



— Image courtesy Green Point Property Co.

STYLISH – Sky Industrial Park will be constructed on 200 acres in the El Paso International Airport development district. The illustration, above, depicts the facility that will be the first industrial park built on airport land since the 1970s.

Tariff concerns fueling El Paso region’s economic growth

By **Alfredo Vasquez**
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Although industrial parks in the El Paso region are composed mostly of warehouses and distribution centers to serve factories in Ciudad Juárez and other areas of Mexico, a gradual shift seems to be in play due to the new tariff policies imposed by the federal government.

For example, Faith Technologies Inc. (FTI), an electrical and energy services company, plans to establish operations in a new 500,000 square-foot manufacturing facility at the Pellicano Industrial Park. The \$81.6 million project is expected to create 200 jobs and is scheduled to begin by summer 2026.

FTI specializes in engineering, construction, manufacturing, and clean energy. The company provides electrical services, including planning, design, and installation, according to its website.

In a recent report, David Jahner, executive vice president of FTI, stated that being a part of the El Paso community is an exciting new chapter for the company. “As we grow, we’re proud to do so with our uncompromising focus on safety and our culture of care, which is our commitment to supporting our team members’ well-being and creating a workplace where people feel valued, respected and empowered. We look forward to building strong connections and making a positive impact in El Paso,” Jahner commented.

To support the project, El Paso County Commissioners Court approved a Chapter 381 Agreement that provides a tax rebate for a portion of the development’s capital investment.

Commissioners approved providing the company property-tax grant payments totaling \$958,988 over 10 years for the project if all requirements are met. That includes creating 200 full-time jobs within three years of completion of the factory, with pay at least equal to the county median wage of \$18.21 per hour. FTI officials stated that they

plan to pay 180 hourly workers \$40 per hour and twenty salaried employees will receive an average of \$110,000 per year.

“FTI’s expansion is a major boost for economic development in the Borderplex region, creating

See **GROWTH**, Page 4



— Image courtesy Faith Technologies

SISTER PLANTS – Faith Technologies Inc. is building a new electric products factory in the Pellicano Industrial Park in East El Paso County. The new factory will be built similar to the company’s facility, above, in Little Chute, Wisconsin.

Marriage has been described as a case of two people agreeing to change each other’s habits.

– Quips & Quotes

Virginia’s clownish redistricting scheme

Virginia is the new Illinois. The practice of drawing partisan districts is named after Elbridge Gerry, the 19th-century Massachusetts governor. Even he might blush at the extreme gerrymander that Democrats in the commonwealth are pushing.

They want to go from a congressional delegation with 6 Democrats and 5 Republicans – broadly representing the partisan makeup of the state – to a 10-1 Democratic advantage.

In other words, purplish Virginia would have a congressional delegation that, in percentage terms, would be more Democratic than that of Illinois; Virginia’s delegation would be 90% Democratic, the Land of Lincoln’s a mere 82%.

Another way to look at it is that Virginia would be almost as purely Democratic as Massachusetts, which has a 9-0 split. Virginia is reliably Democratic

in presidential elections (Kamala Harris won 51% of the vote), but it isn’t Vermont (where Harris won nearly 64%) or California (58.5%).

Prior to this year and the inauguration of new statewide officials, Virginia had a Republican governor, a Republican lieutenant governor and a Republican attorney general. The GOP held a majority in the state House as of 2023, and today is only a step behind Democrats in the state Senate, 21-19.

Yet, the substantial portion of the statewide electorate – sometimes a majority – that votes Republican will be almost completely shut out of congressional seats. And, of course, this is being done in the name of “democracy.”

Virginia’s move, which still needs to clear hurdles, is a salvo in the mid-decade redistricting wars set off by President Trump and the GOP, beginning

in Texas. It was foolhardy of the GOP to go down this road, but now Democrats in a relatively moderate state are creating a new standard for audacity.

Buoyed by their election victory last year – led at the top of the ticket by Gov. Abigail Spanberger, who is supposed to be a centrist – Democrats have tortured the map to produce the 10 presumptively Democratic seats.

One of their methods is to tap into populous, deep blue Northern Virginia to scoop up heavily Democratic voters, and then draw districts extending into less populated, Republican areas. The idea



See LOWRY, Page 7

Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Friendship is a two-way street

Friendship is a two-way street. If a relationship is totally dependent on one person it won’t last very long.

If you have to make all the effort a friendship will soon die. One person, does not make a friendship, marriage or any kind of relationship.

