



NEWSBRIEFS

HS breakfast

El Dorado High School and Dairy Max, a nonprofit dairy council, opened the school's new Breakfast Beverage Bar last Wednesday morning. The new Breakfast Beverage Bar will give students a new breakfast option to enjoy in the morning. The beverage bar will be available alongside the other breakfast options that El Dorado offers to its students. The choices of beverages will include coffee with vanilla flavor and various smoothies like peachy banana apple, apple banana peanut butter, blueberry banana, Chocolate Banana Power and Strawberry Goes Banana. The beverages will be free to students. All six comprehensive high schools and Mission Early College High School in the Socorro Independent School District offer a breakfast beverage bar to encourage students to have their first meal of the day.

— Christy Flores-Jones

Late payers

With Americans owing around \$17.5 trillion in total household debt, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its new report on the *Cities Where People Are the Most Delinquent on Debt* to show where people are at the biggest risk of credit score damage and other negative consequences. To highlight the places where people are having the biggest issues paying their bills, WalletHub analyzed proprietary user data from Q4 2023 for the 100 largest cities for which we could obtain a complete data set. In our ranking, we considered both the percentage of individual tradelines that were delinquent and the percentages of residents' total loan balances that were delinquent. El Paso was rated 16th in the report.

"Being delinquent on debt can significantly damage a person's credit score and make it more difficult to get a credit card, rent apartments, or buy cars and homes in the future. People who miss a loan payment should try to get current as quickly as possible. The good news is that for many types of debt, borrowers have at least 30 days before delinquency gets reported

See BRIEFS, Page 4

Espinal finds some success in fashion world

By Miroslava Casas
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Nathaniel Espinal, a student at El Paso Community College (EPCC) majoring in Media Advertising, is in the beginning stages of a successful career and building his clothing brand *Hypnosis*.

Espinal's inspiration for the fashion world started with his grandmother. He would always see her sewing and it awakened a curiosity in him. After a few years, he wanted to share his talent and style with others.

"EPCC has helped me in many facets of my life, more than anything, it helped me take direction when I feel lost about what I want to do with my life. In fact, in 2019, the director of Vogue Mexico and Latin America visited the EPCC Fashion Technology program. I had a friend in the program, and she helped me get into the event. And it was an inspiring talk that helped me focus on my dreams," Espinal said.

Espinal has been very successful with his brand. Mexican actress Majo Aguilar wore his design for the magazine *Estilo DF*, content creator Beshorts wore a complete look for the yellow carpet at the Eliot Awards,

See ESPINAL, Page 4



— Photo courtesy EPCC

STRIKING A POSE – Daniela Mora models one of Nathaniel Espinal's creations during a photo shoot at Dunas de Samalayuca in Ciudad Juarez.

Canutillo ISD to open on-campus Goodwill Store

Goodwill will train special ed students to staff the store

By Gustavo Reveles
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – Starting next fall, thrift shoppers will be able to buy vintage clothes and wares from a new on-campus Goodwill store that will be staffed by enterprising Canutillo ISD special-education students who will be getting life-changing job skills.

On March 26 the Board of Trustees approved a partnership between the Canutillo Independent School District and Goodwill Industries of El Paso to open the Employee Development Service (EDS) Goodwill Store at

Canutillo High School at the start of the 2024-25 school year.

The on-campus store will offer vintage and gently used clothing, housewares and other merchandise at a discounted price just like any traditional Goodwill location. However, the employees at the store will come from the special-education classes at Canutillo High who have been selected to receive training designed to help them transition to life after graduation.

"We are extremely happy to be able to partner with Canutillo ISD to provide this tremendous opportunity for the students in the District," said Melinda Jordan, President and CEO of

Goodwill Industries of El Paso. "The EDS Program has a proven record of showing that what our special students can do is extraordinary."

Under the agreement, a classroom at Canutillo High would be turned into the EDS Goodwill store. The student workers will then staff the store and receive training such as customer service, telephone skills, workplace safety, cash register operation and production skills.

Elvia Moreno, Canutillo ISD's Director of Special Education, said the partnership adds another layer to the range of services the District offers special students who are getting ready to graduate.

"Programs like the EDS Goodwill store guarantee that our students get the training, skills and confidence they need to be successful in life," Moreno said. "It's amazing to see the personal growth that comes with having our students know they can achieve anything they set their mind to."

If you want to live to a ripe old age, don't ever drive your car in while in a rage.

