



– Photos by Alfredo Vasquez

BIG INVESTMENT – Meta’s plans for its Northeast El Paso data center complex, above, are to build eleven buildings with an investment of about \$10 billion. Construction is well underway on 1,000-acre plot along Stan Roberts Sr. Avenue near the U.S. Highway 54 intersection.

Data centers prompt concerns from area residents

Data facilities place huge demands on both water and electricity

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – The development of data centers to support the growth of AI-tied programs is rapidly sprouting across the El Paso region. Already three expansive centers are under construction – one in the Northeast sector of El Paso County, another in Santa Teresa, New Mexico which abuts El Paso County’s westernmost boundary, and a third center on remote land within the Fort Bliss Army Base. And the construction of these data centers is fueling concerns from El Paso area residents.

Northeast El Paso County

The data center being built by Meta Platforms (originators of Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) on 1,000-acre plot along Stan Roberts Sr. Avenue by U.S. Highway 54 in Northeast El Paso County calls for a \$10 billion complex with 11 large buildings. Together, the buildings will provide about 3.7 million square feet of space for its data storage computer servers and will need up to one gigawatt (1,000 megawatts) of electricity per day running 24-hours seven days a week. One gigawatt of electricity can typically power between 300,000 and 750,000 homes depending on regional energy consumption and climate.

Construction of the Northeast campus is already underway, and estimates are that up to 4,000 employees will be needed to complete the work. Once

the center is up and running, however, only about 300 hires will be needed to operate and maintain the equipment, stated a recent Meta news release. Plans are to complete construction in late 2027.

To meet the data centers’ electricity needs, El Paso Electric (EPE) reported that Meta will pay for a \$500 million, 366-megawatt power plant that will be built near the center. EPE officials stated that the new facility would consist

of 813 natural-gas-fueled generators. They also acknowledged that other sources of electricity will

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The projected daily power consumption of one gigawatt to operate Meta Platforms’ data center far outstrips the company’s contribution to power infrastructure of \$500 million for a 366-megawatt power plant by 63.4 percent.



IN AND OUT – This is one of several gates giving workers and deliveries access to the building site.

Yes, of course, war settles things

Countless protest signs have informed us over the years that “war is not the answer.” We hear this message, with varying levels of sophistication and differing underlying worldviews, from institutions and people ranging from Code Pink to Pope LEO.

“War does not solve problems,” the pontiff said in an Angelus address last year. “On the contrary, it amplifies them and causes deep wounds in the history of peoples – wounds that take generations to heal.”

Now, there are many things that can be said about the tragedy of warfare without crediting the blatantly ahistorical cliché that it is never the answer, or doesn’t solve disputed questions, often with a terrible finality.

Warfare can determine international boundaries

and the nature of governments. It can decide who will rule and who will not. The relative power of states, the extent of religious faiths and the status of a culture can depend on it.

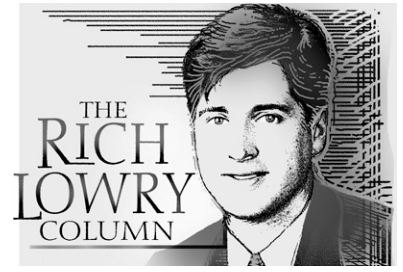
Wars might be pointless, or fought for prestige, revenge or territorial aggrandizement. That’s all true, but it doesn’t change the fact that military conflict is, at times, necessary and highly consequential; it can achieve beneficial ends, as well as awful ones.

It mattered for the spread of Christianity, for instance, that Constantine, who would become the first Christian emperor of Rome, won the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312. Later, Christendom benefited from Ferdinand and Isabella taking back Granada from its Muslim rulers in 1492, and from the Holy Roman Emperor defeating the Ottoman besiegers

of Vienna in 1683.

Certainly, it would have been better if all this could have been amiably worked out among the relevant parties, but that’s not how the world usually works.

In the early 19th century, Europe had a Napoleon problem – a world-historical military genius determined to bend the continent to his will through force of arms. After serial failures, the Allies finally solved this problem in the War of the Seventh Coalition. The ensuing diplomatic settlement at the Congress of Vienna forged a peace that lasted nearly a century, but wouldn’t



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Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Our time is precious

We should never put off till tomorrow what we can do today.

The biggest problem with this is that we can’t do everything today.

