1973 53 Years 2026

West Texas County Courier

VOL. 53, No. 45 SERVING ANTHONY, VINTON, CANUTILLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINT, FABENS, SAN ELIZARIO AND TORNILLO NOVEMBER 12, 2026



– Photos by Alfredo Vasquez

BACK IN THE SADDLE – The San Elizario Veterans Day Parade would not be complete without the *vaqueros y vaqueras* riding their horses down San Eli's main street.

San Eli veterans committee hosts 30th annual parade

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO – Among the many onlookers, who came out on a cool Saturday morning to celebrate with the participants of San Elizario Veterans Committee's (SEVC) Thirtieth Annual Veterans Day Parade, was Yolanda Valdez of Clint. She said that she was there to thank all the veterans for their service including her husband, Enrique Valdez who served in the Army, but especially for her brother Robert Alvarez, who at age 18 was drafted into military duty.

"My brother was in the Marines when he was sent to Vietnam back in the 1960s," Valdez related. "He was only 18 when he died in that war. I was just a little girl back then, but I still remember him, and every Veterans Day since I take time to honor his memory," she added.

For 30 years, the parade and the program that is held afterwards has been made possible because of the Cruz family members, who have been instrumental in putting together the annual event. It started with the matriarch of the family, Carmen Cruz; she contributed a lot of time and energy to coordinate plans for the celebration. But now she is 83 years old and has slowed down quite a bit, according to daughter Pat Cruz.

So, Cruz's daughters have stepped up and have continued their mother's community service. Daughters Lupe Sanchez, Alicia Halter, Cyndy Cruz, and Pat play a role in organizing the traditional parade.

"Through the generosity and dedication of our supporters, we have been able to preserve the tradition of honoring those who have served and sacrificed for our freedom," stated Pat Cruz. She added that SEVC has supported the celebration tremendously.

Ray Borrego, SEVC co-chair, stated that the veterans committee is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to honoring veterans, preserving local military history, and strengthening community pride through service and remembrance.

SEVC currently supports various programs in San Elizario including the veterans museum, memorial brick walk, the honor salute to fallen

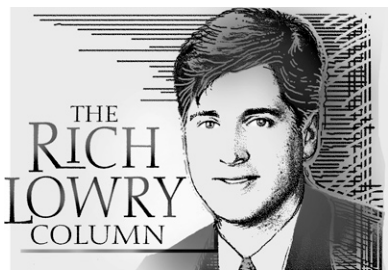
See PARADE, Page 4



STILL STANDING TALL – Among the participants in San Elizario's Veterans Day parade and celebration were members of El Paso's Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 844. Above, from left, are VVA members Ray Baca (Air Force), Victor Portillo (Air Force), George Miller (Air Force), Raul Vargas, (Marines), and Jesse Sandoval (Navy).

Never fear criticism when you are right; never ignore criticism when you are wrong. **– Quips & Quotes**

The unauthorized war



President Donald Trump says that the Iran war will end "soon," a promise he's been making most of this year. Eventually, he will be right, but it hasn't happened in time for the midterm elections, and his party is bearing the brunt.

If Republicans get thumped, all the polling suggests that prices will be one of the main reasons, with the Iran war's contribution to higher costs looming large. According to a recent New York Times/Siena poll, 65% disapprove of President Trump's handling of the war in Iran, and almost 75% disapprove of his handling of gas prices, two closely intertwined issues.

Given the political risk, it's remarkable how stalwart Trump has been in prosecuting the war, the brief interlude of the misbegotten Memorandum of Understanding aside. "The quickest way of ending a war," George Orwell said, "is to lose it," and Trump has been loath to accept a strategic defeat as the way out of the conflict.

That doesn't mitigate the potential political damage. If the Iran war had been as short as initially advertised, or if it had dragged on with no appreciable cost back home, most people presumably wouldn't have cared very much, even if they weren't on board. It's the combination of a relatively drawn-out war causing elevated prices that's a killer, and it adds insult to injury that Trump has handled the matter with such high-handedness.

He didn't ask Congress to authorize the war, and barely made a public case beforehand, while giving the impression throughout that the entire enterprise depends on his whim.

It's often remarked that Trump's obsession with naming things after himself, or building things in Washington, is hurting him because it makes him seem out of touch and interested only in his own priorities. But none of this directly harms anyone – unless they, say, hold a season pass to the Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center.

The Iran war, in contrast, has imposed an

See LOWRY, Page 7

Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Henry Winkler, Pilgrims and Thanksgiving

Henry Winkler recently was interviewed by Tom Llamas of NBC nightly news. In that interview Winkler said his two words are, "Tenacity and gratitude. Tenacity takes you where you want to go and gratitude make the journey more comfortable, more palatable to travel." The segment also covered his parents fleeing Nazi Germany in 1939, his dyslexia diagnosis at 31, and why he keeps writing children's books. He is 81 years old now. You may remember him as the Fonz from the television series, *Happy Days*.

As we approach Thanksgiving we should ponder a bit on Winkler's words, tenacity and gratitude. We can think back to the early pilgrims. It was either tenacity or simply giving up. The new world was harsh with no conveniences. The Mayflower landed in 1620 with about 102 passengers. The first winter killed nearly half of them-disease, hunger, and the cold did most of the damage. They arrived in November with no shelter built, so they lived on the ship for months while building homes in freezing weather. Food ran short, and they were dependent on the Wampanoag people, especially Squanto, who taught them how to plant corn and fish. Without that help, the colony probably wouldn't have survived into spring.

In the fall of 1621, Governor William Bradford declared a three day feast to celebrate the harvest and the colony's survival. About 50 pilgrims sat down with roughly 90 Wampanoag native Americans. They ate venison, wild fowl, corn, and shellfish. There was no mashed potatoes or pumpkin pie – those came much later. It wasn't called Thanksgiving at the time; that label came decades later.

Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine editor, campaigned to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. She wrote Lincoln about it during the Civil War, partly hoping a shared feast might help reunite the country.

Lincoln issued the proclamation in October 1863, setting the last Thursday of November as the day. His secretary, John Nicolay, drafted most of the text, drawing on Hale's language. She had been petitioning since 1849 – Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan, all turned her down. Lincoln was the first to say yes, and historians think the timing mattered: it was mid-Civil War. Gettysburg had just happened that July, and a unifying national ritual had real political appeal. The proclamation didn't mention food or family or Pilgrims at all. It was framed as gratitude for military victories and for the country's endurance.