— Quips & Quotes



Schumer openly attacks Netanyahu in Senate speech



The uncommitted voters of Michigan say “Jump,” and Chuck Schumer asks “How high?”

The Senate majority leader gave an extraordinary speech flaying the democratically elected leader of an ally engaged in fighting a defensive war against a hideous terrorist enemy.

The speech calling on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to go, along with increasingly critical statements by the White House, shows that the Democrats have decided that appeasing their left-wing base in an election year is now their top consideration.

This is bad all around. As a matter of basic decency, this is not something that allies do to one another, especially not in wartime. Present unvarnished views in private? Absolutely. Try to nudge a partner

toward a favored policy? Sure. But blast a friendly government in hopes that it can be toppled via a new election, just months after suffering a monstrous attack and as it is still trying to destroy a terrorist group deeply embedded in an urban environment? No.

The fact of the matter is that this is not Bibi Netanyahu’s war. It is the nation of Israel’s war. Netanyahu sustained political damage after the Oct. 7 attack, but his goal of prosecuting the war against Hamas to its completion is widely shared in Israel. Immediately after the attack, Israel formed a government of national unity that has pursued the war policy that Democrats now find so objectionable. If Netanyahu were to resign tomorrow, any number of things might change, but the war against Hamas

would stay the same.

It is easy, sitting in Washington, D.C., and worrying about how to placate the

anti-Israel uncommitted voters in the Democratic primary, to forget the shock of the massive pogrom carried out by Hamas on that infamous day in October. Israelis, though, aren’t going to forget, nor should they.

It’s a key tell about Schumer’s intentions that his speech engendered a universally negative reaction in Israel, and Schumer – who is no naif – must

See LOWRY, Page 7

Consumer survey of Texas electricity use underway

TEXAS – This spring the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) is surveying Texas electricity consumers to study the costs they may incur from power interruptions. The survey was developed by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and has been used nationally by utilities and electricity regulators to develop innovative grid reliability policy and evaluate the cost-effectiveness of grid infrastructure improvements.

“The demand for electricity is growing fast and the Public Utility Commission of Texas is focused on ensuring grid reliability for Texas, not

just today, but in the decades to come,” PUCT Chairman Thomas Gleeson said. “As we develop this next stage of reliability policy and consider what infrastructure improvements are necessary to meet growth in demand, it’s critical we hear directly from Texas consumers and understand their individual needs and financial considerations.”

Randomly selected residential, commercial, and large industrial electricity consumers in the ERCOT region will receive an email request to participate in the survey. The survey includes questions about consumers’

electricity use and asks participants to estimate the financial impact on their homes, businesses, or facilities that may result from power interruptions. The survey is voluntary, and responses will be submitted anonymously.

The PUCT instructed the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) to conduct the survey as part of a larger study to estimate the value of electric reliability in the ERCOT region, also known technically as the Value of Lost Load (VOLL). The results of the consumer survey will be considered, among other factors, in calculating a VOLL specific to the ERCOT region. This will be an important data point for the PUCT as it continues its work on several market design initiatives, including the development of a reliability standard for the ERCOT region.

Determining a VOLL for the ERCOT region will also help commissioners evaluate whether infrastructure improvements proposed by transmission and distribution utilities (TDUs) in Texas will provide adequate value to consumers in

relation to their cost.

The survey results will contribute Texas-specific data to LBNL’s nationwide electric reliability planning tool, the Interruption Cost Estimate (ICE) Calculator. The tool is used by utilities, government organizations, and regulators across the country to estimate financial impact of power interruptions and weigh the costs and benefits of reliability improvements.

ERCOT contracted with consulting and data analysis firms, Brattle Group and PlanBeyond, to plan and conduct the survey. ERCOT and the Brattle Group are working with transmission and distribution utilities and electric providers across the state to administer the survey to a diverse set of customers in the ERCOT region.

Additional information about the survey and a Frequently Asked Questions resource are available on the PUCT’s website. Consumers can also contact the PUCT’s Consumer Protection Division at consumer@puc.texas.gov or (888) 782-8477 with any additional questions.

– Public Utility Commission of Texas

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Socorro ISD registration opens for Pre-K through 12th grade

By Christy Flores-Jones
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – The Socorro Independent School District is opening registration for all new and returning students in grades Pre-K through 12th on April 8, 2024. The district provides free Pre-K for three- and four-year-olds, innovative elementary academies, free college classes, advanced academic academies, career and technical training, award-winning fine arts, championship athletics, state-of-the-art technologies, and world-class facilities.

