



— Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

SURGE IN DEMAND – El Paso Electric Company is in the midst of an electric substation construction boom, like the one above in West El Paso County. The planned substations are designed to meet the needs of the rapid residential and commercial growth, as well as for the proposed data centers’ huge energy demands.

El Paso Electric Company pushes to keep up with business, industrial projects demands

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – The economic boom that the El Paso region is currently experiencing is impacting El Paso Electric Company’s (EPEC) need to build more substations to keep ahead of the growth, according to company officials.

EPEC officials recently announced in a public statement that their plans are to build 28 new substations within the next seven years. They estimate that the cost will be about \$504 million as each substation averages nearly \$18 million to build and equip, and it takes about two years to construct one, according to Omar Gallegos, EPEC’s vice president of energy delivery.

Gallegos explained that the large transformers for the substations need to be ordered almost three years in advance of starting construction because of global demand. He said that EPEC wants to make sure that they are ready to meet the needs of this area’s economic development expansion.

Local utility officials reasoned that the El Paso area missed out on getting some big industrial projects in recent years because the needed electric infrastructure was not in place. So, the substations are necessary to support EPEC’s multimillion-dollar solar and power plant projects that have been added to the company’s electrical power grid in order to meet the anticipated growth.

The substations are important components for a safe and reliable electric power system, Gallegos stated. Substations help control the power grid, and they are needed to meet electricity demand. He surmised that the borderland missed out on some big industrial projects, such as factories and data centers, in the last few years because the electric

utility lacked the substations and other equipment needed to serve high-energy users.

Eric Montgomery, EPE director of economic development, stated recently in a news release that there may have been projects that decided not to land within the El Paso region because the supply chains did not meet their specific needs. He stated that the local utility has never said it can’t supply the power, but the equipment needed to provide big power demands takes time to get through the manufacturing supply chain.

“The trend across the country right now is that there are obviously a lot of large data centers, manufacturing has been quick to increase in power, and even some logistics operations have seen an increase in power, especially as they lean more on automation of services,” Montgomery noted. “I can tell you we have a pipeline of large projects that has remained pretty consistent for at least the last 18 months and we continue to work through solutions for every project that comes across our desks,” he added.

The \$22 million Eastlake substation, scheduled to go online by the end of 2025, is the latest one of the new substations being built by El Paso Electric to meet the boom in residential, retail, and industrial development in the far eastern part of El Paso County. It will serve as a distribution substation to reduce the voltage of electricity taken off large, electric transmission lines; thus, the power can be distributed directly to customers.

EPEC utilizes two types of substations. There are the transmission substations that interconnect transmission lines so power can travel through the electric system, and there are interconnection substations that relay electricity from solar panels and gas-fired generators into the electric system.

An example of an interconnection substation is the

one that went online this summer which is located next to the Felina solar power plant that is still under construction a few miles from Cattleman’s Steakhouse near the Town of Clint.

Two other interconnection substations were built next to the Buena Vista solar plant, which went online in 2023. These solar facilities are located on the outskirts of Chaparral, New Mexico.

El Paso Electric also plans to build a substation for the Wiwynn Corporation, a Taiwan-based data-center equipment manufacturer. Wiwynn officials recently announced their plans for two factories in the Socorro Logistics Center industrial park along Nuevo Hueco Tanks Boulevard. Construction of this substation is expected to begin in 2026, and Wiwynn officials stated that they will pay the \$24 million in construction costs.

Additionally, EPEC officials have indicated that at least one substation will be built to support the \$1.5 billion data center for Facebook’s Meta platforms which will be located in the Northeast area of El Paso County. EPEC officials stated that this data center would need about 200 megawatts – enough electricity to power about 100,000 El Paso homes – for the project’s first phase.

Furthermore, EPEC officials divulged recently that they have agreed to supply power to the BorderPlex Digital Assets proposed \$5 billion high-tech campus in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. The Austin-based company’s plans call for a campus that will have data centers including manufacturing and logistics complexes.

However, these added electrical grid support systems come at a substantial cost that EPEC’s residential customers will eventually have to pay through rate hikes. Currently, the local utility is

See ELECTRIC, Page 4

The gonzo brilliance of Trump’s Gaza diplomacy

The “ceasefire now” crowd finally got its ceasefire, although not the way it hoped.

Israel and Hamas have agreed to stop the fighting in Gaza, while the terror group will release all Israeli hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners held

by Israel. There’s always a chance the agreement falls apart. Still, it isn’t creating jubilation from all the people who have been braying for Israel to end the war. There are two reasons – one is that the deal

is favorable for Israel, and the other is that the deal’s architect is a president of the United States whom, the fiercest advocates of a ceasefire hate.

