



NEWSBRIEFS

Voices program

Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D. issued a statewide CALLOUT for Veterans to share their stories with the VLB through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program. "As VLB Chairwoman and Land Commissioner, it is an honor to help serve our courageous Veterans by preserving and honoring their legacies through the Voices of Veterans oral history program," said Commissioner Buckingham. "This incredible program is made possible by the hard work of the VLB and GLO staff who record and archive these precious records for future generations. I look forward to the continued growth of the Voices of Veterans oral history program and encourage Veterans across the state to send in their stories and be a part of Texas history." Veterans can email VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov to tell their stories. Veterans must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

— Kimberly Hubbard

Children's health

With workers paying an average of over \$6,500 per year toward employer-sponsored family coverage and Every Kid Healthy Week kicking off on April 22, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on *2024's Best & Worst States for Children's Health Care*, as well as expert commentary. In order to determine which states offer the most cost-effective and highest-quality health care for children, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 33 key metrics. The data set ranges from the share of children in excellent or very good health to pediatricians and family doctors per capita. Texas rated 49th in the report, ranking (1-Best; 25-Avg.):

- 49th – Percent of Children in Excellent/Very Good Health;
- 51st – Percent of Uninsured Children;
- 23rd – Infant-Death Rate;
- 51st – Percent of Children with Unaffordable Medical Bills;
- 27th – Pediatricians & Family Doctors per Capita;

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With money you can buy all the friends you want – but are they worth the price?

— Quips & Quotes



— El Paso Community College

GROUNDBREAKERS – From left, Emiliano Garcia, Dr. Christian Servin and Ivan Alonso were the first community college team to be represented in the Nifty Assignment category at the Technical Symposium of the Special Interest Group in Computer Science Education gathering in Portland, OR.

Blackout



— Photo by Joseph Henderson

BULLSEYE – This was the view of the April 8 full solar eclipse in Indianapolis, IN. The photo was taken at 3:08:11 CDT. El Pasoans saw a partial eclipse akin to a cloudy day.

Servin, Alonso and Garcia do well at tech forum

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Professor Dr. Christian Servin, along with two Computer Science students and STS Peer Leaders, Ivan Alonso and Emiliano Garcia represented El Paso Community College (EPCC) at the Technical Symposium of the Special Interest Group in Computer Science Education (SIGCSE TS). The forum was held in Portland, OR from March 20-23 last month. Their work titled *The Fingerprint Assignment: An Interdisciplinary Assessment for CS I Education* was included in the "Nifty Assignment" session.

Multiple experts and a committee reviewed the EPCC team's work. More than 30 submissions from numerous countries competed for a spot in the Nifty Assignments category. Their

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The absurd four-day workweek

Karl Marx would be proud. Bernie Sanders has proposed taking another step toward the philosopher's envisioned utopia by proposing to mandate a four-day workweek.

Marx wrote how in communist society, workers would be liberated to "hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, raise cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have in mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic."

Needless to say, that's not how communism turned out. Yet the belief that work is basically a capitalist imposition that is unnatural and bad for people still holds sway on the left, and Sanders is, accordingly, proposing to move from a 40-hour to a 32-hour workweek to make us healthy, wealthy and wise.

"It is time to reduce the stress level in our country and allow Americans to enjoy a better quality of life," the Vermont socialist insists. "It is time for a 32-hour workweek with no loss in pay."

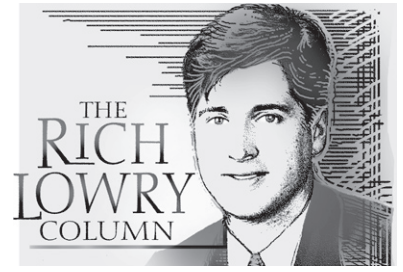
The last clause is the key one. If everyone can work less and produce and earn exactly the same, why not? And if this is possible, why stop at four days a week? It'd be positively cruel to make someone work four days when they can work three days with the same outcomes.

Of course, the promise that we can work less and make the same is the socialist equivalent of Mexico will pay for the border wall. It's not just promising a free lunch, but a free breakfast, lunch and dinner, with room service delivering a late-night snack

gratis.

What we earn is not an arbitrary number, but is linked to what we produce. To simplify, if everyone were to work 20% less without becoming any more productive, GDP would decline by 20%. The pie would shrink, even though Sanders is saying everyone's slice would – impossibly – be just as big.

It's certainly true that Americans work more than people in other countries. France has a much-vaunted 35-hour workweek, although that stricture only



See LOWRY, Page 7

Food for thought By Jamie Mercado, BS, MA

Re-enforcing a child's dream

I recently met a young high school student in his junior year, who expressed that he was without a clue as to why he was in high school, or what he wanted to do after graduation.

That young man's comments got me thinking about my thirty-three years as an educator. I reflected on how throughout my career my greatest concern was always for those students who came

to school without a dream, and how – instead of pointing fingers as to who dropped the ball – I had decided to help parents identify and protect their children's dreams.

For holding on to a dream is a long, hard road that requires the support of a lot of people. That is why, after so many years of innovative educational developments, there are still too many students not graduating from high

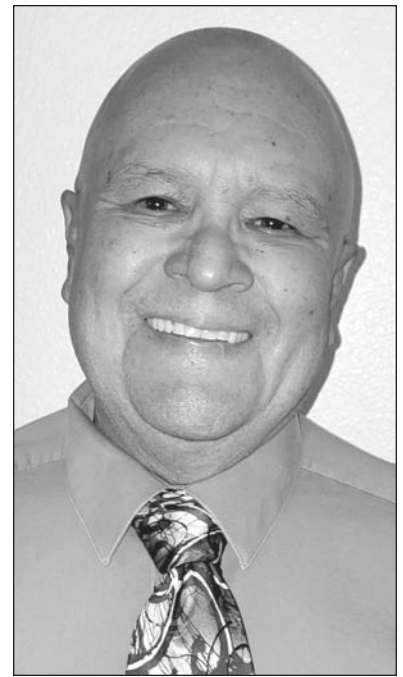
school... especially among poor minority students.

It is important that children know and feel that their dreams- no matter how ridiculous or magnificent they may seem- are being heard and re-enforced. And when family support is shown then trust develops. Trust to come back next week and declare that they don't want to be that anymore, but they want to be something else.