The telephone works both ways. Text messages and emails work both ways. Telephones are made to make calls but they also receive calls. If you have to make all the calls, make all the effort to connect with someone then you will become tired and give up.

This may be why so many people have so few friends. If you want a friend, be a friend. If you want to be connected to your marriage partner then every day it’s

mutual communication and companionship.

If you want help, then help others. If you want love, then love others. Whatever you invest in will typically come back to you.

We’ve all had experiences with the family member who never comes to see us or shows any interest in anything we are doing. We’ve all invested in loved ones and given until we are blue in the face. There always seems to be those that we have tried to reach out to, befriend and love but who ignore us or even bite us.

Many of us have at least one family member who always finds a way to be sour, hateful or critical and never misses a chance to complain about something. Why do we put up with these people? I don’t

themselves very lonely. You can’t treat others badly and get by with it forever. It will come back to you.

Don’t waste your life constantly trying to love the people who shrug you off. Move on!

This is not rocket science or brain surgery. Return communication. Don’t act like you are King Tut and are too important to make phone calls. Visit with others and respond to messages, texts, etc. Reach out to others and show yourself friendly.

Of course, there is a chance that you love being in isolation and prefer to just stare at the walls or television. You have the right to make that choice, as long as you don’t mind living with that choice.

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.glenmollette.com or www.facebook.com/glenmollette.

1973
53
Years
2026

WEST TEXAS COUNTY
COURIER

SEAN ANTHONY VINTON, CANUELLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINE, FARENS, SAN ELIZABO AND TORNELLO

PUBLISHED:
Published each Thursday (minimum 50 issues) by Homesteader News, Inc. Office open Monday through Thursday.

COPYRIGHT:
Entire contents © 2026 Homesteader News, Inc. Individual authors retain all rights. Pictures, drawings and written material appearing in the West Texas County Courier may not be used or reproduced without written permission of Homesteader News, Inc.

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

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

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

DISPLAY RATES:
Open rate — \$40 per column inch. Call for more information or to set an appointment. The West Texas County Courier reserves the right not to publish advertising it considers inappropriate.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS:
Minimum 50 issues for \$50. Delivery via 1st class mail.

MAIL:
15344 Werling Ct.
Horizon City, TX 79928




Phone: 852-3235

E-mail: wtccc@wtccc.com
Website: wtccc.com

Publisher
Rick Shrum

Contributors
Alfredo Vasquez
Steve Escajeda

Homesteader
Est. 1973
News, Inc.



If you’re not covered, you’ll be discovered.

An estimated 1 in every 5 vehicles on our Texas roads has no automobile insurance, but that’s about to change. • TexasSure Vehicle Insurance Verification matches vehicle registration information to insurance policy data to immediately tell law enforcement officers and tax assessor-collectors who’s driving without insurance. • So, if you’re not covered, better get insured! • To learn more, visit: www.TexasSure.com

TexasSure

 catches drivers without insurance.

King 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		

Average Solve Time 24 Minutes

ACROSS

1 Table support

4 Mosque leader

8 Island near Java

12 Terre Haute sch.

13 Terse denial

14 Poetic tributes

15 Ecol. watchdog

16 Faints

18 Word list, for short

20 Japanese pond carp

21 Sty chow

24 Rebuffs

28 Review in detail

32 Pesky insect

33 Friendly leader?

34 Albacore and yellowfin

36 Playwright Levin

37 Finn's floater

39 Revamp

41 Vampire, by nature

43 Nobelist Walesa

44 Bar bill

46 Savory taste

50 Begin anew, as on January 1

55 _ Angeles

56 California valley

57 Egyptian river

58 Book-spine abbr.

59 Afternoon affairs

60 Darkens

61 Oklahoma city

Donovan"

2 Hockey legend Phil, to fans

3 Avocado dip, for short

4 Rorschach pattern

5 Curly's brother

6 Devoured

7 Moo juice

8 Fan disapproval

9 Pt. of speech

10 Author Harper

11 Leb. neighbor

17 "Mayday!"