If it holds, the agreement is the biggest victory yet for Donald Trump’s hyperactive, transactional diplomacy.

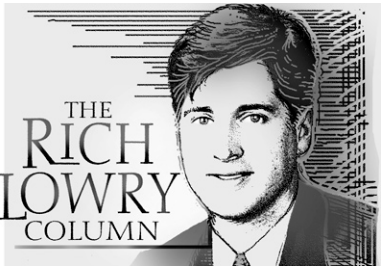
A lifetime of maneuvering for advantage in the real estate and media worlds in New York City – searching for and using every ounce of leverage – was better preparation for high-level international diplomacy than if Trump had spent a lifetime on the Senate

Foreign Relations Committee.

Whereas “international opinion” believed we had to isolate and cut off Israel, Trump armed the Jewish state, bombed Iran and squeezed Qatar to bring Hamas to heel – and it worked. The deal is a tribute to avoiding the well-worn ruts of Middle East diplomacy.

As for Israel, it needed to find a way out of a conflict that had become a PR disaster. Getting the hostages back is an important national goal, even if the exchange is lopsided (these swaps always are). Meanwhile, Israel will pull back to an agreed-upon line, but still hold an estimated 53% of Gaza as a security buffer. Even if things eventually go south again, Israel has bought time by decimating Hamas and significantly diminishing the threats from Iran and Hezbollah.

It is certainly true that Phase 2 of the deal, which is supposed to disarm Hamas and establish a technocratic Palestinian government in Gaza, will be much more difficult to pull off. If it were to come to fruition, though, it would be



See LOWRY, Page 7



Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

You are an influencer

Your life may not make a national impact but who knows how far your life might reach? The people, friends, and family you influence today may have a tremendous impact on many others. You never know what an acquaintance or child might grow up to do or become because of you. The difference you are making now could become the integral key that helps someone to achieve their full potential in life.

We are never certain what exactly and totally influences

someone to live a life of evil, destruction and terrorism. What source of inspiration drives someone to hate others to the point that they act out in a violent way to wound and kill? We all have various opinions but anything that influences people that negatively is bad.

While none of us have the ability to save the world, we can pay attention to the world around us. Who are those we see routinely in our lives? They are our opportunity to

influence, love and mentor in any way that we can.

Some people are difficult to mentor or teach. Old dogs often have trouble learning new tricks. This is one reason we can’t neglect any opportunity we have to positively impact children and young adults who can still be molded and directed.

When I was a kid, I had family, teachers, coaches and ministers who were influential. I also had James E. Webb. James is a first cousin, raised by my grandparents, who lived right across the road from me. He taught me how to play a mandolin a little. He taught me and another first cousin how to play the guitar some. James is a whiz bluegrass banjo picker who inspired us musically and helped us along the way. He spent time with us. He taught us guitar chords

and how to put them together to make songs.

James was Mr. Webb when he became one of my seventh and eighth grade teachers. He was a wonderful teacher and made history especially interesting. He was also our eighth-grade basketball coach. The main thing Mr. Webb did for us as a team was to get us into good physical condition. Many days our practice began with us running 45 minutes and sometimes an hour before we would pick up a basketball. We were skinny and we could run. About this same time, I didn’t have a basketball goal to practice on. Mr. Webb built one and put it up in his backyard so I would have a place to practice.

Mr. Webb influenced his entire county as a school principal and musician. He

made banjos and other quality handcrafted instruments that are scattered out and around Appalachia.

There are a lot of other things James or Mr. Webb has done along the way. We have had a lot of talks about life. He is a good story teller. All of this was 50 years ago, or more. Even today, those little things seem like big things and they were.

Don’t underestimate your influence and how you can mentor others every day.

Glenn Mollette is a graduate of numerous schools including Georgetown College, Southern and Lexington Seminaries in Kentucky. He is the author of “Uncommon Sense” and 12 other books. His column is published weekly in over 600 publications in all 50 states. Learn more at www.glenmmollette.com or www.facebook.com/glenmmollette.

