



River water reliance remains priority for EPWater

By Martha C. Koester
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – With a full river season in the books, El Paso Water’s plant operations are in transition.

El Paso welcomed the Rio Grande in March, and irrigation season ended recently. The end of the season signals the beginning of maintenance at the plants, which are buzzing with activity as they prepare to maximize every drop of river water for next year.

Contrary to recent reports, EPWater’s reliance on river water remains a permanent and significant fixture of the city’s water supply. As long as it’s available, river water from the Rio Grande will make up nearly half of El Paso’s drinking water supply.

“We balance the resources that we have available like river water, which is renewable, because it relieves some of the burden of pumping our groundwater,” said Water Resources Manager Scott Reinert. “We have also built up a drought-proof supply of resources.”

Elephant Butte water storage has dropped to very low levels with limited water available for release next year. Thanks to careful investment and planning, EPWater has sustainable options when the river supply runs short, said President and CEO John Balliew.

“For decades, water reuse has been an effective water management strategy,” Balliew said. “Reclaimed water has been used by industry and for irrigating parks and golf courses. Additionally,



– Photo courtesy El Paso Water

RESOURCE – EPWater strives to use every drop of river water from the Jonathan Rogers Water Treatment Plant’s basins.

we have been treating reclaimed water to drinking water standards to replenish the Hueco Bolson aquifer since the 1980s.”

Also in the planning books are:

- The Advanced Water Purification Facility in Mission Valley will be the first direct pipe-to-pipe project of its kind in the U.S. This project will convert reclaimed water into fresh drinking water and send it directly to customers. This new water supply is safe, reliable and drought-proof

for El Paso.

- The expansion of the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant in the Far East Side will increase production up to 33 million gallons a day.

Water planning continues because of the volatility of drought, Reinert said.

“Our river supply has been highly variable for the past 20 years, and we expect it to continue to be

See WATER, Page 5

Griego earns migrant Student Champion Award

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Alfonso Griego, a dedicated participant in the

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at El Paso Community College (EPCC), was recently honored with the Student Champion Award at the National High School Equivalency Program (HEP) CAMP

Association Conference held in early November in Raleigh, NC. This prestigious award, presented annually to one outstanding student, recognizes exemplary dedication, resilience, and achievement among students in HEP and CAMP programs across the United States. Alfonso was selected from nominations submitted by over 50 CAMP projects nationwide.

“For those in the field of education, there is no greater reward and no more powerful reminder of purpose than witnessing a student emerge from an odd place into the light,” Lizeth Garcia, EPCC Computer Instructor with CAMP, said. “This is the most prestigious honor presented by the National HEP CAMP Association, and we couldn’t be prouder of Alfonso’s achievements.”

“If you can fall and rise again, it’s worth starting over a thousand times,” Alfonso Griego said. “Cowboy up!”

The Student Champion Award holds special significance for Alfonso and the CAMP staff, who support migrant and seasonal farm workers and their families as they begin their college journeys. Through personalized guidance, academic resources, and mentorship, the CAMP Program has provided Alfonso with the tools he needed to succeed at EPCC, where he is working toward an associate degree with plans to pursue veterinary studies at a four-year university. From a proud agricultural background, Alfonso aspires to return his skills to his community as a future veterinarian.

During the ceremony, Alfonso accepted the award with an inspiring speech, a \$1,000 prize, and a commemorative plaque. Reflecting on his journey, Alfonso’s advice to future CAMP students: “Remember, a pencil weighs less than a pick. Never give up.”

Visit www.epcc.edu/Services/camp for more information on the EPCC CAMP program.

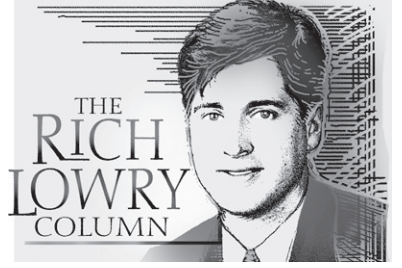
Visit www.hepcampassociation.org/ for more information on the HEP CAMP Association.



– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

COWBOY UP – Alfonso Griego delivered a message of perseverance to the audience in Raleigh, NC where he was named HEP CAMP national champion.

Rockets still captivate America's imagination



At his Madison Square Garden event a week before the election, Donald Trump went on an extended riff about the famous "chopstick" maneuver of Elon Musk's Space X.

In describing his slack-jawed amazement at watching the feat – the first stage of a Starship rocket returning to the launch tower upon coming back to Earth – Trump spoke for all us.

The various videos of the operation that witnesses have posted online never get old. It's not just the technical achievement – the joyous awe of spectators is itself wonderful to behold.

The other day, President-elect Trump took time off from forming his new administration to travel to South Texas with Musk to observe another test

launch of Starship, and why not? Rockets are an enduring object of human fascination, and Space X is bringing an appropriate sense of brio to one of mankind's coolest ventures.

