



NEWSBRIEFS

Mentors' money

The Montwood Mentors were awarded a \$3,000 grant from The Lead4Change Project – a small grants program that showcases the growth of students as leaders and funds their ideas for community impact. Montwood High School students in leadership classes developed projects to benefit their campus and/or community. The Montwood students have been serving as mentors to a select group of students at O'Shea Keleher. They worked with O'Shea Keleher Whole Child Academy to teach the importance of mental health awareness and the impact that friendships and relationships can have on an individual's mental health. With the grant money, the Montwood students are planning field trips to continue their journey to explore the importance of friendship, camaraderie, and mental health awareness.

– Christy Flores-Jones

Healthy cities

With more than 7 in 10 U.S. adults being overweight and health care costs rising, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2024's Healthiest Cities in America, as well as expert commentary, to show where people are saving and costing themselves the most money. WalletHub compared more than 180 of the largest U.S. cities across 41 key metrics. The data set ranges from the cost of a medical visit to fruit and vegetable consumption to the share of physically active adults. El Paso was rated 147th in the report. Other stats:

- Overland Park, Kansas, has the lowest share of physically unhealthy adults, which is 2.4 times lower than in Augusta, Georgia, the city with the highest.
- Laredo, TX has the lowest cost per doctor's visit, which is 3.1 times less expensive than in Juneau, AK, the city with the highest.
- Portland, ME has the lowest share of adults eating fruits less than once daily, which is 1.6 times lower than in Chattanooga, TN, the city with the highest.
- Lubbock, TX has the lowest average monthly cost for a fitness-club membership, which is 8.8

See BRIEFS, Page 2

In our Republic the rich and the poor agree on taxes – they both complain about them.

– Quips & Quotes



– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

COMING SOON – The recently announced Independent Nation entertainment complex will be built on 14 acres of currently vacant land on Sunland Park Drive – between the black plastic/fencing and the casino complex in the background – along the Texas-New Mexico border. It will sit between the Sunland Park Racetrack and the Stateline barbecue restaurant with Mount Cristo Rey as its backdrop. A groundbreaking ceremony for construction of the new venue was held last October. See Page 3 for the project plan.

Sunland Park NM entertainment venues aim to attract El Paso County residents

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

SUNLAND PARK – Construction of the first of two entertainment venues in Sunland Park, NM is underway as El Paso developer David Bingham broke

ground recently on his multi-million dollar complex.

Bingham is president and owner of the Heritage Group, a longtime commercial real estate development company that is headquartered in its nine-story PNC Bank building, which is situated along Interstate 10 in

Central El Paso.

The new venue will be located on 14 acres of currently vacant land at the edge of El Paso County's western most boundary, right on the Texas-New Mexico state line, between the

See SUNLAND PARK, Page 2

Koerner, Wright serve on Texas Veterans Commission

By Jim Halbrook
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – Laura Koerner, Chairwoman of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), has been reappointed by Governor Greg Abbott. Abbott also appointed Charles "Chuck" Wright to the TVC.

Koerner was appointed to the TVC in 2018, and then as Chairwoman in 2020. She is a project manager, engineer, and a Councilwoman for the City of Fair Oaks Ranch. She served in the United States Navy as a Surface Warfare (Nuclear) Officer onboard USS MAHAN (DDG 72) and USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65), earning 2 Navy Commendation Medals and a Navy Achievement Medal.

"I am honored to continue serving the interests of veterans and their families in the Lone Star State. This

state is home to more veterans than any other state because the State of Texas invests in services and benefits to those who served in the Armed Forces," Koerner said.

Wright is a financial planner and founder of Lone Star Wealth Strategies. He is a board member of United Service Organizations of Dallas/Fort Worth and the One Star Foundation. He served in the United States Marine Corps as a CH 46 pilot. Prior to his appointment, he served as the Vice Chair of the Texas Veteran Commission's Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee.

"I am excited to advocate for the 1.5 million veterans throughout Texas as a TVC Commissioner. The agency is filled with many dedicated veterans who strive to continuously improve our services to all Texas veterans, their families and survivors. This role will allow me to continue this work serving veterans and paying it forward," said Wright.



Laura Koerner



Charles "Chuck" Wright

– Photos courtesy Texas Veterans Commission

The rise of Trump nostalgia

Donald Trump obviously left office on a sour note in January 2021, written off by many opinion-makers and political professionals. Then, President Biden happened.

The most remarkable phenomenon of the 2024 election cycle so far is the rise of Trump nostalgia. It's difficult for anyone to have a new opinion about former President Trump, who is so well-known, so in-your-face, and so polarizing. Yet, people have a new, more favorable attitude toward his presidency in retrospect, certainly compared to the current occupant of the White House.

After about 36 months of President Biden, in other words, people yearn for the halcyon Trump years.

Consider the latest CBS News poll. It found that, looking back, 46% of people consider Trump's

administration excellent or good, about 5 points higher than his average job approval when he left office. Only 33% say the same about Biden's time in office.

Even more starkly, on the economy, 65% think the economy was good under Trump, and only 28% think it was bad. In almost a mirror image, only 38% think the economy is good under Biden and 59 think it is bad.

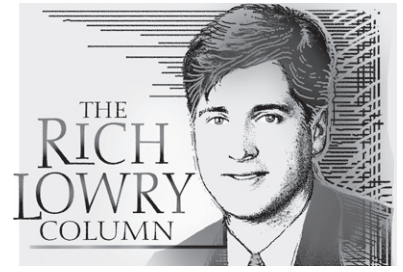
By the end of his term, Trump didn't rate nearly as high. After the disruptions of the pandemic, about 51% of people approved of Trump's handling of the economy.

According to a November 2020 Economist/YouGov poll, people were split, 42-42, on whether the economy would get better or worse under a

President Biden. This was about even with Trump's ratings – 45% thought the economy would get better if he was re-elected, 40% worse.

In today's context, those are numbers from another universe, and would materially improve Biden's chances of re-election if they still held.

Of course, it was Trump's conduct after the 2020 election that blighted his image such that it seemed hard to come back from. In January 2021, according to another Economist/YouGov poll, 55% of people thought Trump shouldn't be allowed to



See LOWRY, Page 7

Sunland Park

From Page 1

Sunland Park Casino and the Stateline Steakhouse Restaurant.

The project, which is estimated to be about a \$30 million investment, will include a six-building entertainment and event complex with a small, outdoor amphitheater for concerts.

