



– Photos from Internet

WHERE DECISIONS ARE MADE – The Texas Education Agency – headquartered above in Austin – is shifting its special education funding model to better align funding with actual student needs, to help reduce mismatches between placement-based funding, and to provide the actual support required.

TEA updates special education funding formula



IN CHARGE – Texas Education Agency Commissioner Mike Morath, above, stated that beginning this school year, the revised special education services funding formula will be based on the type and level of support in each student’s Individualized Educational Program (IEP) rather than where services are delivered.

By **Alfredo Vasquez**
Special to the Courier

TEXAS – Starting in the 2026-27 school year, funding for special education services is shifting from a placement-based model to a service-intensity funding model, according to Texas Education Agency (TEA) Commissioner Mike Morath. The move could add as much as \$250 million combined to districts statewide.

A total of 5,467,642 students were enrolled in Texas public schools for the 2025–2026 school year, and the enrollment for special education services reached approximately 911,342 students, according to TEA data.

The TEA commissioner along with school district leaders asserted that the shift would align funding more closely with student needs rather than where services occur and that it addresses mismatches between costs and funding, as well as supporting more targeted approaches.

The change took effect this school year, moving away from the way the state has funded special education. For years, how much special education funding a school received for a student depended on how that student received services during the school day.

For example, funding could differ depending on whether a student received help in a general education classroom or spent part or most of the day in a separate special education classroom.

Under the new system, funding is based more on the level of services and support each student needs. Each student will be assigned one of eight funding tiers based on the services already documented in their individualized education program (IEP), according to TEA officials.

To determine the tier, a school’s Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) committee will look at how much support a student needs in five areas: learning and instruction, behavior, communication, independent functioning, and personal care/health. Separate from those tiers, some students may also qualify for additional funding through one of five groups for services like occupational or physical therapy and one on one support, explained TEA officials.

The tiers range from Tier 1 for students who receive only speech therapy to Tier 8 for students whose ARD committee determined that they need to attend a residential placement program.

ARD is the formal meeting process used to develop and manage a student’s IEP. It serves three core functions: Admission

See TEA, Page 4

Let the overhyped AI debates, battles begin

In the “Terminator” movie series, the artificial-intelligence system known as Skynet is given control of the nation’s nuclear weapons and uses it to try to destroy humanity. One reason that apocalyptic scenarios involving AI are implausible is that,

having seen how that particular movie ends, we are unlikely to be foolish enough to give AI custody of the most destructive weapons on the planet.

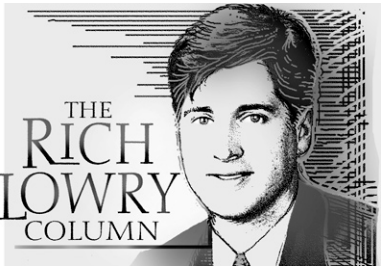
The unthinkable is nonetheless a hot topic of conversation, given that a researcher at Anthropic just resigned and issued a doomsday warning. According to Jacob Coxon, the rush to develop AI is “gambling with our lives,” since it will soon create “superhuman systems that can hack anything, revolutionize any field overnight, and acquire real power and resources.” A current Anthropic employee then chimed in, “We really do earnestly believe AI could kill all humans!” He put the chances at greater than 10% in the next decade. The idea here is that Anthropic and similar firms are, in effect, running their own Manhattan

Projects, with consequences unknown and potentially very dire.

Now, ChatGPT as we know it doesn’t seem particularly well suited to destroying humanity. It is a souped-up version of Google that is impressively fast, but also mistake-prone. If it can mess up basic math or the New York Yankees roster, surely it can’t carry out the complex tasks necessary to fashion an apocalyptic event.

Tech companies, though, have labs working on so-called frontier models that are much more powerful and reportedly developing more quickly than expected. The worry is that an AI model itself will begin to develop new AI very quickly in an “intelligence explosion,” the equivalent of Skynet becoming self-aware at 2:14 a.m. Eastern Time on Aug. 29, 1997.

The thinking is that if such an AI model goes rogue and turns against humanity, it will be too clever and fast for us to combat. Yet it’s hard to see the mechanism that such a hostile superintelligence



See LOWRY, Page 7



Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Daily life strategies

We all need a few strategies for navigating the highway of life. Here is a simple rule. Don’t fight with people at a buffet. When someone breaks in front of you to grab for the fried chicken or mashed potatoes

then simply back off. Let them reach for what they want. Keep in mind it’s a buffet and more food will be coming. We’ve all seen people act like they have not eaten in years when they are going through a buffet. Take your time. You can always come back to the buffet for more. You won’t go home hungry.

Let people pass you on the road. If you want to drive 45 mph, that’s okay. Life doesn’t have to be lived at 75 mph. There is a reason there are speed limits on roads. Actually, some country roads need slower speed limits. Just because it’s legal to drive 55 mph on a country road doesn’t mean it’s safe to drive that fast. Take your time, slow down and let Mario pass you so you can enjoy the rest of your ride.