The cozy version we know came later, through Norman Rockwell and decades of magazine covers that shaped how we celebrate the day.

Still, it is important for us to remember the tenacity of those who came before us and that they stopped to give thanks.

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.

High school students have opportunities to study abroad

By Melissa Misplay
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Qualified high school students are offered a unique opportunity to explore the world by spending an academic year, semester, or summer in Europe, Asia, North or South America, Australia, or South Africa as part of the World Heritage Student Exchange Programs. World Heritage is a non-profit, public benefit organization dedicated to promoting closer ties of friendship between the United States and other countries by fostering intercultural understanding through youth exchange programs.

Students, 15 to 18 years old, qualify on the basis of academic performance, character references, and a genuine desire to experience life abroad with a volunteer

See STUDENTS, Page 3

1973 53 Years 2026
West Texas County COURIER
Serving Anthony, Vinton, Canutillo, East Montana, Horizon, Socorro, Clint, Fabens, San Elizario and Tornillo

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 — $45 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: wtxcc@wtxcc.com
Website: wtxcc.com

Publisher
Rick Shrum

Contributors
Alfredo Vasquez
Steve Escajeda

Homesteader
Est. 1973
News, Inc.



Students

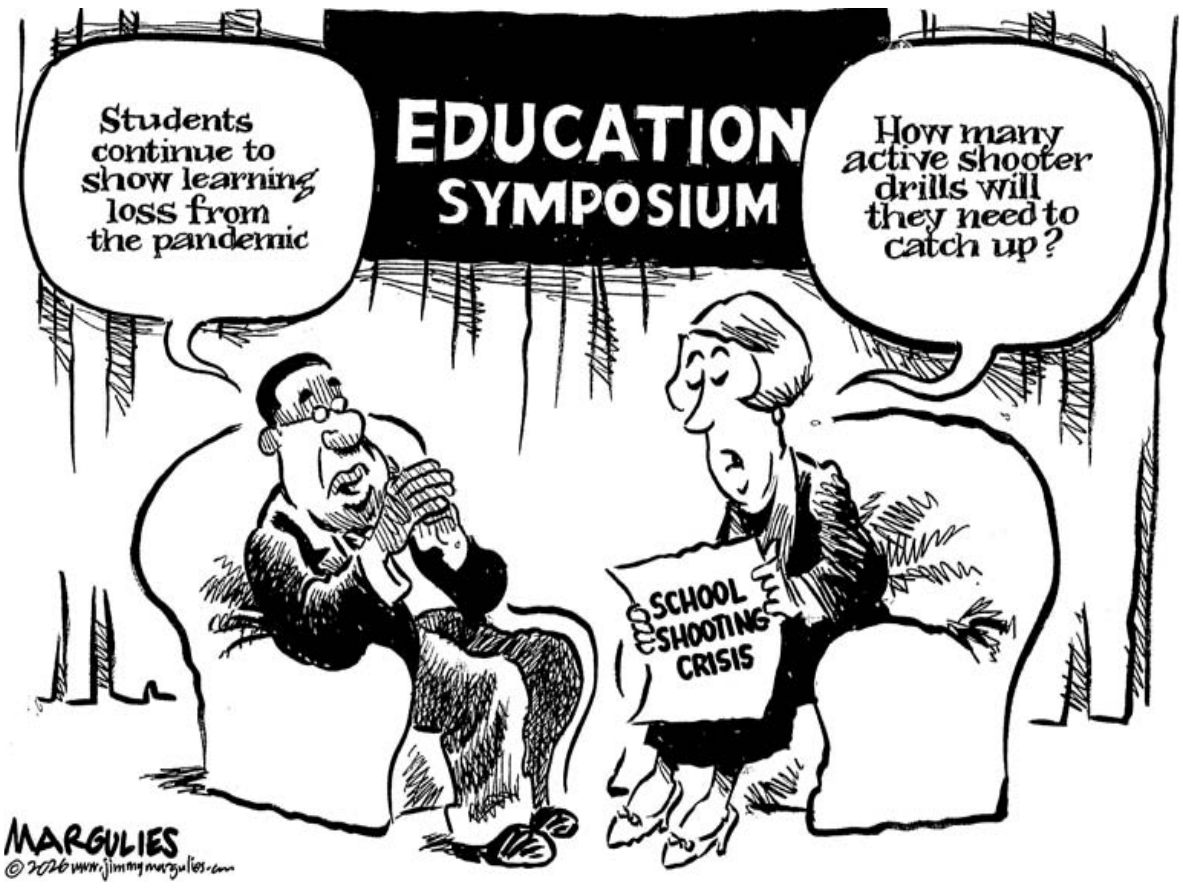
From Page 2

host family. Prior knowledge of the host country's language is not a requirement. Scholarships are available and are based on academic performance, leadership skills, and financial need.

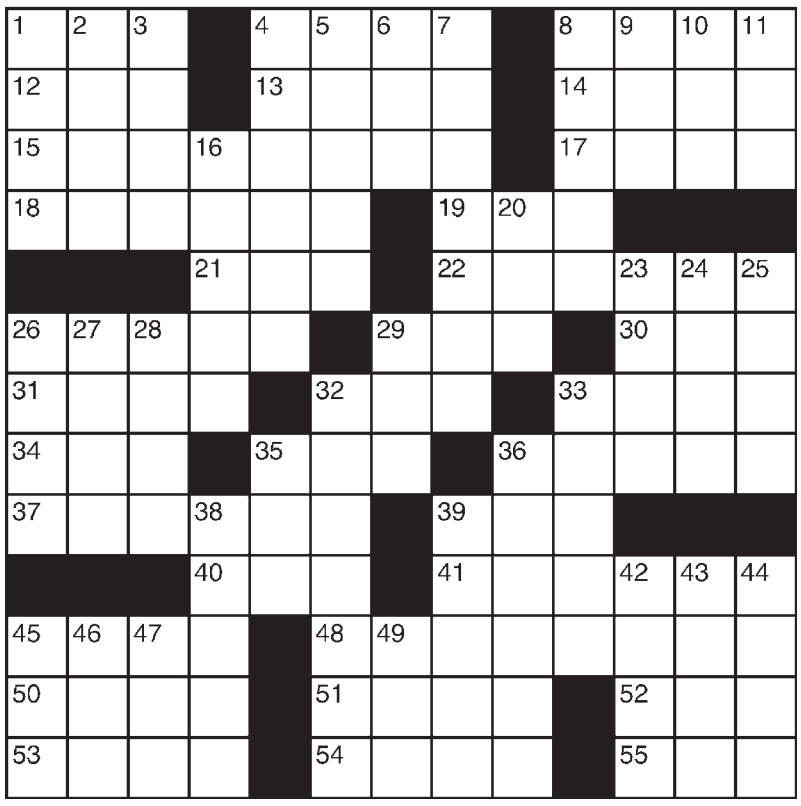
Families abroad are carefully screened, and students do not need to know the language of the host country prior to departure, but will acquire the language skills through experiencing the day-to-day local culture and attending regular high school classes along with their new teenage friends.

