



NEWSBRIEFS

Veteran exemption

Property owners who have previously filed for and received a veteran exemption for a 100 percent disabled or individual un-employability exemption on their homestead property do not need to fill out a new application for 2012. However, in order to ensure the proper application of this full exemption, the property owner must provide a 2012 disability rating letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to the Appraisal District by April 15, 2012. The letter may be e-mailed, faxed and hand delivered or mailed to:

- admin@epcad.org;
- Fax to (915) 780-2130;
- El Paso Central Appraisal District, Deeds & Exemptions Dept., 5801 Trowbridge Dr., El Paso, TX 79925-3345.

Failure to provide a current rating letter will result in removal of the exemption. You may obtain more information by calling the Deeds and Exemptions Department at (915) 780-2066 or e-mail admin@epcad.org.

— Dinah L. Kilgore

Socorro PO

The United States Postal Service (USPS) decision to close the Socorro Post Office originally set for April has been delayed several weeks. The USPS says it wants to allow Congress more time to pass additional legislation that could ward of some of the closings or find other ways of financing post offices. Washington DC still has the final word but will wait at least until spring 2012 before acting.

— Dave Garcia

HHS eco award

Horizon High School (HHS) has earned its second Green Ribbon Schools Award for raising funds to install an irrigation system. The HHS Environmental Club held their 2nd Annual Fall Fashion Show in November 2011 to raise the funds. This year the show featured fall fashions from Dillards at Cielo Vista Mall while guests were served a three course dinner by students. Students and staff modeled casual wear and formal wear for both men and women. "The club has planted trees and helped with landscaping on campus because of their hard work. Because of the success of events like this, the grass is greener here at Horizon High School," said Nancy Navarrete, HHS Environmental Club sponsor. Organizations sponsoring Green Ribbon Schools include Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Association of Student Councils, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas and the Texas Education Agency. These groups recognize schools that participate in real-world activities that

See BRIEFS, Page 4

It's time for both political parties to come to the aid of their country.

— Quips & Quotes



— Photo courtesy of Mario Rivera

BEEN THERE – El Paso Museum of History guest lecturer Mario Rivera in the market place in Puebla, Mexico.

History lecture series spotlights Puebla, Mexico

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

Puebla, Mexico: The City of the Angels will be the next topic to take center stage in the Spotlight on History Lecture Series program sponsored by the El Paso Museum of History. The special presentation is scheduled for 2 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 28, in the Museum's Seminar Room, 510 N. Santa Fe. The event is free to the public.

The informative illustrated presentation will be given by Mario Rivera. "In keeping with the Museum's mission of promoting the understanding and significance of the rich multi-cultural/national history of El Paso, Rivera will tell us the story of Puebla, Mexico," stated museum representative Jim Murphy.

"Many El Pasoans have roots to this city that was founded in 1531 and is situated at the foot of the Popocatepetl volcano. Puebla has

preserved its great religious structures such as the 17th century cathedral and buildings like the old archbishop's palace as well as a host of houses with walls covered in tiles or azulejos," stated Murphy.

Using visual aids, Rivera will transport his audience to this magical city and explore its rich history including culture, food, and traditions. He will discuss the aesthetic concepts that resulted from the fusion of European and American styles which were adopted in Puebla and are now peculiar to the Baroque district.

Rivera is a graduate from the University of Puebla and the University of Phoenix in Technology Management. He teaches Satellite Communications for the Mexican Army and works for Telecom at the Satellite Control center in Mexico City. Since 1997 he has been working in the semiconductor industry for companies such as Motorola and Microchip Technology Inc.

The Spotlight on History Lecture Series

program is a part of the City of El Paso's Museum & Cultural Affairs Department's many offerings. Also offered are art classes, film series, concerts, storytelling sessions and other educational programs to the West Texas, Southern New Mexico and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico communities.

The Museum & Cultural Affairs Department is charged with implementing funding programs, public art programs, cultural tourism initiatives, and performing/visual arts events that provide a variety of opportunities for residents to engage in arts and cultural activities that enliven and celebrate the City of El Paso and the region. These opportunities include developing the City's arts industry, providing quality programs that are representative of the city's diverse cultures, and maximizing available resources to enhance the city's cultural vitality, according to its website.

For more information, call (915) 351-3588 or email at taylorl@elpasotexas.gov.

Government initiatives, tax credits target veteran unemployment

Returning Heroes and Wounded Warrior tax credits

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

New tax credits for veterans and programs to encourage employers to hire the growing army of veterans, particularly those that have been unemployed for a considerable time, were signed into law by President Barack Obama recently.

This latest commitment to service members and veterans aims to provide a comprehensive plan to lower unemployment and ensure that service members leave the military career-ready to work and be hired in the private sector, said the President.

Recent U.S. reports indicate that nearly one million veterans were unemployed and the jobless rate for post-9/11 veterans was over 13

percent. Furthermore, as the Iraq war ends and the wind down in Afghanistan continues one million more service members are projected to leave the military between 2011 and 2016.

With this in mind, the President and Congress approved the following tax credits and programs:

- The Returning Heroes Tax Credit is a new hiring tax credit that will provide an incentive for firms to hire unemployed veterans.
- Short-term unemployed: A new credit of 40 percent of the first \$6,000 of wages (up to \$2,400) for employers who hire veterans who have been unemployed at least four weeks.
- Long-term unemployed: A new credit of 40 percent of the first \$12,000 of wages (up to \$4,800) for employers that hire veterans that have been unemployed six months or longer.
- The Wounded Warrior Tax Credit doubles the existing tax credit for long-term unemployed veterans with service-connected disabilities.

- Maintain the existing Work Opportunity Tax Credit for veterans with service-connected disabilities (currently the maximum is \$4,800).

- A new credit of 40 percent of the first \$24,000 of wages (up to \$9,600) for firms that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities who have been unemployed over six months.

The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs will also be working closely with other agencies and the President's economic and domestic policy teams to develop reforms to ensure that every member of the service receives the training, education, and credentials needed to transition to the civilian workforce or to pursue higher education.

In addition, the President announced a series of executive actions that will provide new resources for veterans to translate

See VETS, Page 8

Veterans Post

By Freddy Groves

Deadline extended for Gulf War benefits

If you're a Gulf War I or II veteran, you would have needed a service-connected illness to rear its head by Dec. 31, 2011 to collect benefits. Now there's a new law: You have until the end of 2016 to apply.

One big difficulty with the illnesses that have come out of that region is that they haven't always appeared quickly. Sometimes it was years down the road before problems came up, and they took awhile to diagnose.