Bingham stated that his company has been researching for years different entertainment venue concepts that combine interesting, community-oriented attractions under one umbrella. He stated that he chose to do the project in Sunland Park because he has owned that land for almost 20 years.

The entertainment complex, which will be called Independent Nation, is expected to open before the end of 2025. Bingham related that plans are to include three

to four restaurants, two to three bars, pickleball, padel and sand volleyball courts, virtual reality rooms, an arcade, and even an ice rink in the winter. Additionally, one building will have about 10,000 square-foot space for conventions, weddings and other events; and, a cannabis dispensary will be located next to the complex, he added.

The amphitheater will sit in the center of the complex and will be able to hold up to 4,000 people, according to the developer. He stated that he also foresees booking bands and other shows that would cater to more-intimate audiences of less than 1,000 people because, as he pointed out, he is not going to depend on concerts as his main economic source of income.

A second venue is being considered by another group that is developing designs for a larger concert arena. "We believe there's enough room for both venues as we've been

aware of his (Bingham's) project for quite some time," George Lowen, a partner in the Visneti Group, stated in a recent news report.

The Visneti Group is working on a plan to build an indoor concert hall with about 5,000 to 6,000 seats on 21 acres, which would be constructed near the Independent Nation site. Bingham also said that he doesn't see his complex directly competing with Visneti's plan, which is still in the design stage, because Visneti would be seeking

different, larger shows.

Reaping big tax dollar rewards for the two upcoming venues is the City of Sunland Park, NM. Mayor Javier Perea stated that he expects both projects to be viable entertainment venues for his fast-growing community.

The Sunland Park mayor said that these projects "support the city's vision for an entertainment district" by capitalizing on the popular Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino and the Western Playland amusement park nearby. He added that as an

incentive, the City of Sunland Park is providing retail and property tax rebates for the Independent Nation venue and that the state of New Mexico is providing millions of dollars in low-interest loans for the project.

"I'm looking forward to the new entertainment venues," one west El Paso County resident remarked, "it will definitely attract not only El Paso County residents but also tourists from New Mexico and Mexico, and it's going to be a big economic boost for the City of Sunland Park."

Briefs

From Page 1

times less expensive than in New York, NY, the city with the highest.

"Staying healthy is a personal responsibility, and everyone should strive to eat nutritious food, exercise regularly and look after their mental health. However, where people live can have a big influence on how successful they are at staying in good health, so the best cities are the ones that provide the greatest access to high-quality healthcare, green spaces, recreation centers, and healthy food San Francisco is the healthiest city in America, in part because it has the lowest share of obese adults in the country, at just 19% of the population. San Franciscans eat well and have good opportunities for exercise, too. San Francisco has the second-lowest share of people who eat less than one serving of fruits or vegetables per day, and 100% of the population lives reasonably close to a location where they can do some

sort of physical activity."

– Cassandra Happe
WalletHub Analyst

Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/healthiest-cities/31072> for the full report.

– Diana Polk

Growing old

It took a while, but Fred Allen Smalls finally got his diploma from the Georgetown County High School in the town of Plantersville. He missed graduation when he moved to Washington, DC to help support his family. Born on February 5, 1918, he recently turned 106 years of age and he is still going strong. Tamara Baker, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, told NBC News that "it's the positive social networks — the ones that are going to influence you, or get behind you to go to the doctor, to do the exercise, to eating properly. Even in some of the more impoverished neighborhoods, if you have that positive social network, that can go a long way."

– John Grimaldi

Classified Ads

LEGALS

VILLAGE OF VINTON, TX

PUBLIC NOTICE

A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT WILL BE HELD AT 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday, May 7th, 2024 during the City Council Meeting at Vinton Village Hall, 436 E. Vinton Road,

Vinton, Texas. The Purpose of the public hearing is to allow any interested persons to appear and testify regarding the following proposed item:
A request for a variance for a side setback less than 5' between house and side property line on 330 Hemley Rd. Vinton, Texas.
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=WVRDZDIFR3ZHR3FVJlU3ZL>

WTB6dz09
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:

1 2 3 4 5
FOLLOWED BY THE POUND SIGN (#). THE MEETING WILL OPEN AT 6:25 PM ON EACH OF THE MEETING DATES SO THAT THE PEOPLE MAY START JOINING. THE MEETING WILL START AT 6:30 PM.
Andrea N. Carrillo
Village Administrator
WTCC: 04-11-24