Parents of Pre-K, new, returning, and transfer students need to use the Skyward Family Access system to register online. To have access to online registration, parents will need to have a valid and current email address. Parents can find the appropriate online forms and instructions to register at www.sisd.net/enrollment.

Skyward Family Access is an easy-to-use website that allows parents and guardians to access information about their students, such as attendance, grades, assignments, schedules, progress reports and report cards. Skyward Family Access is available on any device with an internet connection. (Skyward help: <https://www.sisd.net/o/sisd/page/skyward-family-access>)

Parents or legal guardians are asked to submit basic information via a secure online form for registration. The following documents will be required for new students to the district: student birth certificate, immunization record, social security card (optional), a current utility bill, and an identification for the parent or legal guardian registering the child. For returning students, parents only need to provide proof of residence (current utility bill) and a parent identification. Parents may review other registration/enrollment requirements

at www.sisd.net/enrollment.

Transfer application for students within and outside SISD began April 1, 2024 for students transferring from within the district (intra-district transfers) and students transferring from outside of the district (inter-district transfers).

(FAQ: https://core-docs.s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/3783/SISD/4123012/03_18_24_FAQ_for_INTER_INTRA_District_Transfers.pdf)

(Applications: https://core-docs.s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/3783/SISD/4123012/03_18_24_FAQ_for_INTER_INTRA_District_Transfers.pdf)

SISD provides academic opportunities, including a free full-day Pre-Kindergarten program for all 4-year-olds and a half-day program for qualifying 3-year-old students. In addition, new Pre-K students may apply for the Dual Language Academy.

The district's early childhood programs provide engaging, hands-on learning to build a solid foundation for students to succeed in their academic journey. The curriculum includes social and emotional development, language development, technology, social studies, math, science, and physical development. For more information on Pre-K for 3- or 4-year-olds, visit www.sisd.net/prek or contact your elementary home school.