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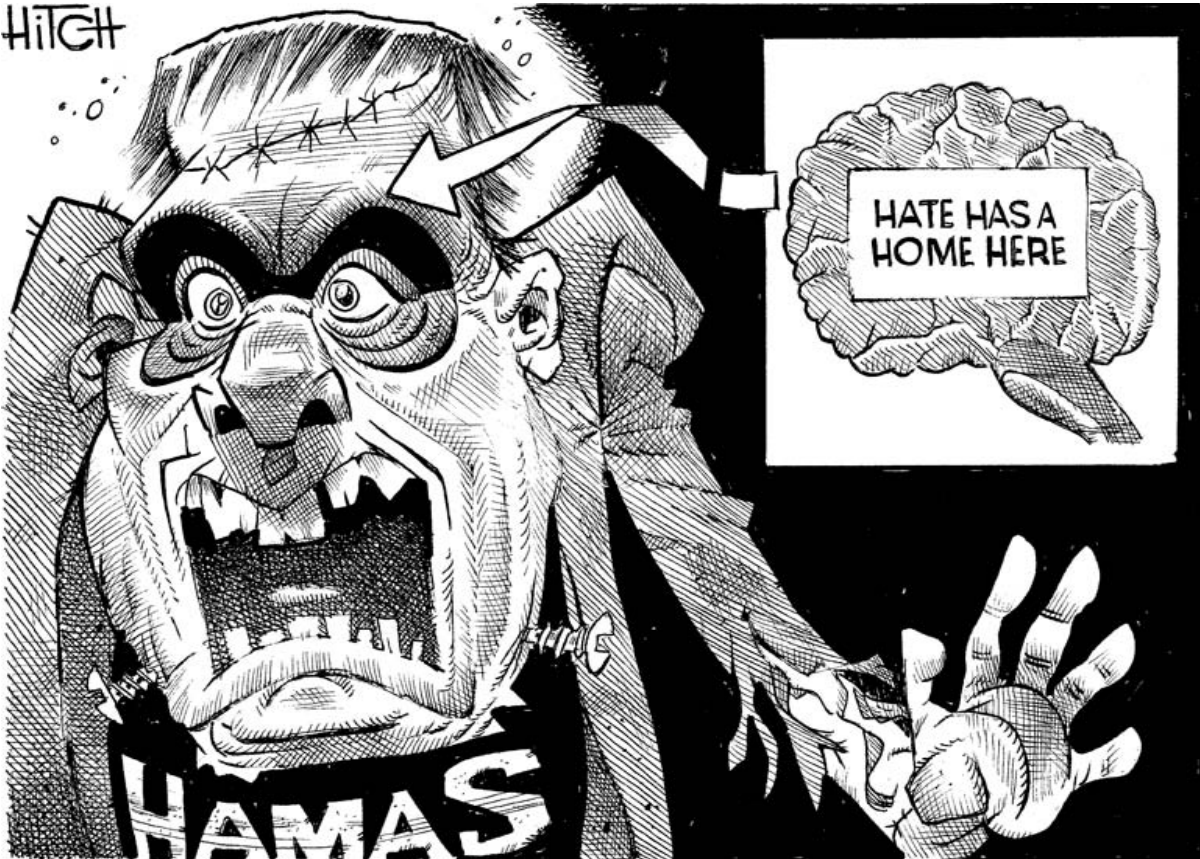
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Wildcats ‘Superior’ in marching contest

By Sofia Maciel
Special to the Courier

FABENS – The Fabens High School Wildcat Band earned a Division I Superior Rating at the UIL Region 22 Marching Contest and advanced to the Area competition after a powerful performance at the Socorro Activities Complex on October 18.

Led by Band Director Miguel Soto, the Wildcats delivered one of their strongest performances of the season. “I’m very happy and pleased with the hard work that the students have done these last months,” said Soto. “We were one of the bands selected to advance to Area. We got Division I ratings across the board, earning sweepstakes. We need to work even harder to improve our sound for the next level of competition. I’m very proud and happy to have the opportunity to work with amazing students like the ones we have at Fabens High School. Thank you for the support of all our teachers, administration, principal, superintendent, and especially the parents – we couldn’t do this without them.”

Bandleaders expressed excitement and gratitude following the results. “I feel great. It was a really good performance and one of our strongest ones this season – it paid off with straight ones!” said Ramon Longoria, Head Drum Major. “Area is next. We’re pushing for finals this year and hopefully get a chance to compete with the larger programs.” Azul Retamoza, Assistant Drum Major, added, “I’m very proud of absolutely everyone. All the hard work everyone’s put in – and the support from family, friends, and our directors – it’s all paid off. We’re excited



– Photo by Sofia Maciel

HEAVY HARDWARE – Ramon Longoria, left, and Azul Retamoza show off the trophy awarded to the Fabens High School Marching Band.