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

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

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

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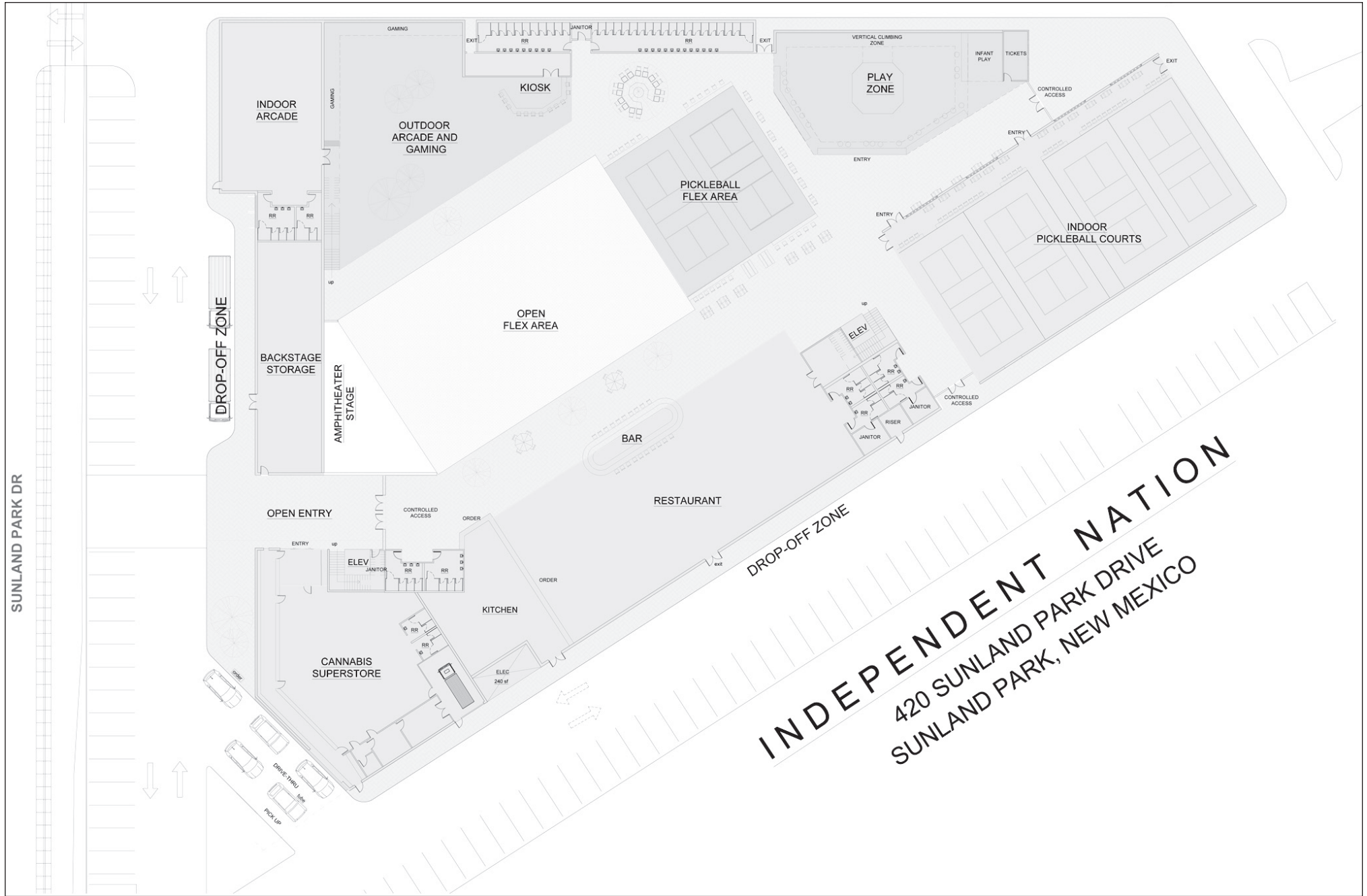
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Homesteader
Est. 1973
News, Inc.



- Rendering Courtesy of Heritage Group

SUNLAND PARK, NM PROJECT PLAN - Above is the current layout of the proposed entertainment complex. It is expected to open before the end of 2025. Plans are to include three to four restaurants, two to three bars, pickleball, padel and sand volleyball courts, virtual reality rooms, an arcade, and an ice rink in the winter. One building will have about 10,000 square-foot space for conventions, weddings and other events. See story on Page 1.



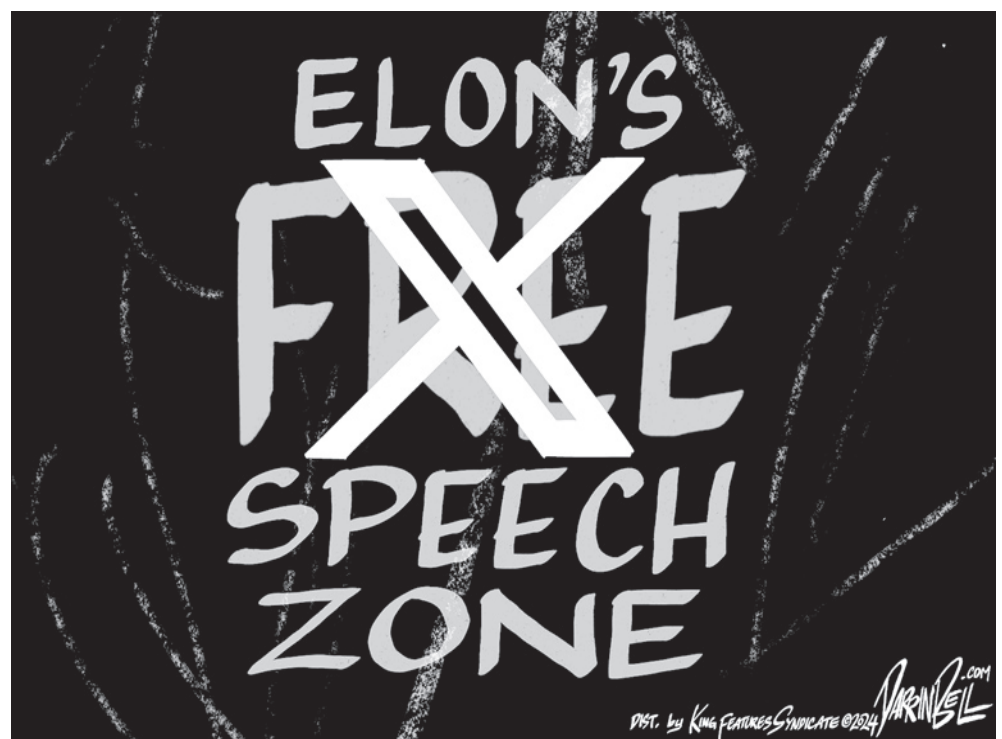
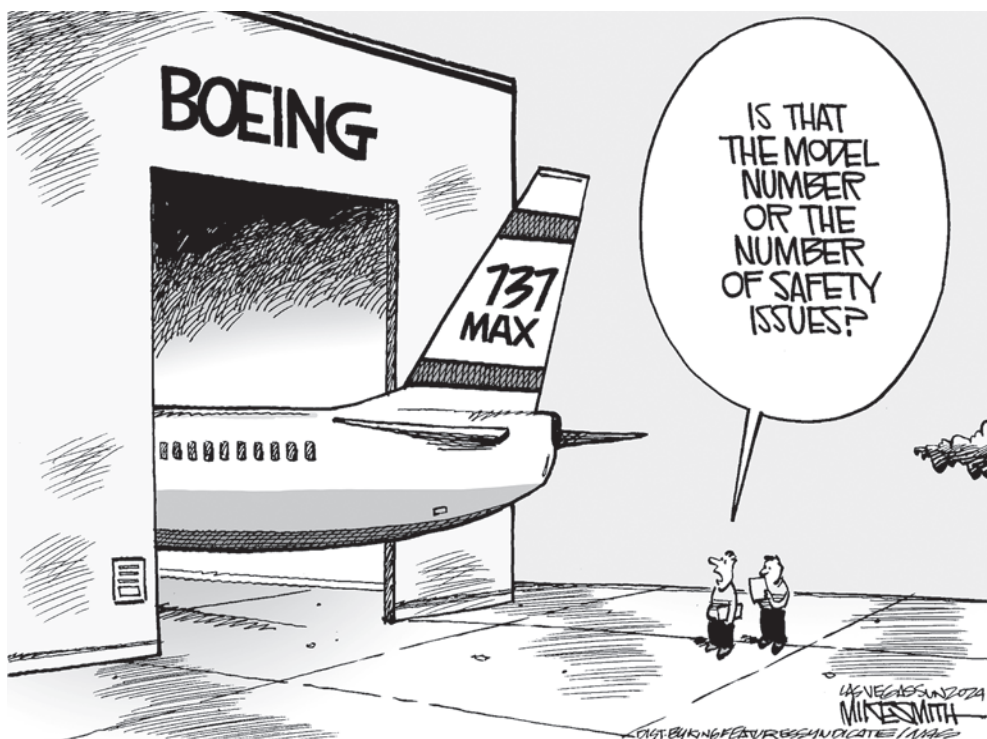
A NATION TURNS AN ANXIOUS EYE TOWARD THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE BETWEEN TRUMP AND THE WHITE HOUSE...