Modern rocketry is the product of a couple of centuries of human thought and ingenuity, from the 13th century when the Chinese used "arrows of flying fire" to fight the Mongols, to Newton's 16th century work on laws of motion, to the experiments of Robert Goddard early in the 20th century, to the advances driven by World War II and the Cold War, to, of course, the Apollo missions to the moon.

A rocket launch is literally spectacular. It is a feast for the eyes and an assault on the ears, as a tall, thin projectile is, after a controlled explosion,

propelled upward on a raging plume of fire.

The iconic 1969 launch of Apollo 11 on the sleek, instantly recognizable Saturn V rocket emblazoned with the words "United States" in red lettering remains a thing of beauty, and an unmatched symbol of 20th century technological achievement.

A rocket is otherworldly in more than one sense. A car can be analogized to a horse. A plane can be analogized to a bird. A rocket is like nothing in nature.

See LOWRY, Page 7

Sanchez encourages victims of violence to file for protection

By Elhiu Dominguez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Too many people in our community experience domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Victims may not know the available safety options. The El Paso County Attorney's Office can help victims get free protective orders, offering a legal shield of safety from their abusers.

Victims can apply for a protective order using a simple, confidential process online. Victims can apply from the privacy of their homes using a computer or smartphone by visiting www.epcounty.com/ca/protectiveorders.htm.

"Our goal: provide victims with options to help them get safe. Protective orders can help victims protect themselves and their families," said El Paso County Attorney Christina

Sanchez. "Apply online from your own safe place or at our offices and we will work to assess your case and obtain a protective order if you qualify."

Domestic violence too often involves the ongoing use of power and control, where fear, emotional manipulation, and financial dependence make it difficult for victims to leave their aggressors; when these tactics of control fail, aggressors turn to violence. The County Attorney's Office understands these challenges. The Office provides legal protection through protective orders and connects victims with resources like emergency shelters, financial assistance, and educational support to help them rebuild their lives.

"We understand the decision to leave an abusive relationship can be a challenge. This is not a decision victims have to face alone," Sanchez added. "In addition to protective orders,

we connect and work with others including the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence, law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office, to help people find safety and regain control over their lives."

The County Attorney's Office operates three locations to serve the public: downtown El Paso, Ysleta Annex, and

the Northwest Annex. Victims can visit any of these offices for assistance or call (915) 273-3238 for assistance.

In addition to calling 911 for immediate assistance, victims can also reach out to the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence (CASFV) at (915) 593-7300 to request emergency shelter. CASFV provides safe, confidential

housing for individuals and families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault, offering a secure environment and support services to help victims begin their journey toward safety and recovery.

Elhiu Dominguez is a Special Projects Coordinator for El Paso County.

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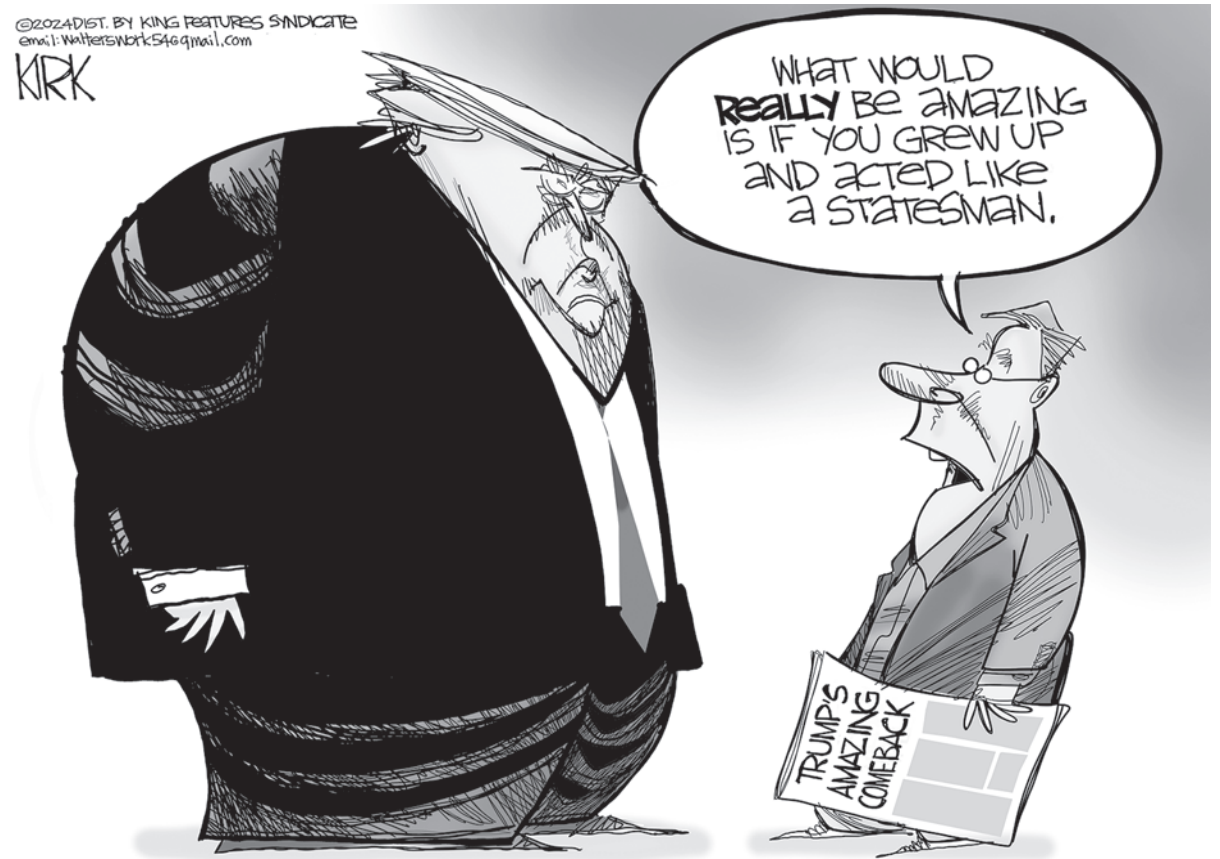
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MAIL: 15344 Werling Ct. Horizon City, TX 79928