I can't remember the number of times parents would tell me that it was impossible to keep up with the number of times their child changed his or her dreams. I would reassure them that this simply meant that their child felt comfortable in exploring different careers because they knew that they had their parents' support.

Trust allows parents to also bring careers to their children's attention. The days when parents would accompany their children to the local library to explore and obtain information about different careers are fading; however, today, parents instead can take trips and access information about all kinds of places, people, and things with their children using the Internet.

Also, parents should remember that, in nurturing their children's dreams, they are not alone. To complement visits to the library and searches on the computer, local community



– Photo courtesy Mercado family

Jaime Mercado

college and university staffs are willing to assist students in obtaining information about career opportunities. In addition, by visiting a college and university with their children, parents can

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Briefs

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- 21st – Percent of Overweight Children;
- 48th – Percent of Obese Children;
- 49th – Percent of Children with Excellent/Very Good Teeth; and
- 22nd – Percent of Children 19 to 35 Months Old with All Recommended Vaccines.

“The quality of children’s health care should be one of the most important considerations for parents when deciding where to live. Having access to quality pediatric and dental care, nutritious food and good spaces for recreation from a young age can give children a much better chance of growing up healthy and forming good habits that will last into their adult life. Massachusetts is the best state for children’s health, boasting the highest percentage of children who had both a medical and a dental preventative care visit in the past 12 months. Massachusetts also has one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the country, and one of the lowest death rates for children ages 14 and under. In the Bay State, only 1.5% of children lack health insurance, the lowest uninsured rate of any state.”

– Cassandra Happe
WalletHub Analyst

Expert Commentary

What are the most important

steps parents can take to help their children grow up healthy?

“Making sure that children have periodic health checks, including well-baby care and all CDC-recommended vaccines, is very important to their healthy development. Dental care is just as important. But just as important is to ensure they lead healthy and safe lives at home, at school, and in their daily lives. That means eating nutritious foods including fruits, vegetables, and lean protein. It also means playing and getting physical activity. And finally, it means avoiding harmful behaviors like using illicit drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Children’s mental health is also very important, and parents should give children a loving and safe environment and avoid excessive use of social media and screens.”

– Lawrence Gostin
Distinguished University Professor
WHO Collaborating Center on
Global Health Law
Georgetown Law

“There are at least three actions that parents, healthcare providers, and the state can take to mitigate the mental health crisis among America’s youth. The first would be to improve access via telehealth. Unlike some other forms of medical treatment, mental health services can be delivered via telehealth without compromising the standard of care. The telehealth option is especially useful for minors with

limited transportation. The second would be increasing the number of providers able to deliver this care. Becoming a therapist requires graduate training, and graduate school is expensive. Increasing financial assistance for therapists will help current students complete school at a higher rate and attract more students into these programs. Third would be raising awareness among youth that they can access mental health treatment without the involvement of their parents. While there is variability between states on issues like the minimum age, duration, and the kind of mental health services available, states have used a ‘public health exception’ justification to grant minors access to treatment they might not otherwise pursue if their parents must be involved.”