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Border Highway East Corridor Study

Notice of a Public Meeting

Notice

Virtual Public Meeting with In-Person Options BORDER HIGHWAY EAST CORRIDOR STUDY

From Loop 375 (Americas Ave) to FM 3380 (M.F. Aguilera Rd)

CSJ: 0924-06-090

El Paso County, Texas

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) El Paso District has initiated the Border Highway East Corridor Study, which seeks to find a unified vision around improving mobility in the study area. The study area is an 18-mile-long corridor that extends from Loop 375 (Americas Avenue) in El Paso, Texas to FM 3380 (M.F. Aguilera Road) near Tornillo, Texas. This notice advises the public that TxDOT will be conducting an online virtual public meeting about the study with two in-person options.

Virtual Option	In-Person Option 1	In-Person Option 2
Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 5 p.m. MT through May 16, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. MT Go to www.TxDOT.gov and enter keyword "Border Highway East Study"	Wednesday, May 1, 2024 5 to 7 p.m. MT Clint High School 13890 Alameda Ave, Clint, TX 79836	Thursday, May 2, 2024 5 to 7 p.m. MT Western Tech College, 2 nd floor 9624 Plaza Cir, El Paso, TX 79927
The same information will be presented at all three meeting options.		

The virtual meeting will consist of a pre-recorded video presentation and will include both audio and visual components. The presentation will be posted online by Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at 5 p.m. MT. To log onto the virtual public meeting, go to the following web address at the date and time indicated above: www.txdot.gov and enter the keyword "Border Highway East Study." The virtual public meeting will remain available for viewing until at least Wednesday, May 16 at 11:59 p.m. MT. If you have questions or if you need help accessing meeting materials, you may leave a voicemail at (844) 243-3325 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. MT Monday through Friday until May 16.

In addition to the virtual meeting, TxDOT is providing two in-person meeting options for individuals who would like to participate in person instead of online. In-person attendees will be able to view hardcopies of study materials such as exhibit boards and conceptual layouts, and they will be able to talk to TxDOT staff and/or consultants and submit written comments. **The first in-person option will be held on Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Clint High School, 13890 Alameda Ave, Clint, TX 79836. The second in-person option will be held on Thursday, May 2, 2024, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Western Tech College, 9624 Plaza Cir, El Paso, TX 79927.**

The Border Highway East Corridor Study analyzes the benefits and challenges of improving mobility in the study area. As part of the corridor study, TxDOT El Paso District staff have met with key stakeholders, including elected officials and leaders of agencies, in an effort to find a unified vision around improving mobility in the Border Highway East study area. The corridor study has several goals, among them is to alleviate traffic congestion and improve safety in the study area. The study is an early planning effort, meaning, no tangible project has been identified, no funding is in hand, and no affects to property can be definitively determined at this time.

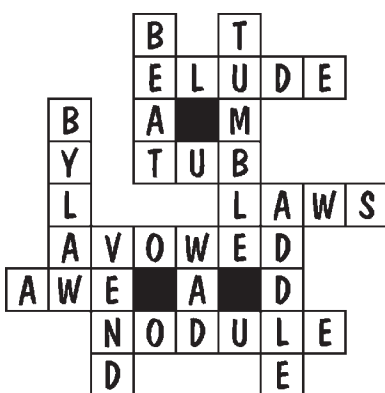
The virtual public meeting and in-person options will be conducted in English and Spanish. If you need an interpreter or translator because you have difficulty communicating effectively in English or Spanish, then an interpreter or translator will be provided to you. If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. If you need interpretation or translation services or if you need an accommodation to enable you to attend and participate in the virtual public meeting or in-person options, please contact the El Paso District Public Information Office at (915) 790-4341 no later than 4 p.m. MT on Thursday, April 25, 2024. Please be aware that advance notice is required as some services and accommodations may require time for the Texas Department of Transportation to arrange.

Written comments from the public regarding the study are requested and may be submitted by mail to the TxDOT El Paso District Office, Attention Gus Sanchez, 13301 Gateway Blvd. West, El Paso, Texas 79928. Written comments may also be submitted by email to BorderHighwayEast@txdot.gov. Verbal comments may be recorded and submitted by calling (844) 243-3325. All comments must be received on or before Thursday, May 16, 2024. Responses to comments will be available online at www.TxDOT.gov (enter key words "Border Highway East Study") once they have been prepared.

If you have any general questions or concerns regarding the study or virtual meeting or in-person meeting options, please email BorderHighwayEast@txdot.gov or send a letter by postal mail to the TxDOT El Paso District Office, Attention Gus Sanchez, 13301 Gateway Blvd. West, El Paso, Texas 79928.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

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CryptoQuip Answer

After the paleontologist finished digging up that valuable fossil, he gave it the brush-off.

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By Lucie Winborne

Residents of the Galapagos island of Floreana use a barrel of disorganized mail in place of a formal postal system. Tourists are responsible for sorting through the mail and grabbing any parcels they can deliver on the way to their destination.

In curling, sportsmanship and politeness are essential. Congratulating opponents on plays and abstaining from trash talk are part of what's known as the "Spirit of Curling."

Apollo 17 astronaut Harrison Schmitt was allergic to moon dust.

According to the record-holder for tallest waffle stack, Guinness World Records has a 40-page document defining what a waffle is. (Frankly, we think we could have managed it in just 30.)

