1973 53 Years 2026

West Texas County Courier

VOL. 53, No. 46 SERVING ANTHONY, VINTON, CANUTILLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINT, FABENS, SAN ELIZARIO AND TORNILLO NOVEMBER 19, 2026



– Photos by Alfredo Vasquez

NATURE CALLS – The Project TEN program brought together a group of El Paso Community College students and staff members on a recent Saturday morning to participate in a wellness hike at Franklin Mountains State Park.

EPCC program uses hiking to instill leadership skills

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Franklin Mountain State Park was the setting for a morning hike that was organized by the Tejano Empowerment Network (Project TEN), an El Paso Community College (EPCC) mentoring program that focuses on student development in specific aspects including leadership, identity, health, college/career readiness, and community engagement.

To achieve these objectives, the Project TEN program provides college students with different learning opportunities each month including workshops, university campus tours, field trips, and community service projects.

The mentoring program follows a curriculum based on five aspects: Leadership, Identity, College and Career Readiness, Health and Wellness, and Brotherhood, according to Dr. Miguel Vasquez, an EPCC biology instructor at the Mission Campus and Project TEN program coordinator.

EPCC faculty and staff members who helped with Project TEN's recent wellness hike were Hector Riverroll, lab manager at Valle Verde campus; Joshua Lara, athletics and esports coordinator; Claire Wells, biology instructor; and Victor Parga, biology instructor.

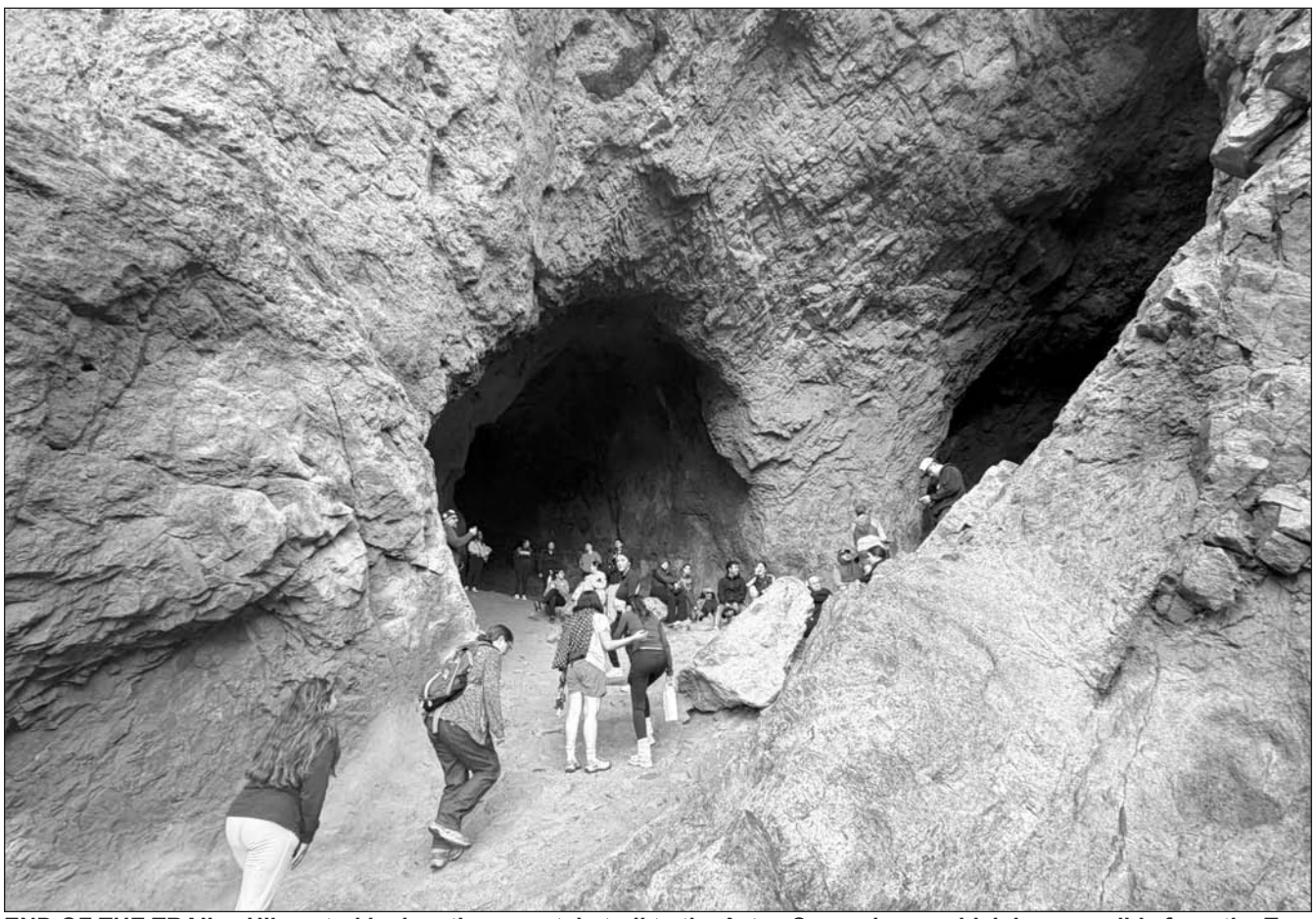
Project TEN's recent morning hike was free and open to EPCC students and their family members. Participants were encouraged to see the event as an opportunity to engage in a healthy physical activity that allowed them to connect with other students in their community.

About 35 early birds showed up for the brisk Saturday morning adventure that took them along one of the various trails available to park visitors. This particular morning, hikers followed the Aztec Trail which led them to a cavernous opening in one of the park's mountain peaks.

"Project TEN's services are available to all EPCC students who want to take advantage of the program's activities. All they have to do is participate in the different functions offered each month," stated Dr. Vasquez.

Project EN is a member of the Texas Education Research Consortium (TERC) which consists of institutional members and research partners from across the state including public school districts, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities.

The local college program utilizes a curriculum that is based on the ideals initially promoted by

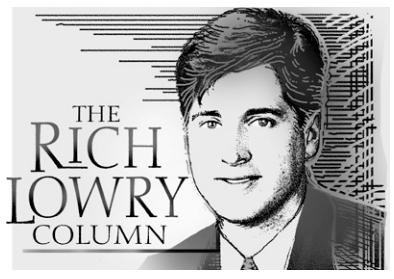


END OF THE TRAIL – Hikers trekked up the mountain trail to the Aztec Cave, above, which is accessible from the Tom Mays entrance to Franklin Mountains State Park.

See SKILLS, Page 5

Wisdom enables one to be thrifty without being stingy and generous without being wasteful. **– Quips & Quotes**

Britain owes no one an apology



When is the Muslim world going to apologize for its slave raids in Central and Eastern Europe that made off with millions of captives? Not any time soon, we can assume, since no one is asking it to apologize, and presumably no one ever will.

The same isn't true in the U.K., where there is a hot debate over whether the country should apologize for its participation in the trans-Atlantic slave trade in what would be a stark expression of double standards and Western guilt.

Prime Minister Andy Burnham, whose contemporary Labour Party has a taste for self-abasement, wants to have "difficult conversations" over such an apology, and says that it's "the patriotic thing to do." He is "offering a structured dialogue with those affected by the trans-Atlantic slave trade," never mind that Britain abolished the trade more than two centuries ago.

It's perverse for the U.K. – pressured by Caribbean countries within the Commonwealth – to consider a formal apology, given that slavery was a universal phenomenon and Britain had an honored role in snuffing it out.

The ancient Egyptians embraced slavery, and so did the Greeks and Romans. Often, enslavement was the price of military defeat in the ancient world. After the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, the Byzantines, the Vikings and Central Asian societies all relied on slave labor.