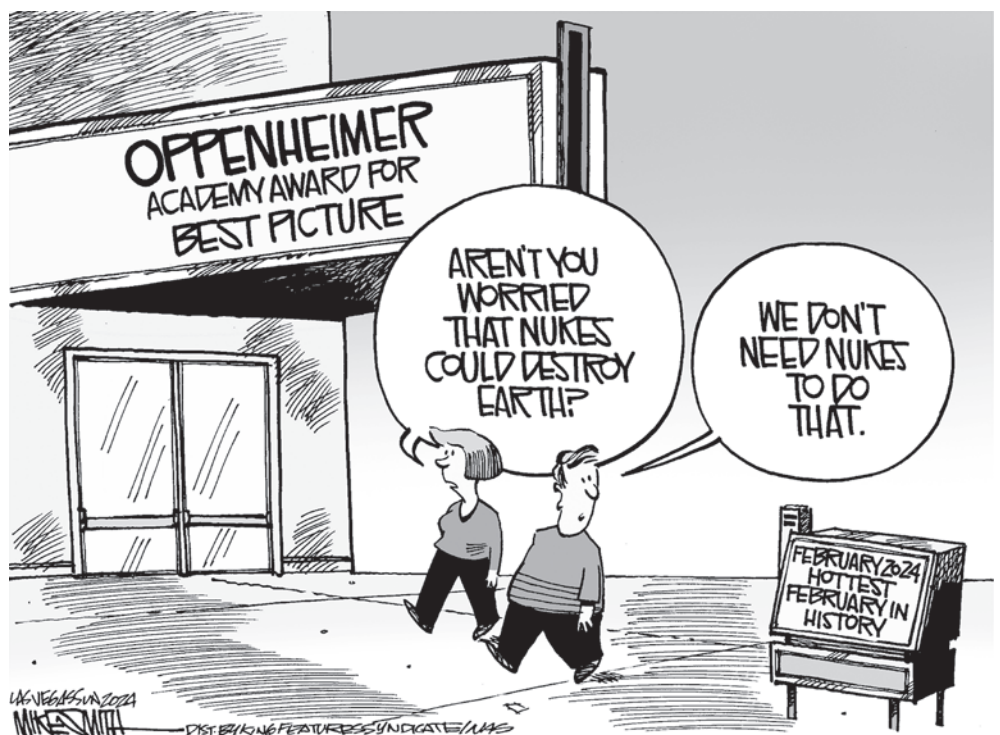
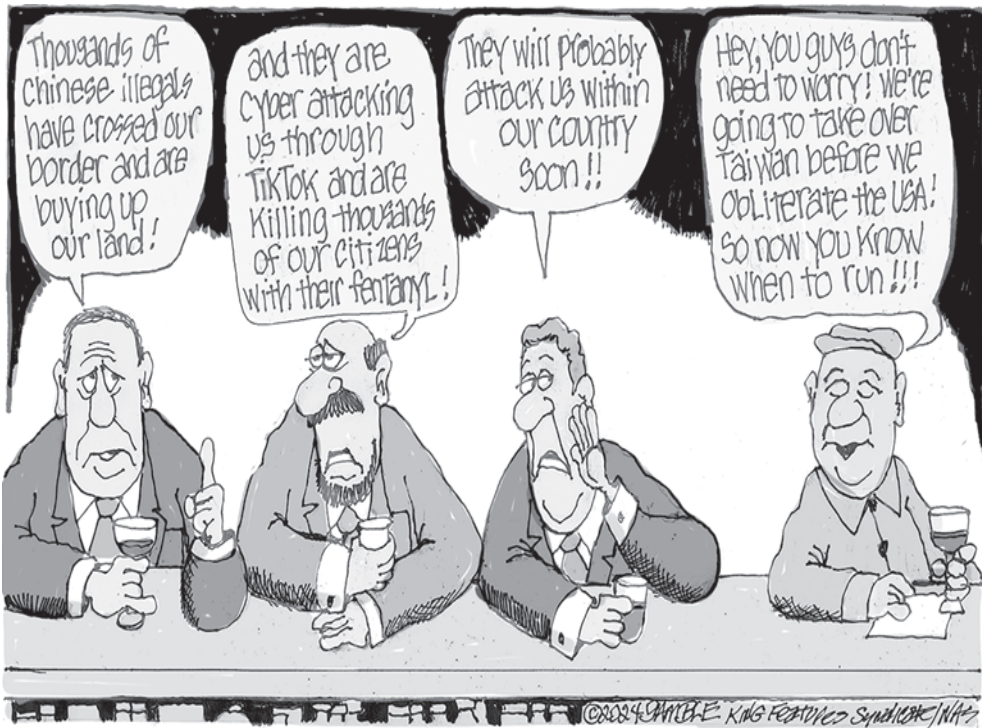
The Pre-K program for 3-year-olds is based on economic, language, homeless or military requirements as established by the state. A child must be 3 years old by September 1, 2024. Registration documents for the 3-year-old program will be accepted on a first come, first served basis, dependent on the time/day parents/guardians submit their online form. Students must meet qualifying conditions for the 3-year-old program.

The Pre-K program for all 4-year-olds has only an age requirement. A child must be 4 years old

by September 1, 2024 to qualify. New, incoming 4-year-old Pre-K students (not currently enrolled in SISD Pre-K) will have the opportunity to apply for SISD'S Dual Language Academy. The academy is housed at Dr. Sue A. Shook, Myrtle Cooper, and Huelco elementary schools and Bill Sybert School.

Pre-K campuses for 3- and 4-year-olds:

- Benito Martínez Elementary (4 only)
- Bill Sybert School (4 only)
- Cactus Trails Elementary (4 only)
- Campestre Elementary (4 only)
- Chester E. Jordan Elementary (3 and 4)
- Col. Ben Narbut Elementary (3 and 4)
- Desert Wind School (4 only)
- Dr. Sue A. Shook Elementary (4 only)
- Élfida P. Chávez Elementary (4 only)
- Escontrias STEAM Academy (3 and 4)
- H.D. Hilley Elementary (3 and 4)
- Helen Ball Elementary (3 and 4)
- Horizon Heights Elementary (4 only)
- Huelco Elementary (3 and 4)
- James P. Butler Elementary (3 and 4)
- Jane A. Hambric School (4 only)
- John Drugan School (4 only)
- Loma Verde Elementary (3 and 4)
- Lujan-Chavez Elementary (4 only)
- Mission Ridge Elementary (3 and 4)
- Myrtle Cooper Elementary* (4 only)
- (*Pre-K in Dual Language Academy only)
- O'Shea Keleher Elementary (3 and 4)
- Paso del Norte Fine Arts Academy (3 and 4)
- Purple Heart Elementary (3 and 4)
- Robert R. Rojas Elementary (3 and 4)
- Sgt. Jose F. Carrasco Elementary (4 only)
- Sgt. Roberto Ituarte Elementary (3 and 4)
- Sierra Vista Elementary (3 and 4)
- Vista del Sol Elementary (3 and 4)



Briefs

From Page 1

to the credit bureaus. That allows people a little leeway to get the funds together and avoid credit score damage, though the issuer will still likely charge a late fee. Laredo, TX, has the biggest debt delinquency problem. Around 14.9% of loans and lines of credit in Laredo are delinquent as of Q4 2023, and when all the dollar amounts are added together, residents are delinquent on around 19.9% of their overall debt.”