Alaska is simultaneously the westernmost and easternmost state.

High schools and universities in New Zealand are allowed to keep up to a pound of uranium on the premises for educational purposes.

An ordinance in Gainesville, GA, states that everyone must eat fried chicken, "a culinary delicacy sacred to this municipality, this county, this state, the Southland and this republic," with their hands. The tongue-in-cheek law began as a publicity stunt aimed at getting folks to think of Gainesville as the fried chicken capital of the world.

Marie Curie's notebooks are still radioactive.

In 2010, rock band Nickelback approached Dark Horse Brewery about having their beer featured in a video, which would have provided great exposure for the small Michigan company. They declined, however, as "none of us at the brewery really care for the band."

The German version of the term "Average Joe" is Otto Normalverbraucher, which translates to "Otto normal consumer."

Polar bears gain more than 400 pounds during pregnancy.

Thought for the Day: "If you're going to do something tonight that you'll be sorry for tomorrow morning, sleep late."
- Henny Youngman



Moments in time
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

On April 8, 1930, baseball legend Babe Ruth signed a two-year contract for a then enormous sum of \$160,000 with the New York Yankees, prompting the team's general manager, Ed Barrow, to predict (with, of course, now laughable inaccuracy) that "No one will ever be paid more than Ruth."

On April 9, 1860, French inventor Edouard-Léon Scott de Martinville used his phonograph, the earliest known sound recording device, to capture himself singing the French folk song "Au Clair de la Lune."

On April 10, 2001, mercy killings became legal in the Netherlands following the Dutch senate's controversial approval of a bill legalizing euthanasia for patients with unbearable terminal illness.

On April 11, 1951, President Harry Truman fired Gen. Douglas MacArthur as commander of the United Nations and U.S. forces in the Far East after he made public statements calling for an attack on mainland China if Communist forces failed to lay down their arms in Korea.

On April 12, 1877, with a well-justified fear of ricocheting foul balls (not to mention being hit by a bat), Harvard's Alexander Tyng wore a converted fencer's mask for a baseball game in Lynn, MA, becoming the first-known player to don a catcher's mask. While the new gear initially drew taunts from fans, designer Fred Thayer's patent for the device was approved the following January.

On April 13, 1964, Sidney Poitier became the first Black actor to win the coveted Best Actor Oscar for his role as laborer Homer Smith, who assists a group of poor East German nuns with building a church, in "Lilies of the Field." Three years later, he was Hollywood's top box office draw.

On April 14, 2010, Neil Armstrong criticized the Barack Obama administration's stripped-down space plans in an open letter co-signed by Apollo commanders James Lovell and Eugene Cernan, describing the president's proposals as "devastating." Supporters, however, insisted that the accelerated rocket program would set new goals for American efforts in outer space.

PUBLIC NOTICE TOWN OF ANTHONY, TEXAS

FAIR HOUSING STATEMENT

The Town of Anthony hereby declares its support of fair housing practices. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the locality to bring about, through fair, orderly, and lawful procedures, the opportunity of each person to obtain housing without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental handicap, marital status, parenthood, or age.

It is further declared that such policy is established upon the recognition of the inalienable rights of each individual to obtain housing and further, that denial of such rights is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the locality and constitutes an unjust denial or deprivation of such inalienable rights which is within the power and the proper responsibility of government to prevent.

The locality has a Fair Housing Policy that may be examined and copied by interested groups or individuals during office hours. The month of April has been proclaimed "Fair Housing Month"; copies of the official proclamation are available at the Anthony Town Hall between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday.

POLICY STATEMENT ESTABLISHING NONDISCRIMINATION BASED ON HANDICAPPED CONDITIONS

The Town of Anthony announces that it has adopted a policy of nondiscrimination based on handicapped conditions concerning access, participation, and benefit of programs and activities operated or conducted by the locality. This policy is in compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 24 CFR, Part 8, "Non-discrimination Based on Handicap in Federally-Assisted Programs and Activities of HUD," dated June 2, 1988. Interested individuals or groups may obtain copies of this policy statement by calling Mayor Anthony D. Turner, who has been assigned to coordinate compliance with this policy and may be contacted by telephone at (915) 886-3944.

POLICY STATEMENT ON PROHIBITING THE USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Town of Anthony announces that it has adopted a policy prohibiting the use of excessive force by law enforcement personnel within its jurisdiction against an individual engaged in non-violent civil rights demonstrations. This policy is in compliance with Section 519 of Public Law 101-44, 1990, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act. Copies of this policy statement may be obtained upon request by telephone at (915) 886-3944.

COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

In order to comply with the requirements of the Texas Community Development Block Grant Program (TxCDBG) and of 10 T.A.C. Section 178.1 and Section 178.2, the locality has citizen complaint procedures intended to provide a timely written response to all complaints made against its proposed or completed TxCDBG efforts.

Responses to complaints will be made within no more than ten (10) working days. A copy of the complaint procedures can be obtained upon request by telephone at (915) 886-3944. The established complaint procedures are an element of the local Citizen Participation Plan, and meet the requirements of USHUD Section 504 (24 CFR) concerning nondiscrimination based on handicapped conditions.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT

The Town of Anthony is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of color, race, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability, in employment or in the provision of services.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POLICY

The locality has adopted a Limited English Proficiency Plan and Policy, and supports the requirements therein.

Copies of this entire Public Notice, in English and in Spanish, are available upon request at the Anthony Town Hall. Copias de este "Public Notice" aviso entero, en ingles y en espanol, se pueden conseguir en la Oficina Municipal de Anthony.

Anthony D. Turner
Mayor, Anthony, TX

West Texas County Courier
April 11, 2024

There might be a new NFL king in the Lone Star state

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

They've always said that there is no other state in these United States that loves football more than the state of Texas.

Football rules, starting in the pee wee leagues, to high school on Friday nights, to colleges on Saturday afternoons and evenings, all the way to Sundays in the NFL.

In college, the big names are the Texas Longhorns, Texas A&M Aggies, Baylor Bears, TCU Horned Frogs and the Texas Tech Red Raiders.

In the NFL there's no comparison, win or lose, the Dallas Cowboys have been the most recognized team in the entire league, let alone in the state of Texas.

Or at least, they always have been.

Little by little, there's been a slight shift going on in the Lone Star state.

Don't look now, but the Houston Texans may about to pass the Cowboys as the best Texas team in the NFL.