They weren't alone; the institution spanned every type of society. Historian Stewart Gordon notes that Ethiopia's legal code in the mid-13th century "recognized slaves as central to the economy and defined the acquisition and holding of slaves as the natural order of things." In the 16th century, he writes, Ethiopia "was a full slave society."

The trans-Atlantic slave trade couldn't have operated without the participation of West African rulers, who took slavery for granted before European slavers showed up and continued the practice after they left.

Something that's almost never mentioned in the debate over accountability for slavery is that North African slave traders enslaved enormous numbers of white Europeans between the 16th and 18th centuries.

Also inconvenient to an anti-Western narrative is

See LOWRY, Page 7

Data center legislation addressing community resources filed

By Shannon Harmon
Special to the Courier

TEXAS — Last Friday, Nov. 13, State Senator Charles Perry (R-Lubbock), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs, filed Senate Bill 338, comprehensive legislation establishing new safeguards for water consumption, transparency, and the impact of data center development on Texas communities.

Perry was joined in filing the legislation by 15 Senate joint authors. The legislation follows a seven-hour Senate committee hearing chaired by Senator Perry in September, where lawmakers heard from state agencies, industry experts, local officials, and members of the public about the growing impact of data centers on Texas water resources and surrounding neighborhoods.

"At our hearing in September, we heard from Texans who are concerned about what these developments mean for their water, their property, and their quality of life," said Perry. "These are legitimate concerns, and the people raising them deserve to be heard. Texans should not have to sacrifice their water resources or the peaceful enjoyment of their own homes to accommodate a new development."

While acknowledging that some data center operators have failed to adequately communicate with local communities or address their concerns, Perry noted that many others are already implementing the very practices SB 338 would require. Responsible developers are investing in regional water supplies and infrastructure, generating new tax revenues, and creating opportunities for long-overdue improvements to local schools, water systems, and power infrastructure.

"Texas has always welcomed innovation, investment, and economic growth. That is not going to change," Perry continued. "Fortunately, many in this industry are already demonstrating what it means to be good neighbors and responsible community partners. These companies can bring tremendous benefits to Texas communities for generations to come. But being open for business does not mean giving businesses a blank check. We have plenty of room for responsible development without making excuses for those who refuse to respect the people and communities around them."

Protecting Texas Water Resources

One of the most significant findings from the September hearing concerned the differences in water consumption among data center cooling technologies.

According to testimony from the Public Utility Commission of Texas, data centers using traditional evaporative cooling systems consume approximately 3.8 times as much water for cooling as facilities using closed-loop systems.

SB 338 would establish new standards for future data center developments, requiring the use of closed-loop cooling technology, cooling technologies which are at least as water-efficient as closed-loop technology, or alternative water sources, including brackish water, seawater, and produced water.

The legislation would also require developers to disclose anticipated water needs and operators to report actual annual water consumption, ensuring state water planners have a clearer picture of the industry's demands.

"Water is not an unlimited resource," said Perry. "Our farmers, ranchers, families, and communities depend on it every single day. We cannot responsibly plan for Texas' future if we do not even know how much water these facilities are using or where that water is coming from."

During the September hearing, the PUC also reported that only 155 of the 377 data center facilities surveyed had provided timely responses to requests for water usage information.

Protecting Communities and Property Rights

Beyond water consumption, SB 338 addresses concerns raised by Texans living near existing or proposed data center developments, including excessive noise, light pollution, and the impact on neighboring properties. The legislation would authorize the PUC to establish statewide standards addressing these issues, including potential buffer zones and dark-sky requirements for future facilities.

"People work their entire lives to buy a home and raise a family," Perry said. "They should not have to worry about a massive industrial development moving in next door and disrupting their lives without reasonable protections in place. Property rights matter, and the rights of existing homeowners deserve consideration alongside the interests of new development."

Establishing Accountability

SB 338 would make compliance with the legislation's water conservation, reporting, and nuisance requirements a condition of certain state regulatory approvals, electrical grid interconnection, and local property tax abatements.

The legislation would also establish additional conditions for future local tax abatements, including restrictions on cooling technologies, environmental cleanup obligations, and a cap limiting abatements to 50 percent of a facility's market value.

"These are reasonable expectations," Perry said. "We are not asking companies to stop investing in Texas. We are asking them to use available technology to conserve water, be transparent about their operations, respect surrounding communities, and take responsibility for the impacts of their developments. Many companies are already doing these things, proving that responsible development and economic opportunity can go hand in hand."

"Texans have made their concerns clear, and this legislation is a direct response to what we heard," Perry concluded. "The companies willing to invest in our communities, strengthen our infrastructure, and respect our resources can be legitimate partners in building a better Texas for future generations. We can embrace the economic opportunities of tomorrow without compromising the water resources, property rights, and quality of life of the Texans who call this state home. That is the balance we intend to strike with Senate Bill 338."

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– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

A BRUSH WITH FUN – Max Valenzuela in front of his artwork, *The DEVO-lution of Fine Art.*

Art exhibit runs to December 9

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

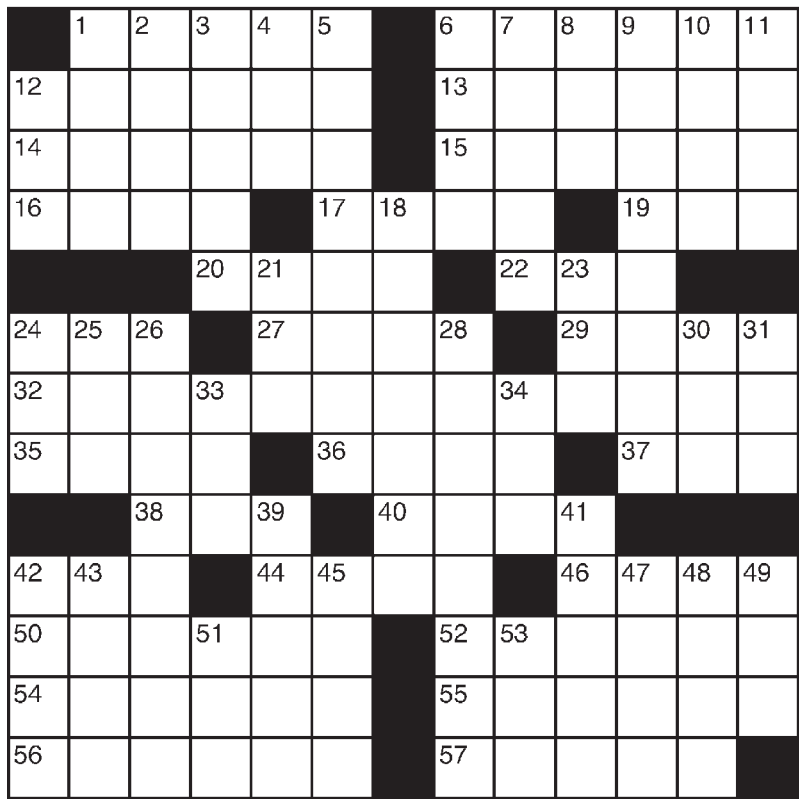
EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) is holding its Fall 2026 Faculty and Staff Art Biennial Exhibition. It's a celebration of creativity, artistic talent, and diverse perspectives from 20 participating faculty and staff members from across the district. The exhibition will run until December 9, 2026.

Bringing together artists from multiple campuses, the exhibition highlights the important role that creativity and artistic expression play throughout the EPCC community. Featuring a variety of artistic approaches, mediums, and personal perspectives, the biennial offers visitors an opportunity to experience the creative work of the individuals who contribute to the college both inside and outside the classroom.