to see where the program goes next.” Fabens High School Principal Roxana Amador praised the band. “I couldn’t be prouder of our Fabens High School Band. Their heart, dedication, and the way they lift each other up during every practice and performance show what it truly means to be a Wildcat. We all knew they would shine at the UIL Region 22 Marching Contest and earn that well-deserved Division I. They’ve made our whole community proud,” she said. Fabens ISD Superintendent Dr. Rogelio Segovia also commended the band’s achievement and the dedication behind it saying, “The

See BAND, Page 4

King Crossword

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Answer Page 8



Canutillo ISD breaks ground on construction of new NECHS

By Gustavo Reveles
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO – Northwest Early College High School marked the beginning of a new chapter on October 1st as shovels hit the dirt for a \$30 million permanent campus that will replace the portable classrooms students and staff have used for nearly two decades.

The state-of-the-art facility will feature modern classrooms, labs, collaborative learning spaces and administrative offices. It is scheduled to open in fall 2027. The project is managed on behalf of Canutillo ISD by Procedeo, designed by MNK Architects and will be built by Jordan Foster Construction.

For Interim Superintendent Jesica Arellano, the moment was both historic and symbolic of the community’s commitment to its students.

“This is a proud day for our district,” Arellano said. “Northwest Early College High School has achieved remarkable success in portable classrooms, but we know our students and teachers deserve better. This new building will give our educators the 21st century facilities they need to continue their high-rigor teaching and give students the spaces they need to collaborate, innovate and thrive.”

Arellano emphasized that the

project was made possible by the passage of Canutillo ISD’s \$387 million bond in May 2024, the largest per-capita school bond ever approved in El Paso County. She said the facility is more than just a building.

“It is peace of mind for parents, pride for our community and confidence for our students,” Arellano said. “When students walk into a safe, modern and welcoming school, it tells them: you matter to us, your education matters to us and your future matters to us.”

Northwest ECHS is consistently recognized as one of the top schools in Texas. It is an A-rated campus, a National Blue Ribbon School and has been named one of America’s Best High Schools. Since opening in 2006, it has been a partnership between Canutillo ISD and El Paso Community College,



– Photo courtesy Canutillo ISD

A WHO’S WHO – Members from the Canutillo ISD Board of Trustees, representatives from El Paso Community College, NECHS students and administrators along with the architects and general contractors were all on hand for the ceremonial ground breaking at the site of the new Northwest Early College High School.



– Image courtesy Canutillo ISD

THE VISION – This architectural rendering offers an idea of the finished project.

one that EPCC President William Serrata said is stronger than ever.

Principal Frank Clark said the permanent campus will be transformational for students and staff.

“For years, our students have excelled in spite of the limitations of portables, but we are ready for a change,” Clark said. “This new facility will eliminate the portables and give us a permanent home. It will provide safer, more secure learning environments and a stronger sense of pride and ownership. When you walk into a campus like this, you know you belong.”

The project is especially meaningful for the students who advocated for the bond and for the future generations who will benefit from their work. Northwest student Moises Aguirre called the ceremony a milestone for the school community.

“This is an amazing day for all of us who worked so hard to make sure the future students at Northwest have a campus they

can be proud of,” Aguirre said. “The legacy we’re leaving behind is a brick-and-mortar campus that will serve this community for many, many years.”

Community leaders, district trustees and EPCC officials joined students, families and alumni for the groundbreaking, which included performances from the Canutillo and Alderete Middle School bands and the Northwest Early College Starlets cheer team.

The celebration underscored the determination of families, educators and supporters who pushed for the creation of the early college high school nearly 20 years ago and fought for permanent facilities today.

“Northwest is one of the best schools in the state because of the belief we have in our students,” Clark said. “Now we will have a campus that reflects that belief.”

When construction wraps up in 2027, Canutillo ISD officials say the school will not only stand as a physical upgrade, but also as a testament to the power of community collaboration.

Electric

From Page 1

involved in a rate case with the Public Utility Commission of Texas and the City of El Paso, in which it is asking for a 23 percent increase in the average residential bill to help pay for past and future projects.

Besides rising electricity costs, other concerns some residents have expressed are that the projects, especially the data centers, will need large amounts of water for their cooling systems which could deplete the fragile water supply that desert communities depend

on for their survival. They also contend that the energy-consuming data centers will increase air pollution from the microgrid electrical systems that would be built to sustain them.

Nonetheless, proponents of these projects, in particular the data centers, insist that the new developments will bring billions of outside dollars, create thousands of good-paying jobs, strengthen schools, invest in water infrastructure, and provide long-term revenue for county priorities. They asserted that these projects are generational opportunities for the borderland region that cannot be passed up.