19 Bat wood

22 Egg

23 Prison-related

25 Rice or Auburn (Abbr.)

26 Naked

27 Rating unit

28 Basil or thyme

29 Smoothie berry

30 Cushy

31 Yard tool

35 Locks down

38 Block-dropping video game

40 Resistance unit

42 Scoundrel

45 Connection

47 Edison's middle name

48 Disposition

49 Actress Fisher

50 Retired jet

51 Dead heat

52 "I _ Rock"

53 Half of XIV

54 Shade tree

Answer Page 4

Ad Council

THE BEST TIME TO LEARN THE SIGNS OF STROKE IS BEFORE YOU HAVE ONE. STROKES ARE THE NUMBER-THREE KILLER IN THIS COUNTRY, YET MANY PEOPLE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THEY ARE. THEY DON'T KNOW THAT MORE OF THE BRAIN CAN BE SAVED IF A STROKE IS DETECTED AND TREATMENT IS RECEIVED IMMEDIATELY.

A STROKE ATTACKS THE BRAIN. THE BRAIN ALERTS YOUR BODY TO DANGER. SEE THE PROBLEM?

STROKES BEGIN WHEN A BLOOD VESSEL IN THE BRAIN BECOMES BLOCKED OR BURSTS. BLOOD FLOW IS CUT OFF. TISSUE IS STARVED FOR OXYGEN, AND PARTS OF THE BRAIN DIE. IF NOT TREATED QUICKLY, ABILITIES AND PRODUCTIVE LIFE CAN BE LOST. YOUR BRAIN IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION. GUARD IT WITH YOUR LIFE.

WITH A STROKE, TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST.

If you suddenly have or see any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately: Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body • Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding • Difficulty seeing in one or both eyes • Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination • Severe headache with no known cause

Learn more at [StrokeAssociation.org](#) or 1-888-4-STROKE.

©2004 American Heart Association

Made possible in part by a generous grant from The Bugher Foundation.

American Stroke Association
A Division of American Heart Association





— Image courtesy Green Power

NEW JOBS, EH – GreenPower Motor Co., a Canadian-based enterprise, will soon move its operations to an expansive facility, above, in the Gateway Rail Park, which is located in Santa Teresa, NM.

Growth

From Page 1

200 high-quality jobs and strengthening our position as a hub for advanced manufacturing and innovation,” noted Jon Barela, CEO of The Borderplex Alliance.

Another company that is moving to the El Paso region is Green Point Development, which is spearheading a project, termed Sky Park. The new complex will cover 200 acres near the El Paso International Airport.

The Sky Park project is a public-private partnership that will be built in four phases, according to company officials. Plans are to turn the city-owned land into a hub for logistics, manufacturing, and innovation.

Sky Park’s first phase will have two buildings with a combined total of just over 636,000 square feet of space, and will cost about \$65 million to construct, project developer David Karr stated during a

recent groundbreaking event. These buildings are expected to be completed this summer.

Eventually, Sky Park is expected to deliver more than 3 million square feet of industrial space on airport property and add about 2,100 direct jobs to the local economy. The entire four-phase industrial park will cost about \$350 million to \$400 million to build, according to Karr.

Tony Nevarez, the airport’s aviation director, said that these leases for development on airport land help the airport fund improvements, expand services, and remain financially resilient.

A third project is GreenPower Motor Company’s plans to build a factory in the border region to create electric school buses. Company officials stated that it will locate its operations in the Santa Teresa industrial park, which is adjacent to El Paso County’s westernmost boundary.

The Canada-based

company plans to move its U.S. headquarters to Santa Teresa’s Gateway Rail Park. The factory will be in a new, 135,000 square-foot building that GreenPower will lease from Grupo Abyacsa, a local development and construction company. GreenPower officials stated that they expect to begin operating in June and hire about 100 employees with plans to expand the workforce to 340 employees within 10 years.

For years El Paso-area economic developers have been trying to get a motor vehicle factory to locate here, noted Jerry Pacheco, Border Industrial Association president, who helped recruit GreenPower to Santa Teresa. He related that this region has a lot of automotive components’ manufacturers and distributors, especially across the U.S.-Mexico border in Juárez, but no factory that builds an entire motor vehicle.


“It’s unprecedented. We are going to see a bus built

from the frame all the way to completion, seeing it roll off the ramp at the factory,” Pacheco exclaimed. He added that jobs will pay an average annual salary of \$46,000, that’s about \$22 per hour.

Pacheco pointed out that because of this area’s Foreign Trade Zone designation, GreenPower will be able to

postpone paying tariffs, and in some cases lower tariffs to help the company’s cash flow.

Apparently, in spite of tariff uncertainties, El Paso’s economy will continue to grow because of its vast industrial park opportunities and its ties to the manufacturing sector in Mexico.



Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Feb. 16, 1959, Fidel Castro was sworn in as Cuba’s prime minister after leading a guerrilla campaign that forced right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista into exile. Castro, who became commander in chief of Cuba’s armed forces after Batista was ousted on Jan. 1, replaced the more moderate Miro Cardona as head of the country’s new provisional government.
- On Feb. 17, 1972, the 15,007,034th Volkswagen Beetle rolled off the assembly line and broke a world car-production record held for more than 40 years by the Ford Motor Company’s Model T, which was manufactured from 1908 to 1927.
- On Feb. 18, 1930, Elm Farm Ollie earned the remarkable distinction of becoming the first cow to fly – and be milked – in an airplane. Her milk was then boxed and parachuted to waiting spectators on the ground.
- On Feb. 19, 1473, Nicolaus Copernicus, regarded as the father of modern astronomy, was born in Torun, a city in north-central Poland on the Vistula River. He would become the first modern

European scientist to propose that Earth and other planets revolve around the sun.

- On Feb. 20, 1977, an episode of the TV sitcom “Seinfeld” titled “The Pothole” debuted, with the inclusion of a storyline in which the eccentric character Kramer adopted a stretch of the fictional Arthur Burghardt Expressway via the real-life Adopt-A-Highway program.
- On Feb. 21, 2016, quadruple amputee Kyle Maynard reached the summit of Mount Aconcagua, South America’s tallest mountain, after bear-crawling up the nearly 23,000-foot peak without the use of his prosthetics. Four years earlier, he’d climbed Africa’s Mount Kilimanjaro in the same manner.
- On Feb. 22, 1983, Arthur Bicknell’s play “Moose Murders” made its Broadway debut at New York’s Eugene O’Neill Theater, and closed the very same night, earning it the unfortunate description by The New York Times as “the standard of awfulness against which all Broadway flops are judged.” After the curtain fell on cue, there was no applause, leading one cast member to remark that “I don’t think there ever was a show in the history of Broadway where you took a bow to silence.”

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

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

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

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

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

CryptoQuip Answer

The aging dry cleaner was a white-collar criminal, infamous for money laundering.

Strange
BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• Actor Paul Newman once said he was tired of people asking him to remove his sunglasses so they could see his famous blue eyes, confessing that his stock response was, “I would take off my sunglasses, madam, but my pants would fall down.”

• Six million pounds of space dust settle on Earth every year.

• The Bahamas once boasted an undersea post office, Sea Floor Bahamas, established in 1939, which allowed mail to be posted with a unique “Sea Floor” postmark, which became a hit with stamp collectors until the office closed in 1942.

• Many birds’ feathers weigh more than their bones.

• Astronauts on Mars won’t just make plans based on temperature, but will also need to consider tau, the level of particulate matter in the atmosphere. High tau levels will block sunlight to solar-powered rovers.

• A coyote can hear a mouse moving under a foot of snow.

• Since 1971, Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, has issued permits to unicorn hunters.

• The 1967 Outer Space Treaty forbids any nation from trying to own the moon.

• Pelé is the only soccer player to ever be a part of three different World Cup winning teams.

• “Beauty and the Beast” was the first animated film to be nominated for Best Picture. It lost to “The Silence of the Lambs.”

• Wisconsin is known as the Badger State because the area’s lead miners used to spend winters in tunnels burrowed into hills – like badgers.

• Honey hunters in Mozambique use special calls to recruit the services of birds known as honeyguides, which lead the hunters to bees’ nests.

Thought for the Day: “Imperfection is beauty, madness is genius, and it’s better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring.”

– Marilyn Monroe



Save a Life.
#SlowDown #MoveOver

Clint Independent School District
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance
Governmental Funds
For the Year Ended August 31, 2025