Life has to be spaced out and we have to hope and pray that we will have the opportunity to do some or most of what we would like to do. You can’t graduate from high school until you complete the requirements. You can’t begin a new career until obtain the job you want. Most jobs have prerequisites. Prerequisites require time. Many occupations require years of education and training. Thus, you have to do what you can today and plan out what you are going to do for three or four years to prepare yourself.

If you spend every day doing nothing then nothing is what

you have to look forward to. The musician practices long hours in hopes of performing at a future date. The runner trains daily hoping to win the 5K or even a marathon at a later date. A family may dream of a vacation so they save their money and sacrifice for a future outing.

The best we can do today is to do the best we can. Do what we know to do. Try to do the right thing. Have a goal or a list of objectives and do today what is necessary to move us closer to our goal.

We don’t have to live with goals but if we aim for nothing we achieve nothing. Often, our goal may be to just do a good job at whatever we currently have to do. If we do a good job every day then tomorrow will most likely be good. If we do a bad job every day then tomorrow

may not be so good. We reap what we sow. Planting good seeds in our daily lives will result in a harvest a little bit later, somewhere down the road.

Hard work pays off. The harder you work, the luckier you will become. The more you try, the more likely you will be successful. If you fish, keep baiting hooks and dropping them in the water. Eventually you get a bite and even catch a fish, if there are fish in the water. There

is nothing more frustrating than trying to catch a fish where there aren’t any. This applies to jobs. You can’t get a job where there aren’t any jobs. This means you have to make plans to be in a place where there is at least an opportunity.

Again, we all have limited time. We could eventually accomplish everything and anything we want to do, if we have 500 years to do it all, but we don’t. Forty, eighty, a hundred years is just a flash

in the pan. Thus, we need to figure out what we really want too because we don’t have that much time to do it.

Be good to yourself. Love people, love God. Wherever you are, be all there. Our time is precious.

Dr. Glenn Mollette is a syndicated columnist read in all fifty states. He is also the author of numerous books and can be heard each weekday morning on XM Radio 131.



– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

PUTTING PEOPLE TOGETHER – El Paso Community College’s Terra Week Career Fair featured many environmentally friendly vendors and businesses.

EPCC fair highlights area possibilities

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC), in coordination with Career and Transfer Services, held the 3rd annual Earth Day ‘Terra Week’ Career Fair for students on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, in the Valle Verde Flexitorium

This career expo featured the biggest names in environmental science, policy, and conservation. Some businesses include: City of El Paso Environmental Services Department, Frontera Land Alliance, Destination El Paso,

Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Gardens, No Lost Food, NMSU Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Texas Clean Rivers Program of the Rio Grande, and Conservation Legacy, to name a few.

“This allows the student to come in and look at what is to offer in the City of El Paso and our region,” Career and Transfer Services Associate Director Ed Montoya said. “Very few actually get to go out and explore the different companies, so this event allows for that, and that’s what the Career Expo for Terra Week does, bring green and sustainable

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1973
53
Years
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 - 15 Rights org.
 - 16 Peyton's brother
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 - 18 Spars
 - 20 Boast
 - 22 Prom outfit
 - 24 TV detective
 - Remington
 - 28 Shirt parts
- DOWN**
- 32 Flynn of film
 - 33 Frankfurt fellow
 - 34 Cleaning cloth
 - 36 Fine cotton
 - 37 "Shake _" (Taylor Swift hit)
 - 39 "Be serious!"
 - 41 More of a snoop
 - 43 Hosp. scan
 - 44 Inert gas
 - 46 Accord
 - 50 Pizzazz
 - 53 Bro, maybe
 - 55 Half a sextet
 - 56 Actress Falco
 - 57 _tizzy (worked up)
 - 58 Lingerie fabric
 - 59 Beloved
 - 60 A gazillion years
 - 61 Park _joon of "The Marvels"
- Room"**
- 1 Con job
 - 2 Killer whale
 - 3 Buddies
 - 4 "The Raven" writer
 - 5 Future tulip
 - 6 Mixes up
 - 7 Crime-solving aids
 - 8 Rage
 - 9 Pickle holder
 - 10 Hoosier st.
 - 12 Crunchy candy bar
 - 19 Minivan alternative
 - 21 Consumed
 - 23 Gen_ (baby boomer's kid)
 - 25 One of HOMES
 - 26 _Linda, Calif.
 - 27 Mideast airline
 - 28 Tibia's place
 - 29 Jared of "Panic Room"
 - 30 Cupid's alias
 - 31 Droop
 - 35 Tiara jewel
 - 38 Service charge
 - 40 Capote nickname
 - 42 Wartime riveter
 - 45 Boy, in Barcelona
 - 47 Showy flower
 - 48 Scrabble piece
 - 49 Singer Ono
 - 50 Last letter in London
 - 51 Chemical suffix
 - 52 Actress Long
 - 54 Prohibit
- Answer Page 4