Only time will tell who is right.

Band

From Page 3

Fabens ISD community is incredibly proud of our Fabens High School Band! Their hard work, dedication, and passion for excellence have paid off, earning a well-deserved Division I rating. Congratulations, Wildcats.”

The UIL Region 22 Marching Contest, held at the Socorro Activities Complex,

featured outstanding bands from across the region, each showcasing their musicianship, coordination, and spirit. With their exceptional performance, the Wildcat Band advances to the Area competition, where they will continue representing Fabens ISD with pride and excellence. The Area competition will take place at Shotwell Stadium in Abilene, TX, on October 25, 2025.

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CryptoQuip

Answer

Celebrated Romantic-era English poet who was famous for being easily tempted: Lured Byron.

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Anthony HS students have a jackpot homecoming

By **Adriana Candelaria**
Special to the Courier

ANTHONY, TX – This year, Anthony High School (AHS) Student Council (StuCo) chose a casino theme for their celebration. In usual Anthony spirit, the celebration took place districtwide with Anthony Middle School and Anthony Elementary School joining the high schoolers for dress-up spirit days. The dress-up days included themes inspired by casinos in Las Vegas, NV.

“We wanted everyone to feel included and united with the homecoming activities,” said Gabriella



Royal Jones

of Honored Ex, a recognition given to AHS alumni who’ve excelled through education, entrepreneurship, or community service 15 years

Lerma, StuCo president and high school senior. “We wanted a theme that was different from what we usually do, something that could leave things up to your imagination. We did some simple dress-up days, like wearing a white shirt with a white lie on it, so it could be easy for everyone to participate.”

Class of 1972’s Royal Jones was awarded the recognition

after graduating high school.

Jones is the President and CEO of Mesilla Valley Transportation, a leading trucking company along the Texas-Mexico border. He was nominated by community members for his distinguished entrepreneurship and commitment to protecting the environment by prioritizing fuel efficiency as his drivers move goods nationwide.

Jones expressed his gratitude and inspiration from his parents and the coaches at Anthony High School, whose support and guidance helped shape his journey. Without them, he said, he wouldn’t be where he is today.

Despite lightning leading to the cancellation of the highly anticipated homecoming parade, the Wildcats didn’t let the weather dampen their mood. Celebrations continued Friday with the Anthony vs. Van Horn football game. The Wildcats took the win 34-12.

“It was very sad to have the parade cancelled, especially because the community always comes out for it, but then seeing how the football team performed and the homecoming celebrations during halftime, it uplifted us and got us ready for the dance Saturday,” Lerma said.

The homecoming court was recognized during halftime, and the Homecoming Queen and King were announced: Zadié Molinar and Justyn Salazar Carrazco!

The week wrapped up with the homecoming dance at Anthony High School, where students transformed the gym into the flashing lights of Las Vegas. Homecoming week was made possible



– Photos by Adriana Candelaria

ROYALTY – Justyn Salazar Carrazco, left, and Zadié Molinar were named Homecoming King and Queen.

thanks to the hard work of Student Council, whose efforts created an unforgettable celebration.

“I’m very proud of StuCo and all the other students who helped out. Everything was very successful. The dance was really good. I saw a lot of kids coming out of their shells, dancing and having a good time,” Lerma said.



Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Oct. 20, 1967, the mythical Bigfoot was believed to have been filmed in northern California, firing the imaginations of numerous enthusiasts. However, when a prominent researcher sent the FBI a supposed hair sample, agents concluded that it was, sadly, of “deer family origin.”
- On Oct. 21, 1797, the USS Constitution launched in Boston Harbor. A 44-gun U.S. Navy frigate, it was constructed to fight Barbary pirates off the coast of Tripoli, and performed admirably during those conflicts. In 1805, a peace treaty with Tripoli was signed on the Constitution’s deck.
- On Oct. 22, 1895, a train with a faulty brake tore through the Gare Montparnasse in Paris and out the front before landing nose down in the street. Onlookers purchased train tickets just to see the damage.
- On Oct. 23, 1958, Boris Pasternak was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for “Doctor Zhivago,” a romance set during the Russian Revolution and World War I. The book was banned in the Soviet Union, and the Soviet government forced Pasternak