"It's nice. I really enjoy all the variety and the level of the work," EPCC art appreciation

See EXHIBIT, Page 5

King Crossword



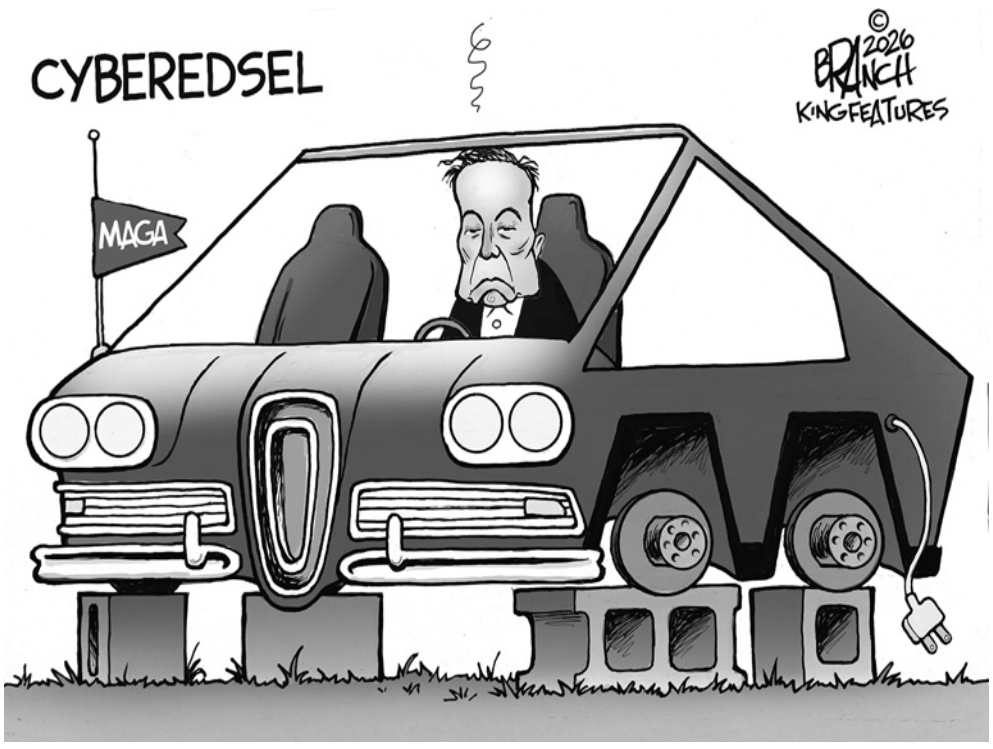
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17 "Dream on!"
19 Prof's helpers
20 Poker pot money
22 Covert agent
24 Jungfrau, for one
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57 Synthetic fabric

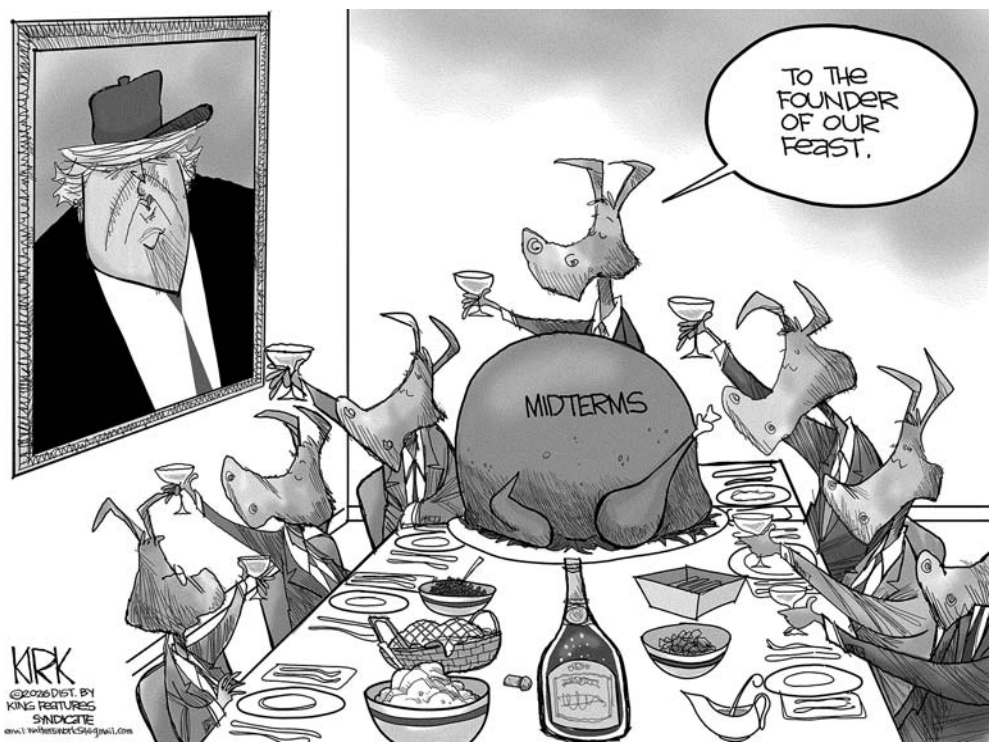
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2 Writer Buchanan
3 Line dance
4 Small bill
5 Affinity
6 Pieces for one
7 Kitchen VIPs
8 Coach Parseghian
9 Bowlful served with chips
10 Sicilian spouter
11 Swift jets
12 "Mayberry _"
18 Hot chili pepper
21 Snooze
23 Pod dweller
24 Nile viper
25 Director Spike
26 Listen to a recording
28 Football game prankster
30 Judge Lance
31 Mentalist's claim
33 Swing to and _
34 Deli bread
39 Proprietor
41 Surround sound name
42 Shortened wd.
43 Dog bane
45 Towel word
47 Jazz singer Laine
48 Shore bird
49 Hosp. areas
51 Mamie's man
53 "_ Little Teapot"

Answer Page 4









Keep food, guests, safe on Thanksgiving

USDA Office of Communications
Special to the Courier

NATION – As families across the country prepare for Thanksgiving, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is reminding consumers to take simple steps that will keep their holiday meals safe and enjoyable.

"Thanksgiving is one of America's most cherished traditions, bringing family and friends together around the table," said USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Mindy Brashears. "At USDA, we work year-round to help keep our nation's food supply safe. Food safety doesn't stop at the processing establishments that produce the food you eat. By following a few simple food safety steps at home, families can protect their loved ones and focus on what matters most – enjoying a safe and memorable Thanksgiving together."



– Internet

MOUTHWATERING – Keep your Thanksgiving meal safe by following basic food handling rules.

Every year, USDA food safety specialists answer thousands of Thanksgiving questions through USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline. From when to buy a turkey to how to thaw and cook it safely, you can find all the information you need, including interactive thawing and cooking calculator, on our Your Safe Thanksgiving Guide webpage. (www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/poultry/your-safe-thanksgiving-guide?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

Prepare a safe meal on Thanksgiving by following these four key food safety steps:

1. Plan and Thaw Safely

Buying a fresh or frozen turkey is really a matter of personal preference, but as you plan for your holiday meal, it's helpful to keep a few important food safety considerations in mind.

If you shop one to two days before cooking, buy a fresh turkey. If there is a "best-by" or "use-by" date on the manufacturer's label, then you can keep fresh turkey, unopened, in the refrigerator until that date.

If you shop weeks in advance, buy a frozen turkey. Never thaw on the counter. Thaw frozen turkey in the refrigerator (24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds) or in cold water (30 minutes per pound, changing water every 30 minutes).

2. Cook to 165 Degrees F

Use a food thermometer to check if your turkey is ready – it's the only way to know for certain that it has reached the safe minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F. Check in all three of these places:

- Thickest part of the breast;
- Innermost part of the wing; and
- Innermost part of the thigh.