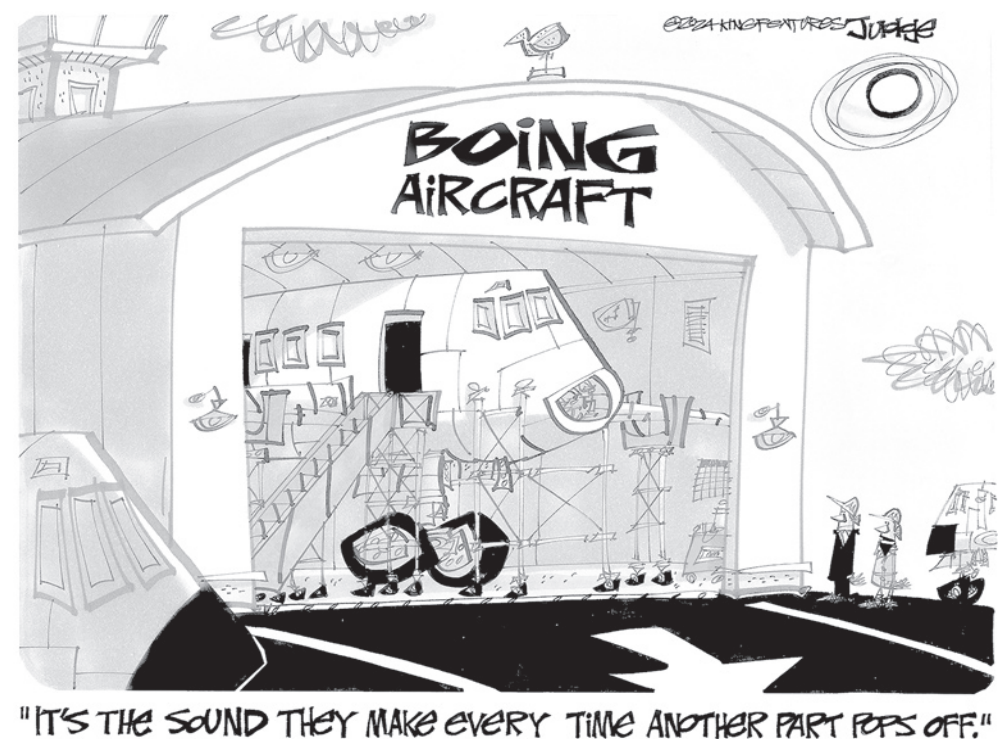
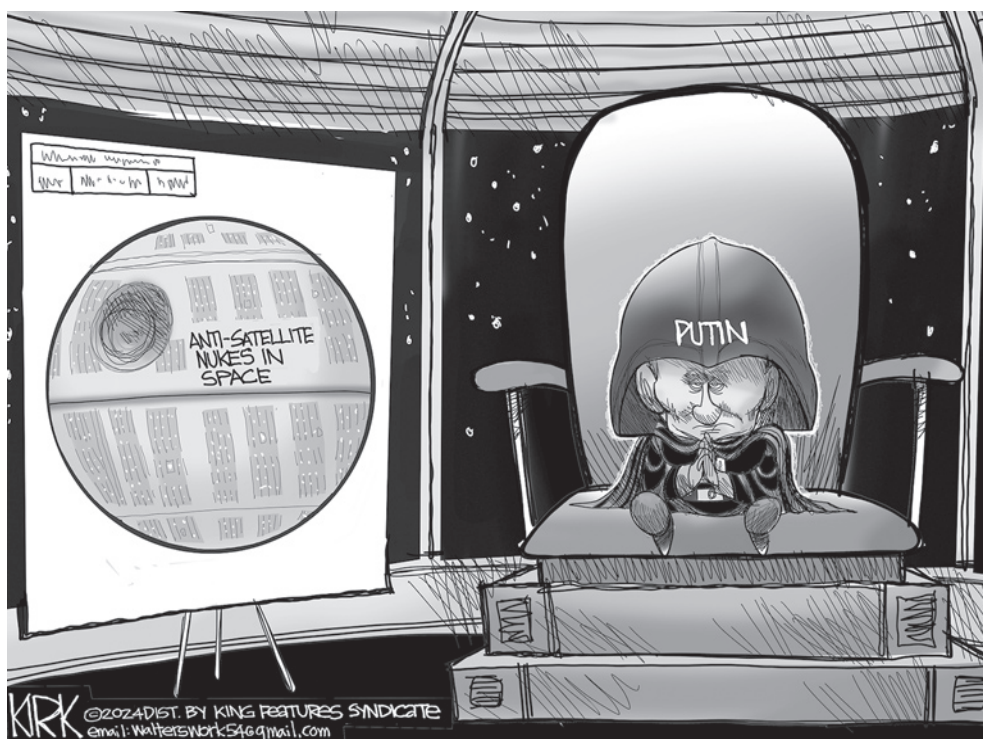
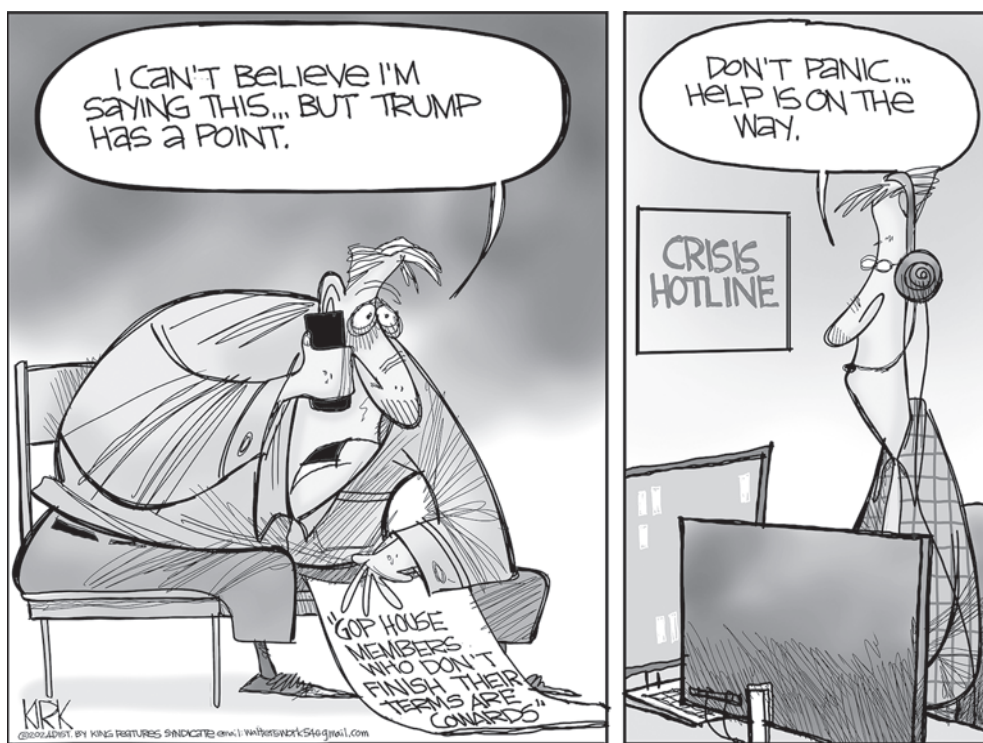
– Abram L Brummett Ph.D., HEC-C
Assistant Professor
Oakland University William
Beaumont School of Medicine

With America’s youth in an ongoing mental health crisis, and nearly 60% of them with major depression not receiving treatment, what actions can parents and health care providers take to mitigate this crisis?

“Children and teens are feeling socially isolated with increased rates of depression and anxiety. Government, organizations, schools and the health care system need to help facilitate social connections

for youth. Schools working with parents and caregivers need to facilitate better social emotional learning tools and skills starting in the early grades. We need to address the adverse impact [of] social media. Rates of alienation and depression correlate not just with the pandemic but with universal access to smartphones in middle school. While social media can have a positive effect in supporting some children who feel marginalized, the impact on self-esteem and mental health are increasing[ly] well documented. Even if there weren’t such negative content, the number of hours children spend on devices including social media often leave no time for traditional real-world engagement with friends and family, for play, for being outdoors all of which are connect[ed] to good mental health...The health care systems need to be part of the solution. Screening children for mental health issues needs to be universal, but only in coordination with community base solutions. Problems need to be addressed before the pediatric psych ward. Physicians and other providers work with the patient in front of them assuming the given conditions of the person’s life. Increasingly they are doing this job under duress including time constraints, work overloads, inadequate staff and

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Dream

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help them release any anxiety they might have about higher education school settings.

Moreover, professional organizations – such as engineers, doctors, accountants, and businesspersons – are always ready to assist students and their parents with information. And the military service branches, as well as technical schools, are ready to provide assistance.

Every student deserves to know that every dream can be turned into reality if he or she knows the requirements to attain that dream and is willing to follow them. One of the best ways to help one's child develop his or her dream is to explore the things he or she enjoys doing. After all, once they start in their careers, they might be in it for more than thirty years.

For example, when I worked as a school counselor, I would give career counseling presentations to middle and high school students. Towards the end of one of my career presentations, one student called out in a loud voice challenging my stating that they could earn a living doing the things they loved. "That's not true," he blurted. "I love to go hiking, bike riding, fishing and hunting. Where am I going to find a career that offers me that?" posed the smart-alecky teen.