World Heritage also provides the experience of a lifetime to American families who are interested in hosting an international student from Spain, Italy, Germany, Ukraine, Thailand, Japan, and many other countries. These exceptional young students will attend the local American high school for an academic year or semester.

Students or families interested in learning more about becoming a World Heritage exchange student or host family should contact World Heritage at (800) 888-9040, visit www.studyabroad.asse.com, or send an email to info@world-heritage.org.



King Crossword



Average Solve Time 26 Minutes

ACROSS

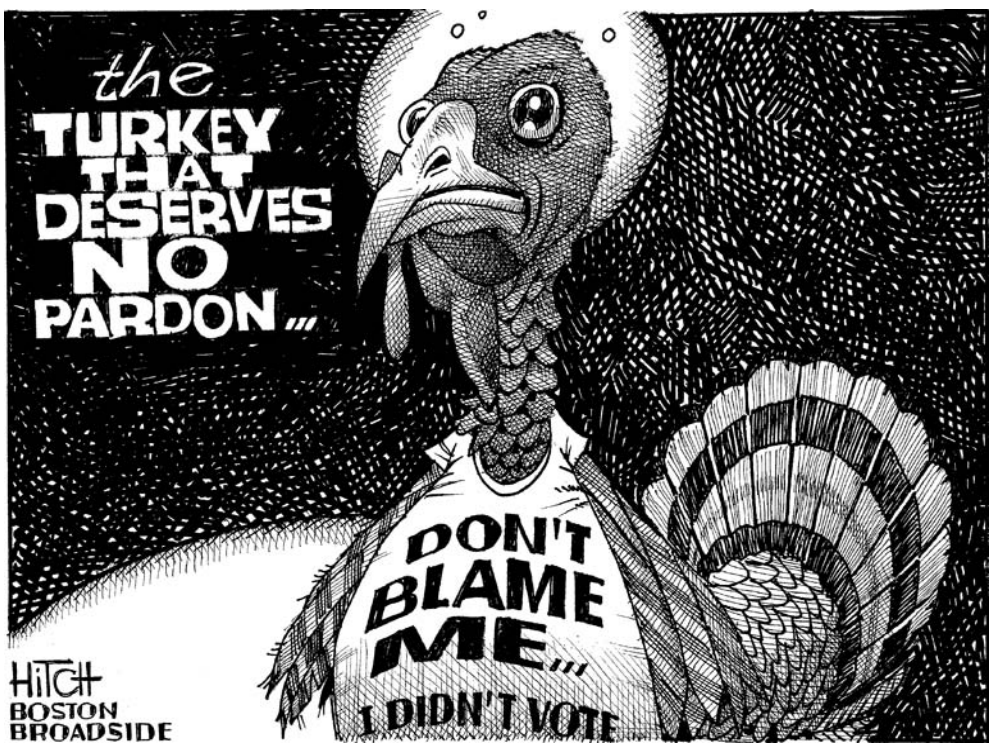
1 Personal
4 Poi base
8 Fraud
12 Romance
13 _ incline (tilted)
14 Unruly groups
15 Message from an admirer
17 Border on
18 On an angle
19 Vinyl records
21 Before
22 "Darn it!"
26 Scrabble pieces
29 Movie format
30 "Little piggie"
31 Rd. crossers
32 Grant's foe
33 1982 sci-fi film
34 "The Newsroom" actor Patel
35 Farm grazer
36 Resided
37 "I, Robot" author
39 Lanka lead-in
40 Storm center
41 Sculpted trunks
45 Sagan or Sandburg
48 Romantic Ella Fitzgerald song
50 Squad
51 _ Stanley Gardner
52 PC linking system
53 Short cuts
54 Snitched
55 Vintage