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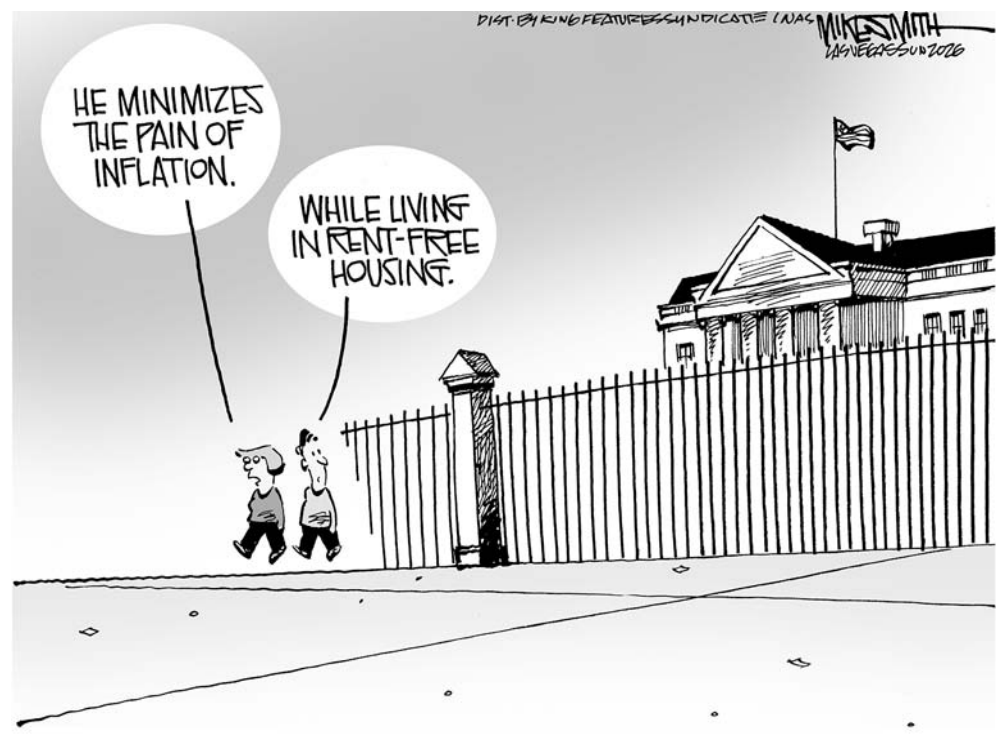
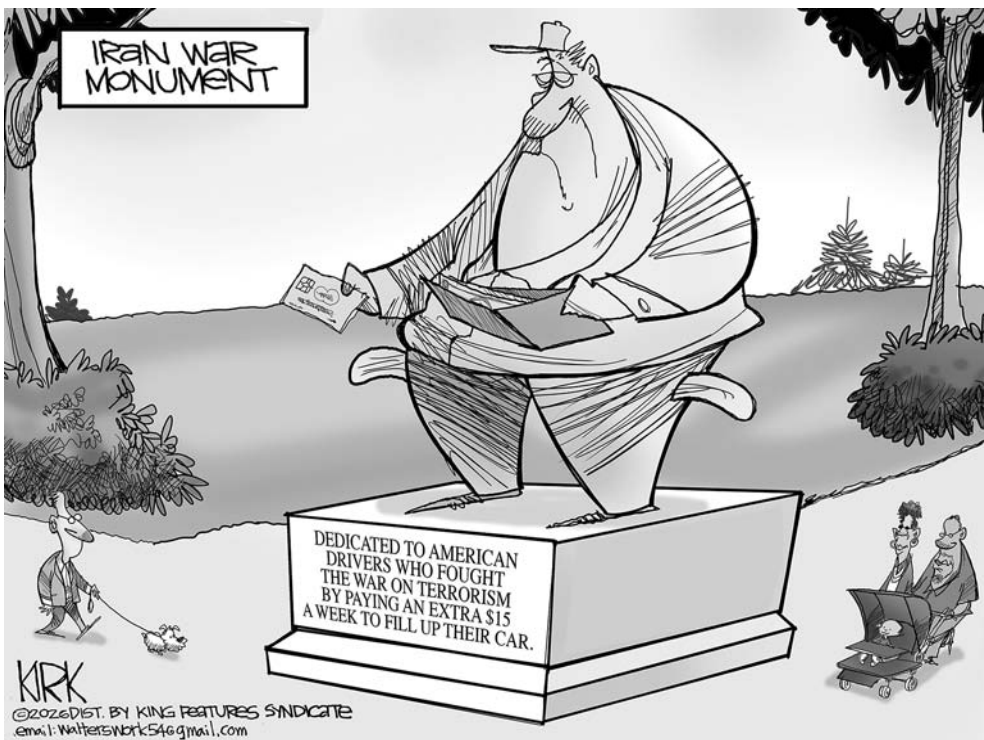
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Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Avoiding cognitive decline