According to Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki, "When there is uncertainty about the connection between a medical problem and military service, veterans are entitled to the benefit of the doubt."

If you have medical problems but are having trouble getting a diagnosis, look through the VA site [www.publichealth.va.gov] and click on Hazardous Exposure. See if you find any answers there.

Some of the hazards listed are:

- Burn pits: Exposure to the smoke from any number of pollutants;
- Infectious diseases: The list includes Malaria, Brucellosis,

- Campylobacter
- Jejuni,
- Coxiella Burnetii (Q Fever),
- Mycobacterium Tuberculosis,
- Nontyphoid Salmonella, Shigella,
- Visceral Leishmaniasis, West Nile Virus;
- Depleted uranium exposure;
- Toxic embedded fragments: The toxins can enter the bloodstream;
- Rabies: If you were bitten within the past 18 months, go get medical care NOW;
- Mefloquine (Lariam): Side effects from the anti-malaria drug;
- Cold and heat injuries;
- CARC paint: A chemical agent-resistant coating used on vehicles; and
- Chromium at Qarmat Ali Water Treatment Facility: Exposure was limited to the summer of 2003.

If you think you qualify for help, call the VA at 1-800-827-1000.

Write to Freddy Groves in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or send e-mail to columnreply@gmail.com. (c) 2012 King Features Synd., Inc.

View from here

By Riane Eisler and Kimberly Otis

Debt Fictions vs. Social Wealth

What we really need, as Nobel Prize-winning economists Paul Krugman and Joseph Stiglitz point out in recent columns, is to get over the current obsession with debt reduction and instead focus on investing in our material and human infrastructure.

This requires the exact opposite of what is happening in Washington. Our most important national asset is our social wealth: the high-quality human capital essential for both individual and national success as we shift from a manufacturing to a knowledge and service economy. In economic terms, this translates into reversing the downward trend of U.S. international competitiveness. In human terms, it translates into ending enormous suffering.

Regarding our debt, consider, as Krugman points out in his New Year's Day column in The New York Times, that it's actually lower now than during WWII. Consider also that interest rates have not increased with big deficits. Indeed, they are at historic lows. Moreover, regarding the argument that foreigners who invest in the U.S. are reaping big profits, Krugman also notes that "America actually earns more from its assets abroad than it pays to foreign investors."

However – and this takes us straight to the critical need to re-examine our national priorities – U.S. corporations with foreign subsidiaries, from General Electric to Nike and General Motors, are not America. U.S. companies may be reaping big profits by investing in other nations, but by so doing they are creating jobs overseas and not for Americans. In short, these are not the kinds of investments that will economically benefit people like you and me, or that will really benefit the American economy in the long term. What we actually need, and this is urgent given our decline in global competitiveness, is a massive national investment in the work of caring for people, starting in early childhood.


This wealthy nation is already behind other developed countries in the measurements that reflect the real wealth of America, not only international competitiveness, but basic measures such as child mortality and poverty rates, our standing in educational math and science rankings, and the state of people's health and well-being. Unlike our gross domestic product (GDP), which is also rising along with Wall Street, these are the social wealth measures that we should be prioritizing.

As Joseph Stiglitz wrote in his recent Vanity Fair article, "The Book of Jobs," instead of cutting health, education, and other such programs, we desperately need more public investments in education, research, and infrastructure.

A major step toward this change in national priorities is the development of more inclusive and accurate economic indicators than GDP – social wealth indicators that assess the real state of our nation. We must show the general public and policymakers both the enormous "back-end" financial costs of failing to invest in people, such as more unemployment, poverty, crime, and despair, and the enormous social and economic benefits of investing in human capacity building so that our nation can weather the drastic technological changes afoot.

As Krugman states, "the fault lies not in our debt, but in ourselves." It's up to us to tell our elected officials that we demand public investments in our most essential national assets, our people. Let's demand changes to the ways in which we measure economic success by demanding more inclusive and accurate indicators. And let's make sure that corporations that are doing so well pay their fair share of taxes so we can invest in the real wealth of America: our people.

Eisler is the best-selling author of The Chalice and the Blade and The Real Wealth of Nations and founder of the Center for Partnership Studies. Otis is director of the Center's Caring Economy Campaign. Copyright (C) 2012 by the American Forum.



AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION
of Texas

YOUR Gift


IS A WAY
TO CONQUER
LUNG DISEASE

Find out how you can help ...

www.texaslung.org

When you lose someone dear to you — or when a special person has a birthday, quits smoking, or has some other occasion to celebrate — memorial gifts or tribute gifts made for them to your local American Lung Association help prevent lung disease and improve the care of those who suffer from it.

1-800-LUNG-USA



WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

1973 39 Years 2012

SERVING ARTHUR, VINTON, CHOTTELLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINT, FARMER, SAN

PUBLISHED:
Published each Thursday by Homesteader News, Inc. Appreciation to our many contributors. Office open Monday through Thursday.

COPYRIGHT:
Entire contents © 2012 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 Courier reserves the right not to print letters to the editor or other submitted materials it considers inappropriate.


AD DEADLINE:
Monday 4 p.m. for Thursday publication.

CLASSIFIED RATES
\$10 for 25 words, \$15 for 40 words. Ad must be in writing and pre-paid. The Courier reserves the right not to print classified advertising it considers inappropriate.

DISPLAY RATES:
Open rate — \$25 per column inch. Call for more information or to set an appointment. The Courier reserves the right not to print advertising it considers inappropriate.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS:
Minimum 50 issues for \$36. Delivery via 1st class mail.