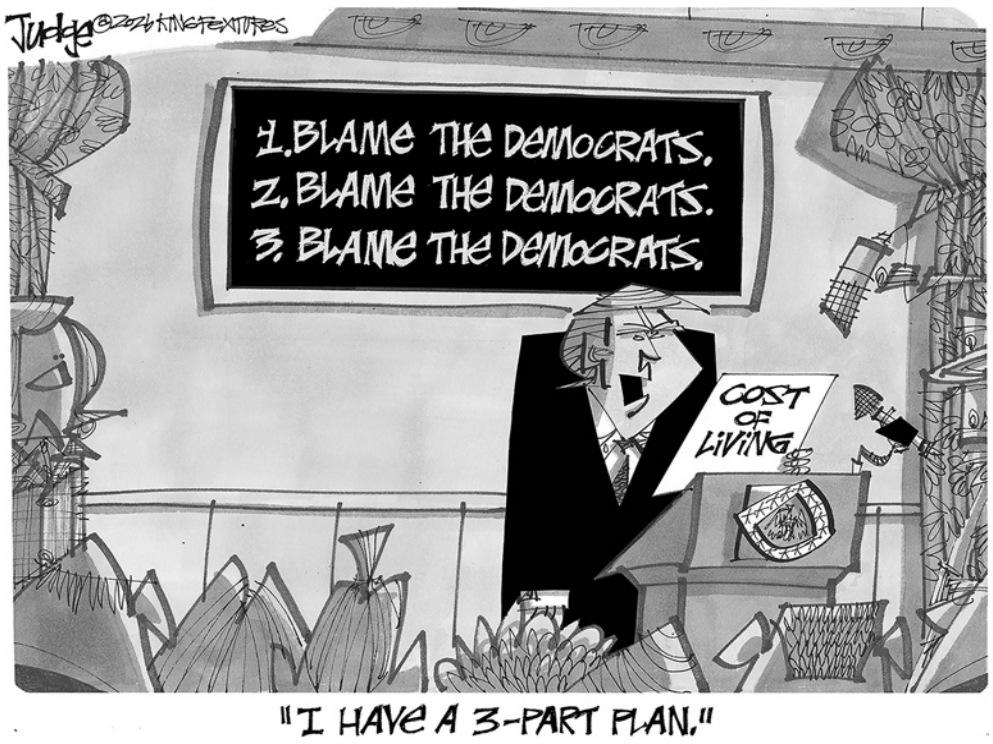
DOWN

1 They give a hoot
2 Scarf material
3 De _ (from the start)
4 Printer refills
5 Battery part
6 Squealer
7 Bob Marley hit song
8 Big hit
9 Corn core
10 _ Dhabi
11 Rockies hrs.
16 Tools for duels
20 Third degree?
23 To be, in Tours
24 "Neato!"
25 Superman's alias
26 "There!"
27 Currier's partner
28 Jeans maker Strauss
29 Morning moisture
32 Mini-shutout at Wimbledon
33 Spin
35 Demure
36 Buzzed
38 Thaws
39 Unmoving
42 Aviator's milestone
43 Track shape
44 Email command
45 Young lion
46 Year in Spain
47 Chest bone
49 Granada gold

Answer Page 4







"I HAVE A 3-PART PLAN."





– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

DANCING IN THE STREETS – Mitztli Folklorico dancers brought a colorful vibe to this year's San Eli Veterans Day parade.

Parade

From Page 1

heroes project, and upkeep of the local cemetery.

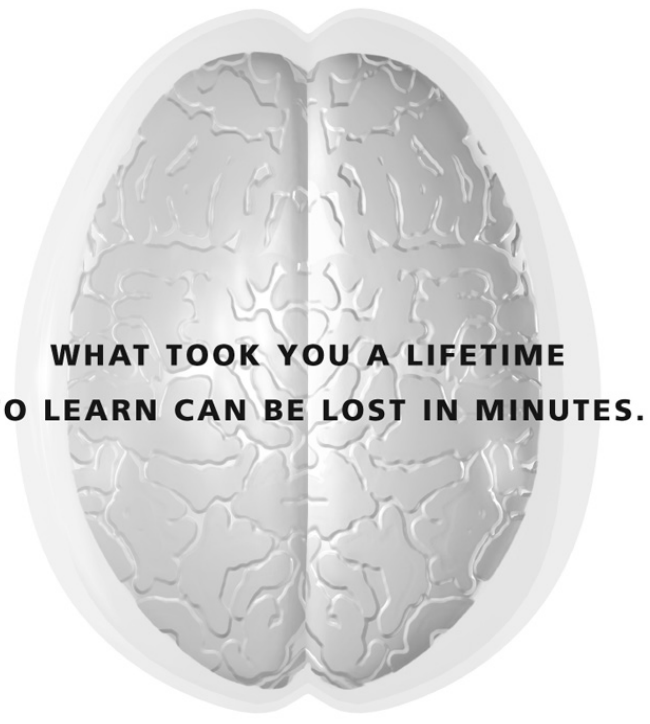
San Elizario Veteran's Day observance was just one of several that were held recently throughout El Paso County. Patriotic events were held in downtown El Paso, Anthony, Clint, Socorro, and Horizon City. Veterans Day is observed nationally on November 11.

Kicking off this year's San Eli's Veterans Day parade was an array of El Paso County Sheriff and San Elizario Police vehicles with their sirens blaring. They were followed by Clint High School's Army JROTC cadets, San Elizario High School cheer squad, Garcia Enriquez Middle School cheerleaders, and El Paso County Commissioner Iliana Holguin riding on a red, white, and blue float.

Other participants in the Saturday morning parade were balet foklorico dancers, Tigua tribe matachines, vintage cars and trucks, a fire engine, and decorated floats carrying the many veterans who showed up for the annual parade and ceremony, among others.

This year, there were two Grand Marshals for the 2026 San Elizario Veterans Day Parade – Army Veteran

See PARADE, Page 5



WHAT TOOK YOU A LIFETIME TO LEARN CAN BE LOST IN MINUTES.

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.**

Ad Council

©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

4	+	3	+	6	= 13
+		+		+	
2	+	9	+	8	= 19
×		+		÷	
5	+	7	÷	1	= 12
= 30		= 19		= 14	

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

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

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

									V	E	T	O	E	D						
									E		U			E						
								F	I	E	N	D		L						
								L						V	A	T				
									F	A	U	C	E	T						
										D		L		T						
								R	O	D	E			U						
											A	C	N	E						
											T		E							

CryptoQuip Answer

If actress Stone and her clones filled up a theater, I suppose one would see rows of Sharon.

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

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• A cook actually cuts himself or herself less with a sharp knife because the latter uses less force to cut through food.

• Goslings begin communicating with their parents while they're still in their eggs.

• Baseball's L.A. Dodgers, originally founded in Brooklyn, were named after the legendary skill local residents showed at "dodging" the city's trolley streetcar system.

• Since Pablo Picasso died without a will, his estate tax was paid with his paintings.

• On May 19, 1956, Kermit the Frog received an Honorary Doctorate of Amphibious Letters from Southampton College in New York. He also gave the commencement speech.

• In August 1914, German troops shot and killed 150 civilians at Aerschot as part of a war policy called Schrecklichkeit, or "frightfulness." Its purpose was to terrify civilians in occupied areas so they wouldn't rebel.

• About 1% of people have feet that are the same size.

• According to the U.N., the world's industries use enough sand to build a wall 88.5 feet tall and 88.5 feet wide around the Earth every day.

• South Carolina is the only state to own and operate its own school bus fleet.

• In a survey of 5,000 singles conducted by Match.com, 43% said fresh breath mattered the most before a date.

• A turkey's skin can either turn blue, vivid red or white when it's excited, frightened or attracting a mate.

• The South Pole's Don Juan Pond is too salty to freeze, even during Antarctica's winters.

• As recently as the 18th century, American women washed themselves in the warm urine of a young boy to erase their freckles.

Thought for the Day: "Everyone may not be good, but there's always something good in everyone. Never judge anyone shortly, because every saint has a past and every sinner has a future."

– Oscar Wilde

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Moments in time
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Nov. 9, 1870, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear a challenge from the state of Massachusetts on the constitutionality of the Vietnam War. In a 6-3 vote, justices rejected the state's effort to bring a suit in federal court defending Massachusetts residents who claimed protection under a state law allowing them to refuse military service in an undeclared war.