The Texans improved by quite a bit last year and have added even more pieces to their puzzle, while the Cowboys, who were very good last year, have lost a bunch of players and have basically added no one.

Houston won the AFC South last season with a 10-7 record and won a playoff game against the Cleveland Browns before falling to the Baltimore Ravens in the second round. Dallas won the NFC East with a 12-5 record, but were destroyed by the Green Bay Packers in the first round at home.

So what is going to happen in 2024? Let's break the teams down.

Believe it or not, after just one season, the Texans have already caught up to the Cowboys in the quarterback department.

Houston's C.J. Stroud, a rookie last season, and Dallas' Dak Prescott are a wash.

Stroud averaged 274 yards passing per game while Prescott averaged 265. Dak threw for 36 touchdowns and just nine interceptions, C.J., who missed two games, threw for 23 TDs and just 5 Ints. Prescott completed 69 percent of his passes while Stroud completed 64 percent.

Both quarterbacks are very good, but you've got to think that Stroud is going to go up a notch after a year's experience, especially when you consider the targets he has to throw to.

The Texans have a great young receiver named Tank Dell, who got injured and missed the last half of the season. They also have veterans Noah Brown, Nico Collins, Robert Woods

and tight end Dalton Schultz.

Oh, and if that's not enough, they just signed free agent Stefon Diggs away from the Buffalo Bills.

They acquired star running back Joe Mixon from the Cincinnati Bengals, and they also signed defensive end Danielle Hunter from the Minnesota Vikings, who recorded 16.5 sacks last year.

Now let's see how the last couple of months have gone for the Cowboys.

They've lost future Hall of Fame offensive lineman Tyron Smith, they released wide receiver Michael Gallup, starting linebacker Leighton Vander Esch retired. They also lost starting running back Tony Pollard, DE Dante Fowler, C Tyler Biadasz, DT Johnathan Hankins, DL Dorance Armstrong and DT Neville Gallimore.

All these guys saw plenty of action and will cost Dallas significantly in the depth department.

Who has Dallas added? Erik Kendricks, a fairly good, but 32-year-old linebacker from the Vikings.

That's it!

There's no doubt about it. The Dallas Cowboys have gotten significantly worse than they were a year ago. And the reason is simple, they decided to pay Dak Prescott way too much money a couple years ago and now they can't afford him.

Well, they can't afford him and also afford to pay all the other players they lost. Plus, they know that in the very near future, they must save tons of money to pay stars CeeDee Lamb and Micah Parsons.

Houston is paying very little for Stroud, who is still under his inexpensive rookie contract, which frees up more money for them to go after other players.

I hate to say it, being the huge Cowboys fan that I am, but the Houston Texans are going to be the Texas team to watch next season.

Don't get me wrong, the Cowboys will still be good, but not Super Bowl good.

The Texans... well, don't be shocked if they have a Super season.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Staying safe

I never thought this kind of thing would happen where I live: A woman was kidnapped in front of a store, in broad daylight, by a man carrying a gun.

It's hard to even type those words, so shocked am I to learn of it.

To cut to the chase, the woman is thankfully fine, although no doubt rattled and upset. After being forced to drive the kidnapper to another location, she was able to drive away safely after he fled the vehicle.

Still, it might not have turned out that way.

I can't count the thousands of times I've gone to that same store, or strolled down the main street to the ice cream shop, or come out of a restaurant... at night... and never been afraid. After all, the relative safety in this area is why I moved here. But there are no guarantees that things will stay the same, are there?

That woman's experience has been a life changer for

me, unfortunately.

I now carry my wallet and cellphone in an inside coat pocket. If a thief wants my purse, he can have it, with no hesitation that might cause him to do bodily harm to me.

I'm now paying more attention to what's around me – people in parking lots, people milling around – instead of just going on my merry way oblivious to my surroundings.

If I'm headed to the car, my keys are in my hand. Once in the car, I lock the doors, something I've never felt compelled to do.

I trust my instincts if something makes me uneasy. After a recent trip to a store, I waited a minute and walked out with a couple of college students after asking if I could walk across the parking lot with them. They were pleased to escort me all the way to my car.

Stay safe out there and beware of what's going on around you.

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HAVING A ROLE TO FILL	Blu" (1958 hit song)	126 Alex (2005 Belmont Stakes winner)	short	85 D.C. VIP
ACROSS	63 Q-tips, e.g.	127 Pupil-dilating alkaloid	35 Small branch	86 Slowpoke
1 Is worthy of	65 Jockeys' garb	128 Comic Johnson and Angels owner	36 German for "everyone"	90 Jacques of French film
9 Ice cream shop treats	67 Like Mass officiants	Moreno	37 Be litigious	91 Delhi dress
15 Glaringly sensational	69 More of the riddle	129 Puts it forth as fact	38 Ghastly	92 Beer on "The Simpsons"
20 Clear out of	73 Really hungry	130 Tailor	41 Tiny pieces	94 Test, as tea
21 Riga's land	76 Really high		42 Some	98 Triple-time dances, in Paris
22 "Nadja" title role player Loewensohn	77 Twangy, as a voice		43 "The Practice" co-star Flynn Boyle	99 Ending for Siam or Milan
23 Start of a riddle	81 Yes, to Sartre		44 Blunder	100 Big Japanese dogs
25 Fuzz-covered	82 U.S. immigrants' course		46 Dirt-digging journalist	102 Kuwaiti ruler
26 Royal Middleton	83 "Gross!"	DOWN	47 Hog haven	103 Yoga poses
27 Inflated head	84 Cookbook qtys.	1 Office fixtures	48 "_ tu" (Verdi aria)	105 Big-band drummer Gene
28 Glimpse	87 Subdue with a stun gun	2 Aquafina rival	50 _ May (one of TV's Clampetts)	106 In a high-minded manner
29 Urge (on)	76 Really high	3 _ Domingo	51 _ May (one of TV's Clampetts)	107 Singers' clubs
31 It may contain coffee	88 And the rest: Abbr.	4 Nero's "Lo!"	52 Ship poles	108 19th U.S. president
32 _-cone (icy treat)	89 More of the riddle	5 Regret	53 "Dream on!"	109 Overplay it
33 More of the riddle	93 Departs	6 Jumbo tub	54 Deform	110 Custom
38 Chess pieces, e.g.	95 "Ad _ per aspera"	7 Early anesthetic	55 Et _ (and others)	111 "Fame" singer Cara
39 Seating tier	96 Wash and iron	8 Pete of folk music	56 Unyielding	112 Hair salon fixture
40 Officer led by Capt. Kirk	97 Attempt to convey	9 St. Pete loc.	57 Muscle power	117 Conks
41 Equilibrium	101 Stephen of "Ondine"	10 Ranch rope	58 Like plunging necklines	119 Ethyl ender
45 Urge on	104 Hypothetical cases	11 River romper	59 Rival of Coke	121 Out _ job
49 Novelist _ Stanley Gardner	105 End of the riddle	12 With _ to (in hopes of)	60 Lipitor and Zocor, e.g.	122 Western tribe
51 More of the riddle	110 Cloaked	13 It may contain coffee	61 Like plunging necklines	123 Song syllable
57 Pipe bend	113 Inferior mag	14 Most wise	62 Salesperson in a car lot	124 "Splash" co-star Hanks
58 Prefix with byte	114 Tiki bar necklace	15 Running time	63 Like plunging necklines	
59 Mardi _ (Big Easy bash)	115 Ending for pay or plug	16 Ending with form	64 Like plunging necklines	
60 Hi-tech special FX	116 Response to "Are you?"	17 Undertow	65 Like plunging necklines	
61 _-rock (music genre)	117 Roseanne of "Roseanne"	18 Alongside each other	66 Like plunging necklines	
62 _ Blu Dipinto di	118 "_ Gold" (1997 Peter Fonda film)	19 "T" singer Taylor	67 Rival of Coke	
	120 Riddle's answer	20 Chanel of perfumery	68 Lipitor and Zocor, e.g.	
	125 Pasta variety	24 Chanel of perfumery	69 Rival of Coke	
		30 Wildebeest	70 "Jiminy!"	
		33 Fender flaw	71 Luau dance	
		34 Disguised, for	72 Jabba the _	
			73 Filmmaker Nicolas	
			74 Salesperson in a car lot	
			75 Deputy ruler	
			76 Anti-DUI gp.	
			77 Tennis great Arthur	
			78 Look of lust	
			79 Mensa stats	