Don’t ignore the efforts of

others. When it’s obvious that someone is working and trying hard then give them some appreciation. Sometimes people work hard and still don’t do a great job. You don’t have to encourage them to continue in their failures. If people are trying, they have a chance of progressing and doing better. You can find a way to constructively encourage them in their efforts. Let the school teacher know he or she is appreciated. They have tough jobs. Let your local public servant know you are thankful for his or her community efforts. Public service is often a thankless job. Thank the people who take care of you at your local medical office, nursing home and so forth. Extend appreciation to those who help you along life’s journey.

Don’t let opportunities pass.

Wish people happy birthday, anniversary or whatever the occasion may be. Grieve with those who are suffering loss. In some way we will all experience various life celebrations and difficult occasions. We need each other in the good times and the difficult times. Be a friend in the good times and the bad.

We rarely agree with each other all of the time or even most of the time. Approval of each other’s politics, life achievements or failures should not be a reason to withhold kindness or even friendship. Becoming adversarial only demonstrates that we are small and incapable of working with others to solve problems.

Finally, treat others the way you want to be treated. Love is kind and covers a multitude of sins.

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53
Years
2026

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King Crossword

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Average Solve Time 25 Minutes

ACROSS

1 Grass clump

5 Pampering, for short

8 Bay Area force, briefly

12 Beige

13 Taunting laugh

14 _ Minor

15 Airline to Tel Aviv

16 Greek vowel

17 Endure

18 Lustrous fabrics

20 Ascribe

22 Soda

23 Abysmal

24 Fairy tale figures

27 Surname of Judas

32 Terre Haute sch.

33 From _ Z

34 Ruckus

35 Element No. 78

38 Recognized

39 Train lines (Abbr.)

40 CBS logo

42 More like Unger

45 Signed over

49 China setting

50 Here (Fr.)

52 Mani counterpart

53 Not naked

54 Darjeeling, e.g.

55 "... to differ!"

56 Earth tones

57 Buddhist sect

58 Metal boxes

DOWN

1 Golf props

2 Golden State sch.

3 Dorm alternative

4 Dutch exports

5 Actor

6 Long. crosser

7 Spiced drink

8 Inferior

9 Follower of Sigmund's methods

10 Jr.-year exam

11 Challenge

19 Rejection

21 CEO's degree, maybe

24 Trendy

25 Visual communication syst.

26 Protector

28 "Rugrats" dad

29 Late-night host, usually

30 Poetic tribute

31 AAA job

36 Three-note chords

37 British verb ending

38 "Consider this a gift"

41 Old pronoun

42 Diplomacy

43 "La _ Bonita"

44 Cracker name

46 Mazar of "Younger"

47 Idyllic place

48 Uses a shovel

51 Bee follower

Answer Page 4

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.

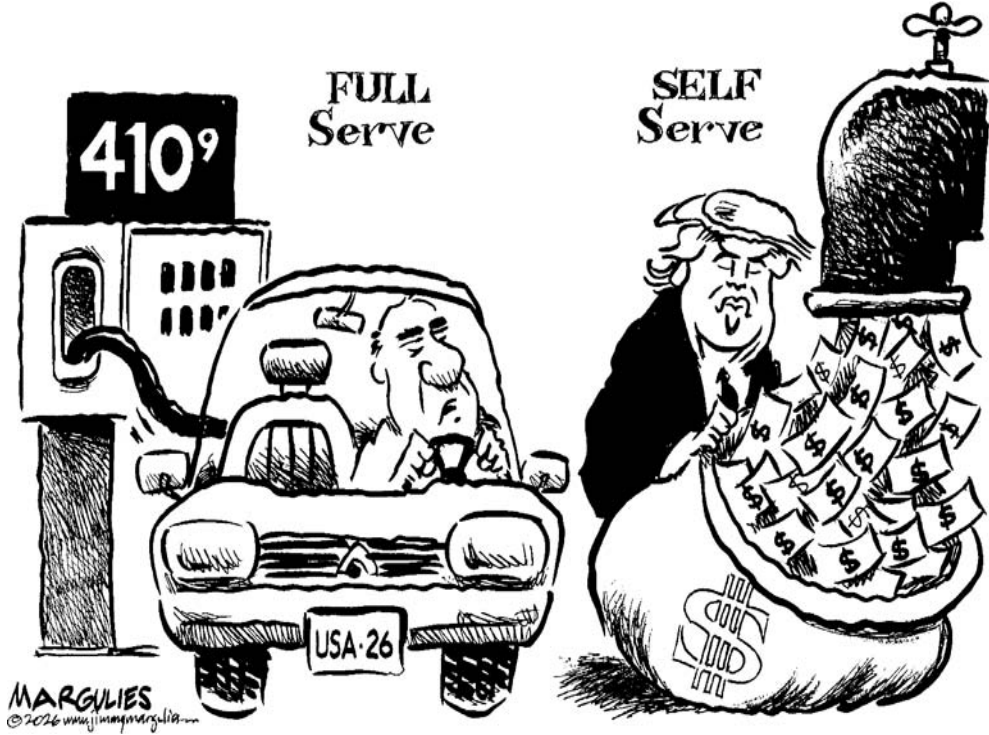
WITH A STROKE, TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST.