• On Nov. 10, 1928, the first installment of Erich Maria Remarque's novel of World War I, "All Quiet on the Western Front," debuted in the German magazine Vossische Zeitung. Released in book form in 1929, it sold a million and a half copies that year and was also adapted into an acclaimed American film in 1930.

• On Nov. 11, 1988, authorities in Sacramento, California, excavated a corpse in the lawn of 59-year-old Dorothea Puente, who had operated a residential home for elderly people. An investigation led to the discovery of six more bodies buried on her property. Puente – who was mentally ill, already had a criminal record and was suspected of additional deaths – died in prison in 2011.

• On Nov. 12, 1969, investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, in a cable picked up by more than 30 newspapers, revealed the extent of the U.S. Army's charges against 1st Lt. William L. Calley at My Lai, writing, "The Army says he [Calley] deliberately murdered at least 109 Vietnamese civilians during a search-and-destroy mission in March 1968, in a Viet Cong stronghold known as 'Pinkville.'"

• On Nov. 13, 2020, Kim Ng was named general manager of the Miami Marlins, becoming not only the first woman and first person of East Asian descent to lead a Major League Baseball front office, but also the first female general manager in North American professional men's sports history.

• On Nov. 14, 1910, U.S. Navy Lieutenant Eugene Ely became the first person to successfully take off in an airplane from the deck of a ship, lifting off the cruiser Birmingham in Virginia.

• On Nov. 15, 1806, explorer Zebulon Pike discovered the Colorado Peak that now bears his name, despite the fact he didn't climb it himself.

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.



– Photos by Alfredo Vasquez

HOOAH – San Elizario's Veterans Day observance included a special presentation that honored five local area veterans. This year's honorees were U.S. Army veterans, from left, Ignacio Muñoz, Juan Rivera, Oscar Rey, Sofia Rey and Wendell T. Smith.

Parade
From Page 4

Martin Medina and Army Veteran Samuel "The K Man" Ornelas. Both are well-known members of the San Elizario community.

Masters of ceremony for the program were Borrego and SEVC executive officer Norma Reyes. Presentation of colors was conducted by members of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) El Paso Chapter 844 including Ray Baca (Air Force), Victor Portillo (Air Force), George Miller (Air Force), Raul Vargas, (Marines), and Jesse Sandoval (Navy).

For the Veterans Day Honorees presentation, five local area veterans – all U.S. Army vets – were recognized. They are Ignacio Munoz, Juan Rivera, Oscar Rey, Sofia Rey and Wendell T. Smith.

Guest presenters for the ceremony were Lillian Trujillo, president of the San Elizario Genealogy & Historical Society; Aleisha Reyes, Jonathan Grijalva Jr., and Joshua Grijalva, who led the audience in the U.S. and Texas pledge of allegiance; Iliana Holguin, El Paso County Commissioner for Precinct 3; Miguel Chacon, City of San Elizario mayor, and Deacon Pilar Grijalva, who gave the invocation.



PEP IN THEIR STEP – San Elizario High School cheer squad adds flair to the annual parade.



YOUR LEFT, YOUR RIGHT, YOUR… – Clint High School Army JROTC cadets keep cadence as they march along the parade route.

Both the NFL and NBA have zebra problems

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Well, it may not be a tale of two cities, but it certainly is a tale of two sets of officials.

One set wear black and white stripes and the other wears solid gray and a bit of black.

One set has another six buddies helping out at a time, while the other set only has two helpers.

One set throws a yellow hankie while the other set blows a whistle.

Of course, I'm talking about NFL and NBA officials. And they've been in the news lately for two entirely opposite reasons.

Both bad.

I don't know if you've heard but NFL officials have been throwing those yellow flags at a record pace this season, while NBA referees have been accused of swallowing their whistles too often.

According to the league, more flags were thrown in the first four weeks of this NFL season than in any other four-week stretch since they started tracking this stuff.

How bad has it been? The average has been 17 to 18 "accepted" penalty flags a game.

Some of the calls that have increased the most are roughing the passer, pass interference and holding. The thing is that all those calls are mostly judgement calls.

If you jump offside or grab a facemask, that's pretty obvious, but how many times have you yelled at the TV about pass interference? Or thought to yourself, "really, that's roughing the passer?"

Fans, players, coaches and media members have all complained all season about the excessive yellow laundry on the ground – not to mention the high number of touchdowns that have been overturned due to a controversial flag.

It's fairly simple, just throw a flag on the plays that are obvious infractions. If it could go either way, let it go. Why the officials have all started calling everything all of a sudden is a mystery to everyone.

Can anything be done about this?

Well, the NFL does appear that it's trying to fix things. It has taken some officials out of their usual group and re-assigned them to new ones. The NFL has even suspended some officials for a game of two for doing such a bad job.

The NBA, however, has a completely different problem; their referees have decided to ignore a ton of violations that players repeat every night.

Whether its traveling or moving screens or offensive fouls or double cribble, the refs act as if those were never violations.

The NBA has always had a reputation for not calling traveling, but this is ridiculous. I can see a guy taking a half extra step and not get called – the game is that fast. But it's when players take an obvious four, five and even six steps without dribbling that drives everyone mad.

One of the biggest scams is when a player has already taken two steps, stops and finds himself a couple feet in front of the 3-point line. So, he takes two or three more steps back to get behind the line for a three. And the referee sees nothing.

Why the NBA officials have forgotten the rules all of a sudden is another mystery.

Obviously, the NBA owners and commissioner got together and decided that they needed more offense in the league. Yeah right, more offense in a league that doesn't allow any defense.

Anyway, in the attempt to drive up scoring, the NBA is becoming almost unwatchable because of the embarrassing product they're putting out.

People are tired of seeing guys run up and down the court without having any defenders, or rules, to stop them.

Owners don't want anything slowing down the scoring.

But really, fans do yell "defense" at games for a reason.

It's a crazy time in sports, fans want less from the NFL refs, and more from the NBA refs.

Who would have thought that Major League Baseball, with its computerized automatic challenge balls and strikes system would lead the NFL or NBA in anything.

There are hardly any judgement calls in baseball anymore, either it's a ball of it's a strike; it's fair or it's foul; he's safe or he's out.

The NFL and the NBA have got to fix their problems.

Because people nowadays, get bored and move on very quickly.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Social Security increase for 2027

We have our new number now. The Social Security increase for 2027 has been announced. All over the country I imagine that seniors are grabbing calculators and figuring out just what this will mean for them.