I responded by asking him to go by my office, and we would discuss it. But he snapped back, "No, tell me now." So I said, Park Ranger, and that got his attention. After that, he wanted to know everything he had missed for the past five years. He had always known the things he loved to do. So, it is important to help children identify their dreams before they lose them. By the way, this young man is presently a ranger supervisor for a national park.

Every child has a dream, even if they have never shared it. Another experience that illustrates this is when I met with a student in my office and I asked her what her dream was. She answered that she didn't know. So, I asked her what did she like to do. Her response puzzled me when she said that she was

too embarrassed to say it because people made fun of her.

After a few moments, however, the young student reached for her backpack and took out a sketch book. She handed it to me and said that this is what she loved to do. To my astonishment, she had drawn page after page of extremely beautiful dresses and gowns. I could not believe what I was seeing.

As I kept turning the pages, she asked, "You don't like them?" I sputtered, "No, I mean yes, they are lovely." Then she started telling me about how she would draw the dresses and then make the dresses for her Barbie dolls. That's when I told her that she could turn this pastime into a real dream.

I proceeded to tell her about a fashion design and illustration program at the local university. After giving her the necessary information, she enrolled in the university and, eventually, graduated with a master's degree in fashion design – what she loved to do as a young girl.

Furthermore, parents must remember that what they say or do can determine what happens to their children's dreams. Once, I had a parent during a presentation who jumped up and yelled, "I'm sorry but the day my son told me he wanted to become a police officer, I refused to support that." I asked her son's age, and she said that he was eight years old.

Then, I asked her if she knew what she had done; and she responded, "What do you mean?" I pointed out that her son, at eight years of age, was exploring, and that instead she, or someone with knowledge about that career, should have explained to him the pros and cons of being a police officer, as well as providing information about other related careers.

Another common way of stealing a child's dream is by imposing what parents like or what they wanted to be. As a career counselor, I have had to sit with a lot of parents who insisted that I help them convince their children to change their minds about their chosen courses of studies.

Typically, students who come to school with a dream get better grades. They have a reason for being in school, and they know that high grades will help them reach their dreams. Nonetheless, these dreamers have to deal with other students who might be jealous and make fun of them. So, parents should maintain consistent communications with their children to help deflect any negativity.

Thieves can also steal a child's dream through intimidation and by using fear of the unknown. For instance, when a child states that he or she wants to be a doctor, the thief will quickly remind the child of how scared he or she is of blood; or... a veterinarian, but you are allergic to cats; or... a Spanish teacher, but you don't speak Spanish. Instead, parents should show interest and be supportive.

Finally, once a child has a dream that will offer what he or she loves to do, then comes the big question: How will the child pay for his or her dream? When students would come to my office and tell me that they already had a dream, but did not know how their parents were going to pay for their post-secondary educational aspirations. My answer was always that their parents were not, and then I'd wait to see their expressions of horror.

Actually, students start a sort of savings account with every grade they earn starting in the eighth grade. Some school districts even grant high school credits for certain middle school classes, such as Algebra I, Health, foreign languages and a few elective courses. This is important because these grades are part of high school students' grade point average, which will follow them throughout their high school years.

I would remind parents that students who had straight A's – from eight to twelfth grades – almost always received the presidential scholarship offered by most universities, which pays for tuition and fees. This not only applies for colleges, but also for the military academies and technical schools. I would emphasize that good grades are rewarded with grants and scholarships which are offered by

As a public-school counselor for over thirty years, I learned that every child is born with a dream, a dream that parents need to help protect, nourish, and guide.



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CryptoQuip Answer

What is the term for someone who's examining the life of president Gerald? A Ford explorer.



- By Lucie Winborne**
- Modern brunch was first proposed in 1895 as a post-hangover meal.
 - Quetzalcoatlus, the largest known flying animal, was as tall as a giraffe and may have used its powerful forelimbs to pole-vault into the sky.
 - Cathay Williams became the first African-American woman to serve in the U.S. Army in 1866. Since women were barred from joining the military at the time, she enlisted as a man under the pseudonym William Cathay.

- Newborn babies have nearly 100 more bones than full-grown adults.
- The human body emits visible light, but it's not visible to the naked eye.
- The FBI dubbed Ted Kaczynski "The Unabomber" because his early mail bombs were sent to universities (UN) and airlines (A).
- As astronauts spend months traveling to Mars, their eyeballs may change shape. Some scientists believe that's due to the pressure from fluids that won't drain from their heads, thanks to the low-gravity environment.

- The Antikythera mechanism, discovered by sponge divers in 1900, is sometimes called the world's first analog computer. Designed to calculate dates and predict astronomical phenomena, it was so advanced nothing surpassed it for nearly 1,500 years.
- Some libraries have been known to use extraordinary measures to ensure titles remained on shelves. A notable example is Marsh's Library in Dublin, Ireland, where in the 1800s, visitors desiring to peruse rare books were locked in cages until they finished reading!

Thought for the Day: "If we open a quarrel between past and present, we shall find that we have lost the future."
– Winston Churchill

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Briefs

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complex administrative burdens. We need to break out of this loop.”

– Michael Doonan, Ph.D.
Professor
Brandeis University

Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-states-for-child-health/34455> for the full report.

– Diana Polk

Collections

Collection accounts stay on a person’s credit report for seven years and can cause significant credit score damage, and increases in collection accounts in a state also show people are having trouble

paying their bills. To see where Americans’ financial futures are most in jeopardy, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its new report on the *States With the Most Collection Accounts*. Texas was rated 2nd in the report. Other stats:

- Average No. of Collection Accounts per Resident in Collections in Q4 2023: 3.00;
 - Average Balance per Collection Account in Q4 2023: \$1,402.67;
 - Percent Change in Average No. of Collection Accounts per Resident in Collections (Q4 2023 vs. Q3 2023): -0.46%; and
 - Percent Change in Average Balance per Collection Account (Q4 vs. Q3 2023): 2.69%.
- Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-with-the-most-collection-accounts/134307> for the full report.

– Diana Polk



Moments in time
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On April 15, 1945, British troops liberated the German Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where they discovered thousands of dead and rotting corpses, and many more thousands of sick and starving prisoners confined to severely overcrowded and dirty compounds. The prisoners were suffering from acute typhus, typhoid and tuberculosis due to a lack of running water. More than 30,000 others had died in the previous months, many from typhus, but even more from starvation.