For optimal safety and uniform doneness, cook stuffing separately. However, if stuffing is cooked inside the turkey, use a food thermometer to make sure the center of the stuffing also reaches a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 F.

3. Stay Out of the "Danger Zone"

Bacteria grow quickly between 40 and 140 degrees F, also known as the food safety "Danger Zone," putting your family at risk for foodborne illness. Keep cold foods in the refrigerator or nestled over ice. Serve smaller portions and replenish them as needed to keep food at or below 40 degrees F.

Keep hot food in the oven, heated chafing dishes, warming trays, or slow cookers at or above 140 degrees F.

Follow the two-hour rule: Refrigerate perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers within 2 hours. Discard perishable foods left at room temperature for more than two hours.

4. Store Leftovers Safely

The joy of Thanksgiving continues with leftovers. By storing them properly, you can savor each comforting dish safely and happily in the days that follow.

Divide large portions into smaller containers for quicker cooling.

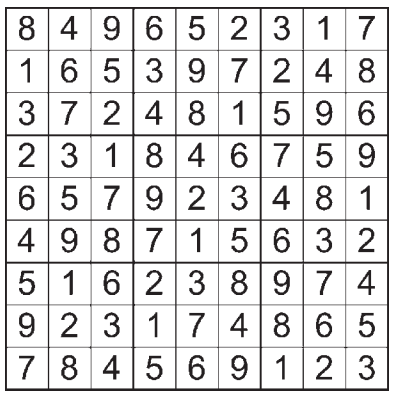
Refrigerated leftovers are safe for up to four days and can be frozen for longer storage. When kept continuously frozen at 0 degrees F or below, they remain safe indefinitely, although quality may decline over time.

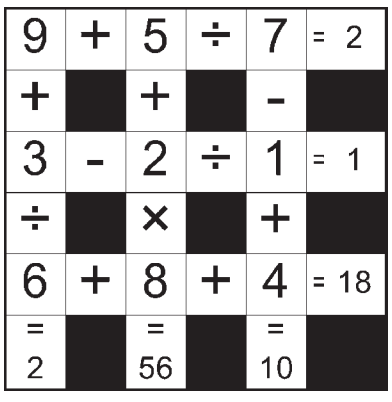
Reheat leftovers to 165 degrees F before serving.

For more information about food safety, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) or email MPHotline@usda.gov. The hotline will be operating 8 AM to 2 PM ET on November 26, 2026 (Thanksgiving Day).



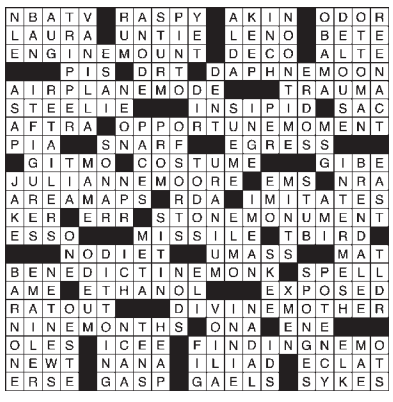






CryptoQuip Answer

Two noted ameteur detective brothers who live in a distinctly bohomian culture: The Arty Boys.





Moments in time
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Nov. 16, 1960, iconic American actor Clark Gable, who was often referred to as the "King of Hollywood," died at a Los Angeles hospital from a massive heart attack at the age of 59, not long after completing "The Misfits" with Marilyn Monroe. He was buried in Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California, beside his third wife, actress Carole Lombard, and her mother.

• On Nov. 17, 1970, Douglas Engelbart received a patent for the first computer mouse, which was officially named "X-Y position indicator for a display system" and earned its nickname "mouse" due to the cord extending from its back like a tail.

• On Nov. 18, 1865, Mark Twain published his breakout story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" under the title "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog" in the New York Saturday Press. Inspired by a tall tale Twain overheard while drinking at a hotel, the story became an overnight sensation and was republished in multiple U.S. outlets.

• On Nov. 19, 1861, the first petroleum shipment (1,329 barrels) from the U.S. to Europe left Philadelphia for London on the brigantine Elizabeth Watts in response to Europe's widespread need for cheap lamp illuminants like kerosene.

• On Nov. 20, 1911, Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin attended the funeral of Paul and Laura Lafargue (daughter of Karl Marx). The socialist Lafargues died in a suicide pact, believing their political usefulness had come to an end.

• On Nov. 21, 1934, the New York Yankees acquired 19-year-old outfielder Joe DiMaggio's contract from the San Francisco Seals in a deal reported as $25,000 and five players.

• On Nov. 22, 2014, 12-year-old Tamir Rice was shot and killed by police officers in Cleveland, Ohio. The boy had been playing with an airsoft plastic pellet gun and was reported to the police by an observer, who noted that he was a minor and likely holding a toy, but a dispatcher noted only a suspect with a gun. One of several African Americans killed by American law enforcement at the time whose deaths garnered national attention; Tamir became a martyr of the Black Lives Matter movement.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• Some scholars speculate that Christopher Columbus may have received secret information from a close friend, sometimes dubbed the "Unknown Pilot," about lands far west across the ocean. No present evidence of this exists, however.

• The only time koala bears leave their tree is to find another tree with more leaves to eat.

• A starburst galaxy contains an unusually high amount of gas and dust, resulting in a high rate of star production.

• Every winter, at least one septillion (1 followed by 24 zeros) snow crystals fall from the sky.

• In the 1960s, Jell-O offered celery-flavored gelatin mix.

• Historical figures with suspected bipolar disorder include Winston Churchill, George Handel, Lord Byron, Virginia Woolf, Edgar Allan Poe, Napoleon Bonaparte and Vincent van Gogh.

• The three biggest glaciers outside of polar regions are in Pakistan.

• The award for worst campaign slogan in history probably belongs to the anti-Prohibition Al Smith, who advertised: "Vote for Al Smith and he'll make your wet dreams come true."

• NFL players weren't required to wear helmets until 1943.

• When Adolf Hitler's close associate Ernst Hanfstaengl told him that his mustache wasn't fashionable, Hitler replied: "If it is not the fashion now, it will be because I wear it."

• Adding salt to a dropped fresh egg makes clean up easier.

• While banned in Europe and Japan, brominated vegetable oil, a toxic flame retardant, can still be found in some American soft drinks.

• In the mid-19th century, cardboard was used to line men's hats for better structure and added warmth.

• The word "halibut" means "holy flatfish" because it was only eaten on holy days.

Thought for the Day: "Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears."

– Les Brown

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– Photo courtesy DEA

SAFE DISPOSAL – Members of the Socorro ISD Police Department rolled out to help collect unneeded medications for safe disposal.

DEA's takes back more than 645,000 pounds of medication

By Carlos A. Briano
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – On Oct. 24, 2026, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and more than 4,200 law enforcement partners collected 645,636 pounds of unused medications as part of ongoing efforts to prevent drug misuse. This event marked DEA's 31st National Prescription Drug Take Back Day with 4,212 collection sites nationwide, including 64 tribal locations.

The El Paso Division collected 1,015 pounds in El Paso, 150 pounds in the Midland area, 76 in the Alpine area, 220 in the Las Cruces area, 1,660 in the Albuquerque area, and 300 pounds on tribal lands in New Mexico.

Since 2010, DEA's National Prescription Take Back Day has collected 21,679,861 pounds of unused, unwanted, and expired medications – the equivalent of more than 10,840 tons – to help prevent prescription drug misuse and reduce the risk of accidental overdoses and poisonings.

"Twice a year communities across the country come together for National Prescription Drug Take Back Day to help remove unused and unwanted medications from homes, reducing the risk of misuse, accidental poisonings, and overdoses," said DEA Administrator Terry Cole. "The collection of more than 645,000 pounds of medications this fall reflects the continued commitment of the public and our law enforcement partners to keep families safe."