The number is 3.6%, which is not great, but it could be worse. For 2026 it was 2.8%, and 2.5% the year before. (A rerun of the 2023 increase of 8.7% would have been nice.)

This means that 76 million Social Security recipients will see approximately an extra $75 per month, bumping the average benefit to $2,170 per month.

To come up with this number, they take the figures from the third quarter and create a COLA – Cost of Living Adjustment. Additionally, they use the CPI-W, which is the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

That is not us.

A show of hands: How many of us are still working as wage earners and clerical workers? Not many. Yet that is the index they use to calculate the amount of money we will get. That index takes all the things those wage earners and clerical workers spend money on – food, transportation, clothing, education, housing – and calculates the number from there.

There are many who think they should use another index that actually represents where we spend our money – the Consumer Price Index for Americans 62 Years of Age and Older (CPI-E). That index puts more weight on medical care, prescription drugs and insurance premiums, for example, and the others things we actually buy.

Medicare is going up, of course. The Medicare Part B monthly premium will now be $209.50 next year, deducted from the Social Security amount, with a $292 annual deductible.

If you don't agree with using the CPI-W to calculate your Social Security COLA, let your senators and representatives know!

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Super Crossword

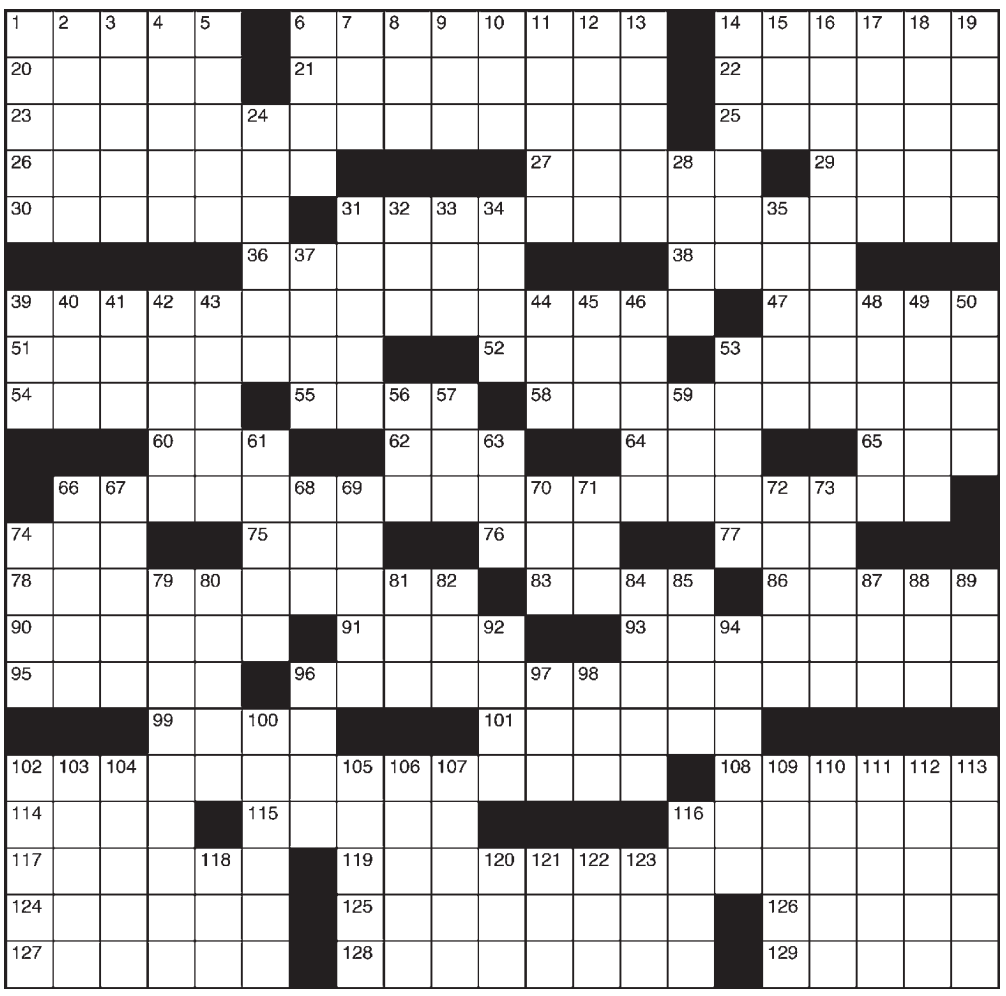
GIVE P'S A CHANCE

ACROSS

1 "It's _ cause!"
6 Square mile, say
14 Puccini's "_ Butterfly"
20 Roping event
21 Broken ceramic bit
22 Trapped after a blizzard
23 Stumbled and really got hurt?
25 Starting a golf game, with "off"
26 As yet unborn
27 Don't fully believe
29 Rind
30 Winged seed of a maple or elm tree
31 Stress felt after eating jalapenos?
36 Arranged like a ladder
38 Organic compound
39 Gymnast?
47 Banquet
51 One giving paid money back
52 U.S. territory since 1898
53 Noonday nap
54 Sight-related
55 Flooring square
58 Person walking with a limp?
60 Actor Mineo
62 Lac liquid
64 Pro vote
65 OR hookups
66 Bribed a judge in order to win?
74 Body part with three bones
75 Wriggly fish
76 Tram cargo
77 Actor Linden
78 Battles between Thelonious Monk and Dizzy Gillespie?
83 Ex-U.N. leader Annan
86 Martini & _ (vermouth)
90 DeGeneres and Burstyn
91 Get really wet
93 Exchanges favors, in politics
95 More guileful
96 Mailed in the opposite direction of?
99 Hoops great Bryant
101 Last Greek letters
102 Bounding along merrily on a Swiss mountain?
108 Himalayan guide
114 Johnson who directed "Knives Out"
115 Electric fan's sound
116 Dissolves out via percolation
117 Riddle
119 Sluggish mammal wearing a pair of hats?
124 Golden ager
125 Fearful
126 San Diego ballplayer
127 Third-largest Danish city
128 Cold carnival treat
129 Tarnish