- to renounce the honor, but his admirers smuggled the manuscript out of Russia in pieces and the CIA helped with distribution behind the scenes. Appearing in numerous translations around the world, it was hailed as a classic, but Pasternak was banished from the Soviet Writers Union, ending his literary career.
- On Oct. 24, 1921, in the French town of Chalons-sur-Marne, an American sergeant chose the body of the first “Unknown Soldier” to be honored among the approximately 77,000 American servicemen who died on the Western Front during World War I.
 - On Oct. 25, 1964, Minnesota Vikings star defensive end Jim Marshall ran 66 yards in the wrong direction into his own end zone after recovering a fumble against the 49ers in San Francisco. Despite the gaffe, the Vikings won.
 - On Oct. 26, 1984, 19-year-old John McCollum was found shot to death on his bed in Indio, California. The boy’s parents believed that singer Ozzy Osbourne was responsible, because John was listening to Osbourne’s album “Blizzard of Oz,” which contained the song “Suicide Solution,” when he died, but the suit was dismissed in 1988.

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Strange BUT TRUE

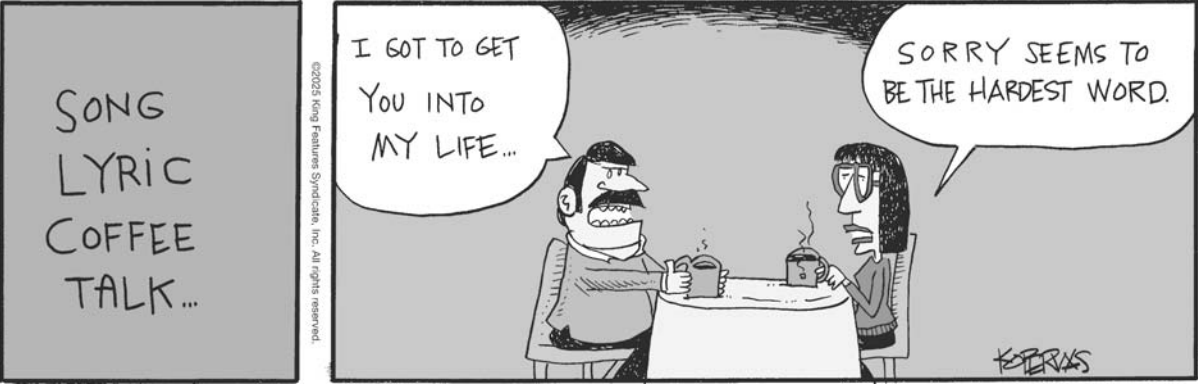
By Lucie Winborne

- The atomic clock known as the NIST-F1 Cesium Fountain Clock, created by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Colorado, is so accurate that it won’t gain or lose a second in 20 million years.
- Compared to the production of standard paper, recycled paper production reduces air pollution to up to 73%.
- The Towel Museum in Japan showcases a vast collection of towels from different countries, each with its unique designs and cultural significance.
- Lobsters pee out of their face.
- A crow funeral is much like a human funeral – the birds gather around a fallen fellow crow, call to each other and pay close attention to their late peer.
- The tradition of a wedding cake topper originated in ancient Rome, where figurines depicting the bride and groom were used for good luck.
- Female turkeys don’t gobble.
- Matthias Buchinger, known as the Little Man of Nuremberg, was born without hands or feet and was only 29 inches tall, but still managed to perform numerous magic feats and illusions, including the famous cups-and-balls routine.
- The first knitting union, founded in Paris in 1527, allowed only men as members.
- Will Shortz, a crossword editor for The New York Times, designed a degree program at Indiana University in enigmatology, or the study and science of puzzles.
- Ancient Romans gargled with urine to whiten their teeth.
- In cities like Seattle and Des Moines, the number of parking spaces per acre is about five to 20 times that of residential units.
- Spiked and studded dog collars derive from the days of the ancient Greeks, who would give their sheepdogs sharply spiked collars to protect their necks from wolves while they watched over a shepherd’s flock at night.
- A theory suggests that the entire internet, based on the mass of moving electrons, weighs about as much as a strawberry.
- The “Ding” bowl, purchased for \$3 at a New York garage sale, turned out to be a

- 1,000-year-old Chinese bowl from the Northern Song Dynasty. It later sold at auction for \$2.2 million.
- Big League Chew bubblegum created its biggest-ever pouch for Shaquille O’Neal, at an impressive 24 inches by 18 inches, more than 15 times the size of a regular pouch.
 - The square dance is the official state dance (or folk dance) of 24 states.
 - Ancient Roman artisans created a glass chalice known as the Lycurgus Cup with nanoparticles of gold and silver so the type of liquid it contained would determine its appearance. On display, the cup appears jade-green when lit from the front, but blood-red when lit from behind.
 - Since the prosthetics Heath Ledger wore on his mouth during filming of “The Joker” would loosen as he spoke, he kept them on by frequently licking his lips, a trait that suited his character and was therefore incorporated into the film.
- Thought for the Day: “The battles that count aren’t the ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself – the invisible battles inside all of us – that’s where it’s at.”
- Jesse Owens
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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

transformative for Israel’s security and for the lives of Gazans.