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		
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58						59				60			61				62			
63				64			65		66			67				68				
				69		70	71					72								
73	74	75							76						77		78	79	80	
81						82			83			84		85	86		87			
88						89			90			91				92				
93				94				95					96							
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113						114				115			116				117			
118				119				120	121				122			123	124			
125								126					127							
128								129						130						

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



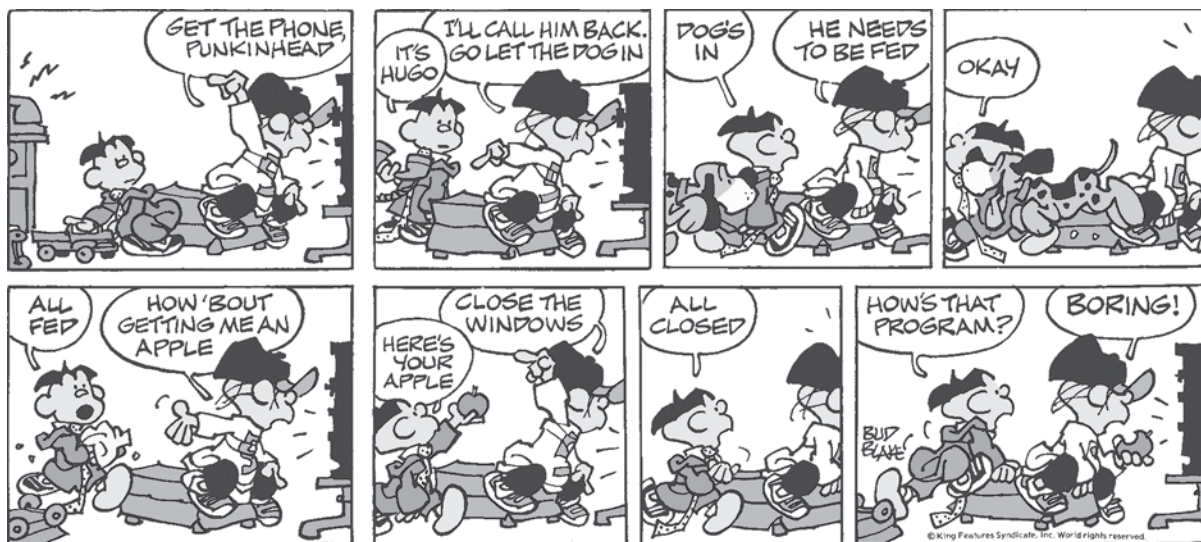
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

run again, and 50% thought he should be removed from office.

Now, according to CBS, 52% of people are supporting him for president, and the democracy issue is a wash. Thirty-four percent think democracy will be safe only if Biden wins and 33% only if Trump wins.

What has created the after-the-fact fondness for Trump?

Most fundamentally, Joe Biden has eased his 1967 Corvette Stingray out of his garage in Wilmington, Delaware, and driven it straight into a ditch. His presidency is such a wide-ranging failure that he'd make almost any predecessor look better. In the 2020 election, Biden benefited from the question "compared to whom?" Sure, he was an undistinguished, uninteresting, aged politician, but compared to Trump he seemed like reassuring normalcy. In 2024, Trump is benefiting from the same question. Sure, he's a radioactive figure whose presidency was unnecessarily chaotic and controversial, but compared to Biden he

seems competent and effective.

Also, Trump has been a little less prominent. He's not flying under the radar, but every social media post doesn't create its own news cycle the way it did when he was president. This makes it easier for people to focus on what they liked rather than the latest outrage.

Finally, another way to look at it is that Trump would have won re-election in 2020 if it hadn't been for the pandemic. Now that the pandemic is in the rear-view mirror and looks more like an event beyond the control of any officeholder, Trump is bouncing back to where he was prior to its onset – and has improved his chances of winning election again.

None of this is to deny that Trump has vulnerabilities, and Biden still has cards to play. But it's no small thing that Biden's record is found wanting when matched up with that of the man who occupied the office just three years ago. Trump nostalgia, in short, is a clear and present danger to Biden's presidency.