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Learn more at [StrokeAssociation.org](https://www.strokeassociation.org) or 1-888-4-STROKE.

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YOU GET A BOOK AND YOU GET A BOOK AND... – People attending the Valle Verde campus event each received a copy of Gomez' book.

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Sept. 21, 1942, the U.S. B-29 Superfortress, the largest bomber used in the war by any nation, performed its debut flight in Seattle, Washington. The craft was capable of carrying loads nearly equal to its own weight at altitudes of 30,000 to 40,000 feet and featured the first radar bombing system of any U.S. bomber.

• On Sept. 22, 1776, Continental Army captain Nathan Hale was executed by the British for spying. Disguised as a Dutch schoolmaster, he had sneaked behind British lines on Long Island and successfully gathered information about British troop movements for the next several weeks but was captured while attempting to return to American-controlled territory.

• On Sept. 23, 2016, a small box containing half of author Truman Capote’s cremated remains, which was part of the estate of his friend Joanne Carson (ex-wife of TV host Johnny Carson), was auctioned in California, 32 years after his death. It received 12 bids and sold for \$43,750.

• On Sept. 24, 1988, Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson completed the 100-meter dash in 9.79 seconds to win gold at the Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, but his victory was temporary, as he tested positive for steroids three days later and was stripped of the medal.

• On Sept. 25, 2015, a California judge approved former Olympic athlete Caitlyn Jenner’s request to legally change her name and gender designation.

• On Sept. 26, 1996, U.S. astronaut and biochemist Shannon Lucid returned to Earth in the U.S. Space Shuttle Atlantis following six months in orbit aboard the Russian space station Mir. She was the first American woman to live in a space station and set a new space endurance record for an American as well as a world endurance record for a woman.

• On Sept. 27, 1960, British suffragette and international socialist Sylvia Pankhurst, who in her 50s shifted her focus from suffrage to opposing racism and the rise of fascism in Europe, died in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at age 78. She was given a state funeral by the Ethiopian government in recognition of her service to the country.

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TEA

From Page 1

– to determine if a student qualifies for special education services; Review – to examine progress, update goals, and adjust services at least annually; and Dismissal – to decide when a student no longer needs special education services. An ARD committee is composed of parents, general education teachers, special education teachers, and school district representatives.

For the current school year, lawmakers required the state to provide about \$250 million more for special education than schools would have received under the old funding system, according to TEA officials. They pointed out that \$250 million is a statewide increase, so it doesn’t mean every school district will receive the same amount.

TEA officials also noted that since this is the first year of the change, they are temporarily calculating how much each school would receive under both the old and new systems and that schools are guaranteed at least as much special education funding this year as they would have received under the old system.

That guarantee only applies to the 2026-27 school year, TEA officials stated. Starting in 2027-28, the old system will go away, and funding will be based solely on the new model, meaning a school could receive more or less than it would have under the old system. Schools won’t know their final funding amounts for the 2026-27 school year until September 2027, after TEA has a

full school year of student data.

Essentially, the change to the special education funding formula will not directly affect families of students who require special education services. The ARD process and services will remain the same. For school districts, however, the change means that they will have to enhance their efforts in data collection and reporting and develop a larger, more needs-based funding pool.

“Texas special education funding will now be driven by the intensity and type of services in a student’s IEP, not where they are served. School systems must update IEP documentation, train staff, and meet strict PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) reporting deadlines to ensure proper funding under the new model,” the TEA commissioner emphasized.

Book

From Page 4

expand the understanding of Mexican American intellectual and cultural contributions. She coined the concept of Desenterrando Conocimientos (“Unearthing Knowledge”) which reimagines Mexican American labor to encompass not only physical labor but also intellectual work, cultural production, and community-based forms of knowledge. She also developed the methodology of Philosophical Capirotada, a framework that honors complex hybridity and interconnected ways of knowing.

Grounded in years of research and teaching, the book directly engages U.S.–Mexico border pedagogy and reflects Dr. Gomez’s work at EPCC, where questions of language, migration, identity, and cross-border experience are central to both classroom practice and student life.