Data Control Codes	10 General Fund	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:			
5700 Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 19,134,662	\$ 8,784,500	\$ 27,919,162
5800 State Program Revenues	104,070,411	6,548,873	110,619,284
5900 Federal Program Revenues	12,962,264	9,773,923	22,736,187
5020 Total Revenues	136,167,337	25,107,296	161,274,633
EXPENDITURES:			
Current:			
0011 Instruction	66,422,988	7,113,943	73,536,931
0012 Instructional Resources and Media Services	1,157,358	3,000	1,160,358
0013 Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	3,011,271	1,825,187	4,836,458
0021 Instructional Leadership	2,057,184	865,445	2,922,629
0023 School Leadership	7,312,557	3,288	7,315,845
0031 Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	4,065,214	1,392,487	5,457,701
0032 Social Work Services	121,592	–	121,592
0033 Health Services	1,382,215	–	1,382,215
0034 Student (Pupil) Transportation	4,420,788	38,767	4,459,555
0035 Food Services	11,753,155	91,157	11,844,312
0036 Extracurricular Activities	3,733,080	–	3,733,080
0041 General Administration	3,900,133	–	3,900,133
0051 Facilities Maintenance and Operations	15,216,378	37,534	15,253,912
0052 Security and Monitoring Services	2,888,118	406,142	3,294,260
0053 Data Processing Services	2,972,857	–	2,972,857
0061 Community Services	89,666	264,427	354,093
Debt Service:			
0071 Principal on Long-Term Liabilities	149,667	7,801,570	7,951,237
0072 Interest on Long-Term Liabilities	3,139	4,775,689	4,778,828
0073 Bond Issuance Cost and Fees	–	251,754	251,754
Capital Outlay:			
0081 Facilities Acquisition and Construction	6,604,928	30	6,604,958
Intergovernmental:			
0099 Other Intergovernmental Charges	450,545	–	450,545
6030 Total Expenditures	137,712,833	24,870,420	162,583,253
1100 Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	(1,545,496)	236,876	(1,308,620)
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):			
7901 Refunding Bonds Issued	-	14,640,000	14,640,000
7915 Transfers In	10,270	-	10,270
7916 Premium or Discount on Issuance of Bonds	-	1,094,648	1,094,648
8911 Transfers Out (Use)	-	(10,270)	(10,270)
8940 Payment to Bond Refunding Escrow Agent (Use)	-	(15,500,054)	(15,500,054)
7080 Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	10,270	224,324	234,594
1200 Net Change in Fund Balances	(1,535,226)	461,200	(1,074,026)
0100 Fund Balance – September 1 (Beginning)	74,361,170	6,116,622	80,477,792
3000 Fund Balance – August 31 (Ending)	\$ 72,825,944	\$ 6,577,822	\$ 79,403,766

The NBA is about to start its race toward the playoffs

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

This past weekend the NBA reached its unofficial midway point of the season. I say “unofficial” because with an 82-game schedule, the halfway point should be when all the teams have played around 41 games.

Well, almost all the NBA teams have played at least 55 games, but since they just had All-Star weekend and the league did take a week off, many see this time as the start of the second half of the season.

And now that the NBA has gotten all that meaningless all-star stuff out of the way, things will get real serious, real fast, as the teams are down to the last 25 games of the regular season.

With that long explanation out of the way, let’s focus on where the league is, and which teams seem poised to make the playoffs and maybe win a championship.

Let’s look at the NBA’s Eastern Conference.

A young team that has been on the rise in the last couple years has finally reached the top of the league.

The Detroit Pistons have the best record in the NBA at 40-13.

How amazing is that?

It was just two years ago that the lowly Pistons set the all-time league losing streak, dropping 27 games in a row. They finished with an NBA worst record of 14-68.

But with the play of emerging superstar Cade Cunningham and big man Jalen Duren, the Pistons improved to 44-38 a year ago and now are a real-life contender for an NBA title.

There are a couple superstar players who are missing the entire season,

Send Your News To:
wtxcc@wtxcc.com

which everyone knew would affect their teams and the shape of the Eastern Conference.

The Boston Celtics’ Jayson Tatum and the Indiana Pacers’ Tyrese Haliburton are missing the whole season, but only one of the two teams has been affected negatively.

With Tatum out for the season, along with losing Kristaps Porzingis, Al Horford, Jrue Holiday and Luke Kornet by either trade or free agency, the Celtics were expected to go through a complete free fall and finish at the bottom of the standings.

But that has not been the case, amazingly, the Celtics are second in the conference with a 35-19 record. The play of Jaylen Brown, Derrick White and sharpshooter Payton Pritchard, has the team at the same spot they were a year ago.

The loss to Haliburton, however, has been devastating for the Pacers, as Indiana, who was 50-32 last season, is just 15-40 and out of the playoff run.

The two other teams that appear to be in the Eastern title race are the New York Knicks and the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Both are veteran teams with a world of talent. The Knicks have Jalen Brunson and Karl-Anthony Towns, while the Cavs have Donovan Mitchell and recently acquired James Harden.