MAIL:
15344 Werling Ct.
Horizon City, TX 79928




Phone: 852-3235
Fax: 852-0123
E-mail: wtxcc@wtxcc.com
Website: wtxcc.com

Publisher
Rick Shrum

Contributors
Alfredo Vasquez
Don Woodyard
Steve Escajeda

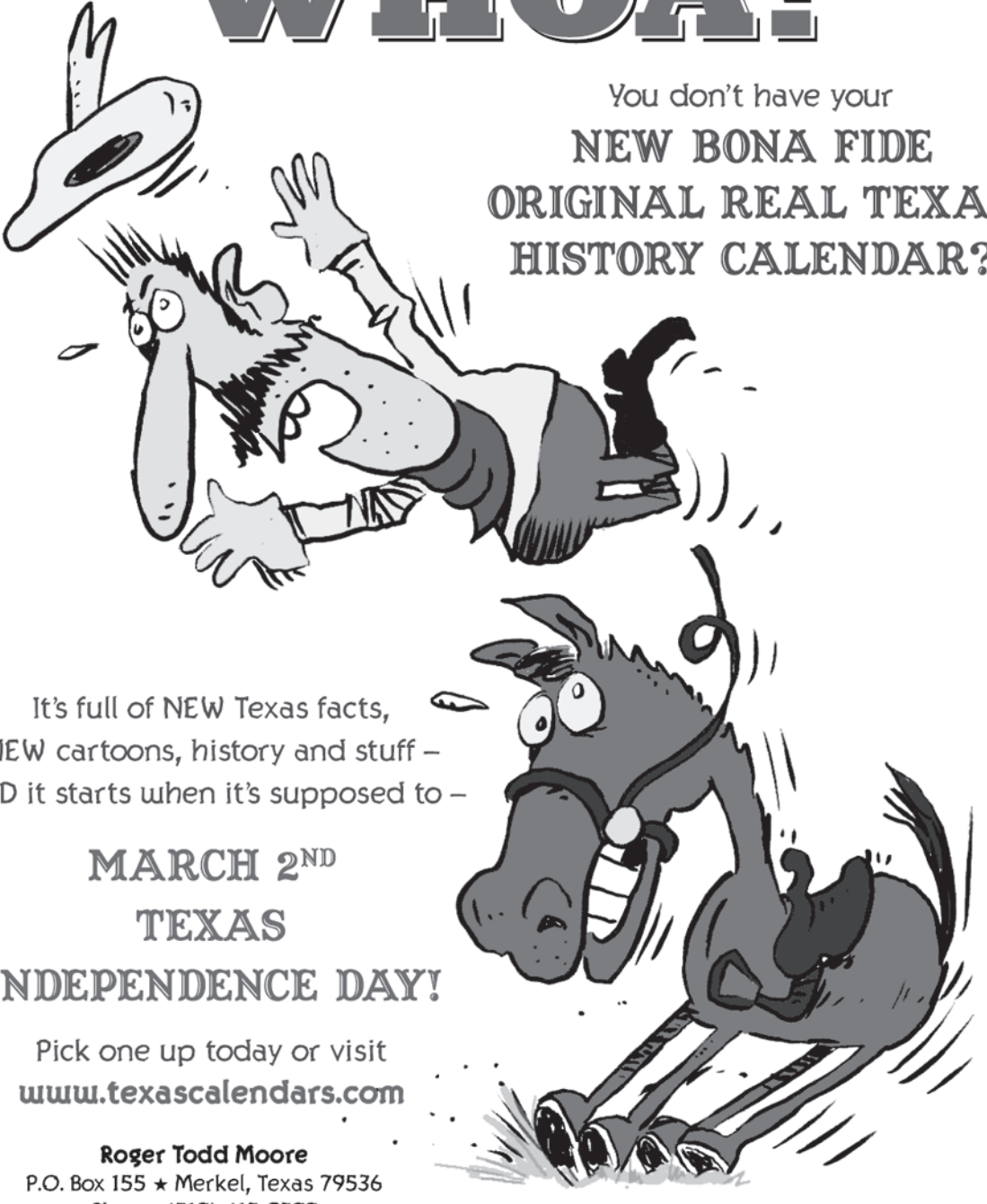
Member Texas Community Newspaper Association



Homesteader News, Inc.
Est. 1973

WHOA!

You don't have your
**NEW BONA FIDE
ORIGINAL REAL TEXAS
HISTORY CALENDAR?**



It's full of NEW Texas facts,
NEW cartoons, history and stuff –
AND it starts when it's supposed to –

MARCH 2ND TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY!

Pick one up today or visit
www.texascalendars.com

Roger Todd Moore
P.O. Box 155 ★ Merkel, Texas 79536
Phone: (512) 413-0392



Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

Days of honor

Hola, mi gente. This past Monday, the nation honored the life and memory of Dr. Martin Luther King. Reverend King was a leader of the African-American community in the fight for equal rights in our nation. The effort by Dr. King to fight discrimination and prejudice in a peaceful manner also benefited other races and cultures. Decades after his death, the African-American community has reached economic and political heights that were hard to imagine 50 years ago.

The violence of the sixties is so far in the past that many readers of this article have no idea the stress our nation faced back then. Riots, assassinations, looting and civil violence by citizens and police were everyday occurrences. We needed the passive resistance that was the cornerstone of the King movement. Without the peaceful protests, the situation could have worsened into straight out civil war.

The holiday to honor King is the first of three such holidays in the early part of the year. On Monday February 20th, we observe Presidents Day. Presidents Washington and Lincoln are both honored on this day. In some states, the event is meant to honor all Presidents, not just Washington and Lincoln.

Before 1968, both of the birthdays were observed individually; in essence granting two holidays for celebration. In 1968, the congress enacted laws that placed certain federal holidays on the third Monday of the month, including the birthday of Washington. At some point, the tradition included the celebration of Lincoln’s birthday as well. Unfortunately, the ultimate result of the

changes was to totally commercialize the holiday. The most prominent visualization of Washington and Lincoln tend to be in commercial advertisements. Sales by retail businesses trump the events that do take the time to honor our presidents.

On March 31st, Texas celebrates the birthday of Cesar Chavez. He was also a pacifist in his efforts to change societal norms. Most notably, Chavez brought to life the uncivil treatment of migrant workers in California who were employed on vineyards. Eventually his efforts resulted in changes that benefited the Hispanic community. His efforts served as an inspiration to a new generation that in some cases sought change by violent means.

We recognize that all four honorees changed our nation for the better.

It is very unfortunate that in celebrating the lives of these great men, we are tending toward making the holidays more of a festivity as opposed to one that honors their efforts and contributions. The consequence is fostering generations who know too little about all of them but enjoy a day from school or work.

It is vitally important that we observe the days in the manner that was originally intended. We should all take some time to read and remember what Washington, Lincoln, King and Chavez did to deserve our respect. Without the humility of Washington, the determination of Lincoln, the passivity of King and the inspiration of Chavez, we may very well be living in a nation much different than it is today.

All of them changed our lives for the better.

Gracias, mi gente, and I remain your friend and public servant, Chente por la gente.

View from here By Michael Quinn Sullivan

Legislators must fix the gimmicks

As a boy, cleaning my room usually meant pushing toys under the bed and shoving clothes into drawers. On cursory inspection the room was clean, but should my mother dare to open the closet door... serious injury to life and limb was not out of the question.

I remember once trying to move my bed, so I could shove more clutter under it, only to find in doing so I exposed rubble from previous such exercises in “cleaning.” Let’s just say I don’t recall my parents being overly amused.