Phone: 852-3235
E-mail: wtxcc@wtxcc.com
Website: wtxcc.com

Publisher: Rick Shrum
Contributors: Alfredo Vasquez, Steve Escajeda

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Dec. 2, 1972, the Temptations earned the last of their four chart-topping hits when "Papa Was a Rollin' Stone" made it to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100. The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1989.

• On Dec. 3, 1984, an explosion at a Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, marked the worst industrial accident in history. At least 5,000 people died immediately, according to official estimates, while approximately 20,000 died over time and another half-million were injured when toxic gas enveloped the city.

• On Dec. 4, 1917, psychiatrist W.H.R. Rivers presented a report titled "The Repression of War Experience" to the Royal School of Medicine. The report was based on his work at the Craiglockhart War Hospital for Neurasthenic Officers, near Edinburgh, which was one of the most famous hospitals used to treat soldiers suffering psychological trauma after serving on the battlefield.

• On Dec. 5, 1776, five students at Williamsburg, Virginia's College of William

& Mary gathered at Raleigh's Tavern to found a new fraternity they called Phi Beta Kappa, which was intended to follow strictly American principles rather than those espoused by England or Germany and in which members engaged in the kind of fervent political debate characteristic of the school's student life.

• On Dec. 6, 1961, Syracuse running back Ernie Davis became the first African American player to win the Heisman Trophy, beating out Ohio State fullback Bob Ferguson. Earlier that day Davis had met John F. Kennedy at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, remarking that he'd "never thought I'd ever be shaking the hand of the president of the United States."

• On Dec. 7, 2001, the blockbuster remake of the 1960 film "Ocean's Eleven" opened in theaters. Directed by Steven Soderbergh, it spawned the profitable sequels "Ocean's Twelve" in 2004 and "Ocean's Thirteen" in 2007.

• On Dec. 8, 1942, Jeannette Rankin, a committed pacifist and the first woman elected to Congress, cast the sole congressional vote against America's declaration of war on Japan.

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HATE IS EASY FOR THOSE WHO ONLY VIEW PEOPLE AS STEREOTYPES



Hack the Border 3.0

EPCC, national sponsors, host tech conference

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College computing fields of study (Computer Science, Cybersecurity, and Artificial Intelligence Analytics) hosted the nationally renowned 3rd Annual ‘Hack the Border 3.0’, an event that offered workshops in Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity, along with competitions like ‘Capture the Flag’ (CTF), Adversarial Thinking, Phishing, Secure Coding, and the first ‘Datathon’.

EPCC is designated as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity and has garnered attention from organizations such as NCyTE and the NSA. Notably, the NSA has highlighted our use of experiential learning in cybersecurity as a best practice.

Sponsors of the event include: El Paso Electric, Microsoft, National Science Foundation (NSF), The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM), National Cybersecurity Training & Education Center (NCyTE), Association of Computing Machinery (ACM), and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).



Dr. Christian Servin

“This sense of belonging – feeling accepted, valued, and connected – helps students understand their role within the community and the relevance of their contributions,” Dr. Christian Servin, EPCC Computer Science Professor and Hack the Border Co-Founder, with Instructor Nadia Karichev, said. “Hack the Border aims to cultivate this feeling, which is essential for building self-esteem, motivation, and engagement, ultimately empowering students to thrive in both their personal and professional lives.”

A key highlight of Hack the Border 3.0 is the introduction of our first Datathon, generously sponsored by El Paso Electric. Now a permanent feature of the program, this Datathon offered students in fields like data analytics, health informatics, and other informatics disciplines a chance to apply and refine their skills through real-world challenges that benefit the community. El Paso Electric has provided a comprehensive dataset reflecting local data, allowing students to engage with issues that impact their community and foster a sense of belonging through meaningful problem-solving.

CTF competitions provide hackathon participants with an opportunity to engage in hands-on scenarios and apply solutions based on the knowledge and skills they have acquired through training or education. The CTF challenges we offer extend concepts and topics identified by our regional industry partners as critical needs.

