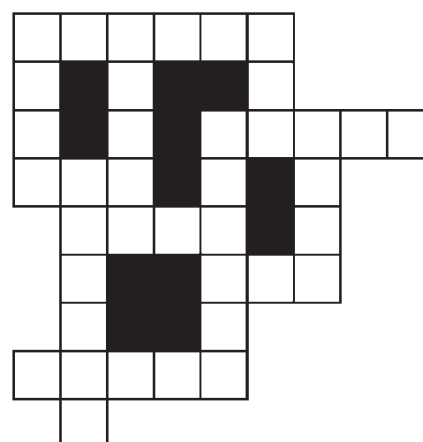
★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 5

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- VEE
- ARNBET
- ♥ TARSE
- ♥ GSNI
- GAVEAR
- ♥ ADG
- ♥ ENVI
- STOEB
- ♥ TNU
- SEVEAR
- REGEV
- ♥ IDAR



Answer Page 5

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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