Scroll around the internet to look for ideas about avoiding cognitive decline, and you'll find a wide variety of suggestions and studies.

UCLA has it narrowed down to four types in particular. Brain training games came in at the top of their list after they did a review of studies about improving cognitive function.

Number puzzles, it is said, can have a powerful impact on memory, reasoning and attention. Again, the more often you do them, the greater the result.

Last on their list is three-dimensional video games (such as Super Mario). Memory improved after only playing for two weeks.

But the various universities and research groups don't all agree.

Columbia University concluded that crossword puzzles were better than computer video games for memory function.

To be considered: Even if you don't have any signs of cognitive decline, starting early to keep ahead of it is no doubt valuable.

It's never too late to start.

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Centers

From Page 1

be necessary to meet the center's one gigawatt requirement.

Santa Teresa, NM

The Oracle Corp. data center is being built on a 1,400-acre piece of land in the Santa Teresa, New Mexico and will consist of four sprawling buildings.

Located on the western edge of El Paso County, the huge data center complex, referred to as Project Jupiter, is a joint venture among the Austin-based Oracle Corp., OpenAI (creator of ChatGPT), and a Japanese investment firm, named SoftBank.

EPE, which provides electricity to residents and businesses in the Santa Teresa area, will provide electricity to the Project Jupiter site while under construction.

Fort Bliss Army Base

The U.S. Army plans to put a hyperscale data center complex on 1,384 acres of Fort Bliss land, north of Montana Avenue and east of Loop 375 in far East El Paso County.

The number of data center buildings in the project is not yet known, but it could need as much as 2.5 gigawatts of electricity, or 2,500 megawatts, according to an Army spokesperson.

The project could bring an estimated 2,000 construction jobs, according to a Fort Bliss

news release, but will employ a much smaller workforce once the center is operational.

Regional Impact

Although the data center boom is pumping billions of investment dollars into the El Paso region's economy, still the rush to create these AI mega centers is worrying many local residents.

Probably the biggest concern is the vast amounts of water a data center is expected to consume. According to an Environmental and Energy Study Institute report, a data center, like the ones being built in this region, can consume as much as five million gallons of water each day.

Consequently, El Paso's U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar is calling on these companies to hold a series of public meetings to allay residents' fears about rising electricity costs, water usage, and environmental impacts.

El Paso area residents "have expressed legitimate concerns regarding the impact data centers will have on our resources, utility costs, and the environment; they deserve to have a voice, especially as data centers proliferate in our community," the Congresswoman said.



Rep. Veronica Escobar (D)

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

Most volcanoes spit out magma, ash and gas when they erupt, but a few rarer ones have been known to eject diamonds.

The longest recorded burp lasted one minute and 13 seconds.

Some German nursing homes use fake bus stops as a way to round up patients with Alzheimer's or dementia who seek to return home via public transportation.

Bald himself, Hippocrates recommended a treatment consisting of pigeon droppings, opium, beetroot, horseradish and spices to cure hair loss.

The wood frog can hold its urine for up to eight months.

The Cannabis Cup is the largest marijuana festival in the world, featuring music, food and comedy, as well as awards for best new product, hash, glass, booth

and seed company.

Due to their rare appearance, blood oranges were once considered an exclusive delicacy reserved for royalty.

Somelibrariesandmuseums loan out taxidermied animals as teaching aids.