The Western Conference also has four teams that appear to be the top of the crop.

The best team is the same team that won the title a year ago, the Oklahoma City Thunder.

The Thunder have the reigning MVP in Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (SGA for short), and a cast of guys who play their roles perfectly.

After starting the season 24-1, the Thunder looked like they were going to run away with everything again this season, but OKC has gone a mediocre 18-13 since then and only have a three-game lead over the scariest young team in the league, the

San Antonio Spurs.

No, this is not the Tim Duncan-Tony Parker-Manu Ginobili-Greg Popovich Spurs. This is the Victor Wembanyama-and the rest of the guys Spurs, who look like a real threat to the Thunder, especially after beating them four-out-of-five times this year.

The other two teams that could contend are the Denver Nuggets (Nikola Jokic and Jamal Murray) and the Houston Rockets (Kevin Durant and Alperen Sengun).

There are a few more teams that are good, but not that good, like the Toronto Raptors, Los Angeles Lakers, Minnesota T-Wolves and the Phoenix Suns.

But I truly believe that the NBA’s final four will have the Pistons and the Knicks fighting it out in the East and the Thunder and Spurs starting a long-time rivalry in the West.

Who is going to win it all?

We’ll talk about that at playoff time at the end of May.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Courses on AARP

Are you a member of AARP? Even with the recent price increase (from \$15 to \$20 per year), there is still a lot to recommend it.

The AARP Skills Builder for Work section is a valuable benefit, even if we’re not still working, because the skills can be helpful to us now for our cognitive health, memory and task focusing. To develop the courses, AARP has partnered with MindEdge Learning, an online company that provides professional development and higher education classes. MindEdge was created by Harvard and MIT for interactive, self-paced learning. There are even credits and certificates for completion.

It was the Communication section of the MindEdge website that caught my eye, and I zeroed in on Advanced Grammar. The MindEdge Studio section looks fun as well, with an introduction to drawing course. Start by looking at AARP’s Skills Builder page (www.aarp.org/work/skills-builder), or see mindedge.com/course-catalog

for the available courses.

There’s more to AARP’s course offerings, however. Put “courses” in the search box of the main site (www.aarp.org). Right at the top of the page are courses for defensive driving for older drivers and the online smart driver course. (Ask your insurance agent if this course could get you a discount on your insurance premium.) Use the dropdown menu to narrow your selections.

If what you really want is online games, AARP has those, too. Remember FreeCell Solitaire, the game that came installed on the first computer we ever owned? It’s on the AARP games page. (There is also Classic Solitaire for the purists among us.)

The Games Center has arcade games, daily crossword, word games and a special section for members only. If you want a real mind-stretcher, look for the 10 x 10 game.

To save on the cost of an AARP membership, consider signing up for three years for \$55, which saves you a few dollars.

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

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										126						127					
128										129						130					

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

is that the Northern Virginia contingent will overwhelm the more rural voters, ensuring that they have little chance of electing a member of Congress who reflects their priorities.

In this sense, the map is not just a partisan power play, but a means of giving Northern Virginia hugely disproportionate sway over the state’s congressional delegation.

One district will reach from the inner suburb of Arlington, Virginia, all the way down to York County in the Tidewater area of Virginia, a roughly three-hour drive. For all that these areas have in common, the district might as well stretch all the way to Erie, Pennsylvania. To try to force through their map, Virginia Democrats need to maneuver around a constitutional amendment passed by voters in 2020 to create a nonpartisan districting commission, exactly to avoid the kind of outrage Democrats are now proposing. The amendment passed with 66% of the vote, a strong message from the public that it didn’t want gerrymandered

districts.

Democrats have now blown past procedural requirements for re-amending the Constitution to allow for their plan, and may yet get blocked by the state’s Supreme Court. The measure also has to pass in a referendum, and there’s a chance voters will reject it, although Democrats have scheduled the vote for April, when turnout is low.

None of this is worthy of a state with one of the finest political traditions in America. Virginia Democrats tell themselves they are just responding to Texas, but Democratic states like Illinois and California were already heavily gerrymandered prior to the Lone Star state redrawing its map, and Virginia is going above and beyond in its rank partisan grubbiness.