"We can't thank our communities enough for their fantastic participation in this important initiative," said Robert "Eric" Castañeda, Special Agent in Charge of the DEA's El Paso Division. "DEA could not have disposed of all those pounds of medication without the community's help."

More than 15,300 pharmacies, hospitals, businesses, and many police departments offer safe medication disposal year-round. For information on permanent drop boxes, visit DEA's Every Day is Take Back Day webpage.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day results are available at Take Back Day. Safe disposal of unused medications remains one of the simplest ways communities can help prevent drug misuse.

Skills

From Page 1

Project MALES (Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success), a research and mentoring program under the auspices of the College of Education at the University of Texas at Austin.

In 2024, EPCC's TEN program earned the "Program of the Year" award at TERC's Texas Student Leadership Summit in Austin, an annual two-day conference that brings together hundreds of students from across Texas to attend sessions on leadership, identity, college and career readiness, health and wellness, and brotherhood/sisterhood.

The 2024 TERC award recognized the El Paso program's role in helping students persist, find jobs, secure scholarships, graduate, and transfer to four-year institutions. The Summit event has been held since 2013. It was EPCC's first time winning an award at this event.

Contact Dr. Vasquez, at mvasq255@epcc.edu, for more information about the Tejano Empowerment Network program.

Exhibit

From Page 3

instructor and featured artist Shane Wiggs said. "I usually don't show off my work, and this is a great venue to do something I don't normally do. And I really enjoy seeing what my colleagues do in their off hours. It's really interesting."

Beyond celebrating the artistic accomplishments of faculty and staff, the exhibition provides a particularly meaningful experience for students.

"Seeing their professors' artwork offers a unique opportunity to connect with their instructors on another level, reminding students that the people teaching them are also practicing artists, creators, and lifelong learners," Zoe Spiliotis, EPCC Gallery of Fine Arts Coordinator and Art Faculty at Transmountain Campus, said. "It can be especially inspiring to see the same individuals who encourage students to experiment, take creative risks, and develop their artistic voices, putting those principles into practice in their own work."

The exhibition is free to the community during the Gallery of Fine Art hours.

Visit www.epcc.edu/Academics/Arts for more information on the Arts Department.

EPCC Gallery of Fine Art Hours

Monday: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



El Paso teams advance in football playoffs

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The Friday night lights shine brightly around the city during the fall months, with high school football being played from Canutillo to Mountain View, from Bowie to Parkland and from Anthony to Tornillo.

In other words, competitive football is being played throughout the city, as many of the local teams are pretty evenly matched.

That is, until our El Paso teams go against out-of-town teams in the playoffs.

It's no secret that once our local teams leave the city limits – it can get pretty ugly.

In 2024, only one of 17 teams advanced past the bi-district round when Del Valle knocked off Abilene Cooper 63-35.

Last year, things got a little better with three teams advanced past the opening round when Eastwood, El Dorado, and Andress made it to the area round.

Well, it may not sound like a lot, but El Paso keeps improving. This past weekend, no less than four of the 17 teams that made the playoffs, beat out-of-town teams.

Yes, there were the usual blowout losses that happen every year. A week ago, Burges lost to Amarillo palo Duro 64-7, Ysleta lost to West Plains 84-0, Bowie lost to Seminole 63-0, Clint lost to Monahans 45-0, Eastlake lost to Odessa Permian 58-22, Bel Air lost to Amarill High 63-13, Irvin lost to Pecos 52-14 and Riverside's lost to Canyon High 47-14.

Then there were those defeats that were tough but not embarrassing, like Austin's 35-7 loss to Canyon Randall, Franklin's 35-26 loss to Midland High, Chapin's 62-45 loss to Wichita Falls Legacy, Canutillo's 41-21 loss to Abilene Cooper and Del Valle's 41-17 loss to Abilene Wylie.

But there were some games where the El Paso teams had a chance to win but just fell short, like Americas losing a 41-38 heartbreaker against Amarillo Tascosa, Mountain View dropping a close 28-20 decision to Big Spring and there was El Dorado's 44-39 loss to Frenship, where they scored the winning touchdown late in the game – that was called back due to a holding penalty.

Well, El Paso sent 17 high school teams to the Texas State playoffs and four remain standing.

The #5 team in the state, the Andress Eagles pounded Dumas 34-10.

Andress is the team that many believe have a real chance to advance deep into the playoffs with quarterback Jamari Milton and star skill position players like defensive back/wide receiver Elijah Cooper and wide receiver Aavant Clayton.

Pebble Hills defeated Midland Lee 39-27 and is led by quarterback Joe Fernandez who threw 25 touchdown passes this year and also led the team in rushing. But the big star for the Spartans is wide receiver L.J. Bailey, the speedster who caught 15 touchdown passes this year.

The Eastwood Troopers ran out to 35-13 lead, then held on for a 35-33 win over San Angelo Central.

The Troopers have four players they rely on the most, quarterback Kingston Jeffries, running back Matthew Ramirez, wide receiver Jordan Nava and defensive back Logan Bedwell, who had three interceptions (one he returned for a touchdown) against San Angelo.

Then there were the Hanks Knights, who crushed Abilene High 56-21.

Hanks was the highest scoring team in El Paso this year, averaging 55.5 points a game. The Knights lost their three games this season by a grand total of just nine points.

Hanks' high-octane offense is led by quarterback Jordan Morales, who went an incredible 25 for 25 for 368 yards against Abilene, throwing seven touchdown passes.

Also having a big game against Abilene was wide receiver in Alex Robles, who caught five of those touchdowns, along with running back Austin Deucher, who rushed for 128 yards.

So, there it is, the next round is set.

#5 Andress (11-0) will meet Decatur (10-1), Eastwood (9-2) will take on Aledo (8-3), Pebble Hills (10-1) will play Arlington Martin (11-0) and Hanks (8-3) will tangle with Arlington Heights (10-1).

It'll be really tough for any El Paso team to advance past this round, but no matter what happens, it is promising to see four teams still playing this weekend.

And with so many key players coming back next year, we should expect even better results in 2027.

Now if we could only transfer that success to our college team…

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Medicare enrollment is open now

Medicare open enrollment is going on until Dec. 7, giving us the opportunity to change our health coverage and drug plans, if we wish to do so… after we wade through all the information for 2027.

Medicare.gov/plan-compare is your place to go to compare the plans available on pharmacies, drugs and providers.

Some thoughts while you go through all the information:

Medicare Advantage plans are making many changes, leaving some markets completely, deleting some benefits, shrinking others and adding lesser benefits in their place.

Many seniors feel overwhelmed and look for help to make their decisions about which plans they want – and help is out there.

Call 1-800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227) as a place to start. They're open 24/7.

Look online at the Medicare Plan Comparison Tool at www.medicare.gov. Click "Find health & drug plans" or "Find care providers" and put in your ZIP code. Be sure the drugs you take are on any plan you consider. If you'll be looking at drug plans, have your prescription bottles in front of you, as you'll need to enter the drug name as well as the dosage. Beware the quantity: Do you usually get your drugs every 30 days or 90 days?

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) has trained staff, and the good news is that they're not aligned with any particular plan. They can help you wade through the plans with your needs in mind. Go to www.shiphelp.org to find the SHIP office in your area. Have your Annual Notice of Change in hand before you call anyone.

Call your local Area Agencies on Aging to see if they're offering any workshops on Medicare or if they're hosting any SHIP counselors who will be available for advice. The main number is 800-677-1116.

Remember – don't just continue with the same plan you've had without checking the other plans in your area. Changes can happen any year, especially this year.