DOWN

1 "_ a jealous mistress"
2 _ Doone (cookie brand)
3 Strong dislike
4 Train system in Philly
5 Heavy drinker
6 Raised coif
7 Negating word
8 "What was _ do?"
9 General _'s chicken
10 Sound made during a physical
11 Novelist Charles
12 Mistake
13 Do a tally of
14 Glove alternative
15 High card
16 Heavy slumber
17 "Sayonara!"
18 76-Across digger
19 A right one is 90 degrees
24 Wiped clean
28 Male sibling, in dialect
31 Father: Prefix
32 Pixieish sort
33 Good bud
34 Prudish sort
35 Opera singer Anne _ von Otter
37 Tech news website
39 To and _
40 Sales agt.
41 Small newt
42 Old cereal with an alien mascot
43 Open, as a drink bottle
44 British tavern
45 Gasol of the NBA
46 TV prizes
48 Meat jelly
49 Actor Carell of "Vice"
50 Sailors, colloquially
53 Spherical bacterium, informally
56 Zodiac feline
57 Body part with three bones
59 Establish
61 Gazes creepily
63 ETs' craft
66 Cave dwarf
67 Insinuate
68 Dawn moisture
69 Blink brightly
70 Rankle
71 Olds oldie
72 Basketball great Bird
73 Socially cold
74 $5 bills, informally
79 Looking through a keyhole, say
80 2002 scandal company
81 King, in Nice
82 Devitalize
84 Writer Fannie
85 Ames' state
87 35mm camera type
88 _-mo replay
89 Doctrine
92 Psy and BTS' music genre
94 Very excited, slangily
96 Meeting, informally
97 U.K. record label
98 Lion lair
100 Watch out for
102 Playground rejoinder
103 Like ruled paper
104 Pamphleteer Thomas
105 Saint _ and Nevis
106 Writer Shaw
107 Teaser ad
109 Lock holders
110 Dazzling success
111 1970s sitcom
112 _ dish (bio lab item)
113 Ghostly white
116 _ majesty (high treason)
118 Year divs.
120 AAA service
121 Tolkien fiend
122 Malti-_ (hybrid dog)
123 Play on words



Answer Page 4

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



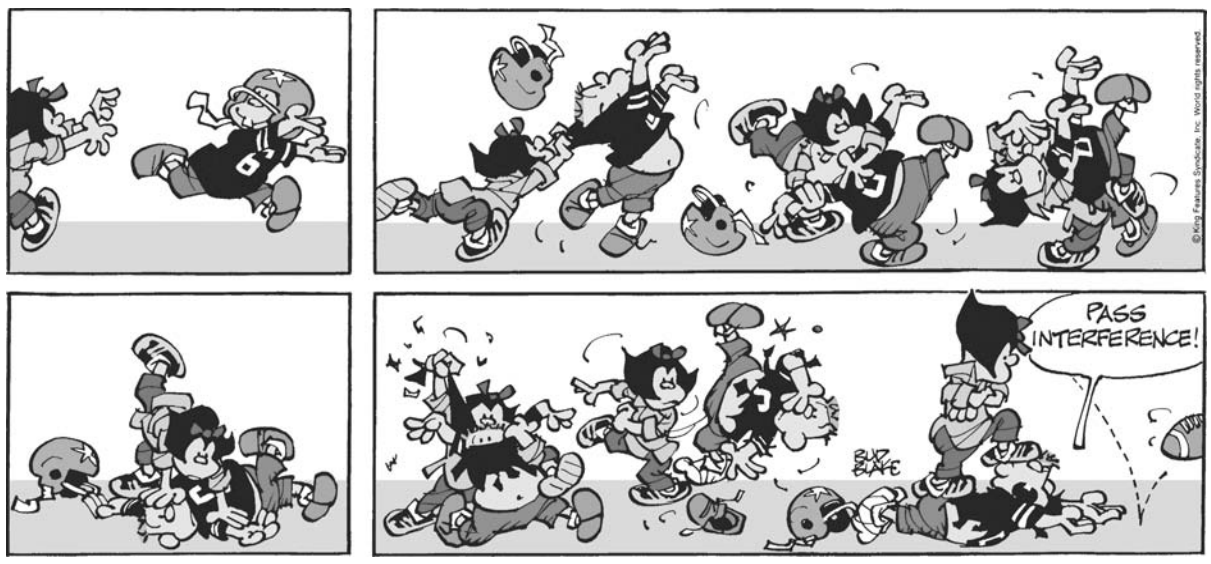
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

economic cost on nearly everyone in the country. President Trump has an idiosyncratic view of representative government. The common understanding of our system is that we elect representatives who debate and vote on important public matters, before standing for election again and finding out if their constituents still want them.

Trump's populist understanding is different – he's the people's representative. It makes sense that Trump, who has a highly personalized view of government and of his movement, has a highly personal view of himself as the tribune of the people. This tends to render the other representatives an unnecessary encumbrance, and indeed this is how Trump has largely treated Congress in his second term.

So it shouldn't be a surprise that it evidently didn't occur to him to ask Congress to authorize the Iran war. There have been comparisons made between Trump's war and George W. Bush's in Iraq, but this is a stark difference. Bush went to Congress, and by the time lawmakers authorized the war, it was a matter of national consensus (although one that fell apart).

Trump hasn't gone to Congress on his tariffs, either, but he made it abundantly clear in the 2024 campaign that he intended to drastically increase duties. Compared with that, the Iran war was a bolt from the blue.

There have been ongoing efforts to cushion the conflict from public accountability. Republicans have tried to argue that it isn't really "a war," and Trump has said that a renewal of a major bombing campaign will only occur after the election, an effort to keep the war from being front and center during voting.

Now, although the war hasn't gone as planned, we need to wait to see how it turns out to make an ultimate judgment – if Trump manages to crack the regime, it will indeed be a legacy-defining achievement. The problem for now, though, is that you can't expect great patience from the public when it wasn't asked or even informed beforehand.

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

Immune system attacks its own red blood cells

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm about to turn 70. A month ago, I was diagnosed with autoimmune hemolytic anemia (AIHA) that's idiopathic. Two CT scans and many blood tests have cleared me of all tumors; however, my spleen's enlarged. My hematologist put me on prednisone, which is working very well. I don't know how long I'll have to take prednisone, but I'm tolerating it very well. I'd appreciate any information and advice that you have on AIHA. – M.L.



As its name suggests ("hemo-" is blood, and "-lytic" is destruction), with this condition, the body's immune system destroys its own red blood cells, causing a low blood count. It's not a common disease, and most of the time, it occurs by itself (idiopathic, as you stated). But your doctors carefully looked for underlying conditions, especially leukemia, lymphoma and systemic lupus.