• On April 16, 1964, The Rolling Stones’ debut album, “The Rolling Stones,” issued in the U.S. as “England’s Newest Hit Makers,” was released. The band consisted of lead singer Mick Jagger, rhythm guitarist Brian Jones, lead guitarist Keith Richards, bassist Bill Wyman and drummer Charlie Watts.

• On April 17, 1985, the U.S. government announced a campaign to increase organ donation awareness with the hope of making the procedure as widespread as donating blood, following similar campaigns from other countries around the world as organ transplants became more common.

• On April 18, 1997, major

floods in Grand Forks, N.D., caused by the Red River’s breaching a dike, necessitated the evacuation of 50,000 residents from their homes. In some areas, only the roofs of their houses were visible.

• On April 19, 1897, the world’s oldest annual marathon run took place for the first time. Today the Boston Marathon ranks among the world’s most prestigious road racing events, with an average of 20,000 participants, and is one of five members of the World Marathon Majors, which also include the cities of London, Berlin, Chicago and New York.

• On April 20, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI visited Ground Zero in New York, the scene of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the city’s Twin Towers, at the end of his six-day tour of America. He greeted survivors, fire and police workers, and relatives of some of the 2,749 people who died at the scene, and prayed for the rescuers and victims, as well as “those whose hearts and minds are consumed with hatred,” before celebrating Mass at New York’s Yankee stadium.

• On April 21, 1918, Baron Manfred von Richthofen, the German ace pilot popularly known as the “Red Baron” and credited with 80 confirmed air combat victories, was killed in action during World War I.

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Tech

From Page 1

work was considered among the top six assignments in the computer science community for the current year globally. It is particularly noteworthy since this is the first time that Nifty Assignments has accepted a community college in this category.

The symposium focused on addressing common challenges among educators involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating computing programs, curricula, and courses. The symposium serves as a platform for sharing innovative ideas related to syllabi, laboratories, and other aspects of teaching and pedagogy [teaching practices] across all levels of instruction.

As the first community college to be included, EPCC’s winning submission is now part of a body of work that includes assignments from Tier One universities – including Stanford, Berkeley, Princeton and others. According to Servin, this is just one

example of how research and contributions originating from EPCC are being showcased in the global community of computer science education. It highlights the importance of involvement of undergraduate students in research in the field.

He says the Computer Science department at EPCC prioritizes ensuring that students have the opportunity to be involved in innovative projects like this frequently. For many students, EPCC provides their first experiences doing research which helps broaden their knowledge. Alonso and Garcia are EPCC students who have served as peer leaders for the computer science programs for the past two years.

Working on this project helped Garcia gain skills that he will use as a computer scientist. He said the project presented many challenges that boosted both his educational experience and professional development.

Participating in this project gave Alonso a deeper understanding of computer science and he learned valuable

insights about potential career paths for his future. “Through participation in this research, I discovered knowledge beyond the classroom. Engaging in research exposed me to real world applications and challenges, which fostered a deeper appreciation for the complexities of the field,” Alonso said.

With innovative projects like these, EPCC students and faculty are able to work together. Students gain the knowledge and skills they need to become competitive for the jobs of the future. “I express gratitude to the Student Government Association, EPCC’s Education & CTE department and to the National Science Foundation ATE grant DUE-2300378 that made travel expenses possible to present this work,” said Servin.

Dream

From Page 4

hundreds of schools, companies, and organizations locally and throughout the country.

But for some students, scholarships are out of reach for various reasons. So, students seeking a post-secondary education must look at all of their options for financing their dreams. From enlisting in a branch of the military or in programs, like college ROTC, national guard, or a military reserve unit, to considering public service possibilities such as AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, state and national parks to earn college funds.

Also, students can apply for internship and apprenticeship programs in their fields of interest – such as nursing, law enforcement, and technical skills (electrician, plumbing, etc.) – to qualify for special stipends and grants that help defray post-secondary educational costs.

Whichever route a student chooses, it is important that the financial aspect of paying for a his or her dream starts by contacting the educational representative of the institution or organization that he or she is interested in attending.

Jaime Mercado is a retired public-school counselor and community college instructor. He served as an educator for 33 years in school districts throughout El Paso and Dona Ana NM counties including San Elizario, Fabens, Ysleta, Canutillo, Anthony, and Gadsden. He also worked with El Paso Community College.



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As bad as the transfer portal is, it's about to get worse

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The changes in college athletics over the last few years all seem to have been for the worst.

Although it's never been perfect, there was a time when the NCAA rules made a little bit of sense. For the most part, players stayed on the same teams. They were amateurs and didn't get paid. And you knew which teams were a part of which conference.

As most of you know, all of that has been flipped on its head.

Before, a player had to think twice before deciding to transfer to another school because if they did, they had to sit out an entire year before they could be eligible to play for their new team.

Over the years, players were complaining more and more that universities were making all kinds of money using their name, image and likeness, and the player wasn't getting a penny. I can totally understand that, but the solution has been a disaster.

For decades, the Pac-10 was the Pac-10, the SEC was the SEC, the Big 10 was the Big 10, the WAC was the WAC, and so on and so forth. Teams were put in conferences by geographic region, and they stayed that way forever. Just like professional sports, you knew who would play who, which created some traditional rivalries.

And though NCAA officials, college presidents and coaches, and almost every reasonable person around college athletics knows the system is broken, nobody seems able, or willing, to fix it.

Colleges are able to pay players

NIL (name, image, likeness) money for attending their school. The only problem is that there are almost no rules. Colleges can pay players as much as they want. There are actually some college players who get paid more than pro athletes.

And naturally, the bigger schools can afford the most money, which brings them the best players. It's not really fair, is it?

In another attempt to make as much money as possible, universities are scrambling to change from conference to conference. Things have gotten so bad that the Pac-12 won't even exist anymore – all the teams left. The search for higher TV revenue and the ability to share bigger pots of money with other bigger partners has schools scrambling for the pot of gold.

So, what are the solutions?

One thing the NCAA has done is limit the number of times an athlete can enter the transfer portal and immediately play for a new team. A

student can transfer once and play the very next year. But, after that they must sit out a season like they did before.