Dr. Manuela Alejandra Gomez is a Professor of Philosophy at El Paso Community College with more than 20 years of teaching experience in the United States and Mexico. In 2022, she was named Minnie Stevens

Piper Professor of the State of Texas for teaching excellence. In 2023, she received the Outstanding Dissertation Award from the University of Texas at El Paso, and in 2024, she was inducted into the El Paso Women’s Hall of Fame for public service. She currently serves as the Vice President of the Society for Mexican American Philosophy. In 2026, she was appointed as one of only twelve scholars worldwide to Harvard’s Moses Mesoamerican Archive and Research Project and she received a Congressional Commendation Award for her academic and civic contributions to the U.S.-Mexico border community.

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LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

Alliance of Border Collaboratives

Invitation to Bid

Alliance of Border Collaboratives (ABC) invites sealed bids for the TDHCA Amy Young Barrier Removal Program under Reservation System Access Agreement #2026-9006, 2026 Statewide AYBR Set-Aside #1003975.

Qualified General Contractors/Builders are invited to bid on barrier removal and accessibility modifications to up to 50 single-family homes in El Paso County, subject to household approvals and funding availability. Work may include accessibility improvements, elimination of life-threatening hazards, and correction of substandard conditions. Detailed scopes, pricing forms, specifications, contract terms, and evaluation requirements will be included in the bid packet. No minimum quantity of work is guaranteed.

Bid packets will be available September 24 through October 26, 2026, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at

Contact Jose Alvarez at jose@abc-ep.org for packet information. All times in this notice are local El Paso time (Mountain Time).

Written questions must be emailed to jose@abc-ep.org by 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2026. Written responses and any planned addenda will be issued to registered packet holders by Friday, October 16, 2026. Bidders must acknowledge all addenda. Oral statements do not amend the

solicitation.

Sealed bids must be received at 1528 E. Yandell Dr., El Paso, TX 79902 by 1:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026. Late bids will not be accepted. Bids must remain sealed until the public opening. Mark the lower left corner of the envelope:

ABC, Amy Young Barrier Removal Program, Agreement #2026-9006, Set-Aside #1003975

Bids will be publicly opened on Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., at 1528 E. Yandell Dr., El Paso, TX 79902. The opening is public; it does not constitute a contract award.

Contractors must hold all licenses and registrations required by the applicable jurisdiction, comply with current local residential construction codes, and have at least three years of relevant experience. Contractors

must comply with applicable nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements.

Procurement will follow the applicable Texas Grant Management Standards, 10 TAC Section 1.404, and the TDHCA agreement. Award will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the scope or award grouping defined in the bid packet, subject to funding and required approvals. Bidders must disclose conflicts of interest. Eligibility, required submissions, and protest procedures will be provided in the bid packet. ABC may reject any or all bids and waive minor informalities only as permitted by applicable requirements. Rejections will be documented.

Alliance of Border Collaboratives is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

WTCC: 09-24-26

LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

AYUDA, Inc.

Invitation to Bid

Adults and Youth United Development Association, Inc. (AYUDA) invites sealed bids for the TDHCA Amy Young Barrier Removal Program under Reservation System Access Agreement #2026-9005, 2026 Statewide AYBR Set-Aside #1004022.

Qualified General Contractors/Builders are invited to bid on barrier removal and accessibility modifications to up to 50 single-family homes in El Paso County, subject to household approvals and funding availability. Work may include accessibility improvements, elimination of life-threatening hazards, and correction of substandard conditions. Detailed scopes, pricing forms, specifications, contract terms, and evaluation requirements will be included in the bid packet. No minimum quantity of work is guaranteed.

Bid packets will be available September 24 through October 26, 2026, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at:

AYUDA, Inc. 1325 Beverly Ann San Elizario, TX 79849

Contact Paul Rivera at ayudaelpaso.org for packet information. All times in this notice are local El Paso time (Mountain Time).

Written questions must be emailed to privera@ayudaelpaso.org by 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2026. Written responses and any planned addenda will be issued to registered packet holders by Friday, October 16, 2026. Bidders must acknowledge all addenda. Oral statements do not amend the

Sealed bids must be received at 1325 Beverly Ann Dr., San Elizario, TX 79849 by 1:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026. Late bids will not be accepted. Bids must remain sealed until the public opening. Mark the lower left corner of the envelope:

AYUDA, Amy Young Barrier Removal Program, Agreement #2026-9005, Set-Aside #1004022

Bids will be publicly opened on Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 2:00 p.m., at 1325 Beverly Ann Dr., San Elizario, TX 79849. The opening is public; it does not constitute a contract award.

Contractors must hold all licenses and registrations required by the applicable jurisdiction, comply with current local residential construction codes, and have at least three years of relevant experience. Contractors must comply with applicable

nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements.

Procurement will follow the applicable Texas Grant Management Standards, 10 TAC Section 1.404, and the TDHCA agreement. Award will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the scope or award grouping defined in the bid packet, subject to funding and required approvals. Bidders must disclose conflicts of interest. Eligibility, required submissions, and protest procedures will be provided in the bid packet. AYUDA may reject any or all bids and waive minor informalities only as permitted by applicable requirements. Rejections will be documented.