On Thursday, November 21, 2024, EPCC hosted “Industry Nights,” bringing together regional industry leaders and workforce representatives to discuss valuable credentialing opportunities and explore ways to enhance curricula,



– Photos courtesy El Paso Community College

PROBLEM SOLVING – Chad Schaar, left, and Josephine Lopez work on a hack.

helping students understand regional workforce needs and access work-based learning opportunities. This initiative is supported by the National Cybersecurity Training & Education Center (NCyTE) and featured two distinguished speakers: Stephen Miller, Principal Investigator for NCyTE, and Michelle Isenhardt from the National Security Agency (NSA).

Additionally, as J.J. Childress from Microsoft shared, EPCC was recently mentioned in national news for its role in Hack the Border. This recognition underscores the national impact we are making.

In addition, DEVCOM, our official sponsor for “adversarial thinking,” offered exceptional workshops that integrate AI and cybersecurity. Through the support of a Microsoft grant, we are building capacity in artificial intelligence tools and technology, with both DEVCOM and NCyTE helping us expand these resources for students, the workforce, and city leaders.

This project would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of the Hack the Border team. Karichev’s leadership was instrumental in overseeing the coaching component of the hackathon. Her preparation and training of coaches ensured the successful integration of relevant challenges into the event.

Isaac Perea, Andrew Pownuk, and Rafael Escalante provided invaluable contributions in designing the challenges and platforms that fostered a dynamic and engaging hackathon environment.

The event’s success also depended on the dedicated coaches – Jesus Ramirez, Louis Dominguez, Victor Razo, Sirach Mejia, Raul Macias, Delilah Esparza, Armando Levario, Alejandro Solano, and Ivan Alonso.



TRY THIS – EPCC Assistant Professor of Computer Science Nadia Karichev, standing, floats between students working on challenges.

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CryptoQuip Answer

If two animated characters are drawn on the same cartoon frame, I’d call them cel mates.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- NASA's first interplanetary CubeSats, a pair of briefcase-size spacecraft called Mars Cube One, or MarCO, which flew by Mars in 2018, were named for the Pixar characters Wall-E and EVE.

- Figure skate blades were originally made of animal bones.

- Dolphin calves are typically born tail first, so they don't drown during the birthing process.

- Christian Louboutin manufactured a limited edition shoe for brides. They had baby-blue soles to give the bride "something blue," but the company ceased production after copyright issues.

- It takes Pluto 248.09 years to make one orbit around the sun.

- And speaking of shoes... England's Queen Elizabeth II had hers broken in for her by her personal assistant and senior dresser. The idea was that she couldn't afford for her shoes to be uncomfortable or give her blisters while on official business.

- Jim Henson made his first Kermit puppet using his mother's old coat and two halves of a ping-pong ball.

- Bacon was used to make explosives during World War II.

- Peter Pan creator James Barrie used to act as if he were his dead brother, David, to cheer his mother by dressing in his brother's clothes and whistling like his sibling used to do. On one such occasion, his mother thought for a moment that David had actually returned from the dead.

- Automobile tires were originally white.

- The Caesar salad was actually invented in Tijuana, Mexico, in 1927. Hotel Caesarowner Caesar Cardini wanted to make dinner for friends but didn't have a lot of available options, so he tossed lettuce into a bowl with a dressing made from whatever he could find at the moment.

Thought for the Day: "I always wanted to be somebody, but now I realize I should have been more specific." – Lily Tomlin

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Water

From Page 1

variable," Reinert said. "But we want to maximize its use each and every year that we have it."

The city's river water supply is dependent on bountiful snowpack from Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico. The snowmelt flows downstream into Elephant Butte Reservoir, where it is held in storage.

While Elephant Butte Reservoir drains this year to about 5% capacity, conversations at EPWater turn to next river season.

"The projections are not favorable because of La Niña, which puts snowpack in question," Reinert said. "EPWater wants to meet the challenge of no river in any given year, but when Mother Nature provides, we want to maximize it."

The full river season in 2024 serves as a reminder of the volatility of drought conditions.

EPWater received about 55,000 acre feet this year, about 43% more than 2023's 38,500 acre feet. A full 30-week season is encouraging after multiple years of limited river water supply and drought cycles – such as 2021's and



– Photos courtesy El Paso Water

CAPTURED – River water fills up basins at the Robertson/Umbenhauer Water Treatment Plant in March 2023.

2022's short 10 weeks and groundwater and desalinated plan because the next drought is right around the corner,"

Over the decades, EPWater demand. Reinert said. "Like Maxwell House coffee, river water is good to the last drop."

PUBLIC NOTICE

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

The *West Texas County Courier* will not publish the last two weeks of December. The first issue of 2025 will be January 2.

The *West Texas County Courier* office will close beginning Monday, December 9, 2024. The office will open again on Friday, December 27, 2024.

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The NFL MVP may be someone nobody is talking about

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

I know we're just past the midway point of the NFL season and there's a lot of football left to be played.

Picking playoff teams would still be tough right now, let alone picking a Most Valuable Player.

But sports TV and radio hosts start doing that after week three of the season.