For decades, Iceland maintained one of the strictest naming regimes in the world through the Icelandic Naming Committee, which reviewed applications to ensure personal names complied with Icelandic grammar and cultural tradition.

Folks with less nose hair have a higher risk of developing asthma.

In 2018, six medical professionals each swallowed a LEGO minifigure head to determine whether it could pass without medical intervention, and how long it would take.

Shaquille O'Neal missed 5,317 free throws over the course of his career.

Thought for the Day: "The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts."

- Marcus Aurelius

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Grid of numbers for a puzzle.

Grid of words for a crossword puzzle.

Grid of words for a crossword puzzle.

Grid of math problems for a puzzle.

Grid of words for a crossword puzzle.

CryptoQuip Answer: One of five bodies of water that many tykes could have learned about by watching "Sesame Street": Lake Ernie.

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Deciding when to collect SS benefits

By Russell Gloor
Special to the Courier

A question from an anonymous writer was sent to the Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) asking if current economic conditions should change his or her retirement planning. This question might apply to many people wrestling with the same financial math.

"I am 67 and 9 months old, collecting a modest SS survivor benefit with plans to collect my own much larger benefit at age 70. I was confident this plan was a good one; but recent turbulent events make me nervous that cuts could come to Social Security at any time without warning. Would it be prudent to file for my own Social Security as soon as possible so that my benefit might be "grandfathered" in before any sudden and drastic cuts occur? I do not generally panic, but these are unprecedented times. I would be quite comfortable with the benefit listed on my 2024 statement for my current age; I was just hoping to maximize the benefit by waiting.

When I go to the Social

Security website to view my 2025 annual statement to see the personalized monthly retirement benefit estimates for ages 68, 69, and 70, that section no longer shows. This omission makes me uncomfortable. Can I find out what my current benefit estimate would be for ages 68, 69, and 70? Or should I just rely on the 2024 statement?"

Individuals not be nervous that recent "turbulent events" pose a threat to their future Social Security benefits. Those events do not, in any way, jeopardize future Social Security benefits, because Social Security is completely separate from all other federal political issues and finances. The primary problem with Social Security became an issue long before the current administration took office.

The Trustees of Social Security have been warning Congress for decades that Social Security's finances require Congressional attention. The fact is that Social Security revenue (as predicted decades ago) became insufficient to pay all benefit obligations in about 2021. Since that time, money from Social Security's reserved

funds (Trust Funds) has been used to pay full benefits to all. In 2020, there was nearly \$3 trillion in SS reserved funds, but that has now dwindled to about \$2.5 trillion as reserves are used to supplement SS payments. And that problem continues. The Trustees of SS now predict that the reserves will be fully depleted in about 2032, at which time – lacking program reform by Congress – Social Security will be forced to pay out only what it receives in revenue. And that would mean an estimated cut of about 23% to everyone's monthly SS benefit. In the unlikely event that happens, wouldn't a 23% reduction to your larger age 70 benefit be better than a 23% cut to your lower age 68 benefit?

No one wants those cuts to happen – least of all politicians – because it would amount to political suicide (seniors are, after all, a very large voting bloc). Thus, we believe that Congress will act to reform Social Security to prevent any general benefit cuts from happening. It will, however, require Congressional bipartisanship because the reforms needed for Social Security are likely unsavory to some. Those reforms may include SS tax increases and changes to the basic structure of the SS program to align

it with today's demographic reality. The program needs reform, which Congress has, unfortunately, neglected to provide for many years. And this neglect will likely also continue, at least through the forthcoming mid-term elections. It seems the nature of Congress is to wait until the last possible moment to offer corrective legislation.

Here's what to keep in mind: Congress already knows how to reform Social Security to avoid any future benefit cuts – they just lack the bipartisanship to accomplish that reform. For our part, the AMAC has offered to Congress a commonsense reform plan via its "Social Security Guarantee (SSG)." AMAC's proposal has received a positive reception in Congressional circles, and we are optimistic that the proposal will provide financial stability to the program for generations. AMAC continues to advocate for SS reform in Washington, D.C. on a regular basis, even more intensely as the depletion of the SS Trust Funds grows closer.

We do not suggest people change their strategy for claiming Social Security benefits based upon fear the program will cut benefits. That's because it's unlikely that all benefits will be cut because we believe Congress

will eventually enact reform. And even in the unlikely event that Congress neglects to reform the program by 2032, the percentage of reduction to a higher monthly SS benefit amount would be better than a similar reduction to a lower benefit amount. In other words, the original plan is still a prudent one.