In the same way, taxpayers shouldn’t be amused by the tricks and gimmicks legislators employ to keep up appearances that state’s fiscal house is in order.

A top priority for the next legislature must be to correct the creative accounting and get rid of the gimmicks so the state can have an honest budget. Or at least so Texans can have an honest budget debate.

It is absolutely true that the lion’s share of the biennial budget balancing act was accomplished through reductions in spending. Yet it is also undeniably true the legislature balanced the budget with no small number of tricks that will demand a reckoning.

A recent story in the Dallas Morning News recounts how a portion of the money from red-light cameras is supposed to go to the state, and then to fund emergency trauma care. While cities are remitting the cash generated by the cameras, the money isn’t flowing to the trauma centers from the state.

Why? The legislature is using the funds – some \$46 million – to help keep the books in the black.

In fact, the Associated Press reports \$4 billion in taxes and fees earmarked for funding specific projects were withheld by the legislature. And that doesn’t include the spending gimmicks, such as the purposeful under-funding of Medicaid (budgeting for

18 months instead of 24).

While such actions might make the books balance, it is a practice that crosses well past the borders of honesty.

If the legislature is going to assess a tax or a fee for a specific purpose, then those dollars should be used only for the specified purposes. Those revenues shouldn’t sit in a slush fund protecting legislators – and the public – from a clear discussion about spending priorities. Use the money as intended, or don’t collect it.

Of course, there is nothing new about this practice. For years we’ve watched federal lawmakers rob the Social Security trust fund the way a child might sneak cookies from a cabinet, replacing the dollars with an IOU and a smile. State legislators have for years used constitutionally dedicated gas-tax money to fund projects and programs with only a passing relationship to the maintenance and construction of roads and bridges.

When it is suggested we must stop the diversions, the push back is always the same: “But then we’d have to get the money somewhere else!” Perhaps so. Or, perhaps, with a clear view of all the spending and revenues, the people of Texas and their legislators would start prioritizing projects and consider previously unsought efficiencies in services.

It is cliché to note the cleansing power of sunlight in government, but it is cliché only because it is also true. We need to true up the state budget so the people can see precisely what the politicians are doing.

Legislators are our employees, hired by the people to execute the affairs of the state. They are not rulers, lieges nor lords; the money and power they wield are ours and only delegated to them. As such, we expect them to be good stewards, accurately describing to us – as their employers – the

School board members recognized in January

By Barbara Williams
Special to the Courier

AUSTIN – January 2012 is School Board Recognition Month, a time when districts across the state show their appreciation for the pivotal role elected boards of education play in their local schools and communities.

More than 7,200 locally elected school board members serve – without pay – in the 1,034 school districts located throughout the state.

“The people who make up these boards volunteer their time because they care about their communities and their schools. Each year, the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) designates January as School Board Recognition Month to emphasize the importance of the service these dedicated men and women provide to the schools and students of Texas,” said James B. Crow, TASB executive director.

“These community servants focus on ensuring the success of their local school district and serve as strong advocates for our kids. In

a time of financial uncertainty, they are willing to step forward to meet the critical challenges facing our public schools, working to balance the district budget while still providing excellent educational experiences for each child,” Crow said.

“We hope every community will express appreciation to our local board members for their dedicated commitment and offer support to the school board as it tackles the important task of governing. Local trustees work closely with parents and educators to develop

sound education policies in their district and set high standards for student success. We applaud them for shouldering enormous responsibilities and making the time to care about the future of Texas schoolchildren,” he said.

TASB is a nonprofit association established in 1949 to serve local Texas school districts. School board members are the largest group of publicly elected officials in the state. The districts they represent serve approximately 4.9 million public school students.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

- It was noted 20th-century poet T.S. Eliot who made the following sage observation: “Some editors are failed writers, but so are most writers.”
- The United States’ first railroad was built in 1809 in Crown Creek, Pa., by a man named Thomas Leiper. It had wooden tracks.

• When the now-classic television show “Gilligan’s Island” first aired in 1964, critics were not impressed. The review published in the San Francisco Chronicle said, “It is difficult to believe that this show was written, directed and produced by adults. It marks a new low in the networks’ estimation of public intelligence.” The show went on to air for three seasons and spurred three TV movie sequels.

• Believing that beards and long hair were too easy for enemies to grab, Alexander the Great ordered his soldiers to shave their faces and heads before going into battle.

• You hear a lot about the isolationism of Switzerland – the country that’s always neutral in any conflict – but you might be surprised to learn how serious they are about it. The country’s system of roads is mined in 2,000 places and can be demolished in the space of 10 minutes.

• Are you doing your share? If you’ve had a beer today, you’ve contributed to the approximately 90 million cans of the brew that are consumed by Americans every day.

• When the territory that later became the state of Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867, the cost came out to about 2 cents per acre.

• It’s not clear why, but it seems that fine hair grows faster than coarse hair.

Thought for the Day: “My father taught me to work, but not to love it. I never did like to work, and I don’t deny it. I’d rather read, tell stories, crack jokes, talk, laugh – anything but work.”

– Abraham Lincoln

(c) 2012 King Features Synd., Inc.

Briefs

From Page 1

promote and encourage a healthy and environmentally friendly learning environment in each of the four cornerstones of the program: Eco-Campus, Health and Fitness, Nature Adventure, and Natural Classrooms.

– Laura Cade

Mountain biking

Franklin Mountain State Park is one of 48 locations statewide listed in the Texas Parks and Wildlife bike guide. The guide says “... the scenic Franklin Mountains offer a taste of the Chihuahuan Desert and a dose of bona fide mountain biking through some of West Texas’ highest peaks.” and advises “... to keep an eye on the trail and make sure to avoid the various cacti and spiny plants and be prepared for obstacles that promise to challenge even the most experienced riders.” The Franklin Mountain trails are rated at the intermediate and experienced rider levels. “Many trails in Texas state parks provide great opportunities for all levels of mountain-bike riders to test and develop their biking skills, get a good workout, refresh their mind and spirits, spend family and friend time together and experience the great outdoors,” says avid mountain biker Dan Sholly, deputy director of Texas state parks. The Bike Texas brochure is on sale at a number of state parks or can downloaded free from http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_k0700_0715.pdf. You also can find a wealth of information about mountain biking destinations and resources by visiting the mountain biking pages on the Texas Parks and