There will presumably be no speeches at Hollywood awards ceremonies crediting Trump for his peace-making. Among other things, there’s too much cognitive dissonance in saying, “I think President Trump is a dangerous fascist – but appreciate how bound and determined he is to end conflicts around the world.”

Trump is a gonzo version of standard U.S. foreign policy. All American presidents want to make peace in the Middle East, and all want, whether they say it or not, to win the Nobel Peace Prize. What’s different about Trump is his methods, and his openness about seeking a call from the Nobel committee.

A hallmark of his policymaking at its best is an unwillingness to take “no” for an answer, an unrelenting sense of urgency and a creativity that is considered unrealistic or reckless by conventional metrics. We saw it during his first term with his success

in securing the border, with the historic achievement of Operation Warp Speed and with the Abraham Accords.

“The reasonable man adapts himself to the world,” George Bernard Shaw maintained, “the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man.”

In this sense, Trump is usefully unreasonable. Everyone around the world needs to be a little afraid of him, while he is willing to talk to anyone or consider anything. His optimism can be misplaced (the Ukraine war was a tougher nut than he thought) and his highly personalized diplomacy can misfire (he got unnecessarily crosswise with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi), but he can also prove all his doubters wrong.

The Washington cliché is that there is no limit to the good you can do if you don’t care who gets the credit. Trump shows, to the contrary, that sometimes there is no limit to the good you can do if you want all the credit.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. ©2025 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Chikungunya has symptoms including fever, rash and pain

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a friend who lives in Paraguay and had been diagnosed with chikungunya. It has been extremely painful for her for several years. Her doctor prescribed 90 mg of etoricoxib daily and a shot of duodecadron once a month. I’ve never heard of chikungunya, and the medical care she is getting seems sketchy. I wish there was a solution for her immense pain. Do you have any knowledge of this virus and/or the medication for it? Are you aware of any new or trial drugs that might be worth trying? – J.



Chikungunya may not sound like a real medical condition, but it is a viral disease that was first found in West Africa. It has since spread to the Caribbean and the Americas with transmission occurring in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and a few cases in Florida.

It is spread mainly through mosquitoes. The word “chikungunya” is from an African language and roughly translates to “stooped walk” due to the joint pain caused by the disease. In addition to joint pain, people with chikungunya usually have a fever and a skin rash. Headache and even meningitis may occur. However, joint pain is the most common long-term complication.

While most people will clear their joint symptoms within six months, symptoms can go on for years in some people. Your friend is receiving a COX-2 inhibitor (etoricoxib), which has the potential for heart damage, so it is not approved in the United States.

She is also on a chronic steroid, dexamethasone, which is used in North America but may not be the best long-term treatment as it has numerous long-term side effects. In North America, people with chronic joint pain from chikungunya are treated similarly to those with rheumatoid arthritis. This often includes methotrexate or another disease-modifying antirheumatic drug. I urge your friend to see a rheumatologist.

DEAR DR. ROACH: In your column, I frequently read letters from people who have to get up during the night to urinate. My husband had this problem and got up hourly. We assumed it was as a prostate issue. After prostate surgery, he had a catheter for a few days, and we found that he was producing almost two liters of urine at night. The urologist immediately ordered a sleep study to determine if sleep apnea was present. He tested positive, was started on a CPAP machine, and only needed to get up once on the very first night. It changed his life. – D.S.

I thank D.S. for writing. Obstructive sleep apnea is a well-known cause for urinating at night, but we often forget to think about it. A really useful tool for sleep apnea, the STOP-Bang questionnaire, doesn’t include excessive urinating at night, but your letter is a good reminder that we should consider this diagnosis in people who are at risk for sleep apnea.

The risk factors in the STOP-Bang questionnaire are Snoring; Tired enough to fall asleep easily during the day; Observed stopped breathing or gasping for breath during the night; high blood Pressure; a Body mass index over 35; an Age older than 50; a Neck size larger than 16 inches (40 centimeters); and the Gender of male.

A person who answers positively to three or more of these risk factors should at least prompt a consideration of whether sleep apnea is likely enough to test the person for it.