I guess everyone wants to be the first one to stir up some controversy.

I might be stirring up a little controversy myself because the guy I think is on the way to winning it, hasn't been mentioned much at all.

But let's see who the experts have been picking.

Believe it or not, with his youth and excellent early start, Washington Commanders rookie quarterback Jayden Daniels was actually being talked about as a possibility. Of course, that crazy talk has died down in recent weeks.

Then the talk shifted toward Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson, who has already won two, including last year.

And Jackson did get off to a hot start, but he's come down to Earth lately, as have the Ravens.

The guy that I think has had a biggest impact on the Ravens is running back Derrick Henry, who joined the team this year and has been almost unstoppable.

Well, I said "almost" unstoppable. His last few games have been fairly regular and not spectacular, so his name has disappeared from the MVP talk.

For a while, the experts were saying that Minnesota Vikings wide receiver Justin Jefferson could be the first pass-catcher to win the award since tight end Don Hutson won it in 1942 for the Green Bay Packers.

But they're not mentioning Jefferson's name anymore.

Lately, the talk has shifted toward two guys.

The first being running back Sequon Barkley on the Philadelphia Eagles. There's no doubt, Barkley has had a great first-year with the Eagles and that backward no-look jump over that defender didn't hurt in the "style points" category.

But even his MVP talk have moved to someone else recently.

Now the media guys have put Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen at the top of the list. Almost everyone thought the Bills were going to take a significant step back this year after losing a few key guys, especially receivers Stefon Diggs and Gabe Davis.

But the Bills still look like the Bills and most of that is thanks to Josh Allen.

We all know that Allen is big and strong, can throw and run, and is vocal

on the sidelines. That kind of passion just looks good on TV and as we said earlier, "style points" count.

There are a few other guys who could emerge before the season is over.

Guys like Cincinnati Bengals receiver Ja'Marr Chase, who is leading in almost all the receiver categories. There's Cleveland Browns' defensive end Myles Garrett, who has been a force this season. But those NFL voters would never give the MVP to a defensive guy. The quarterback who is having the best year of anyone is the Bengals' Joe Burrow. He leads the league in total passing yards, touchdown passes and passer rating. But the Bengals have a losing record – enough said.

The guy who I feel should win the award is Detroit Lions quarterback Jared Goff.

Why is no one talking about Goff? Is it because he's not flashy? Is it because Detroit has a great running game? Is it because people know more

about the coach, Dan Campbell, than the quarterback?

I don't know. But Goff has steadily put together the kind of season that got the team off to a 9-1 start. And the Lions have been crushing their opponents.

Goff is near the top of the league standings in passing yards, touchdown passes, completion percentage, yards per attempt and quarterback rating.

During a streak this season when the Lions had won six in a row, Goff was averaging just four incomplete passes per game.

Wow, it just dawned on me that we've mentioned all these names for possible MVP and Patrick Mahomes never came up.

I think he'd just rather win Super Bowls.

Don't be surprised if this year's MVP, Jared Goff, and his Lions take on Mahomes and the Chiefs in this year's big game.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Listeria and salmonella in lunchmeat

The saga of listeria in sliced deli lunchmeat continues, month after month. The list of affected items gets longer and longer as there is now an additional company subject to recalls due to listeria.

To stay current on the lunchmeat recalls, go to CDC.gov and search for "lunchmeat listeria recall." That will give you several articles with information you need.

As if that's not enough, to be safe, do we need to change the way we prepare eggs? The Food and Drug Administration has now labeled the ongoing egg recall as a class 1, which means it's "reasonable" to assume that the eggs can cause serious health consequences or death.

To be safe from salmonella, they say, gone are poached and sunny side up eggs. Instead, to kill any possible salmonella, we need to scramble or hard boil our eggs and cook them thoroughly, with both the yolk and the egg firm.

To learn more, go to the FDA website (fda.gov) and search for "egg safety salmonella."

The latest food recalls cover a wide variety of products.

There's dip that's being recalled because it potentially has mold contamination. And lactose-free milk that has tree nuts. There's dog food recalled for salmonella and listeria. And whole cantaloupes with salmonella.

But it's not all food. There's the drug remdesivir that has glass particles in it. And the dietary supplement tainted with dexamethasone (a corticosteroid) and chlorpheniramine (an antihistamine). And the baby powder with metal or chemicals in it.

On recalls.gov – a site that covers recalls from the FDA, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and FoodSafety.gov – there are recalls for consumer products, boats, medicine, cosmetics, food and more. At this writing, there are recalls of bicycle helmets, bathroom mirrors, yard tractors, playpens and so much more.

If there are certain products that concern you, sign up for email notifications on Recalls.gov.