Democratic state senator Louise Lucas crowed after Democrats produced their maps, “We said 10-1, and we meant it.” Yes, indeed, they are determined to protect democracy – Virginia voters be damned.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. ©2026 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Vaccines: Same day or arm is up to preference

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have notes from friends at home who are getting their COVID vaccines and high-dose flu shots on the same day in the same arm. They talk about being completely wiped out and the cons of having two sore arms. Does it matter if you get the shots in one arm or the other? I suspect that it’s fine to do them both in one arm, and there’s no advantage to dividing it over time or by arm. – N.W.



Recent studies seem to suggest that getting the COVID-19 vaccine in the same arm as previous vaccines leads to higher short-term vaccine effectiveness; however, another recent study shows that getting a subsequent COVID-19 vaccine in the opposite arm leads to higher antibody levels, which are also longer-lasting.

I suspect that there is no major difference whether you consistently get the vaccine in the same arm or not. Personally, I always get my COVID vaccine in my nondominant arm, but I have colleagues who prefer the vaccine in their dominant arm (as they are convinced that moving more means a faster resolution to a sore arm, which is very common after any vaccine).

Getting both your COVID and flu vaccines at the same time is convenient for people who have trouble getting to their provider or when there is no pharmacy near them that provides the vaccine. It’s most efficient to get both done at the same time, but when I have done so, I get one in one arm and one in the other. Again, it’s a personal preference.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have high blood pressure and a chronic heart condition that is treated with rosuvastatin and clopidogrel. I do not have high cholesterol. Even so, my cardiologist strongly recommends that I continue rosuvastatin as a precautionary measure. Does this make sense? – T.L.

The goal of rosuvastatin and other statin drugs is to reduce the risk of heart disease complications, including heart attacks, strokes and death. Not everybody who gets these complications will have high cholesterol.

They might have other risk factors such as the high blood pressure you have, or they might have diabetes or less-common lipid issues like a high Lp(a). A high Lp(a) is a risk factor that is not always looked for, but it is important in a person with known heart disease or in those who have a strong family history despite having no traditional risk factors.

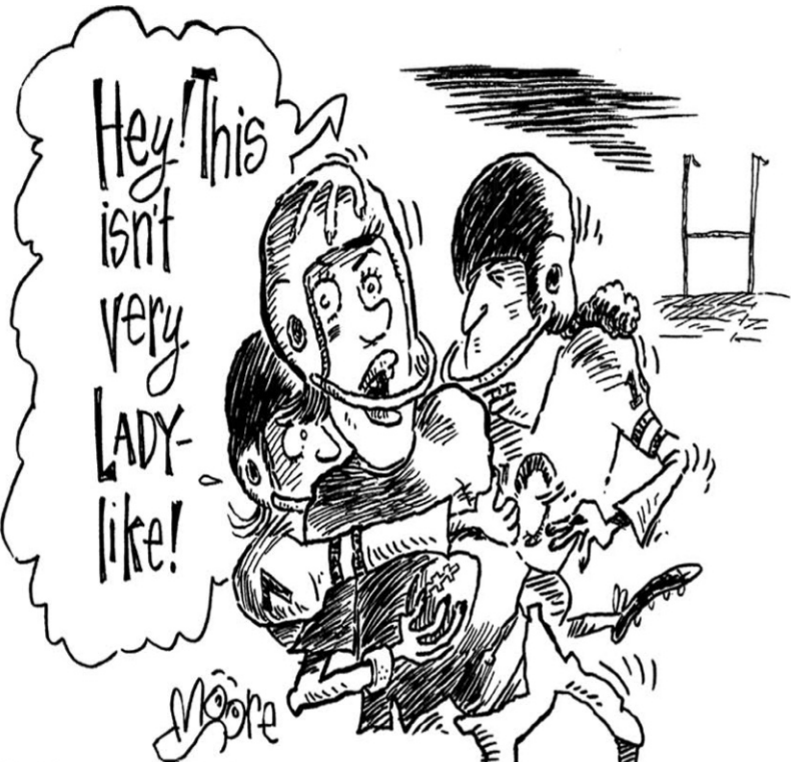
In a person who is at a higher risk despite normal or even desirable cholesterol levels (especially a person with known blockages in their arteries), the benefits of treatment outweigh the risks for nearly everyone. There are several calculators your doctor can go over with you to estimate your risk – with and without medicines like rosuvastatin.

It’s critical to remember that statin drugs (and other medications that we traditionally call “cholesterol medicines”) are effective in people who are at a high risk even if their cholesterol levels are normal.

You are on clopidogrel (Plavix), which is given to people to prevent blood clots, especially people who are at a high risk such as those with a stent or a history of a stroke. This suggests to me that your doctor thinks you are at a high risk, so the use of a potent statin like rosuvastatin is appropriate in this case.