Regarding the question about estimated benefits, I expect your most recent SS statement didn't include future benefits because you are already collecting SS survivor benefits. You can contact SSA at (800) 772.1213 to obtain the future SS retirement estimates you seek.

Russell Gloor is the National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the AMAC. This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration. Visit www.amac.us for more information about AMAC.



Moments in Time THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On April 27, 1521, Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan was killed during a tribal skirmish on Mactan Island in the Philippines. Earlier in the month, he had met with the local chief on the Philippine island of Cebu, who, after converting to Christianity, had persuaded the Europeans to assist him in conquering a rival tribe on a neighboring island. During the ensuing conflict, Magellan was hit by a poisoned arrow and left to die by his retreating fellow fighters.

- On April 28, 1953, inventor Howard Ross received a patent for a useful, if rather curious, garment called a "double coat," with an outer layer that could be extended to cover two people at a time in athletic stadiums when it rained.

- On April 29, 1991, paroled felon Rodney King led police on a high-speed chase through the streets of Los Angeles County before eventually surrendering. Drunk and uncooperative, he resisted arrest and was beaten by three police officers who didn't know they were being filmed by a nearby citizen. Upon release to the

press, the video triggered outrage around the country and started a national debate on police brutality.

- On April 30, 1977, more than 2,000 protesters carrying signs saying, "Split Wood, Not Atoms" and "Go Fishing, Not Fission" occupied the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant construction site in New Hampshire. More than half were taken into custody in what became one of the largest mass arrests in U.S. history.

- On May 1, 1958, the United States celebrated its first Law Day after President Eisenhower announced the observance to honor the role of law in the country's creation. Three years later, Congress followed suit by passing a joint resolution establishing May 1 as Law Day.

- On May 2, 1972, after serving nearly five decades as FBI director. J. Edgar Hoover died, leaving the agency without the administrator who'd turned it into an efficient crime-fighting machine.

- On May 3, 2007, shortly before her fourth birthday, Madeleine McCann of Rothley, England, disappeared during a family vacation at a resort in southern Portugal. Despite an international search, she remains missing.

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EPCC

From Page 2

companies in that are so many different types of industries in El Paso that are available."

"This is really interesting, so that's why I'm here, to see what is available," Biology major Viridiana Torres said.

The City of El Paso mascot, Amigo Man, was also on hand to greet students.

The Career Fair was free, and open to the entire community.

Earlier in the week on Monday, Students gathered early in the Valle Verde Flexitorium for a Panel Discussion on Energy and Water Resources with industry experts and community leaders.

The panel brought together voices from across

energy, environmental policy, and community advocacy, each offering a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities shaping El Paso's water and energy resources.

As the discussion unfolded, ideas sparked curiosity and urgency. Speakers shared insights from the field, connecting real-world experience to the issues students' study in the classroom. The conversation wasn't just about today – it was about what comes next.

When the panel concluded, the energy in the room carried into the next phase of the event. About 25 students stood beside their research posters – all were ready to share their work on policy, energy, and water resources. The presentations became personal and interactive as attendees moved from poster to poster. Questions became opportunities for exchanging ideas and building contacts.

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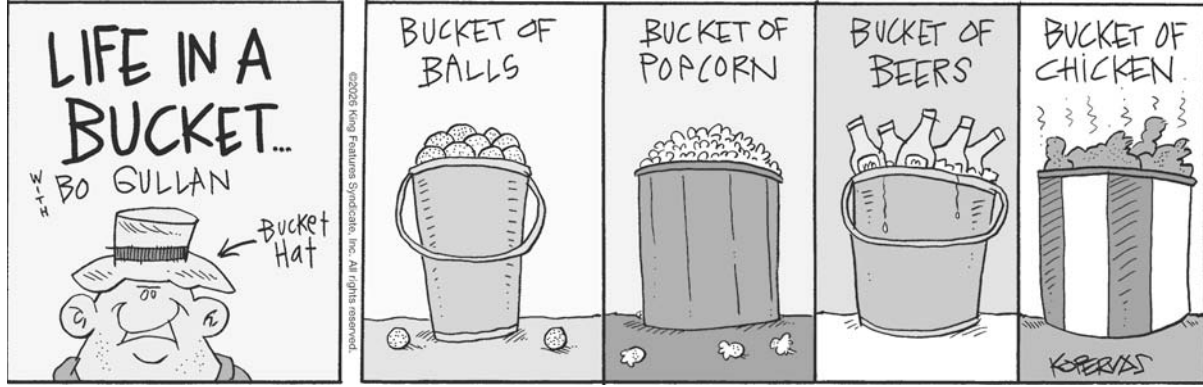


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Lowry

From Page 2

have been possible without victory at Waterloo.