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Super Crossword

GO FISH

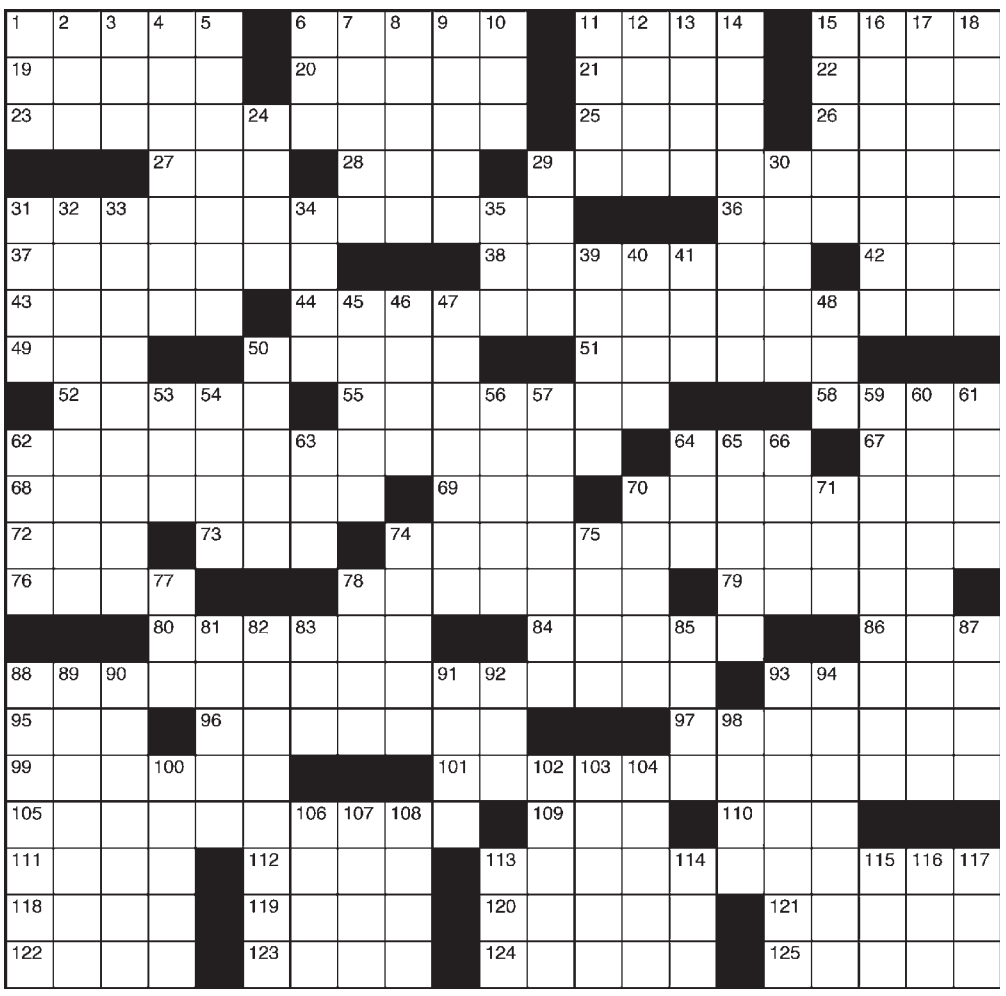
ACROSS

1 Hoops-centered cable channel
6 Hoarse-voiced
11 Similar (to)
15 Bad smell
19 "The Son" actress Dern
20 Disentangle
21 Joker Jay
22 _ noire (bane)
23 Vehicle part connecting the motor to the frame
25 Art of Erte
26 "Der _" (nickname for Konrad Adenauer)
27 Greek letters before rhos
28 "_ & the Women" (Richard Gere film)
29 Niles Crane's wife on "Frasier"
31 Smartphone setting for a flight
36 Major shock
37 Metal playing marble
38 Bland
42 Bodily pouch
43 SAG-_ (performers' union)
44 When it's ideal to make a move
49 Actress Zadora
50 Eat greedily, in slang
51 Place of exit
52 U.S. base in Cuba, in brief
55 Halloween wear
58 Jeer
62 Best Actress winner for "Still Alice"
64 "Tommy" has two
67 Firearm rights gp.
68 References aiding tourists
69 Nutrient std.
70 Copies
72 Lead-in to plop or plunk
73 Goof up
74 Stele or monolith
76 Canadian gas brand
78 Ballistic weapon
79 Classic Ford, for short
80 Like weight-loss plans in "Eat This, Not That!" books
84 Bay State coll.
86 Wrestling pad
88 Saint Anselm, e.g.
93 A wizard may cast it
95 "Botch-_" (Rosemary Clooney hit)
96 Grain alcohol
97 Squealed on, say
99 Squeal on
101 She's part of the Hindu Godhead
105 Pregnancy length
109 Put _ show
110 Suffix with propyl
111 Bullring cries
112 Frozen drink brand
113 Hit Pixar film… and what you are doing as you examine this puzzle's longest answers?
118 Pond wriggler
119 Mom's mom
120 Epic of Troy
121 Stylish flair
122 Language spoken by 124-Across
123 Pant
124 Scottish Celts
125 Wanda of "Black-ish"

DOWN

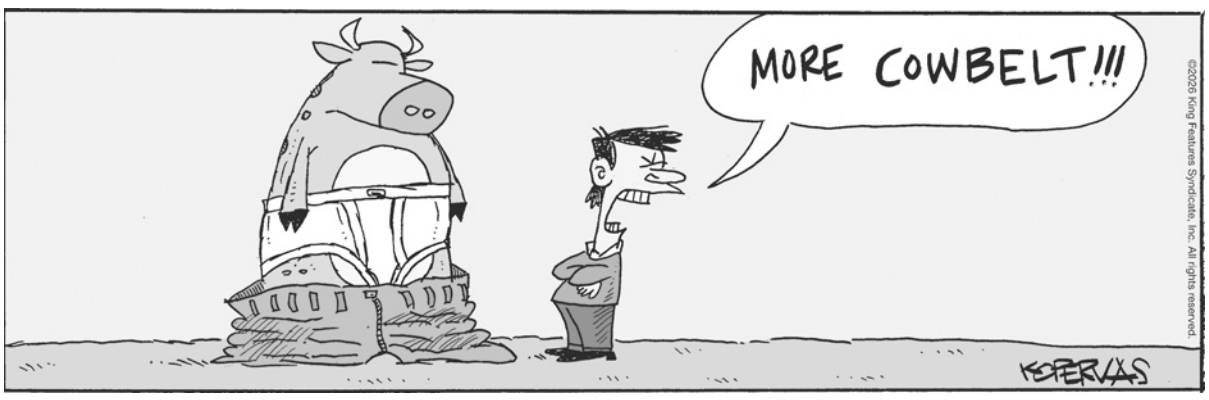
1 Braves' and Mets' div.
2 Prohibit
3 Popular vacation mo.
4 Stumbling person
5 Cream soda's flavor
6 Daiquiri base
7 Battery end
8 _ und Drang
9 Spotted pony
10 Nevertheless
11 Pierce player Alan
12 Retain
13 Part of a foot
14 Twelve p.m.
15 Ex-president with a Nobel
16 Remove certain insects from
17 Soft footstool
18 Simulate the events of
24 Morales of "Superfly"
29 Vehicle ding
30 Graph theory pioneer Paul
31 PDQ cousin
32 "I expected as much"
33 Many store owners
34 Gas in signs
35 Filmmaker: Abbr.
39 It may follow "So I lied!"
40 Playwright William
41 For each
45 Footsteps
46 Ball for grads
47 In a way
48 Chinese menu abbr.
50 Sub-locating system
53 Actress Carrere
54 Broadway "Auntie"
56 Foofaraws
57 Element in a reactor
59 Fit together, as gears
60 "All Alone Am I" singer
61 Sunrise side
62 Gyllenhaal of "The Guilty"
63 "Latino USA" broadcaster
64 Angsty genre
65 Breath fresheners
66 Ticket section
70 "To clarify…"
71 Pal, in Lille
74 '60s protest
75 "Ticklish" doll
77 Certain till bill
78 Making reference to itself
81 Ancient concert hall
82 Making copies of
83 I, in Berlin
85 _-Ball
87 "I just skimmed the post" inits.
88 Omitting nothing
89 Spam sender, say
90 Current events reported via websites
91 Silent assents
92 Lilly of drugs
93 Loofahs, e.g.
94 Power
98 Marvel mutant group
100 Opposite of 61-Down, in Spanish
102 "There it is!"
103 Concave bellybutton
104 Tennis star Rafael
106 School sports org.
107 Certain till bills
108 Messy stack
113 "Newton" fruit
114 SSNs, e.g.
115 Moose cousin
116 Sallie _
117 Nail-biting NFL periods