Wildlife Department website.
– Rob McCorkle

Texas parks

Texas State Parks are facing a \$4.6 million revenue shortfall caused by heat, drought, wildfires and a drop in park visitation. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) board of trustees voted to donate \$500,000 last week to help keep parks open. An additional \$460,000 has been raised since a Dec. 6 campaign for donations began. Donors have contributed online, mailed in donations and contributions from the new Texas motor vehicle opt-in donation program. “Our hope is to encourage many other donors large and small to step up and help keep our Texas State Parks open,” said Kelly Thompson, TPWF board chairman. “Our mission is to support the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and there has never been a greater need for private support of our parks. We will be aggressively seeking donations for state parks from private individuals, corporate partners, and other foundations to help reach the \$4.6 million goal.” Park officials continue to stress three ways Texans can help keep state parks open:

- Go to <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/help/parks> to make a tax-deductible donation.
- Make a donation when you renew your motor vehicle registration.
- Finally, because visitor fees pay for about half of park system operating costs, visit state parks often with family and friends. Park leaders are continuing their call for people to visit state parks, touting cooler weather, parks greening after recent rains, and campfires now allowed again in almost every state park. Check each park’s web page online for the

latest information. To learn about the various Texas State Parks and their offerings, or to make online camping reservations, visit <http://www.texasstateparks.org>. Or call state park information at 1-800-792-1112, option 3, between 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

– Lydia Saldaña

Smokeless

In 2010, 19.3% of adults (or 45.3 million) smoked cigarettes, compared with 20.9% of adults in 2005. The percentage of high school students who smoked stood at 17.2% in 2009. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, accounting for approximately 443,000 deaths each year. People who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk for disease and premature death. The health benefits include:

- Compared to smokers your stroke risk is reduced to that of a person who never smoked after five to 15 years of not smoking.
- Cancers of the mouth, throat, and esophagus risks are cut in half five years after quitting.
- Cancer of the larynx is reduced after quitting.
- Coronary heart disease risk is cut by half one year after quitting and is nearly the same as someone who never smoked 15 years after quitting.
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease risk of death is reduced after you quit.
- Lung cancer risk drops by as much as half 10 years after quitting.
- Ulcer risk drops after quitting.
- Bladder cancer risk is halved a few years after quitting.
- Peripheral artery disease goes down after quitting.
- Cervical cancer risk is reduced a few years after quitting.
- Low birth weight baby risk

drops to normal if you quit before pregnancy or during your first trimester.

Source: Centers for Disease Control Website (cdc.gov/tobacco/).

– Victor Parra

Wanted

George Rivas, 62, is this week’s Manhunt Monday Most Wanted Fugitive. He is wanted for deceptive business practices.



George Rivas

Rivas also goes by George Fuentes. He is 5’2” tall and weighs 140 pounds. He has black hair and brown eyes. Rivas has tattoos on both arms. In March 2011, Rivas was hired to install a refrigerated air conditioning system at a home in the Montana Vista area. Over the course of the following months the homeowners paid him \$5,500 for the job. Rivas removed the swamp cooler from the residence and never returned. The homeowners have tried numerous times to contact Rivas. They reached him by phone in late October 2011 and Rivas again promised to complete the work. He did not go back and charges have since been filed. Rivas knows he is wanted and is believed to remain in the area hiding with friends or family. If anyone has seen or has any information on the whereabouts of Rivas they can contact Crime Stoppers of El Paso at 566-TIPS (8477). Callers will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a reward if the information provided leads to the apprehension of Rivas.

– Deputy Jesse Tovar

Gimmicks

From Page 1

Rather than rearrange the furniture, Texans deserve the opportunity to

finances of the state. Using budget gimmicks might get them through a session, even an election, but such things do not serve well the long-term interests of the people of Texas.

see a clean fiscal house. That will begin with an honest budget, one free from smoke, mirrors, gimmicks and tricks.

Michael Quinn Sullivan is the president of Texans for Fiscal Responsibility (www.EmpowerTexans.com).

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

A	Z	U	R	E					
	E		O						
	A		O	A	F				
P	I	L	A	F		R			
	L			E		O			
A	L	O	U	D		Z	I	P	
			N			E		A	
			D	I	R	N	D	L	
			O						E

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

CryptoQuip Answer

Popular sitcom about a wealthy Arab and his wife and children: “Oil in the Family.”

6	+	8	÷	7	2
×		×		–	
4	+	1	+	2	7
–		+		×	
9	÷	9	+	5	6
15		17		25	


“WE HAVE SO MUCH **Sun**
and so many great
resources; IT’S GOOD
TO SEE US TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THEM.”

— Mary Kipp, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer at El Paso Electric



Our commitment to renewable energy continues with the opening of the Roadrunner Solar Plant in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. Capitalizing on state-of-the-art technology, the plant utilizes the sun to its utmost potential. Spanning over 210 acres of land, generating 20 MW of power, the plant provides clean, environmentally sound power for thousands of homes in our region.



For a video tour of the Roadrunner Solar Plant,
go to epelectric.com and click on the  **sunny side**.



The NFL sorts itself out on way to Superbowl

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

The National Football League season is heading toward another Super Bowl awfully quickly.

And how about those games last weekend?

All I kept thinking was what a game that the Green Bay Packers and New Orleans Saints would be.

And just like that, both teams, both favorites, Aaron Rodgers and Drew Brees are out of the playoffs.

It’s proven every year but we just love to forget about it – defense does win championships.

The San Francisco 49ers aren’t the prettiest team in the league but they play a hard-hitting style of defense and sprinkle in just enough offense to come out ahead.

Just ask the Saints about how hard the 49ers hit on almost every tackle. And speaking about tackling, I think San Francisco may be the only team in the league that hasn’t forgotten how to wrap up a ball carrier and bring him to the ground.

The Green Bay Packers came into their game with the New York Giants as the rock stars of the NFL.

But while the Packers were carrying their Gucci man-purses into the game, the Giants brought their lunch pails and a smash-mouth brand of football.

In the end, the Packers were left to wonder what had happened to their spectacular season. It’s funny; all the talk about this year’s Packers being the best team of all time and Rodgers being the best quarterback of all time came to a screeching halt.

I love it when people come back to their senses.

Speaking of returning to reality, let’s take a look at what Tim Tebow did last weekend.

All he did was be himself.

Was anyone really surprised that Tebow and his Broncos were destroyed by Tom Brady and his New England Patriots?

C’mon, Tebow is a great motivational speaker and the kind of guy we all hope our daughters marry, but the guy isn’t an NFL-caliber quarterback.

I really believe the guy could become a pro bowl tight end, but he’ll never be any more

than a mediocre quarterback who needs the help of a great defense to keep his games close.

The Patriots’ defense is one of the worst in the league but Tebow made them look like the 1985 Chicago Bears for goodness sake.