Sounds like a very logical compromise to me.

But there can never be a logical compromise to anything, as long as there are lawyers around.

It seems that a West Virginia judge has decided that the NCAA's rule limiting players from transferring whenever they want violates antitrust laws. The United States Department of Justice joined the lawsuit against the NCAA.

It appears that the NCAA will most likely change its rules and allow players to enter the transfer portal every single year if that's what they want.

So even when the NCAA tries to fix a rule that they can clearly see is going to hurt its brand, the courts come in and stop them.

There is no cap on how much

colleges can pay their athletes. There is almost no oversight on where the money is coming from and who it's going to, or whether every penny of it is accounted for.

High school athletes are now free agents and no longer go to their favorite school. They go to the highest bidder.

And if they're not happy with the school, they simply quit and leave, and quit and leave, and quit and leave. Boy, that's a great way to prepare a young person for the real world.

Many coaches have complained about the ridiculous rules, including legends like former Duke basketball's Mike Krzyzewski (Coach K) and former Alabama football coach Nick Saban. Each has said the new collegiate rules played a part in their retirement decisions.

They say we learn from our mistakes. But how can NCAA athletics recover when they're not even allowed to fix their mistakes?

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

When are we too old to climb ladders?

Months ago I'd made my resolutions list for 2024, carefully picking options that I could surely accomplish this year. I chose things like adopting a kitten pal for my cat, selling my father's coin collection, and hiring my handyman neighbor to paint the bathroom.

Thus far it's the bathroom painting that is causing the greatest annoyance and hesitation. Why, I keep wondering, can't I do it myself? I've painted many, many rooms over the years and done a fine job. But, dare I climb a ladder again?

I even went to the internet for support that would tell me it's OK at my age to climb a ladder and apply paint to the walls.

An Australian study cut right to the chase with statistics about how many over the age of 65 had died from injuries sustained after falling from a ladder, not to mention the list of possible ladder-related injuries that put many others in the hospital.

A U.S. home-care website was aimed at the adult children who need to convince elderly parents to stay

off ladders, and suggested citing statistics about deaths and injuries. Should that not work, said the website, pull in reinforcements like doctors and extended family to convince the renegade senior to stay off ladders.

The NIH (National Institutes of Health) even chimed in with a study about the risks of ladder use by seniors and went so far as to analyze the types of dangerous tasks seniors might do that involve ladders. That's where I part company with the NIH's study: I'm not interested in trimming tree limbs or cleaning leaves out of gutters.

I only want to paint a bathroom.

Update: I will not be painting the bathroom. Neither will my handyman neighbor. That neighbor, a good 20 years younger than I am, fell off a ladder and is now facing shoulder surgery.

The bathroom will stay as it is.

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Send Your Newsbrief To:
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PUTTING ON A GOOD FACE ACROSS

1 Very little bit
5 Large Indian city
10 Discover by chance
15 Elegant
19 Liposuction target
20 Take out _ (borrow cash)
21 Journalist _
Rogers St. Johns
22 Actor Cronyn
23 Initial impression
25 Printer cartridge contents
27 Still in the future
28 Harsh review
30 Admit defeat
31 Wonder
32 Like bedroom communities
35 Partners of 84-Down
36 Metal sleeve in an engine's piston
40 Slide down a slope
41 Cuts of pork
42 Disney who drew
43 Toot one's own horn
46 Gaius' garb
50 Rand of objectivism
51 "Viva _ Vegas"
52 Base coat on a wall, maybe
54 Is a little too fond of
57 Rest on top of
59 Writer Nin
60 Prefix with conscious

61 Dock
62 Honey liquor
64 Cpl., e.g.
65 Big grant-giving group
72 Totally
73 Granny
74 Dog food brand
75 Places with lots of IVs
76 Mental picture
78 Dictators
81 Row of PC-screen buttons
85 Cabaret where the cancan originated
87 Kilmer of "Tombstone"
88 Kitchen utensil brand
89 "Little" actress Rae
90 Decorative tattoo dye
91 Very little
93 Garden pest
95 Mem. of the family
97 Annotation in the text of Christian scripture
100 Server overseer, informally
103 Convention speeches
105 "... flaw _ feature?"
106 Mixed with cognac, e.g.
108 Flip (out)
109 Clip out
113 Something cast at sunset
116 What you have passed when you figure out this puzzle's theme?
118 Hydroxyl compound
119 Cooling, as champagne
120 French gal pals
121 To be, to Livy
122 Really resist
123 Former quarterback Rodney
124 French governing body
125 Letters after pis

DOWN

1 Not definite
2 "Rolie Polie _" (kids' book)
3 Sour
4 Refrain from drinking
5 Patted lightly
6 Fanning of "Teen Spirit"
7 Baseball's Gehrig
8 Wields influence
9 Occupy
10 TV's Linden
11 Lupino or Tarbell
12 Actress Thompson of "Creed"
13 Brand of fake 69-Down
14 _ a one (zero)
15 Go through the motions
16 1/16 pound
17 Aroma
18 "_ Johnny!"
24 Small cities

26 Ankara native
29 Convent sister
32 Span. women
33 Steel support for concrete
34 Grill
36 Dressed (in)
37 "Around-the-world" toy
38 Dryer fluff
39 Actor McGregor
40 Fuel additive brand
44 Strong ill will
45 Dutch artist Jan
47 Certain Arab
48 State Farm alternative
49 Fiery crime
51 Spa sponge
52 Actress Valerie of "Lenny"
53 Storm-finding systems
55 Cartoon cry
56 Act starter
57 Qatar export
58 Letter #22
61 Take selfish advantage of
63 "It's _" ("You're on!")
65 "Darkman" director Sam
66 Actor Edward James _
67 Santa _
68 _ nous
69 Liposuction target
70 Mantra words
71 "For shame!"
77 In a harshly bright way
79 Pass quickly on foot
80 "To repeat..."
81 Unveiling cry
82 _ -chic
83 Pivot point
84 Fishing sticks
86 Devils' org.
87 Dirt Devils, e.g., in brief
91 Nissan car models
92 Reason for extra innings
93 Get _ on reality
94 Ceiling coat
96 Terminates
98 Arrow shooter
99 Short-horned grasshopper
100 Differently _ (other-skilled)
101 Pilotless craft
102 Lead-in to "the cloth" or "the hour"
103 Cartoonist Bil
104 Comic and actor Murphy
107 Breakfast chain, in brief
109 "_ bad moon rising"
110 Meeting period, slangily
111 _ buco (veal dish)
112 Map nos.
114 Tenth mo.
115 Very little
117 Cousins, e.g.