– *Cassandra Happe, WalletHub Analyst*

Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/cities-where-people-are-most-delinquent-on-debt/134712/> for the full report.

– *Diana Polk*

A very, very pricey taste

The rare, fragrant, flavorful and extremely expensive white truffles that grow in Alba, Italy can put you back nearly \$7,000 a pound. It’s the reason why Japanese company, Cellato, broke the Guinness record for the world’s priciest ice cream, a brand called Byakuya that would set you back \$6,696 per serving. According to the company, “It took us over 1.5 years to develop, with a lot of trials and errors to get the taste right. Achieving a Guinness World Records title made the effort all worth it.”

– *John Grimaldi*



– Photo courtesy EPCC

DESIGNER – Nathaniel Espinal models one of his creations designed for either men or women.

Espinal

From Page 1

and actor Robbie Mora wore his designs for the MTV Latin America program, Acapulco Shock.

“The EPCC counselors and faculty have been very important in my career. Jessica Del Rio has been like a compass for me during my stay at EPCC and Professor Yasmin Ramirez, who allowed me to work with her, helped me with my many doubts,” Espinal said. Adding, “Professors Crystal Frank and Donna Muñoz have always believed in me”.



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CryptoQuip Answer

When you pack tons of fluffy duck feathers onto a transport ship, I guess that’s down-loading.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Using high-pressure, high-temperature techniques that mimic Earth’s diamond-forming conditions, scientists can transform the carbon in peanut butter into sparkling gemstones. Chew on that!
- And speaking of chewing, snails have thousands of tiny teeth on their radula, the tongue-like organ they use for grinding up food, making them one of the earth’s toothiest creatures.
- If stored correctly and not contaminated, honey can last for thousands of years without spoiling.
- Though T-shirts have existed since the late 1800s, the plain white version gained popularity as a wear-alone garment thanks to Marlon Brando’s portrayal of Stanley Kowalski in the movie “A Streetcar Named Desire.”
- One out of every seven American jobs is related to transportation.

Some architectural structures, known as whispering galleries, have unique acoustics allowing a whisper at one end of the gallery to be heard clearly at the other end, due to sound waves following the curved surfaces.

The “United States Postal Service Anthem,” a unique song composed by (appropriately) Jack Stamp, is an official musical salute to the USPS, its employees, and its role in American life.

In some WWII POW camps, the Nazis would allow Allied soldiers to play board games like Monopoly, even providing the games. The British exploited this opportunity by using compasses, banknotes, and real-world maps in place of standard boards and pieces, as a means of helping prisoners to escape.

Thought for the Day: “If no one ever took risks, Michelangelo would have painted the Sistine floor.”
– Neil Simon

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

social reformer Dorothea Dix was born in Hampden, Maine. Dix founded a home for girls in Boston while she was still just a teenager and later passionately campaigned for humane conditions in jails and insane asylums.

On April 5, 2008, actor Charlton Heston, who won an Oscar for his starring role in "Ben-Hur," died of Alzheimer's disease at his home in Beverly Hills. Heston notably played Michelangelo, El Cid, and other heroic figures in Hollywood movies of the 1950s and 1960s.

On April 6, 1917, following a vote by Congress approving a declaration of war, the U.S. entered World War I in Europe. Four days earlier, President Woodrow Wilson cited Germany's violation of its pledge to suspend unrestricted submarine warfare in the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean, as well as its attempts to entice Mexico into an alliance against America, as his reasons for requesting the declaration.

On April 7, 1712, a rebellion of 27 Black slaves took place in New York City, with nine whites shot as they attempted to put out a fire started by the slaves. The state militia was called out to capture the rebels, and 21 were executed while the remaining six committed suicide.

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On April 1, 1988, a federal judge in Little Rock, Arkansas, dismissed a sexual harassment case against President Bill Clinton, stating it had no "genuine issues" worthy of a trial. Although Clinton had denied any wrongdoing, a unanimous ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in May 1997 allowed the case to proceed, establishing a precedent permitting sitting presidents to be sued for personal conduct that allegedly occurred before they took office.