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. ©2025 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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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: W equals L

BCWCMPRICE PQLRDIGB-CPR
CDAWGJY VQCI OYQ ORJ
KRLQSJ KQP MCGDA CRJGWT
ICLVICF: WSPCF MTPQD.

Answer Page 4

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Using the VA home loan program



by Freddy Groves

The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, gave several benefits to veterans coming back from war, including help to buy homes. Within a few years, 2 million veterans took advantage of the program.

Now, in 2025, they’ve issued the 29 millionth home loan. Since the Home Loan Guaranty program began, the VA has guaranteed \$4 trillion in home loans.

Are you ready to buy a home? Your first step will be to get a Certificate of Eligibility (VA Form 26-1880). The COE is used for specific VA benefits, such as the home loan or education (Post-9/11 GI Bill). It is your proof of entitlement with details about your service and the benefits you qualify for. The COE confirms to a lender that the VA will

back part of your loan.

There are several ways to get the COE, but the fastest might be to go online to complete the form. You’ll need to log in at ID.me or Login.gov. Once in your account, you’ll be able to request your COE, see if you already have one or check the status if you’ve previously asked for one. See tinyurl.com/ytr5549 to get started. Or if you’re working with a lender who specializes in doing VA loans, they’ll be set up to process your COE request. You can also do it by mail. Download the form, fill it out and send it in with a copy of your DD-214.

Keep in mind that you still need to pass the lender’s scrutiny to get a home loan. (The VA’s part of the program is to guarantee that the lender won’t lose money if you fail to pay the mortgage.) The COE isn’t a preapproval or a promise. You’ll need to have a good credit history and adequate income. Your current debts will be factored in.

To see how your basic entitlement is calculated,

go online to www.va.gov/housing-assistance/home-loans/loan-limits.

If you have eligibility questions, call the VA at 877-827-3702.

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• “To speed the healing of bruises, try eating pineapple. Drink lots of water, too. I play contact sports, and this has always helped me.” – R.E. in Missouri

• Need new tires? Don't overlook big-box stores with automotive departments. Sometimes the best deals aren't at the tire places!

• Are you dreaming of a beach vacation right about now? Maybe you're looking to make an early booking. Here's a travel tip: Skip the ocean views from your hotel room. The rooms facing the ocean have a 20-25% higher rate. There's usually a nice common area where you can admire the view, anyway.

• “If you're thinking of getting a new TV, don't forget about safety. Be sure to use a wall strap, or just go ahead and mount it to the wall!” – E.S. in Virginia

• Ease stress when dropping off a child at day care by creating a special, just-for-the-two-of-you ritual. Maybe a secret handshake or a kiss for your cheek and one in the hand to “save for later.” Reinforce with your attitude that it's a good and fun thing to go to school.

• Here's a great school tip from a young reader, P.J. in Florida: “Take a photo of your spelling words with your mom or dad's cellphone, and you can go over them anytime, anywhere!”

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2025 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.

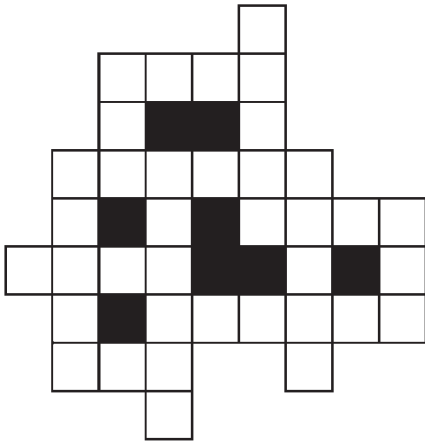
Answer Page 4

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	+		÷		= 11			
+		+		+				
	+		+		= 16			
-		+		-				
	+		×		= 52			
=		=		=				
4		19		2				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



IGG
PIDANK
DRUNO
♥NSGI
GREEDI
UDD
♥OPRM
♥ESPRI
PPA
KOGGIN
NEGIK
♥RPDO



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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C	E	D	S		S	E	T		L	I	D
P	L	E	A	T		U	V	A		A	N
U	M	B	R	A		D	E	B	A	C	L
		A	L	I	S	O	N		M	E	E
P	O	T		D	A	K		L	U	S	T
A	L	E	C		T	U	B	E	S		
O	D	D	I	T		L	I	E	D	T	O
		C	O	R	G	I		D	E	A	L
A	B	B	E	Y		R	N	S		B	E
L	E	A	R		M	A	I	T	A	I	E
D	E	B	O	R	A	H		A	R	T	I
A	T	E		E	R	A		L	I	E	N
S	S	S		G	E	M		L	A	D	E

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Answer Page 4

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