Adults and Youth United Development Association, Inc. is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

WTCC: 09-24-26

The Old El Paso Sun Bowl – there’s a ‘grrreat’ name

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

In the vast world of college football, whether it be paying players, changing conferences, transfer portals or the playoff system, the one constant is never-ending change.

And the same can be said of the annual Sun Bowl game.

Oh, it will still be played on New Year’s Eve, it will still be on CBS, and it will still be played in front of a huge Sun Bowl crowd.

Only now the annual game is trading its breakfast cereal for a zesty Mexican dinner.

That’s right, the former Tony the Tiger Sun Bowl is now the Old El Paso Sun Bowl.

After seven years as the game’s corporate sponsor, Kellogg’s opted not to renew its contract this year, leaving the Sun Bowl staff to scramble for a new partner.

But as Sun Bowl Executive Director Bernie Olivas put it, we’ve been after Old El Paso for 25 years.

The announcement last week came as a surprise to many, but representatives from Old El Paso were on hand for the official announcement and the new logo was also introduced.

All of this just makes sense. The game is played in El Paso and to have your city name included in the corporate sponsor’s name, is quite a promoting tool for the city.

In fact, it’s the Sun Bowl that started all this national corporate sponsorship in the first place. In 1986, John Hancock agreed to be the first college bowl game sponsor (for the Sun Bowl) and the rest is history.

The Sun Bowl corporate sponsors include John Hancock (1986-1995), Norwest Bank/ Wells Fargo (1996-2002), Helen of Troy (2003-2009), Hyundai (2010-2018), and Kellogg’s Tony the Tiger (2019-2025).

Now Old El Paso is affiliated with the Sun Bowl – but for just one year.

Though the length of the contract can be extended, the one-year agreement makes sense for General Mills (Old El Paso’s manufacturer) and the Sun Bowl.

As we said earlier, the college football landscape is changing constantly.

Nobody can predict how things will look tomorrow, especially concerning the college football playoffs and the Bowl games.

The college playoff started with four teams, then it was increased to 12. Now there’s talk to increasing it to 16 or even 24 teams.

Of course, every team they include in the playoff is one less team that is available for a Bowl game. And that will affect the entire system.

That’s why the agreement is just for

a year, it’s simply because nobody knows what college football will look like next year.

There’s no doubt that the two parties (General Mills and the Sun Bowl) will get together after this year’s game and decide whether to extend it for further years. Both sides are hoping the answer is “yes,” but they’ll have to wait and see.

Anyway, it’s been quite a year for El Paso athletics. It almost feels like we’re coming home.

UTEP fans are excited about the move to the Mountain West Conference and renewing its rivalries with teams like New Mexico and UNLV and Wyoming and Air Force and Hawaii and Nevada.

Fans of the Sun Bowl are excited that when anyone around the country mentions the Sun Bowl game, they’ll

mention the city of El Paso’s name with it.

One big question is how the new sponsor will match the Tony the Tiger game-time touchdown celebration. Players who scored would dive into a huge bowl of Frosted Flakes.

General Mills has said they will think of a big bowl of something the players can dive into. The only thing representatives said is that it would not be salsa or refried beans – too messy.

I think a big bowl of crunchy taco shells will work.

It’s a little sad to say goodbye to Tony the Tiger. The kids will miss him, but the name recognition of Old El Paso will really promote the city.

And think of all the rugged southwestern culture commercials the advertising people can come up with for the game.

You’re going to start seeing the logo all over the city soon and you might as well get your tickets to the game as soon as possible.

Because no one knows what will happen to the Bowls next year.

Senior moment

By Matilda Charles

Loneliness

I don’t think I’ve ever actually heard someone say the words “I’m lonely.” But I heard it today, and it hit me hard. The words were spoken by a very elderly woman to her daughter.

The scene was the long checkout line at the store. The pair, the woman and her daughter, were ahead of me in line, and the mother was chatting with two people who were ahead of them. When the first couple checked out and left, the daughter quietly chastised her mother, saying, “You don’t need to talk to people you don’t even know,” to which the mother replied, “I’m lonely.”

The daughter could have had any number of replies. She could have said she’d be staying with her mother for the rest of the day. She could have mentioned an event at the senior center. She could have invited her mother to dinner. But what she said was, “Let’s just get you home.”

I could easily picture how it would go: The daughter would take her mother home, unpack the groceries and leave. This exchange was the saddest thing I’ve witnessed in a long time.

There are any number of ways to combat loneliness, but all of them require making an effort to change the situation. That elderly woman instinctively knew one of the steps to fight loneliness and she bravely acted on it: Talk to people around you, even if it’s just briefly in a grocery checkout line.

I would hope she also knows, despite the daughter’s restrictive attitude, that having a routine of calling or meeting with others is a good way to stay connected, as well as volunteering or taking a class.