In the other AFC playoff game, the Baltimore Ravens outlasted the tough Houston Texans 20-13.

If nothing else the game helped me catch up on my sleep. Boy the Ravens are boring to watch, but they do play the kind of defense that can lead to a Super Bowl date.

And we can’t close out their season without giving an ovation to Houston and coach Gary Kubiak for getting the absolute most out of a depleted team.

The Texans lost quarterback Matt Schaub and defensive end Mario Williams for the season and also wide receiver Andre Johnson for most of the year and still made the Ravens play up until the final whistle last week.

So now that we’ve gone over last week, it’s time to make some prediction for this week’s NFC and AFC championship games.

In the AFC, it’s a fight between a high flying

offense and a stingy hard-hitting defense.

These are the kind of matchups everyone likes because they really end up being a battle of wills. Which team will be forced to play the other team’s style?

In this game, I see the Ravens all over Brady. I see them forcing him to throw the ball before he’s comfortable, which will lead to at least three turnovers.

I see Joe Flacco silencing his critics by throwing for a couple touchdown passes and leading them to a 31-20 victory.

In the NFC, The 49ers will do something to the Giants that the team is not used to – hit them right back in the mouth.

The Giants are used to being the toughest team on the field. They won’t be this week.

San Francisco will do what they usually do – will themselves – some how, some way, to come out of every game with an ugly win.

This week’s ugly win will come by a 24-16 score.

Last week’s pretty win over New Orleans was an anomaly.

My predictions mean that we will have a Harbaugh versus Harbaugh Super Bowl.

Talk about the ultimate sibling rivalry.

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

Wide world of sports

NBC Sports used the “The Winter Classic” hockey game between the Philadelphia Flyers and New York Rangers to officially announce the formation of its own sports network

– the aptly named “NBC Sports Network.”

As Costas said it, I remember thinking, “Well... what took you so long?” After all, NBC Sports has as

good a legacy as any other network. Notre Dame football, the first to air the Super Bowl, and, if I recall, thanks to the physical prowess of “Buck Rogers in the 25th Century” star Gil Gerard, didn’t it win “Battle of the Network Stars” more than once? And then the camera panned to show the giant Comcast tower in downtown Philadelphia.

“Ah, right,” I said to myself

(because nobody would watch the hockey game with me). “Comcast is the new majority owner of NBC. Comcast had the Versus network, and now that will become the new NBC Sports network.”

We all know what we’re going to get from the network, too. Another Costas interview show in addition to his regular HBO “Inside the NFL” and “NBC’s Football Night in America” gig. Not that there’s anything wrong with that, either. A lot of people find him to be a bit smug, conceited and kind of arrogant, and while he does use a lot of extraneous \$40 dollar words during his shows, he’s a great interviewer and very knowledgeable. He asks the tough questions. Ask Jerry Sandusky about that.

And we’ll get hockey. And Notre Dame... lots and lots of Notre Dame.

Continuing my conversation with the voices in my head, I wondered why CBS didn’t have a “60 Minutes” network. MSNBC news is a collaboration between Microsoft and NBC (IBM declined to partner with another network at the time because it didn’t want

to compete with its customers in an area outside of its “core competency.”) Why didn’t FOX have an animation network, and why doesn’t ABC have its own networks? Turner Broadcasting did very well with the Cartoon Network.

Then I remembered that ABC has one or two small properties out there in the market, little niche networks that go by the name of Disney and ESPN. (Also, FOX just announced that it is indeed planning an animation network; it’s just waiting on the rebroadcast rights for “The Simpsons.” Doh!)

ESPN aside, can’t we make ESPN8, “The Ocho,” a “Wide World of Sports” branded network? Can we once again see rattlesnake-hunting championships, Evel Knieval and the thrill of victory so clearly expressed when Lee Majors beats Gabe Kaplan in the shot put?


Eh, who am I kidding? I would tune in just to watch the ski jumper’s epic fail each day.

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in Kansas City. (c) 2012 King Features Synd., Inc.





MINER BASKETBALL NOCHE LATINA

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 VS UAB
7:00PM at DON HASKINS

- 3,500 special edition replica Jersey koozies
- Commemorative Mineros jerseys worn by the team
- A silent auction will be held on the concourse for commemorative Mineros Jerseys
- Latin Music played all night




utepathletics.com



El Paso Electric

Get your tickets at the UTEP ticket center, the miner store on Zaragoza at Don Haskins or call 747-5234



Notice of Public Hearing Tornillo Independent School District

The Board of Trustees of Tornillo ISD will conduct a Public Hearing on the annual A.E.I.S. Report (Academic Excellence Indicator System) for Tornillo ISD. The meeting will be held at 6:00 P.M., Tuesday, January 31, 2012 in the High School Cafeteria, at 430-D Oil Mill Rd., Tornillo, Texas.

The 2010-2011 Tornillo ISD A.E.I.S. Report provides information on all the State defined accountability elements which the Texas Education Agency uses to evaluate the academic performance of the District.

Parents of children attending Tornillo ISD schools are encouraged to attend.

WTCC: 01 -19-12

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Your good health By Paul G. Donahue, M.D.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: I am a 74-year-old male and have been diagnosed with peripheral artery disease, PAD. I have a complete occlusion of the main artery just above the knee. What, in your opinion, are the chances of getting through the blockage with angioplasty? There is constant soreness in my calf, even at rest. Is that caused by the blockage? Will cilostazol (Pletal) and Crestor possibly dissolve some of the blockage? – J.C.

Peripheral artery disease, PAD, is also called peripheral vascular disease. It's an obstruction to the flow of blood through a leg artery. The obstruction is a buildup of cholesterol, fats and various other blood elements. Between the ages of 60 and 65, 4 percent of adults have it, and by the time people reach 80, 20 percent or more are victims of it.

Its chief sign is intermittent claudication, which is pain in leg muscles, quite often the calf muscles, when a person is active. Many can predict almost to a specified number of steps when the pain will arise. Once the person rests, pain usually lasts minutes, but it can take 20 or more minutes to leave. It returns when the person begins to walk again. I can't say definitely if your constant calf pain is due to PAD; it might be.

Ankle blood pressure is a valuable test for detecting PAD. Normally, the ankle pressure should be close to the arm blood pressure. A lower ankle pressure indicates an obstruction in a leg artery.

Your medicines cilostazol and Crestor won't completely dissolve the buildup in your leg artery, but they'll keep it from growing larger. Crestor might reduce the size somewhat. You can help matters by watching your cholesterol; eating a diet that emphasizes grains, fruits and vegetables; controlling your blood pressure; and controlling

your blood sugar if you have diabetes. Walking is an exercise that is most helpful.