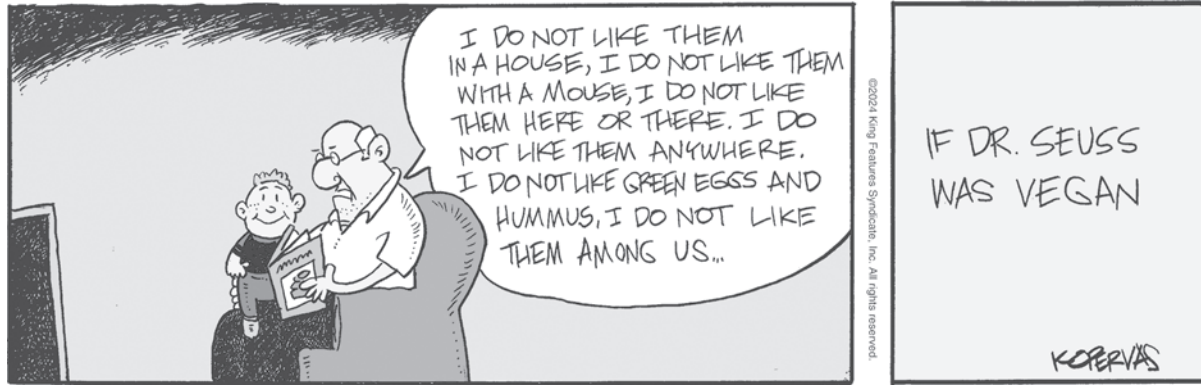
Answer Page 4

Super Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19				20					21					22				
23			24						25				26					
27						28		29		30								
			31			32			33	34			35					
36	37	38			39						40							
41				42					43	44	45			46	47	48	49	
50				51				52					53					
54			55	56			57	58					59					
			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			97	98					99					
100	101	102			103	104							105					
106					107				108				109			110	111	112
113							114	115		116		117						
118					119					120						121		
122						123				124						125		

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



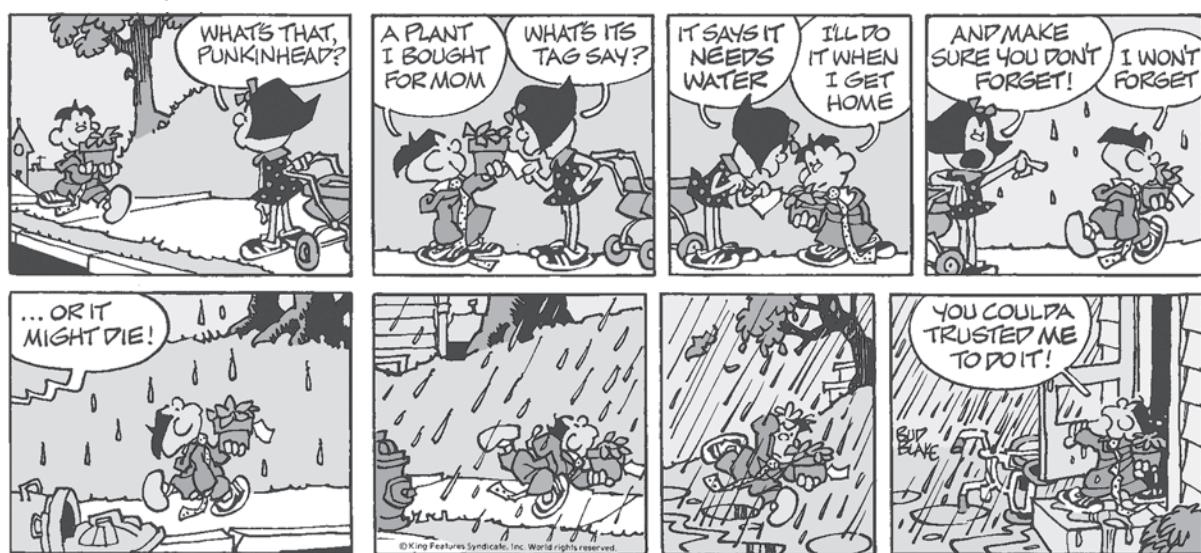
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

applies to blue-collar workers. Still, France works less than we do, and – in a sign that basic economic laws aren't so easily suspended – its workers make less money. The average net disposable household income in France, according to The Week magazine, is \$34,375 a year, whereas it is \$51,147 in the U.S.

If Sanders were being honest and weren't a socialist, he'd say he has a great deal for Americans – they can work less and become poorer. There probably wouldn't be many takers.

Sanders complains that American workers are 400% more productive than they were in the 1940s, yet they are still working long hours. Over time, though, we have worked less. In 1830, the average working week was more than 70 hours, and over the course of the next century, it dropped by almost half.

If we were all content with 1940s living standards, maybe we could go all the way and adopt a two-day workweek. From a 21st-century perspective, though, returning

to 1940s-era housing, plumbing, technology, transportation and health care would feel like impoverishment, and it would be.

What Sanders misses, as economics writer David Bahnsen argues in his new book "Full Time: Work and the Meaning of Life," is that work is good for us, indeed an inherent part of the human condition. Moreover, the problem isn't that Americans work too much, but that too many Americans aren't working at all. Noting the long-term decline in labor-force participation, Bahnsen points out that if the participation rate were the same as it was in 2000, an additional 10 million Americans would be working, with a concomitant increase in goods and services.

In short, the Sanders idea is a frank expression of economic illiteracy. Instead of working so hard to propose and publicize such baldly ludicrous ideas, it'd be better for everyone if the senator found more time for leisure pursuits and resolved to put in fewer hours on the job.

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

Slower heart rates can be good or bad

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a question about a resting heart rate, specifically when it is considered too slow for one's health. I am a 67-year-old male who, from an early age to the present time, has always been physically active every day. Now retired, I feel a great sense of accomplishment when I work out. The endorphin boosts and benefits to my body are my daily rewards. Recently, I received a fitness watch that tracks my heart rate. My nightly sleep sessions show a range of 39-58 bpm over the past month. During a dental visit a while ago the hygienist told me that she knew of an athlete who died in his sleep, and his heart rate was so slow that it just stopped. Is this possible? – D.M.