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

Tick bite saliva cause of alpha-gal syndrome

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was recently diagnosed with alpha-gal syndrome (AGS). I live in the country, but I do not remember having a tick on me. My husband and I are very cautious and always check for them. I am struggling to understand what exactly are my symptoms, and what I can and cannot eat. I don't know if I am someone who can have dairy or not. The biggest challenge seems to be eating out. If I order chicken, fish or vegetables and they are cooked on the same grill as meat, then they are not safe to eat due to cross contamination. Also, dairy, lard and whey are in many food items. Is there a specialist I should consult? My doctor seems to know about some of this, but is unable to answer many of my questions. Any information you can share would be helpful. – S.N.



AGS is an allergy to galactose-alpha-1,3-galactose, a carbohydrate allergen found in all mammalian meats, such as beef, pork and lamb. The allergy can be serious as people develop symptoms, including various syndromes like skin itching and rashes; gastrointestinal symptoms; and even anaphylaxis, a severe allergy syndrome of cardiovascular collapse.

These reactions are delayed compared to other typical allergic responses, with people often developing symptoms the night after consuming meat – about two to six hours after consumption. A blood test for alpha-gal allergies can confirm the diagnosis.

These symptoms usually begin after getting bitten multiple times by a Lone Star tick. The tick has alpha-gal in its saliva, which triggers the sensitivity. Many medical professionals are unaware of this newly described condition (40% reported never having heard of the syndrome), which can prevent a diagnosis from being made in a timely fashion.

Because the condition is new, there are some factors that we don't really understand about it, like why some people tolerate muscle meat from an animal but react strongly to organ meat. There just aren't answers to some of the questions that you might be asking. For example, milk, whey and gelatin sensitivity have been described with AGS, but not lard (at least that I could find).

Sometimes a person tolerates cooked meat but is intolerant of raw (or barely cooked) meat. Some people lose the allergy over time (usually a few years), but additional tick bites may bring it back.

The ideal specialist in this case is an allergist. You should certainly have and know how to use an epinephrine injector in case of a severe reaction.

DEAR DR. ROACH: A dietician recommended that I drink six glasses of water every day. I tend to drink most of the water in the morning and early afternoon. My husband thinks I should drink it "equally" throughout the day. His logic is that I don't retain enough water to stay properly hydrated throughout the evening and night. Does timing really matter? – C.R.

Your body has a system in place to hold onto water so that you don't need to drink it during the night. Unless you are losing unusually high amounts of water (as you would in a very dry and hot environment, for example), there is no reason to hydrate at night. Most people realize that doing so will cause you to visit the bathroom rather than sleep.

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

April 17, 1897, Aurora, TX: The Dallas Morning News reports that a "strange airship" (complete with a green alien) has crashed into a windmill and exploded.

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: Q equals F

WQRGM RNG HWVGXZR XVXSJKR
 QJZJKNGE EJSSJZS FH RNWR
 IWVFWPVG QXKKJV, NG SWIG
 JR RNG PMFKN-XQQ.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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Financial aid for vets in stress



by Freddy Groves

If your debts are so bad the stress of it is making you physically ill, you're not alone. And if the weight of it all is stressing you mentally, you're not alone there either. The past several years, with the economy and Covid and everything else, have made many of us wonder if there's hope.

But yes... there is hope. The Department of Veterans Affairs has created the National Veterans Financial Resource Center (FINVET).

The purpose of FINVET is to help veterans learn to manage finances and handle the mental uncertainty of debt – and lower the risk of suicide, which can come with the stresses of finances.

The website (www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/finvet) has tools, videos, calculators and resources for five different money-related

issues: paying for essentials, saving money, increasing your income, managing debt and protecting your money.

Depending on your situation, one of those might be more important than the other right now, but they all have value.

Protecting your money can be a big one, with scammers on the line each time you answer the phone. Dozens of scams are identified, from payday lending to identity theft and scams aimed directly at veterans. Get familiar with all that the page has to offer so you're not caught unaware.

Managing debt sometimes takes more than just additional income. Often it requires good information with advice and tools or learning ways to improve your credit score so you qualify for lower interest rates on big purchases like vehicles.

Paying for essentials can be a serious problem as well. Check the website for the many sources of help, ranging from emergency food assistance, to the national hunger hotline, to housing counselors.

The whole FINVET website is very well done, with mountains of good information no matter your financial situation, everything in one place. Bookmark the page so you can find your way back as time goes on and your situation changes.

And don't give up. Sometimes all you need to fix a financial situation is information and a bit of support.

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- What's the best way to keep sheet sets together? Tuck all the pieces in a matching pillowcase, of course.

- Need to hull strawberries? Try using a straw. You position the straw at the bottom of the strawberry, then push up toward the stem. It works quickly and well.
- If you mount a magnet strip in your bathroom or on your vanity, you can use it to hold bobby pins or metal barrettes. Or mount a ribbon to hold all kinds of hair clips.

- Baby leg protectors are cute. And cheap, if you have some old athletic socks. Cut off the ends, slip over baby's legs, and watch cutie scoot across the floor.

- If your entertainment electronics have a clock that is too bright, cover it with plain tape. You will still be able to read the time, but the tape will lessen the glare.

- My in-laws have a vaulted ceiling, and there is a corner that even the longest-handled duster won't reach. My brilliant son had an idea to get down the cobwebs that had accumulated there. He used a rubber band to secure a dish towel around a tennis ball. Then he just tossed it at the area repeatedly. I can't believe how well it worked.

- If new denims are too stiff, add half a cup of salt to your wash water along with the regular detergent.

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.

	+		×		= 14			
-		+		+				
	-		+		= 6			
×		×		×				
	+		÷		= 2			
=		=		=				
18		28		56				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult

★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 4

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EAW

WEVODA

♥ DELDA

♥ EBTA

BLUMET

♥ ADW

NVDE

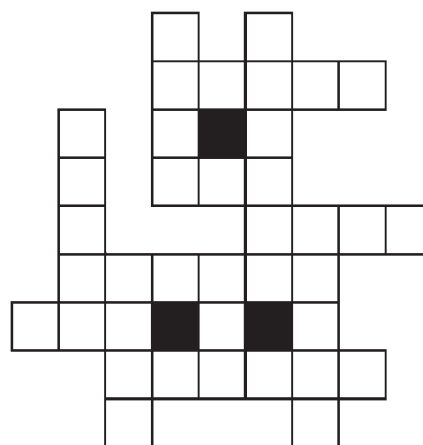
WYLBA

♥ UTB

♥ DUNLEO

EUDEL

♥ WSAL



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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