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WAX SHOP	birds	126 Olympics award	31 Famed orca, once	79 Broadway's "Miss
ACROSS	61 Pass on	127 Depraved emperor	32 Bagel shape	81 Edgar Allan _
1 Cheer shouts	62 Durance of	128 Wise off to	34 Faith faction	83 Pair for vision
5 Specialty of Penn & Teller	"Smallville"	129 Ballerina's field, in France	35 Rice-shaped pasta	84 Rescue ropes
10 Meddles, with "in"	66 Astronaut Buzz	130 Affirmative answers	36 On or about	85 Sleep noisily
15 Golfer Snead and politician	68 Own	131 Gas brand in Canada	37 56, to Caesar	86 Goaded (on)
26-Across	69 Riddle, part 4		39 In the hub of	88 Habitually lazy sort
19 On the ocean	75 Shine		44 One_ (brief drama)	90 Tiny fraction of a min.
20 Port in Japan	76 Alleviation		46 Part of R&R, for short	91 Cat, in Spain
21 TV's Winfrey	77 Worshiper of Jah, for short	DOWN	47 Nissan model until 2015	92 Sound from a 91-Down
22 "Zip-_Doo-Dah"	78 Bits of Viking script	1 Coarse	49 More peeved	94 Always, to poets
23 Start of a riddle	80 Decelerate	2 Campfire residue	50 Amount of food carried in a cafeteria	97 Cracks
26 Four-term Georgia senator	82 Ultimatum ender	3 Large amount of medicine	51 50%	98 Extreme fear
27 Calf's meat	87 Bonuses	4 Surfeit	52 Slashed words of choice	99 Cello bow rub-ons
28 Make a dining surface of	89 Riddle, part 5	5 Bread	54 Old soda brand	100 Liqueur flavorings
29 Fastening bars with crosspieces	93 Robert of "The Sopranos"	6 Horse relative	55 Czech, e.g.	101 Cramps, e.g.
31 Hog hangout	95 Twin brother of Jacob	7 Gun, slangily	56 Roof feature	102 Sentence structure
33 Riddle, part 2	96 Clear mist from	8 1950s prez	57 Seedy loaves	103 _ Sea (salt lake in Asia)
38 Kotb of morning TV	97 Sci-fi writer L. _ de Camp	9 Military pupil	60 Perches	108 C.S. Lewis lion
40 In this place	101 Place to get a mud wrap	10 Infant's sock	63 3/15, e.g.	109 Foe
41 Sun Yat- _	104 To be, in Toulon	11 Northern part of an urban area	64 Stiff shirt part	110 Chevy Tahoe, e.g.
42 Travel bags	106 Sahara-like	12 Robbins of "underground comix"	65 It's negatively charged	115 Web mag
43 Nice scent	107 End of the riddle	13 Tic-_toe	67 Sleep aid brand	118 Grassy tract
45 Government bigwig	111 Directed	14 Kind of sheepdog	69 Hideous giant	119 Spot
47 Deer _ (street sign)	112 In last place, say	15 Maalox's company	70 Continuous change	120 Spots
48 Riddle, part 3	113 Plastic wrap	16 Grown-ups	71 It might be boldface	121 Actress Issa
53 More tightly packed	114 Rock bassist	17 Creme de _	72 Fancy jug	122 52-wk. spans
58 In the habit of	116 Stork's kin	18 Feels	73 Prurient	123 Lav, in Leeds
59 Common origami	117 Riddle's answer	24 Furry "hand"	74 Capacitance unit	
	125 Extracts juice from	25 Slangy refusals		
	126 Fork feature	30 Ray who portrayed the scarecrow in "The Wizard of Oz"		

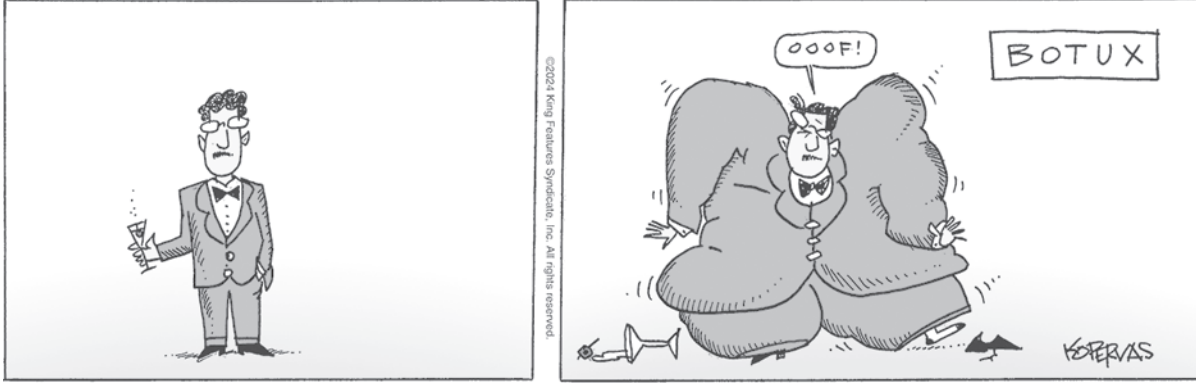
Answer Page 4

Super Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
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112								113						114		115			
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124					125						126					127			
128											130							131	