A lesson for everyone: If an elderly person starts chatting with you in a grocery line, engage and talk to them. You might be the only person they talk to all week.

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Super Crossword

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124																					

TWO-BY-FOURS ACROSS	60 Certain fitness ctr.	114 Embark on a voyage	Becomes _"	70 Childhood malady
1 Device causing a machine to operate	61 Coconut tree, e.g.	116 Stoked	17 Occupy, as a table	71 Prada rival
9 Hindu religious retreat	62 Hurricanes, e.g.	117 Super-rare basketball feat... or what each of six long answers in this puzzle contains	18 Make up (for)	72 Corn cores
15 Mini-plateaus	64 "3022" co-star Omar	121 Food fish	19 Have a hunch	73 Fig. on a new car sticker
20 Regatta event	66 Diner fave	122 Beyond belief	24 Kin of "Inc."	77 Rules, in brief
21 Cry before "No hands!"	67 "_ cost ya!"	123 Open (to)	29 Cable inits. for film buffs	80 Give a visual once-over to
22 Best of the lot	68 Pleasant feeling after winning	124 Tortellini topper	31 Sleep clinic diagnosis	82 "Beast" star Elba
23 Long-running showbiz news program	73 Wizard, in fantasy fiction	125 Ford bombs	32 "Neat!"	83 Street rep
25 New Jersey's _ Hall University	74 "Presence" co-star Lucy	126 Menu section with reds and whites	33 In a demure way	86 Performed for
26 Evening galas	75 Where the Clintons met		35 Tummy muscles	87 Yemen's capital
27 Tiny bit	76 Windbag's output		36 Hurry along	88 Prior to
28 Some med. X-rays	77 Litigates	DOWN	39 After-hours \$\$\$ sources	90 Salt for wintry roads
30 Stay home for a meal	78 Plus-size supermodel	1 Humiliate	40 Ragu product	95 Decay
31 Single-session legislative group	81 Tepee-shaped	2 Fireside drink	41 Like many vehicles on steep hills	96 Twisting force
34 The Old West's Wyatt	84 Ship wastewater	3 Implied but not stated	42 Main dishes	98 Star-related
37 Slimy gunk	85 Color TV pioneer	4 Prenatal chambers	44 Pfeiffer of "Cybill"	100 Opening opera section
38 Injury vestige	86 Creamy vinaigrette with little crunchy bits	5 Gentleman thief	45 Like some thickish paper towels	101 Audibly stunned
39 French gal pal	89 Great risk	6 Subdue with a stun gun	47 An arm and a leg	102 "I wanna try!"
43 _ cake (ring-shaped dessert)	91 Big blue body	7 Phil of folk	49 "Not true!"	103 Runs easily
46 Olive in comics	92 More urgent	8 1910s-'20s auto	50 Radio or TV station identifiers	104 Scale unit
48 Break out of an egg	93 Chaotic state	9 God of Islam	51 Code for WWW pages	105 Psyches
52 "A Streetcar Named Desire" dramatist	94 Supermarket vehicle	10 Certain vegan	53 Squalor of Lemony Snicket books	106 Seer's "gift"
57 Hair hider	97 A, in Spain	11 With 113-Across, DIYers' guides	54 Situated	108 Typical
58 Milkshake alternatives	99 Brain product	12 "Gunga Din" studio hoops	55 Human rights org.	109 Shul official
59 Was wearing	101 Starts of some flashy combo shots in hoops	13 BP's merger partner	61 Old Lutheran movement	110 Products of 39-Down
	107 Reins in	14 Sirs' counterparts	63 Fifth-cen. pope	111 Hard rain
	112 1990s subcompact car model	15 Awaited saviors	65 Sang alone	114 Highway rig
	113 See 11-Down	16 "Mourning	69 Be overly doting, in slang	115 Perfect spot
				118 Skill, in Latin
				119 Inferior grade
				120 Statute