In the early 20th century, Europe had a Hitler problem – a fanatical, race-obsessed militarist who wanted his Third Reich to dominate Europe. This problem, too, was solved by force and led to a lasting peace, although a very tense one during the Cold War. If it's true that war should usually be the last resort, the Allies would have been better off if it had been the first resort against Hitler, checking him when he was relatively weak.

More parochially, the United States wouldn't be what it is today absent two existential wars. When the colonies began agitating for independence, the British weren't simply going to cede what they considered sovereign territories, especially given their economic and strategic value. The American cause – and all the good that has flowed from it – depended on prevailing in a grinding eight-year war.

About a hundred years later, it all could have collapsed had the United States not prevailed

in the Civil War, an appallingly bloody conflict that extinguished American slavery and preserved the foundation for the nation's gathering greatness.

None of this is a warrant for heedless warmongering, or a reason to dismiss, say, the sheer cynical brutishness of the Roman destruction of Carthage in the Third Punic War, or the horrors of Passchendaele. That war is terrible; however, it doesn't mean that it's ineffective.

In our times, Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022 in the erroneous, but not crazy, belief that a sharp, decisive military campaign would topple the Western-oriented government in Kyiv and force the creation of a regime more to the Kremlin's liking. This was a war that never should have been launched, and yet Ukraine had no alternative but to fight it.

If Kyiv wants to protect its sovereign territory and eventually get a tolerable diplomatic outcome, war is the answer – as, sadly, it has been so often throughout human history.

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

Dialysis is a choice only the patient can make

DEAR DR. ROACH: A loved one of mine has had kidney problems for his whole life. He's now on the transplant list, and his kidney function is very low. But he continues to avoid dialysis, saying that he's not ready for it. Surprisingly, his heart health, cholesterol and blood pressure are always great when tested. He sometimes has swelling if he's on his feet for too long, but this can be reduced by going on medication for a few days.



He also has uncontrolled diabetes. At one point, his A1C level was over 11%, but now it is closer to 6% or 7%. In addition, he's on a biologic due to an autoimmune disease. How long can someone with a glomerular filtration rate (GFR) that is lower than 10 be expected to function without starting dialysis or getting a transplant? How long can someone like him survive if he continues to avoid dialysis? – Anon.

The answer is one to two years for a person with a GFR of 10 who doesn't receive kidney replacement therapy, like dialysis or a transplant. Some people will do well for even longer periods.

I've had more than a few patients who were in similar situations – some of whom had decided against dialysis, while others, like your loved one, were undecided. But the vast majority decided to take dialysis once they started feeling more unwell. As their kidney disease progresses, their ability to get rid of excess fluid, even with medication, decreases. They are also likely to have symptoms such as a loss of appetite, nausea, and "brain fog."

People with progressive kidney failure may suffer from medical emergencies such as critically high potassium levels or severe levels of acid in the blood, which usually require emergent dialysis. Eventually, medications will only provide temporary relief. Your loved one should be prepared to give an answer as to what they would do if this happens.

You may wonder why his diabetes is controlled when it wasn't before. One reason is that insulin lasts for longer in the body when the kidneys aren't working well. He might also not be eating as much.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Are there health benefits that are associated with liver support products, which are found in a variety of options that are sold over the counter? I am a 60-year-old man who is in generally good health and imbibes occasionally (4-5 drinks per week). – C.C.

A very good rule of thumb is that your liver doesn't need any kind of supplementation to keep it working well. It has remarkable self-regenerating abilities, but even these abilities can be overwhelmed when taking in substances that are harmful to the liver.

Alcohol is probably the most common liver toxin in North America, although 4-5 drinks per week isn't usually enough to cause liver damage (unless you are drinking them all on the same day). To keep your liver from being damaged, definitely keep your intake to below 2 drinks per day. (This is the guideline for men; the guideline for women is 1 drink per day.)