Answer Page 4



Comix

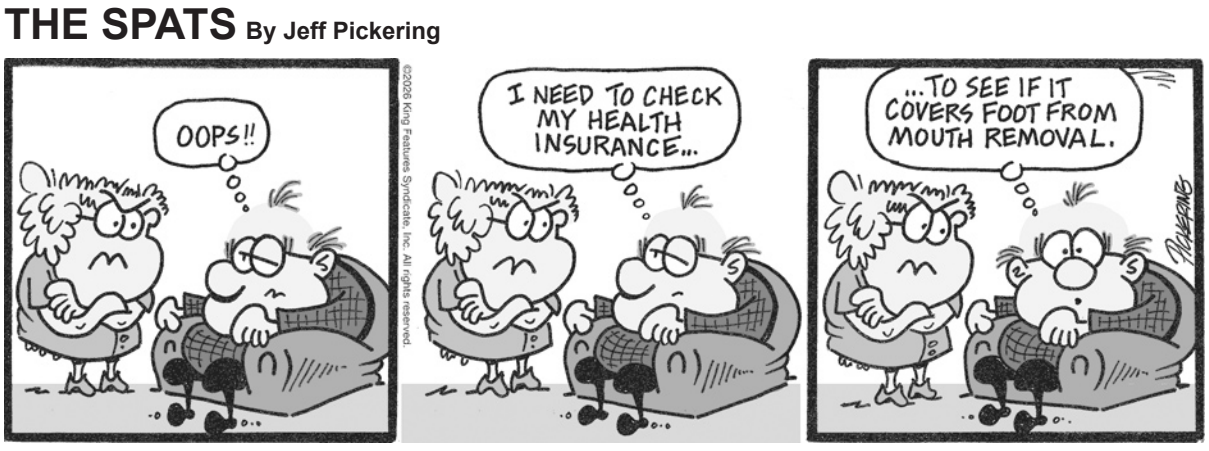
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



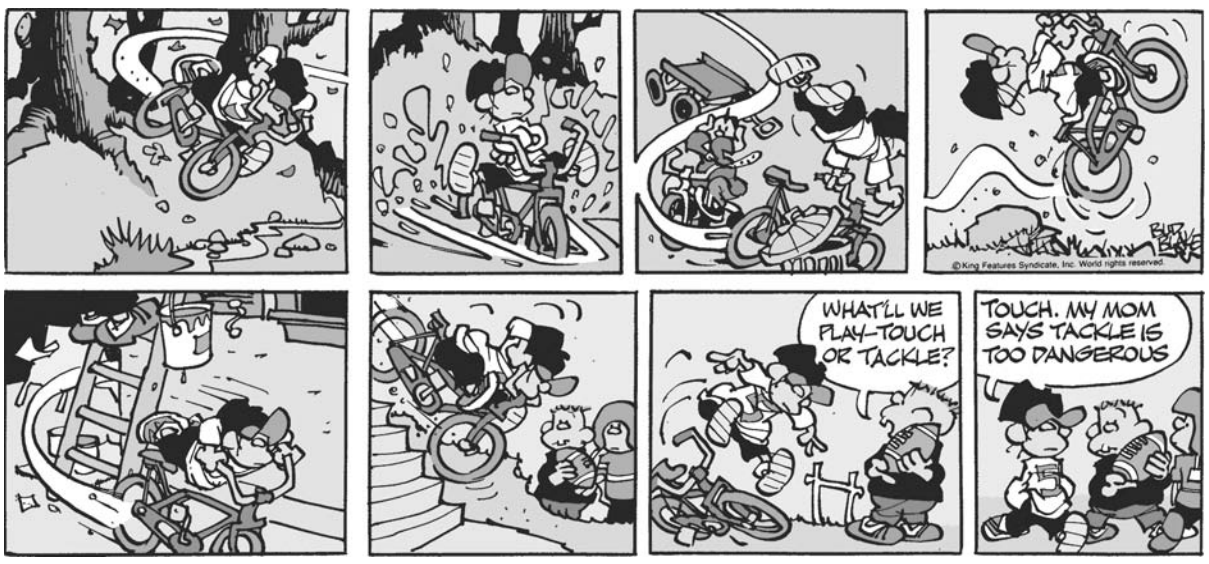
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

that, as James Walvin writes in his "A Short History of Slavery," "Islamic societies were characterized by the widespread and generally unchallenged use of slavery. Indeed, slavery was commonplace throughout Arabia well before the rise of Islam. But as Islam spread between the eighth and 15th centuries, and especially to black Africa, it extended and confirmed the commonplace use of slavery and slave trading."

As part of the so-called Arab slave trade, more than a million slaves were taken from East Africa in the 19th century, and the flow continued apace into the 20th century. According to Gordon, "Perhaps the last large-scale movement of East African slaves to the Middle East was in the 1920s."

As for Britain, beginning in earnest in the 17th century, it became a central cog in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, an industrial-scale enterprise of stomach-turning cruelty. Its ships transported millions of slaves, while the plantation economies of its Caribbean possessions depended on slave labor.

Then, in an extraordinary triumph of morality over unjust profit-making, William Wilberforce and his fellow abolitionists convinced British society to abolish the slave trade and eventually slavery itself. If the institution of slavery was very old, the influence of this Christian-driven attitude to human rights was new. The British went further than simply turning their back on slavery, and used their navy to suppress the slave trade and their diplomatic sway to push other countries to give up the trade as well.

At considerable cost to itself in terms of military effort and financial resources (it paid off Spain, for instance), the U.K. did much more than its share to make abolition the international norm, on top of its other outsized contributions to the creation of the modern world. Rather than contemplating a groveling apology, the attitude of the U.K. should be: "A simple 'thank you' will suffice."

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

Reducing the risk of heart disease

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a 70-year-old female who had a stress test, echocardiogram and carotid study. I passed all tests. My cholesterol is 173, with my HDL 56, LDL 95.6 and triglycerides 108. My blood pressure is 110/64. The cardiologist put me on 5 mg of Crestor. He feels this will help my numbers. He also has me taking CoQ10 and vitamin D3 in case my legs start aching from the Crestor. I've been taking everything now for two weeks, and my legs are starting to ache. Is it really necessary to stay on Crestor? – J.S.



I put all your numbers into the standard risk calculator at www.cvriskcalculator.com, and your risk for heart disease or stroke in the next 10 years is 6.8%. That is in a range where medication therapy is not usually recommended.

Of course, I can't tell you to stop taking the medication your doctor has recommended. He may know something about you that I don't. It's possible you have a less-common risk factor your cardiologist may not have told you about.