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



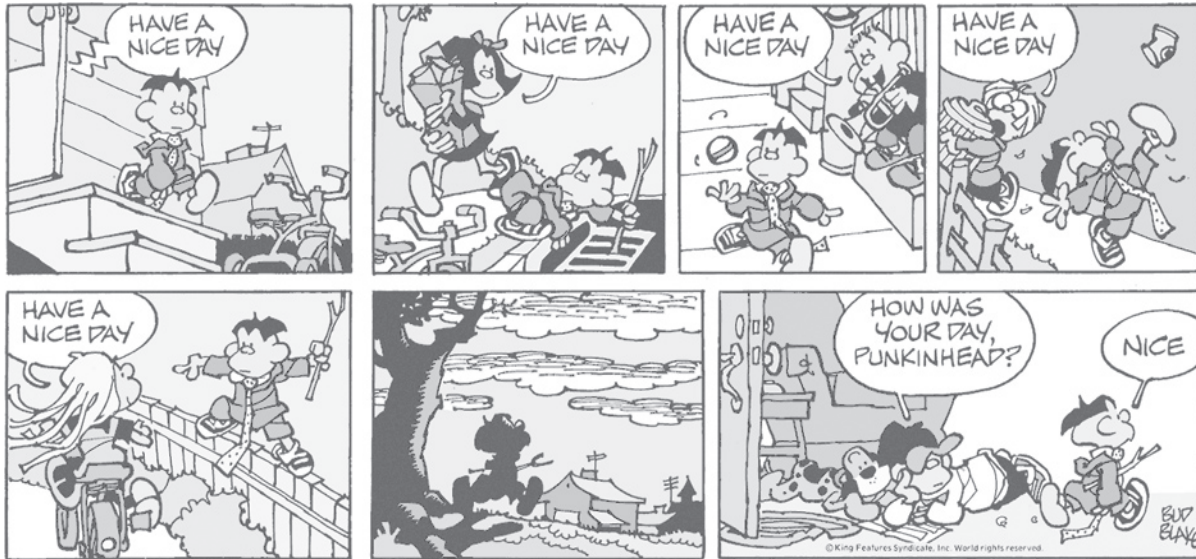
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

And it promises to take us to worlds beyond our own, whether outer space, or the moon, or, if Musk can achieve his ambitions, Mars.

There is an inherent risk to the enterprise, making it even more compelling. The countdown of mission control always holds a certain drama, and the announcement of "liftoff!" always carries a justified tone of triumph.

Space X's chopstick operation had a little of all of this. The returning rocket stage looked like a Roman candle flying in reverse, and it created visible – and then audible – sonic booms as it descended. It represented a new frontier in human achievement, since such a thing had never been done before. And, as it hovered above the tower, the success of the test remained in doubt, until it nestled in the metal arms of the tower.

In engineering terms, it was a virtuoso performance – like watching a skater land a quadruple axle.

It looked and felt like the future.

When Musk was with Trump in Texas and demonstrated how the latest Starship test would work with a model in his hand, he looked every bit a boy smitten with the adventure of rocketry and eager to share his enthusiasm.

That, in large part, is what Musk is, but no one should mistake the seriousness of his achievements. For all that rockets are supposed to be cutting edge, there was a decades-long period of stagnation in launch costs until Musk came along and revolutionized the business with his entrepreneurial mindset. Now, launch costs have radically diminished and Musk alone operates 10 times more satellites than any other country or company, according to Ars Technica.

The tests of Starship, the world's largest and most powerful rocket, are the latest iteration of Musk's approach of rapid innovation toward the goal of sending men to the moon again, and then Mars. It is an expression of a basic human instinct for exploration and adventure, with the rocket as its symbol and vehicle.

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

Balance issues as aging can have multiple reasons

DEAR DR. ROACH: Apparently, it is common for older people to have balance issues. Do these balance problems usually stem more from muscular issues or inner ear issues? – E.M.



It is often a combination of issues that lead to balance problems in older adults. Inner ear problems, where the organs of balance are located, are a major cause. However, balance problems are exacerbated by muscle weakness, vision problems, arthritis and medications, to name a few common ones.

The body has many safeguards to keep us from falling. If the balance system can't tell us our exact position in space, our eyes can, and the neurological system uses fine muscle control to keep us upright and safe. We can often do well even with one system not working properly. When multiple systems are affected, falls are more common.

Improving balance and reducing fall risk often involves multiple interventions. One is working on balance directly. This can be achieved with home exercises; group exercises, like tai chi and yoga, which have the added advantage of increasing muscle control; or with a skilled therapist such as physical or occupational therapy. Making sure vision is as good as possible and staying on top of joint, muscle and neurological conditions will help reduce fall risk.

Medications are so often the source of balance and fall problems that many medical practices (including mine) review medications at every visit to look for errors, medicines that have combined toxicities, medicines that are less safe in older adults and any medicines that might safely be discontinued.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am an 89-year-old man who has been taking tamsulosin (Flomax), 0.4 mg, for many years. I take it after supper in the evening. I get up at night three or four times to urinate. Would it be better to take the medication after lunch? I would be happy if I could reduce the number of times I get up to maybe only once or twice. – P.J.S.