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. ©2026 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

To Advertise Call 852-3235
Archives: www.wtxcc.com



Moore Texas by Roger MOORE
Feb. 18, 1973: Texas’ 1st team in the National Women’s Football League - Dallas Bluebonnets - lost their 1st game.

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 L

VTTFAVX L YEHI KGVXTO
EBTVPK BG HEB L KLOXT
IEVC GS YTLB, L YLV FTHKLOTF
“CFAST’P BGG PIGOB.”

Answer Page 4

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Using your GI Bill education benefits



by Freddy Groves

GI Bill education benefits come with several forms of help, including a monthly housing allowance (MHA). To be eligible for a full-time allowance, you need to be enrolled in a full-time slate of classes that equal 12 credits. But it’s not quite that simple.

The actual amount of money you receive for the MHA depends partially on where you live (more if the area has a high cost of living) and partially on how you attend those classes. If you’re taking all of your full-time classes online, did you know that you can increase your housing allowance by taking at least one in-person class? That one class changes your MHA category to in-person, getting you more benefit money, nearly double the rate you would get for only attending classes online. If all of your classes are online, your

monthly housing allowance will be approximately half of the national average, which is quite a deduction.

To find a school that qualifies for you to receive benefits, go to www.va.gov/education/gi-bill-comparison-tool. Be certain your school qualifies; the January 2026 file of GI Bill Quick Facts indicates there are over 600 suspended institutions. Ask at the school about what they call “hybrid” classes, the combination of online and in-person classes, and if they’re allowed.

Many of your questions about your education benefits can be answered at www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/how-to-use-benefits. When it’s time to apply, you can do that online at www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply. Start at the top of the page with the eligibility information. Note the service periods: 90 days of active duty after Sept. 10, 2001, or 30 days of continuous service after that date, or if you received a Purple Heart after that date.

Be sure to look at the details for the Yellow

Ribbon Program. It covers several expenses the GI Bill doesn’t, such as out-of-state or graduate school tuition.

Where there is a desire for education, there is usually a way to make it happen. Call the VA Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 for help.

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.



• “Keep cats indoors during very cold weather. They are particularly vulnerable to freezing. If you can leave the curtains drawn on a window where Kitty can look outside and sunbathe, she probably will be happy.” – M.R. in Washington

• This is some good advice given to me by my grandmother if you have lots of outdoor or feral cats in your area: Start your car with a bang – on the hood, that is. When the overnight temperature dips, cats know to find someplace that is wind-shielded and off the ground, and sometimes, that means they will climb up into your engine area to hunker down. If your car starts, they can be hurt or even killed. Give the hood a knock to let a cat know to get out quick.

• Pet paws need extra care in the cold months, especially dogs that must be walked in icy and snowy conditions. Here’s a great tip from Y.L. in New York: “I keep a small towel with me on my daily dog walks, but I also wash off my dog’s paws with a warm washcloth when we return. Another thing I do is to rub petroleum jelly into her pads once a day. They really take a beating having to go out three times a day in salty, muddy, cold conditions. She won’t wear doggie booties, so this works best for us.”

• If you keep birds, a reminder: Never preheat pans on high heat, especially nonstick pans. They can let off a chemical that you or I cannot even detect, but can be a health hazard for your bird friend that is in the kitchen area. Don’t keep birds in the kitchen when cooking.

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2026 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.

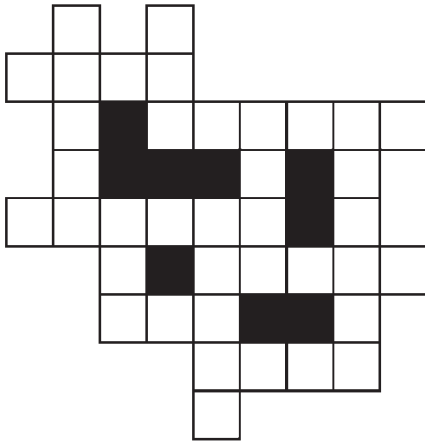
Answer Page 4

©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

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



UYG
EGSAKT
CHEAD
NAUL
♥ ROIGNE
AKY
♥ RUCE
MOKUA
GKE
UARKEE
♥ REGUS
NSCY



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.

©2026 King Features Syndicate. All rights reserved.

Weekly SUDOKU

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

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.