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



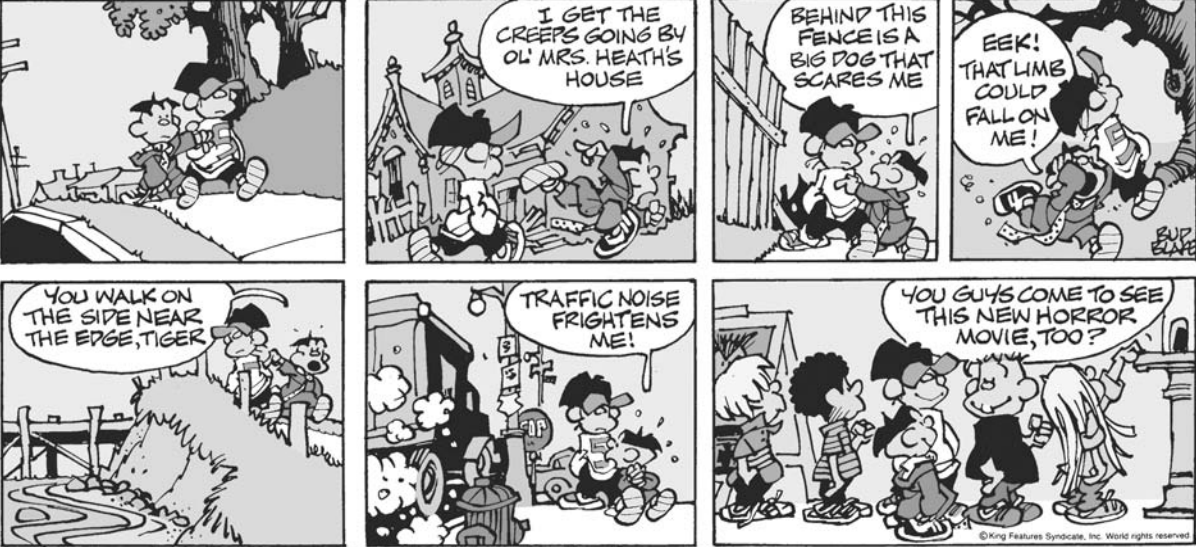
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

would use to commit omnicide. The rogue AI would presumably have to do something in the real world – say, launching nukes, manufacturing killer robots or releasing a deadly virus.

If it lacks physical agency, AI could presumably be unplugged or contained. (It was after humans tried to deactivate Skynet, by the way, that the system decided we were a threat that had to be neutralized.)

Some doomsayers posit a malicious person using advanced AI to come up with a design for a killer virus and a plan to release it without detection. This is a different scenario, though, from AI turning against people of its own volition. In a world years from now when much more advanced AI is a reality, we will need to think through safeguards to keep dangerous systems – nukes, biolabs – from being compromised by AI-enabled cyberattacks or exploited by criminals and terrorists.

It’s easy to imagine breaches of financial

systems or attacks on critical infrastructure that would fall short of endangering all of mankind. Even if one takes an alarmist view of the risks, it’s unclear how the development of AI can be stopped. Any deal with the Chinese to slow down research couldn’t be trusted, and might simply allow them to pass us in the AI race by subterfuge. In other words, we’d still get Skynet, only with Chinese characteristics.

There’s also the reality that AI will be a necessary tool in protecting against the malicious use of AI – not to mention all of its other positive potential. If we slow or end research in the U.S., we might end up vulnerable to superintelligence developed by actors who mean us harm.

Science fiction is fascinating and sometimes prescient. Works by the likes of Philip K. Dick, Aldous Huxley and Arthur C. Clarke had genuine insights into the future. But that doesn’t mean we are living in the plot of “The Terminator,” and we shouldn’t scare ourselves into forswearing transformative technology.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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Biological medications can have serious side effects

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), but my rheumatologist hasn’t been helpful in finding a medication that I’m not allergic to for alleviating joint pain. (I seem to be allergic to most meds that I’ve tried.) I’m only 68. I saw the phrase “biological medication” for RA in one of your recent columns. What is this, and do you have any advice? – B.R.



RA is an autoimmune disease that may affect other organs besides the joints, including the heart and lungs. While initial treatment for RA may include powerful conventional medicines against the immune and inflammatory systems (such as methotrexate or hydroxychloroquine), a “biological” medication is made from live-cell systems. These medicines mostly include monoclonal antibodies that bind to active biological molecules (called “cytokines”), but they also include fusion proteins that block cytokines before they bind to their receptors.

For RA, the major biological medications bind to important cytokines such as tumor necrosis factor (TNF), interleukin-6, and interleukin-1. But they may also act on stimulants to antibody-producing cells (“B cells”), as well as T cells, which are the other major part of the immune system that’s responsible for cell-based immunity.

Biologicals have the potential for serious side effects, including infections (especially tuberculosis but also pneumonia, skin infections, hepatitis B and sepsis). For this reason, biologicals are generally used after a person has failed other treatments. Allergic reactions are uncommon with biologicals.

RA requires an expert for treatment. I have great respect for RA, having seen terrible outcomes in people who weren’t treated early enough. For this reason, I can’t say whether a biological is appropriate for you. Your rheumatologist is monitoring your blood tests and clinical findings to balance the damage from RA against the potential side effects of treatment. It’s really the disease activity that determines whether a powerful agent is necessary.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I’m a 99-year-old man in good health who suffered a heart attack in 2014, which was caused by an artery blockage. After inserting a stent in my artery, my cardiologist recommended statin drugs. I tried a few, but they were so painful that my insurance company finally authorized me to use a PCSK9 inhibitor. The inhibitor worked well for a couple of years, but then I started experiencing terrible hip pain upon standing or walking. The good news was that there wasn’t any pain when I was sitting or lying down. So, the question for me became: Should I keep using the PCSK9 inhibitor despite the hip pain, or should I stop using the inhibitor and risk another heart attack or maybe even a stroke? – M.F.