On April 2, 1863, a bread riot occurred in the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, when angry people demanded bread from a bakery wagon before wrecking nearby shops. The mob only dispersed after Confederate President Jefferson Davis made a personal plea and threatened to use force to break it up.

On April 3, 1944, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 8 to 1 that African Americans could not be barred from voting in the Texas Democratic primaries. The court stated that discrimination against Blacks violated the 15th Amendment and that political parties were not private associations.

On April 4, 1802, American

Leos heads AISD anti-bullying program

By Adriana Candelaria
Special to the Courier

ANTHONY, TX – Anthony ISD has hired Melissa Leos as Project Director of the Stronger Connections Program, a vital initiative aimed at addressing and responding to bullying, violence, and acts of hate within Texas school districts.

With nearly 18 years of experience in social work and human services, Leos brings a wealth of expertise and dedication to her new role.

Since 2017, Leos has served as the Anthony ISD as the Parent and Community Engagement Leader and Migrant Education Specialist. During her tenure at Anthony ISD, Leos has built rapport with district parents to help them navigate the school system and to provide support services. She has also worked to identify migrant students and help them successfully transition to postsecondary education and/or employment.

In her capacity as Project Director, Leos will provide daily oversight of the Stronger Connections Grant. She will work closely with school administrators to analyze and gather information regarding students' behavior and implement practices to assist the students with improving their mental and



– Photo courtesy Anthony ISD

Melissa Leos

emotional health, among other requirements of the Stronger Connections Grant.

"I am deeply honored to assume the role of Project Director for the Stronger Connections Program at Anthony ISD. With this initiative, we will be dedicated to fostering a safe and inclusive environment where students can thrive academically and socially," Leos said.

The Stronger Connections Grant is a \$1 million grant that was awarded to Anthony ISD in November by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to improve safe and healthy learning environments. The grant will provide funding through September 2026.

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LEGALS

VILLAGE OF VINTON, TX

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public hearings will be held at 6:30pm on Thursday, April 23, 2024 during the Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting, and on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 during the Regular Council Meeting at Vinton Village Hall, 436 E. Vinton Road, Vinton, Texas.

The purpose of the public hearings is to allow any interested persons to appear and testify regarding the following items:

1) A request to amend the Unified Development Code to allow truck stops and gasoline stations on Town Center thru a Special Use Permit.

2) A request to amend the Unified Development Code to allow food trucks in Town Center, C-1 and C-2 zonings.

Those who are unable to attend may submit their views in writing to the Village Administrator at 436 E. Vinton Road, Vinton, Texas 79821. Persons with disabilities that

wish to attend this meeting should contact City Hall at (915) 886-5104 to arrange for assistance. Individuals who require auxiliary aids or services for this meeting should contact City Hall at least two days before the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

MEETING WILL BE HELD IN PERSON, BUT THE PUBLIC CAN ACCESS THE MEETING THROUGH THE ZOOM.US PLATFORM AT THE FOLLOWING URL:

LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2520023141?pwd=WVRDZDIFR3ZHR3FVlJUL3ZLWTB6dz09>

THE VILLAGE PROVIDES TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE COMMISSION DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING BY CALLING THE FOLLOWING NUMBER: +1 346 248 7799 AND THEN DIAL IN THE MEETING ID 252 002 3141 AND PASSCODE: 12345FOLLOWED BY THE POUND SIGN (#). THE MEETING WILL OPEN AT 6:25 PM ON EACH OF

THE MEETING DATES SO THAT PEOPLE MAY START JOINING. THE MEETING WILL START AT 6:30 PM.

Andrea N. Carrillo
Village Administrator

WTCC: 04-04-24

VILLAGE OF VINTON, TX

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS 2024-003

BANKING DEPOSITORY SERVICES

Notice is hereby given that the Village of Vinton is accepting sealed applications for a three (3) year bank depository services contract with an effective date of June 1, 2024. The contract may be extended by agreement for up to two additional one (1) year terms.

The contract specifications may be obtained from the Village of Vinton website under "Opportunities" or directly from the Village Administrator.

Sealed applications must be received by the Village of Vinton no later than 9:00 a.m. on May 2, 2024 at the Village City Hall, located at 436 E. Vinton

Road, Vinton Texas, 79821. Applications received after the due date will not be considered by the Village Council.

All applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "DEPOSITORY SERVICES APPLICATION 2024-003".

The Village Council will consider awarding a depository services contract at its regular Council meeting to be held on May 7, 2024.

The Village of Vinton reserves the right to reject any or all applications, to waive any irregularities or informalities or both in any application, and to make an award in any manner, consistent with the law and deemed to be in the best interest of the Village.

No applicant may withdraw its application within thirty (30) days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

Village of Vinton is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Village of Vinton, TX
Andrea N. Carrillo
Village Administrator

WTCC: 04-04-24

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Lowry

From Page 2

have anticipated as much. Benny Gantz, who would presumably run against Netanyahu in a future election, harshly rejected the Schumer call for a new government. So, the only place where Schumer could have any assurance of advancing his cause was here at home.

What stronger signal could there be that the Democratic leadership has heard the activist calls to rein in Israel than the previously staunch supporter of the Jewish state, Chuck Schumer, unloading on its wartime government?

Hamas has been getting devastated on the battlefield, but the turn against Israel among Democratic officials in the U.S. is a sign of the success of its longer, deeply cynical strategy. By doing everything in its power to create the predicate for more civilian casualties in Gaza, Hamas hopes to turn international opinion against Israel. So it has done in one of the two major American political parties.

If you had told many of the same Democrats criticizing Israel today that within five months of the Oct. 7 attack they would be inveighing

against Israel's war against Hamas, they would have been incredulous. If you had told them they would be getting pushed around by pro-Hamas sentiment in their own party, they would have rejected the idea as impossible. If you had told them they would have been seeking a two-state solution as one of their highest post-Oct. 7 priorities, they might have considered it a smear.

Yet here we are.

On top of everything else, this isn't good domestic politics. There is still majority support for Israel. The anti-Israel turn demonstrates, yet again, that the Biden campaign is pursuing a base strategy in November. Just the last couple of days, Kamala Harris visited an abortion clinic, Joe Biden suggested there will be no executive action at the border, and Schumer – having run it by the White House first – delivered his Philippic.

What's fidelity to an ally compared to zeal in pursuit of an embattled president's election strategy?

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

Be cautious using Viagra after a stroke

DEAR DR. ROACH: My husband had a small stroke last spring, causing a minor loss of vision in his left eye. He is 81 and an otherwise active man. He has even been told by several doctors that he can drive. One doctor told him to stop using meclizine and Viagra. Another physician said that he didn't see a problem with taking the meds. Both physicians are very skilled. Whose advice should he follow? – M.M.



A stroke is caused by the death of brain cells, most commonly due to poor blood flow in the brain, and it's critical to avoid any medication that will increase the risk of stroke. Meclizine is an antihistamine medicine most commonly used for motion sickness and sometimes used for vertigo. Although it has been reported to cause blurry vision, the risk of taking meclizine in a person with a history of a stroke is minimal.

The situation with Viagra is more complex. A rare side effect of Viagra is nonarteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION), affecting one in every 10,000 people over 50. A person with a history of NAION should not take Viagra.

There isn't good evidence that Viagra is dangerous for a person who had a stroke. One trial suggested that there was benefit in reducing the size of a stroke with Viagra. However, Viagra does lower blood pressure by a few points, so if your husband's blood pressure is on the borderline, this might be an issue.

I can't give you a definitive answer, but most authorities say that a man who is stable, has good blood pressure and is more than six months out from his stroke does need not stop Viagra.

DEAR DR. ROACH: At 75, I developed stress urinary incontinence, but in the past two years, it has become more uncomfortable. My urogynecologist has recommended a urethral bulking agent called Bulkamid. Are you familiar with this procedure? Can you give any insight on the pros and cons? – M.F.

My preferred treatment for female stress incontinence are pelvic floor exercises, ideally with the help of a pelvic floor physical therapist, as this has a very high patient-satisfaction rate without the risk of medication or surgery. Unfortunately, they don't work for everyone. In women well past menopause, I look carefully for evidence of vulvovaginal atrophy and consider topical estrogen.

If these low-risk therapies are ineffective, then a visit to the urologist or urogynecologist is in order. The most common treatments include surgery, such as the minimally invasive sling surgery, and also the injection of a bulking agent into the urethra, like Bulkamid. Comparing the two, surgery tends to have higher patient-satisfaction rates, but the injection is less invasive. It has good results for most women, although sometimes additional injections are necessary (about 25% in a large study).