Ironically, supplements have been a fairly frequent cause of liver damage. Turmeric, green tea extract, echinacea, goldenseal, black cohosh, red yeast rice, and vitamin A can all cause liver damage, especially when taken in higher-than-recommended doses.

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.

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Moore Texas by Roger Moore

April 26, 1837: John J. Audubon comes to Texas to study and paint birds.

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: Y equals S

MOX MT TVFX EMCVXY MT
 JZH XI HGZH PZOR HRSXY
 LMWDC GZFX DXZIOXC ZEMWH
 ER JZHLGVON "YXYZPX YHIXXH":
 DZSX XIOVX.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
 ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Answer Page 4

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Additional education benefits



by Freddy Groves

Have you been using your veterans educational benefits? Are you running out of time because you're coming to the end of the standard 36 months of benefits you received? Because of two new rulings, you might be one of a million veterans who are eligible for an additional 12 months.

The rulings in question (Rudisill v. McDonough and Perkins v. Collins) say that certain veterans could get more education benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Adding 12 months of benefits will bring you up to 48 months.

It started two years ago when the Supreme Court decided that, under one of the rulings, veterans who had more than one qualifying period of service (one for the Montgomery GI Bill and another for the Post-9/11 GI Bill) were

eligible to combine them for 48 months of benefits. Then, last year, the appeals court decided that veterans with only one qualifying period of service could get benefits under both the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post-9/11 GI Bill programs.

Here is how it's going to work:

You no longer need to pick one program over the other and be limited to 36 months.

The VA is looking at eligibility under both of the rulings for any veteran who used benefits after August 2018 and who now has less than three months of benefits remaining or a veteran who was enrolled during the last six months.

Then, the VA is looking at veterans under one of the rulings to see if additional benefits are available. They're starting by automatically approving the standard 36 months of benefits. Those veterans who are eligible for the additional time will be told.

If you're new to filing for education benefits, download VA Form 22-

1990 (www.va.gov/forms/22-1990) to either apply or ask to change an existing benefit. Family members can scroll down to Form 22-1990e and use that form.

If you've previously filed for education benefits, download Form 22-1995 (www.va.gov/forms/22-1995) to ask for any changes.

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• Putting in your spring garden? To keep your nails from developing a dirt problem, use this classic tip: Rake your nails over a bar of soap. It "seals" the gap underneath, and later when you wash your hands, the soap slips right out, no need to spend time scrubbing out the dirt!

• Add these to the list of items to eliminate the odor of cooking cabbage: a heel of bread, a whole walnut or a pinch of baking soda.

• Love beans but trying to save a little money? Don't be intimidated by dry beans. Just rinse them and chuck them in the slow cooker. Add water according to package directions and cook on low for up to eight hours. After they are cooled, you can bag them in zip-top bags and freeze them for easy use later.

• If you or your kids have trouble drifting off to sleep, try this aromatherapy trick: Spray sheets with a diluted lavender essential oil. Lavender is classic for sleeptime.

• "To make the most handy long handled garden tool, do this right now: Lay the tool on the ground (it can be a hoe, rake, whatever you use most) and, using a tape measure, mark out feet and inches with a permanent marker right on the handle. Now, when you go to put plants in the ground, you can space them out perfectly by laying down your tool along the planting line." – C.O. in Arkansas

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.

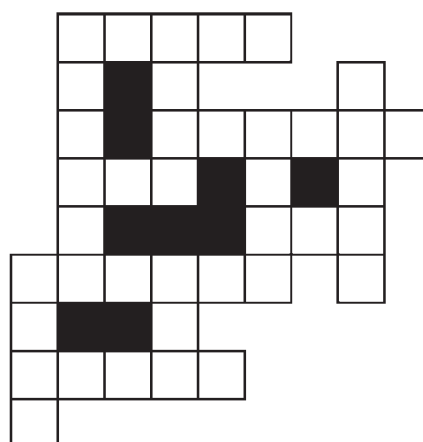
Answer Page 4

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	-		+		=	7		
+		+		+				
	+		÷		=	1		
÷		+		-				
	+		×		=	35		
=		=		=				
11		15		4				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



- IKT
- KATNEL
- IGDNE
- CDTU
- NERGIC
- ♥ODN
- ♥AKEL
- ♥ASKLC
- ♥ALG
- CLEDKE
- SECTA
- ♥ADLE



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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