This really wasn't a great thing for the hygienist to say, as there is very little truth to it. Most people who exercise do have a slower heart rate, and it's a good sign of a healthy heart. However, some older people can develop heart block when the electrical impulse from the natural pacemaker of the heart fails to pass to the ventricles. This is an occasional cause of sudden cardiac death.

Your heart rate suggests, to me, that it's more likely the healthy heart rate of an athlete than it is a disease of the electrical conduction system, but a visit with your regular doctor or cardiologist can separate this through a simple electrocardiogram in most cases. Some people just have slow heart rates, but they can be treated with a pacemaker if they're symptomatic.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 79-year-old man with diabetes and high blood pressure. What are your thoughts on taking a supplement designed for horses by humans? My son-in-law takes 1 teaspoon of this every other day for building his body and suggests that it might help me. – Anon.

Please don't take products designed for other animals. The dosing that is healthy for some animals can be toxic for others. I looked up the product – it contains vitamins and minerals that are important for humans, but the dosing isn't right.

Supplements are not an effective treatment for diabetes or high blood pressure. Strong data show that people who eat well don't benefit much, or at all, from vitamin and mineral supplementation, but if you choose to do so, choose one designed for humans, not horses.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I read your recent column on overactive bladders. Like many middle-aged and older women, I've progressively had more and more trouble with frequent urination and bladder control. I saw a urologist who diagnosed me with bladder spasms. I got very good improvement on an expensive drug called Myrbetriq. A few years later, an abdominal scan done for another reason revealed a large uterine fibroid. I eventually had a hysterectomy a year ago. Now at 75, I don't have any bladder spasms and don't take any medication. – C.J.R.

Fibroid tumors and other pelvic masses can press on the bladder and cause symptoms that feel like an overactive bladder. These aren't common causes, but I am glad you wrote in about this cause and that your symptoms have gone away after surgery. Since the medicine worked, I suspect that the mechanical pressure of the fibroid triggered bladder contractions.

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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Texas Weekly, our first all Texas weekly magazine debuted in 1446... and lasted seven months.

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: Y equals X

PZNM AV MZX MXHO EQH
 VQOXQWX PZQ'V XYNOAWAWF
 MZX UAEX QE CHXVASXWM
 FXHNUS? N EQHS XYCUQHXX.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging

Answer Page 4

◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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The OIG in our corner



by Freddy Groves

You hate to learn of it, but per a Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General (OIG) report, a former veteran who worked at a VA hospital was found guilty of stealing money out of patient accounts. It came about when the sister of a deceased veteran checked her brother's account and discovered the missing funds. An investigation showed that the thief was stealing from accounts where the veteran was unable to appear in person at the cashier window to withdraw money due to illness and tried to blame the missing funds on someone using fake identification. All he got for his crimes was six months in jail and six months with an ankle bracelet at home.

An elderly veteran lost his foot due to deficient podiatry care. The whole sorry mess involved defective specialty

diabetic shoes, blocked blood flow to the leg, a patient fall due to the shoes, lack of patient education, lack of communication among staff... and ended with amputation of the patient's foot.

There was enough blame to go around, but nobody to throw in jail. The podiatrist didn't adequately instruct on the proper fitting of the shoes. The fall wasn't correctly reported because the safety officer was new. It could not be determined who did or didn't warn the patient about possible amputation. And so on.

But not all OIG investigations are so serious. There was the VA employee auction of VA property, which was for the purpose of gathering funds for employee activities and parties. When purchasing agents placed orders for supplies, sometimes there were freebies or incentives sent by the manufacturer when the order was large enough. The employees would then auction off the extra goods, which were government property. It

appears that the auctioning of the freebies had gone on for many years, with nobody admitting to the OIG that the vendor was selected because of the freebies they would get. The bulk of the free goodies were big-name expensive coolers.

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- "Technology can be really helpful, especially if you have very little storage area for papers. I had a trustworthy neighborhood teenager come over and help me scan in all my important documents. I have everything on flash drives and have given copies to appropriate people. She showed me how to scan a copy of warranty receipts so I can find the information I need quickly if I have an electronic item or appliance break down." – T.L. in Massachusetts

- D.B. in Minnesota has this to share: "When you are going fishing and only bringing a couple of lures, use an old, empty pill container. Holds well and you won't get poked!"

- Oranges are wonderful treats and full of delicious fiber and vitamin C. Save your peels and stash them in a net bag hanging from your rearview mirror for just a day or two. As they dry, they give off the best smell.

- "This tip is from my babysitter. She gives small children two 'get out of bed free' tickets at bedtime. If they get out of bed, say, for one last drink of water, etc. (we parents know these are stalling tactics), they have to give her a ticket. If they still have a ticket unused when they fall asleep, she will leave a prize with their parents for the morning." – M.J. in New Mexico

- "My friend and I found these great vintage spice bottles at a garage sale. We decided that since we got such a good deal, we would treat ourselves to a few new, interesting spices that were a little pricey – and we went in half on them." – E.D. 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!

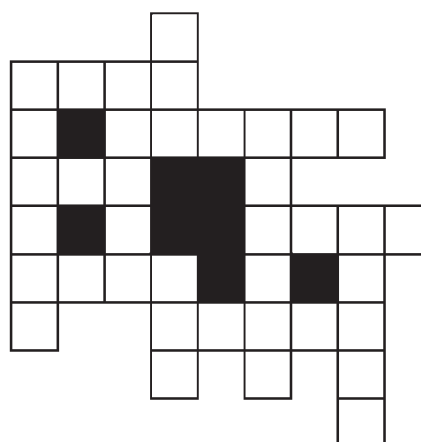
Answer Page 4

	+		+		=	11		
+		+		-				
	+		-		=	11		
+		+		+				
	+		×		=	48		
=		=		=				
13		23		5				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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- OLT
- OCNYTO
- YAHNE
- RDMO
- PAROSE
- RYP
- HEOC
- ♥ ORTET
- ♥ PMA
- MOYDLE
- EACPA
- ♥ OMRO



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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