Angioplasty is one option for you. It will get through the buildup. It's the same procedure used to open heart arteries with a balloon-equipped catheter that is threaded to the blockage through a surface artery. The balloon is opened at the obstruction, and often a stent is left in the artery. A stent is a wire device that keeps the artery opened. Surgical replacement of the clogged segment of artery with a graft is another option. The location and extent of disease determine which is the better choice.

The booklet on PAD explains this common condition in detail. To obtain a copy, write: Dr. Donohue – No. 109W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Canada with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: My boyfriend's feet sweat terribly. His socks are wringing wet when he takes his shoes off after running. I have told him to wear cotton socks, and he made the change. I don't see any improvement. Would a different kind of sock be better? – H.M.

Acrylic is a better material. It wicks moisture away from the feet. Dusting powders and a change of socks will improve the situation. Have him carry an extra pair with him when he runs. Damp feet invite fungal infections.

Dr. Donohue regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Readers may write him or request an order form of available health newsletters at P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. (c) 2012 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Super Crossword

- CLONES ACROSS

1 News bit

5 Billboard

9 Request an encore

13 Flying Pan?

18 Praise

passionately

19 Singer Guthrie

20 Top-notch

21 Pit

22 " _ It Up" ('73 hit)

23 A roaring success?

24 Nary a soul

25 Actress Andress

26 Start of a remark by Laurence J. Peter

30 Unfashionable

31 Castilian cry

32 " _ and shine!"

33 Part 2 of remark

37 "Golden Girl" McClanahan

38 Read quickly

40 Spellbound

44 Generation

45 McGregor of "Trainspotting"

47 Company

49 Hot off the press

50 Mirth

52 Tennis legend

53 Kanga's creator

54 Crafter's need

56 Anderson's "Tea and _"

58 Shucks

59 "Beagle" passenger

60 _ Spumante

61 Lout

62 "State Fair" state

64 Etta of the comics

65 Commercials

68 Part 3 of remark

72 Actor Fernando

73 Learning method

75 Grant or Elwes

76 Youngster

77 Emulated

Pinocchio

79 Winter wear

81 Milo of "Ulysses"

83 Malamutes and huskies

87 Poe crow

88 More owlish

89 Coat material

90 Singer Amos

91 Relished the rigatoni

92 Ullman or Gold

94 Flicka's foot

95 Chum

96 Harper of "Tender Mercies"

98 Adequate

99 Understanding

100 Part 4 of remark

104 Lug

106 Actress Zadora

107 TV's "Have _ Will Travel"

108 End of remark

117 Infantry action

118 Cheeseboard choice

119 Landed

120 Bearing

122 Like Corn Belt soil

123 Congenial

124 _ list

125 Beige

126 "The Threepenny Opera" star

127 Antlered animal

128 Out-of-this-world org.

129 Meat cut

DOWN

1 April initials

2 "Cheerio!"

3 Sinister

4 Wine variety

5 Greet the general

6 Rainbow goddess

7 Whipped-cream serving

8 Hendryx or Gaye

9 Wicked thing?

10 At large

11 _ May Wong

12 Jury member

13 Knitting stitches

14 Less demanding

15 Part of Micronesia

16 Colleague of 101

Down

17 Rug type

21 Like a Vermont village

27 "What?"

28 It may be common

29 Rub out

33 Packs groceries

34 "The _ Dachshund" ('66 film)

35 Swarm (with)

36 New York university

37 _ Dawn Chong

38 Made mucky

39 Faultfinder

41 Response

42 Clothing category

43 Jacksonian bill

46 Kid's query

47 Hodges of baseball

48 Loser's locale

51 Antipollution grp.

52 Storm

53 Winter wear

55 Joan Van _

57 Lava particles

58 "Bali _"

59 '73 Elton John hit

61 Ancient epic

63 Prosperous

65 Genesis peak

66 Contribute

67 Ranges

69 Beethoven symphony

70 Air safety org.

71 Nugent or Knight

74 Poetic preposition

78 Banned pesticide

80 Picnic pest

82 "Yo!"

83 _ Canals

84 Klutz's cry

85 Mardi _

86 Farm feature

88 Rouse

89 Finished first

93 Act like the Earth

94 " _ Wave" ('63 hit)