Some people with very good cholesterol and blood pressure numbers have high levels of C-reactive protein, for example, which confers an increased risk for heart disease. That's true even in people with desirable cholesterol levels, and people in that situation would clearly benefit from taking Crestor or a similar medicine. All of these medicines have the risk of muscle aches, although the risk of serious muscle damage is very small.

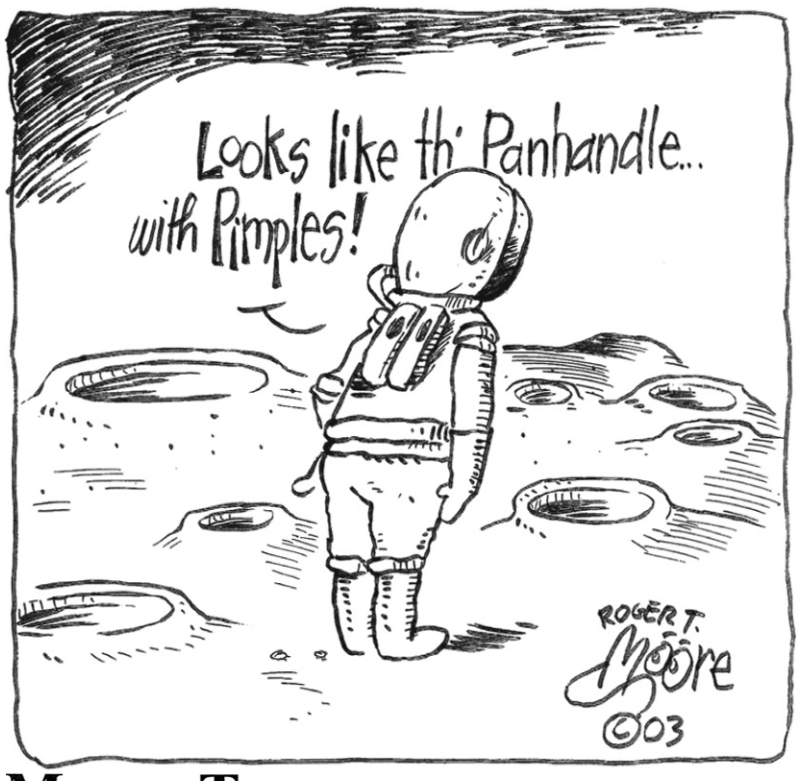
Nearly everyone can reduce their heart disease risk by having a diet with very little meat but high in vegetables, legumes and nuts, along with whole grains and fruits. Regular moderate exercise is as important as diet. Keeping stress levels low, having good close relationships and sleeping 7-8 hours daily are underappreciated beneficial factors to reduce heart risk as well.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 76, female, healthy, do not take any meds and am scheduled for a total knee replacement. During the testing, they made an incidental discovery on the CT scan of "a possible right sided right Hutch diverticulum of the bladder" and "two prominent right external iliac lymph nodes, measuring up to 15 and 13 mm in short axis." My surgical team did not respond, and my internist says, "do not worry," with no explanation. I would greatly appreciate your opinion. – L.M.

A Hutch diverticulum is a congenital condition, a small pouch in the wall of the bladder. They are seldom diagnosed in adults. They can be associated with infection and stones, but if you have had no problem with either of those conditions, I would certainly advise against doing anything about it.

The external iliac lymph nodes are structures in the hip, and like all lymph nodes, may enlarge in the presence of infection or inflammation. Yours are definitely enlarged, with less than 8-10 mm considered normal. Although we worry about enlarged lymph nodes as a symptom or sign of cancer, it's thought to be cancer only about 1% of the time. After you recover from surgery, it may be worth taking another look to see if they have shrunk. If they are persistently enlarged, especially if they are growing, some physicians would recommend a biopsy to be sure it is nothing to worry about.

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

November 19, 1969: Alan Bean of Wheeler becomes the first Texan to walk on the moon.

Fast rewards for whistleblowers

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

There is a new tool in the toolbox to catch criminals who steal from government agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Justice Department has now started the Fraud Whistleblower Incentive Program (WHIP). The highlight: Instead of waiting years to receive a reward for turning in the thieves and scammers, waiting through the appeals and delays that always occur, whistleblowers can receive an upfront award for their tips.

In other words, the government is asking for our help. And you know they're quite serious because whistleblowers can receive an award of $10,000 to $30,000 for information on certain categories of offenses that lead to criminal charges.

A few items on the list of basic eligibility criteria to receive the award include voluntary participation, information that is truthful and in writing, and tips that lead to criminal charges. The information needs to concern a long list of government agencies that provide healthcare and benefits, such as the Department of Labor, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services and, of course, the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Weeks ago the DOJ sent a directive to all fraud division personnel saying they will "zealously prosecute" those who defraud taxpayers and "aggressively target" them. They instructed the fraud division to create a program to "incentivize whistleblowers to bring forward credible information pertaining to fraud." A mere 19 days later the Whistleblower Incentive Program (WHIP) was announced.

So, they're quite serious. If you are ever in a position to save the government (and your fellow taxpayers) money by blowing the whistle on those who are scamming, stealing and defrauding all of us, check out the Whistleblower Rewards Program website at www.justice.gov/fraud/whistleblower. Also see america.gov/fraud.

There is another whistleblower awards program as well that might result in a monetary award: the Criminal Division's Corporate Whistleblower Awards Pilot Program (www.justice.gov/criminal/criminal-division-corporate-whistleblower-awards-pilot-program).

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: **V** equals **N**

FMJ VJFDB RLRFDGZ BDFDWFASD CZJFNDZI MNJ KASD AV R BAIFAVWFKU CJNDLARV WGKFGZD: FND RZFU CJUI.

Answer Page 4

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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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	+		÷		= 2
+		+		-	
	-		÷		= 1
÷		×		+	
	+		+		= 18
= 2		= 56		= 10	

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Weekly SUDOKU

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

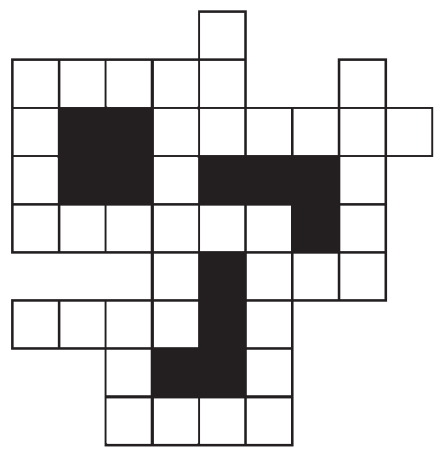
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FEAR KNOT™

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

MPO
EKDTCO
♥ ARPEC
♥ ESRO
TOMAPI
ODC
APDM
♥ ONDRO
RER
KESARO
♥ ARMSE
APTC



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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• "If you heat a pita in the microwave first, it will be easier to open and will rip less. About 10 seconds should do." – M.E. in Georgia

• "Here is a sewing tip for your column: I prewash fabrics that tend to shrink before I use them to make clothing items. That way, the fit is more accurate." – G.V. in Indiana

• I have said this before, but I'm happy to give a reminder with the holidays coming up and possibly new cellular technology in your family's future: Many of us have found ourselves with old cellphones that still work, but don't have the features we want. If you get a new phone, donate your old one. There are groups that refurbish the phones and give them to domestic violence victims for emergency purposes. Other groups send the phones back into use in the developing world. Any way you recycle your phone is a benefit to the environment. Check with www.bigskyrecycling.com or Verizon Wireless' HopeLine.

• Instead of using costly brass polish, try a little lemon juice and salt. Another brass polish you probably have right now is ketchup. Apply a thin layer and buff off with a soft rag.

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