Prednisone is the usual first-line treatment, with many experts also starting people on rituximab (a powerful drug that reduces the body's ability to make antibodies) in the beginning. But some people do well with prednisone alone.

AIHA requires an expert – a hematologist. They use their judgment, but a general rule of thumb is to taper the dose of prednisone once the anemia is under control. It takes several months (or longer) to bring down the dose.

We don't recommend the long-term use of prednisone because, even though you're tolerating it well, it can cause high blood sugar (even overt diabetes), high blood pressure, bone loss, cataracts, weight gain, infections, and many other problems. If prednisone can't be tapered off entirely, then it may be time to consider rituximab.

Because a person's red blood cells are constantly being destroyed and remade, they need higher doses of folic acid. Also, people should be warned that excess blood clotting can be a problem with AIHA, so symptoms like leg swelling and shortness of breath need to be taken seriously, as they could signify blood clots in the legs or lungs.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have an enlarged prostate. I take 0.5 mg of dutasteride (one per day) and 0.4 mg of tamsulosin HCL (one per day as well). Is there anything else I can take to reduce the size of my prostate? – V.F.

Dutasteride does reduce the size of the prostate by blocking a hormone (dihydrotestosterone) that enlarges the prostate. Dutasteride works slowly over 6-12 months to shrink the prostate and improve urine flow.

Tamsulosin relaxes structures called smooth muscles, which are found in the prostate and in blood vessels. Tamsulosin doesn't reduce the size of the prostate, but it works quickly by allowing the urethra to open up more widely. (Most men get relief within the first three to seven days.)

Since these meds can also open up blood vessels, they can cause low blood pressure and lightheadedness upon standing, although newer agents like tamsulosin and silodosin are much less likely to do so than older drugs. Some experts use tamsulosin at 0.8 mg at night if the 0.4-mg dose isn't enough.

For men who have persistent symptoms despite treatment with both tamsulosin and dutasteride (or similar drugs), then another medication choice is tadalafil, which is particularly helpful if a man also experiences erectile dysfunction. My experience is that this is modestly beneficial. Otherwise, a referral to a urologist to talk about alternative options is appropriate.

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



Moore Texas by Roger Moore

November 15, 1983: Billy Sol Estes is released from prison for selling non-existent fertilizer to West Texas farmers.

Pharmacy chain nailed for fraud

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Now here's a real shocker. Typically when the VA's Office of Inspector General (VAOIG) and the DOJ have nailed criminals, it's either an individual or a handful of thieves. To learn of a major chain in the U.S. being pegged for crimes isn't something we expect.

But it has happened. A long-established pharmacy chain, with approximately 9,000 locations around the country, has been hit with a $315 million fine for fraud crimes they've committed for 13 years. They were reported by a whistleblower.

The crime: illegally filling prescriptions for opioids and other substances and then filing for payment from the VA, Medicare and other federal healthcare programs. Specifically, they were filling prescriptions that they knew "lacked a legitimate medical purpose, were not valid and/or were not issued in the usual course of professional practice." Additionally, prescriptions were filled from prescribers known to issue fraudulent prescriptions and were in dangerous combinations of other opioids.

Why did pharmacists willingly fill prescriptions they knew were suspect or dangerous or fake? Apparently it was because of corporate policy. Headquarters imposed "performance metrics" and – in something that will send a chill down your spine – created policies that "allegedly prevented pharmacists from warning one another about certain problematic prescribers."

Read that again: They kept pharmacists from telling their co-workers about problems with prescriptions.

From now on the chain will be required to do something they should have been doing all along. They're going to create a hotline for employees and the public to report suspected illegal dispensing of drugs, monitor patterns of prescribing opioids and watch the prescribers suspected of illegal prescribing.

So, I'm shocked, but thinking back, maybe I shouldn't be. For years I had my prescriptions filled at a location in this chain, by a great pharmacist. But I always sensed he was unhappy and under stress. One day he disappeared. Word was he went to work for a very small local pharmacy and that he was very happy there. Now I know why.

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

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: **U** equals **C**

KG ZUDPFYY YDXIF ZIC SFP URXIFY GKRRFC EO Z DSFZDFP, K YEOOXYF XIF NXERC YFF PXNY XG YSZPXI.

Answer Page 4

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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.

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.

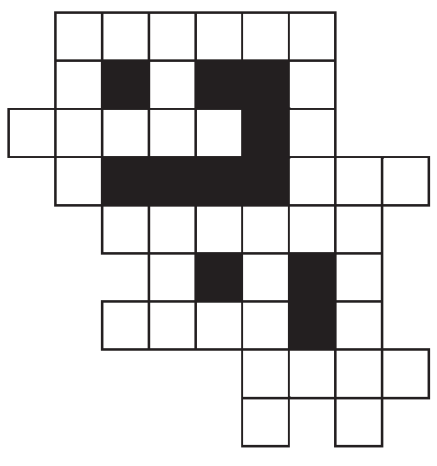
	+		+		= 13			
+		+		+				
	+		+		= 19			
×		+		÷				
	+		÷		= 12			
= 30		= 19		= 14				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

FEAR KNOT™

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

ATV
TUFECA
♥ IDFEN
♥ NCEA
♥ EVDTEO
OAD
♥ ILEV
♥ TELCA
♥ UTN
TENTUA
EVDLE
♥ EDRO



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.



• "I found a terrific metal magnet strip that is for use in the kitchen. It was a great price at a local resale shop. I have used it in my mini workshop to hold jewelry-making tools by my craft desk. It is especially handy now that I am making many ornaments for gifts." – E.L. in New Jersey

• Use baking soda as a dry cleaning agent for fabric items such as suitcases, backpacks, boots, canvas items, etc.

• "Try this baking tip from my mother: When you have a recipe that calls for dry spices (cinnamon, ginger, ground clove, etc.), cream them with the butter instead of sifting them with the dry ingredients. I do feel like they become infused in the recipe better." – A. in Illinois

• Fresh ginger can be frozen. Simply grate as needed. Flavor remains and it will stay fresh much longer.

• "An oldie but a goodie, and certainly considerate of dear old Mom: In my family, you come to Thanksgiving dinner with your own plastic containers for leftovers. If you don't bring your own, you don't go home with tomorrow's lunch. Mom instituted this rule after the first Thanksgiving when all the kids had moved out. We practically cleaned her out of Tupperware!" – E.Y. in New Mexico

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.