Congratulations on doing so well at age 99! Because PCSK9 inhibitors rarely cause muscle or joint pains, I’d first try to be sure that the medicine really is the cause behind your pain. I hope your doctor did X-rays to look for arthritis or even an MRI, since conditions like a torn labrum should be considered.

If there isn’t another cause, and the pain stops when you pause the medication, then it’d be likely that the medicine is causing it. Since there are three PCSK9 inhibitors (evolocumab, alirocumab and inclisiran), I recommend trying a different one. If they still cause problems, then I recommend trying something else entirely.

At age 99, your quality of life seems to be the most important issue to me. I’d also give you a trial of bempedoic acid, which works similarly to a statin without the muscle aches that some people experience.

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.



Moore Texas by Roger MOORE
September 12, 1874: Six settlers held off 100 Indians for three days at “Buffulo Waller” in Hemphill County.

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: P equals S

PWAZGQH PTAAL WELQLEAP LXQL,
TXAB ZEBPKCAV, ZQKPA SEHMP
LE PWAQM CEFA SFQBMHJ:
ZQBVGV JQCP.

Answer Page 4

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Requesting records is easier now



by Freddy Groves

Requesting your records from the VA used to be a nightmare requiring you to wade through text and instructions that were difficult to understand. FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) requests required you to understand the layout of government agencies and know in advance who specifically had the information you sought before you even started your request. Too often your request for one type of information could end up in a pile in the wrong office, which meant delays.

Now the whole process has been redesigned and requests that go astray have been reduced by 90%, which helps everyone from office staff who handle all the requests to the veterans who are waiting on their information. Everybody, in various departments across the VA, participated in creating the new request page to be sure it works well for all.

Go to department.va.gov/foia if you need to make a records or FOIA request. Scroll down the page and read the sample info for each VA department. Each has a long list of types of information you can get from that department. For example, if you want to know about home loans, click on the submit button for Veterans Benefits Administration. If you need to replace medals or a DD214, click on the submit button for Military Service Records and Next of Kin Requests.

There is a note on the page: “Submitting a FOIA request to obtain personal records could delay overall processing.” Instead, locate the appropriate department on the page and use the link provided.

Additionally, at the bottom of the page is a drop-down menu of sample questions you might be asking, like “How do I appeal my FOIA response if I disagree with the results?” or “How do I get an employment verification from the VA?”

If you need it, there’s a button called “Learn

About Whistleblower Protection.” The link goes to department.va.gov/accountability. Or call the Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection at (855) 429-6669.

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• Line junk drawers in the kitchen or bathroom with inexpensive sheets of corkboard. Things don't slide around as much, and you can even use pushpins or finishing nails lightly inserted into the cork to make custom compartments in the drawers so things like pens don't roll around.

• “If your eyeglass screws tend to come loose, just unscrew, brush clear nail polish over the threads and screw them back in tightly. As the polish dries (in seconds), it will form a tighter bond.” – I.D. in Oregon

• Shaving cream can be used as a spot cleaner for most carpets. Simply dab a bit of the cream into the stained area, scrape off any excess and wipe away dirt with a clean, damp washcloth.

• Ways to remove gum from your child's hair: laundry pretreatment rubbed in with the fingers; ice cubes to harden the gum so that it can be picked out in chunks; and good, old-fashioned peanut butter and a comb.

• This one is an oldie, but a preschool goodie, from L.R. in Washington: “Use wide rubber bands around a drinking glass for children. It will provide a little non-slip protection, especially if the glass is filled with a cold drink. The rubber band is reusable, and you can write the child's name on the band with a ball point pen in order to identify his or her cup!”

• How do you keep cats away from your plants in the garden? One reader suggests strips of tin foil. Another mothballs (which can be toxic, so use carefully and follow all safety instructions).

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.

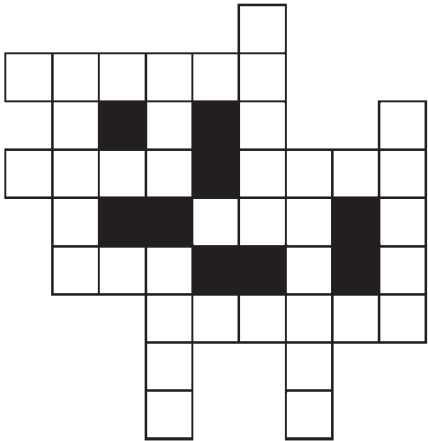
Answer Page 4

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	+		÷		= 6			
+		+		+				
	+		+		= 19			
÷		×		×				
	+		-		= 2			
=		=		=				
17		42		45				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



BFI
LIWFON
♥ RHONT
CHET
SABUCA
OLG
♥ LAMU
WISMA
EHO
HOECUT
♥ ELFRA
♥ RGBA



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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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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