Tamsulosin is in the class of alpha blockers, and they relax smooth muscle, a special type of muscle found in the prostate and in blood vessels (among other places). Relaxing the smooth muscle in the prostate makes the urethra, the tube that carries the urine from the bladder and through the prostate, larger. As a result, men can empty their bladders more easily.

However, even though tamsulosin is better at relaxing smooth muscle in the prostate than in blood vessels, some men will get lightheaded upon standing when using it. This occurs especially on the first dose, and over time most men no longer have trouble. It is usually dosed at nighttime so that the lightheadedness on standing is minimized. You can take it at any time of the day (a half-hour after eating is recommended, at the same meal of the day), but I doubt it will work much better.

Many experts will use 0.8 mg in men who haven't had an ideal response and who do not have lightheadedness. I'd ask your doctor whether an increased dose might be better. Before considering another drug, be sure you avoid too many liquids at night, especially alcohol, and try voiding your bladder twice before bed to make sure it is as empty as possible.

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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How 'bout somethin' catchy like...
"There's Not-a-burger like What-a-burger."



Moore Texas by Roger Moore

Corpus Christi, 1950: Famous burger joint WHATABURGER begins operations... the name is an ad agency's dream.

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: K equals F

RK SDF CMRVCSWP QGCHCQSWHL
CHW PHCDM FM SGW LCVW
QCHSFFM KHCWV, R'P QCUU
SGWV QWU VCSWL.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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Homeless programs and services



by Freddy Groves

Back in March, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced its goal of getting 41,000 homeless veterans into housing during this fiscal year. As of this time, they not only reached that goal, but exceeded it. Nearly 48,000 homeless veterans have permanent housing now.

The numbers are impressive. Not only did they exceed the intended number, but they surpassed their goal of keeping veterans in that housing, aiming for 95% who stayed. They reached 96% this year.

The VA's Housing First approach considers stable housing to be the first and most important in the whole menu of services and help that a veteran can receive. The model promotes the theory that getting veterans into stable housing should be first in the list of priorities, with other concerns—such as

completing an alcohol program or beginning treatment for mental health issues – to be addressed afterward and not as a requirement to receiving housing services.

The housing program has a number of services, including working with HUD to provide vouchers to get into privately owned housing. Additionally, there are case managers who connect veterans to support services such as mental health treatment, legal services, health care, job training, counseling for substance abuse and employment services. The Housing First approach seems to be working, because veteran homelessness has been reduced over 50% since the program started in 2010.

For low income veterans with families, the VA has support services and case management that includes preventing homelessness or finding other housing. Go online to www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.html for more information.

One additional form of help is available at the nearest VA medical center, where homeless coordinators can

provide connection to all the homeless services.

If you are a homeless veteran, or are at risk of becoming homeless, call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 877-4AID-VET (877-424-3838) for help.

You can also go to the VA's homeless services webpage at www.va.gov/HOMELESS/housing.asp. On that same page, scroll to the bottom for 24/7 chat and a link to the nearest VA medical center.

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• "I have small candy dishes out in my home, and I like to keep them filled with goodies throughout the year, but now, when I have little children over, I put them up high and let parents know that they and the children are welcome to have as much as they like. The parents appreciate this, as the children sometimes like to overindulge." – D.A. in Rhode Island

• Unexpected company on the way? Throw clutter in a laundry basket and stash. Clear the sink of dirty dishes; take out the garbage; clean the faucets, sink and mirror in the bathroom most likely to be used; and, finally, sweep or vacuum the floors. This should not take long, but these moves will maximize the feeling of cleanliness in your house.

• Here's another use for a bandanna: In-a-pinch earmuffs. Tie around head and position over cold ears to keep winter winds at bay.

• "When traveling, let your host/hostess know of any serious health problems or allergies you may have and what to do in case of an emergency." – M.W. in Saskatchewan Canada

• One great item to have on hand in your pantry: jarred peppers and olives. They can be used to make a quick but sophisticated appetizer, and they add a lot of flavor for their price. They are very stable on the shelf, so you can keep them around just in case.

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.

	+		+		=	12		
+		+		+				
	+		+		=	13		
×		×		+				
	+		×		=	99		
=		=		=				
28		35		22				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult

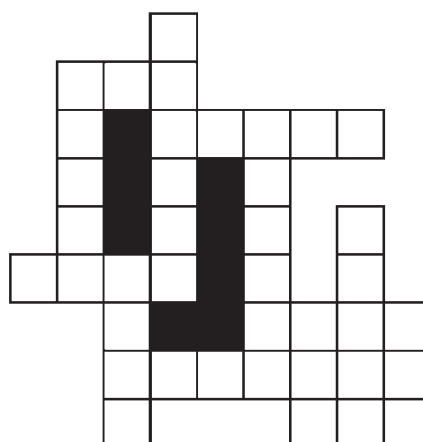
★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 4

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- YIC
- NICAMA
- CHOIM
- ♥ YERL
- POIYAM
- ♥ IPH
- ♥ ASRE
- NENIA
- ♥ PYA
- OLDIUM
- CAHPR
- ♥ IERM



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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