For younger women, especially those with fewer medical problems, surgical treatment is often recommended. For older women or those who aren't in good medical shape (or who just want to avoid surgery), the Bulkamid injection is a good option. Your urogynecologist can explain why they recommended Bulkamid over a urethral sling procedure.

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

In Texas, 1.7% of our legislators are full-time... in California, 80% of their state lawmakers are full-timers... hmmm.

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: F equals H

CFRM AEO VNLB SEMH EK
 KJOKKA ZOLB KRNSFRXH EMSE
 N SXNMHVEXS HFQV, Q IORHH
 SFNS'H ZECM-JENZQMI.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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Small punishments for scammers



by Freddy Groves

What always stands out, at least to me, are the low penalties for the criminals who steal from veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The number of scams seems to grow, and one wonders if it's because thieves don't perceive there to be much punishment if they should be caught.

An example: A veteran threatened to blow up a VA medical facility. He verbally told the crisis line and even identified the person he specifically wanted to kill and when. He was found and arrested for making threats and even made additional threats after the arrest. Now, he hasn't gone to court yet, but the evidence is pretty strong. Why, one wonders, would he only be in line for five short years in the slammer? Yes, there could be a hefty fine, but it's the time behind bars that would keep society safe.

Another example: There was the VA employee who stole prescription drugs that were mailed to VA patients. He knew where they were going, of course, since the drugs were shipped from the VA pharmacy and he therefore had the addresses. He and his pals would break into the mailboxes to steal the drugs, which he would then sell for big profits. I think about cancer patients when I learn of something like this, cancer patients who need their drugs on time, not to mention the likely pain medications. The main thief in this scam only received a sentence of 42 months in prison; his scammer pals got sentences of 12 and 35 months. Not long enough, not nearly long enough.

Then there was the guy who convinced everyone that he was blind and therefore 100% disabled and needed some benefits. Turned out he had both a drivers license and a gun carry permit and could see well enough for those activities. Not so blind after all, but his punishment was

a few years of probation and some cash restitution.

So where is the deterrence to thieves and scammers when the punishment is so light?

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- Have stubborn stains in the toilet? Put some teeth in your cleaning job by dropping in a denture-cleaning tablet and letting it sit overnight. In the morning, scrub and flush. It just might do the job.

- "Lighten blemish spots on your skin with lemon juice. Just dab on several times per day." – O.M. in Georgia

- "Collect small bits of soap into a cup or jar. When you have several, add a tablespoon or two of water to the cup to soften the contents on a washcloth, fold it over and press into a bar shape with your hands. Peel away the cloth to reveal what should be a reasonably solid new bar of soap." – C.T. in Pennsylvania

- Save power with this tip: Use cold water to wash towels and jeans. Then hang them to dry – preferably outside, but on an inside line is OK, too. When they are mostly dry, pop them in the dryer on air dry to fluff up. Towels and jeans take the longest to dry in the clothes dryer, and use a lot of electricity.

- Take soap scum right off your shower curtain – spray with vinegar and water mixture, then throw it in the washer. Hang it right back up, and those mildew stains are gone!

- Shopping for bagged frozen vegetables? Give them the squeeze test: If the vegetables feel hard and solid, they have thawed and refrozen. Choose another bag.

- "When canning or doing another job, always do the thing you hate first, then the rest will be easier." – L.D.W. in Illinois

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

GO FIGURE!

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

	+		×		=	63		
+		+		-				
	-		+		=	3		
÷		÷		×				
	+		×		=	48		
=		=		=				
2		10		56				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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IFE

SPLOGE

♥ SASEP

NGWA

APILEM

♥ WLA

LPFE

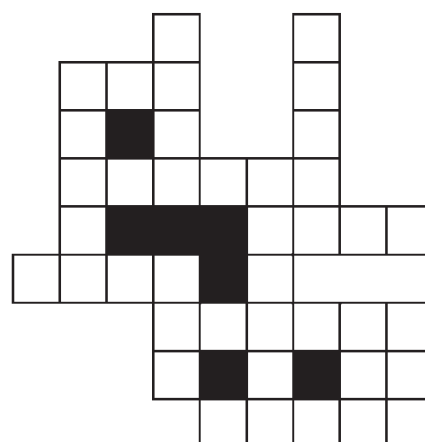
♥ NIWSE

♥ PNA

WEGSEA

LWFNO

♥ WSOL



Answer Page 4

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

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