97 Comic Kaye

99 "Trees" poet

101 Author Christie

102 Word with fruit or Stanley

103 Crown covering

105 Florida city

106 Locale

108 Knight time

109 Muscat's nation

110 Be inclined

111 Magnus or McClurg

112 "Laugh-In" name

113 Literary pseudonym

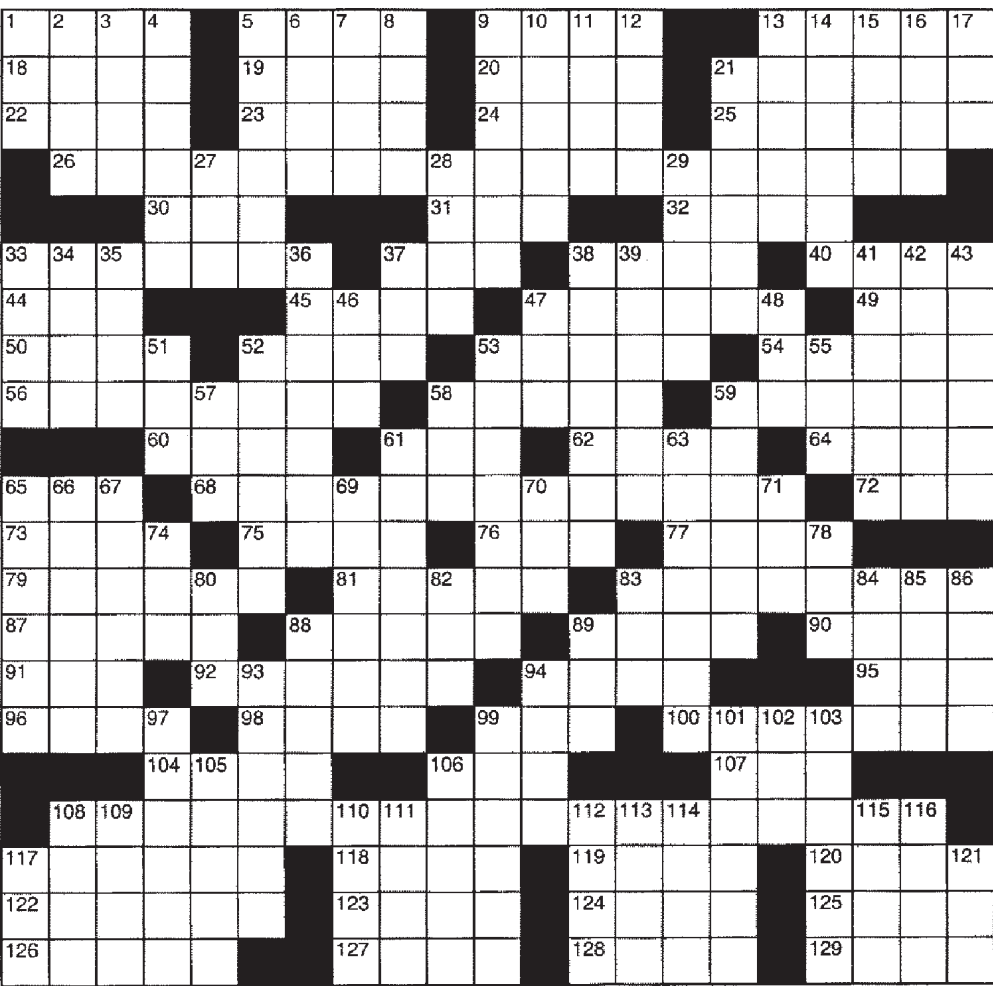
114 Pine for

115 Puerto _

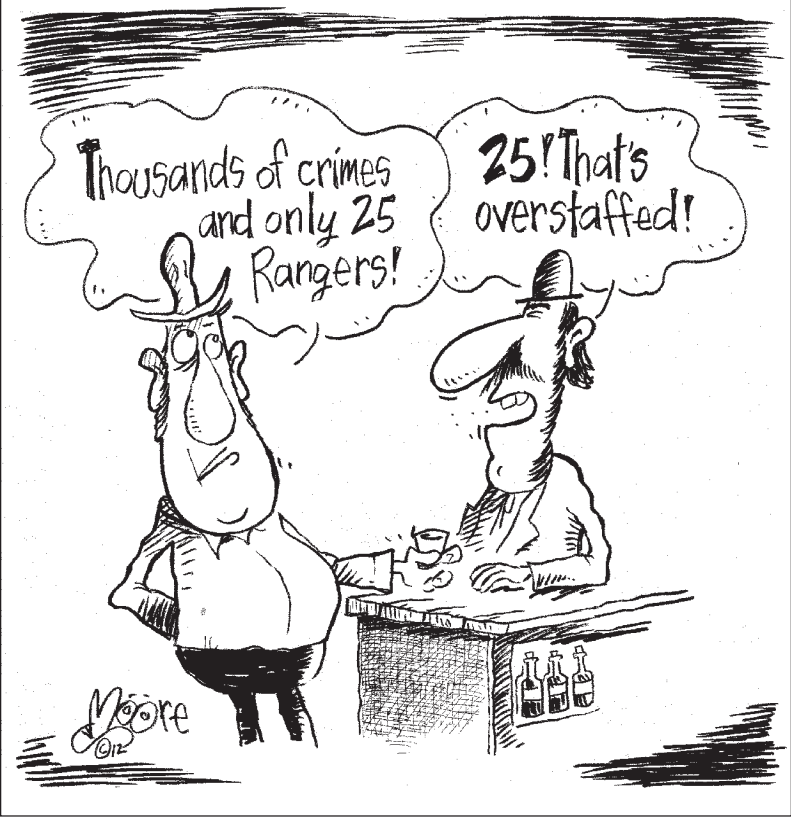
116 Garr of "Mr. Mom"

117 "Silent" president

121 Sister



Moore Texas by Roger Moore In 1910 Texas there were only 25 Texas Rangers on the payroll.



GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

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.

	+		÷		2
×		×		-	
	+		+		7
-		+		×	
	÷		+		6
15		17		25	

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

Answer Page 4

© 2012 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

Answer Page 4

★★★ HOO BOY!

© 2012 King Features Synd., Inc.

Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Social Security helps the homeless

More than half a million Americans experience homelessness on any given night. Nearly 20 percent of them are “chronically homeless,” meaning they are on the streets regularly.

Social Security has several programs that pay benefits to qualified individuals, including those who are homeless. These programs include retirement, disability, and survivors benefits, as well as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which is a needs-based program for people who are blind, disabled, or age 65 or older. If you know someone who is homeless, and you want to learn more about how Social Security might help, a good place to get information is at www.socialsecurity.gov/homelessness.

That page includes a link to the Spotlight on Homelessness – a website designed to help the homeless apply for SSI. It’s available at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-homeless.htm.

The homelessness page also includes links to information

on health care for the homeless, institutionalization, advocacy groups, reports on homeless outreach, and even links to other websites like the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and HUD.

You’ll find other information helpful to the homeless on www.socialsecurity.gov. For example, there is a link to our Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool, or BEST. Based on answers to various questions, this tool helps determine the benefits someone might be eligible for and gives information about how to qualify and apply. Go directly to www.socialsecurity.gov/best.

Tell anyone you know who is homeless or threatened with homelessness to use the Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool and to check out the different types of benefits and assistance they may be eligible to receive. Spread the word about the help available to the homeless.

Visit www.socialsecurity.gov/

homelessness to learn more.

Q: Are Social Security numbers reassigned after a person dies?

A: No. We do not reassign Social Security numbers. In all, we have assigned more than 460 million Social Security numbers, and each year we assign about 5.5 million new numbers. The current system has enough new numbers for several more generations. For more information, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

For more information on any of the material above, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us at 1-800-772-1213. If you have any questions that you would like to have answered, please mail them to the Social Security Office, 11111 Gateway West, Attn: Ray Vigil, El Paso, Texas 79935.

Vets

From Page 1

military experience to the private job market, give veterans additional

career development support, and better identify firms looking to hire veterans. These initiatives include:

- Veteran Gold Card: Post-9/11 veterans will be able to download the Veteran Gold Card, which

entitles them to enhanced services including six months of personalized case management, assessments and counseling, at the roughly 3,000 One-Stop Career Centers located across the country. This could help serve the more than 200,000 unemployed Post-9/11 veterans.

- MyNextMove for Veterans: The Department of Labor will launch the My Next Move for Veterans online resource that allows veterans to enter their military occupation code and discover civilian occupations for which they are qualified. The site will also include information about salaries, apprenticeships, and other related education and training programs.

- Create a Veterans Job Bank: The Administration will launch the Veterans Job Bank to help veterans find job postings from companies looking to hire them. It already searches over 500,000 job postings and is growing. In a few easy steps, companies can make sure the job postings on their own websites are part of this Veterans Job Bank.

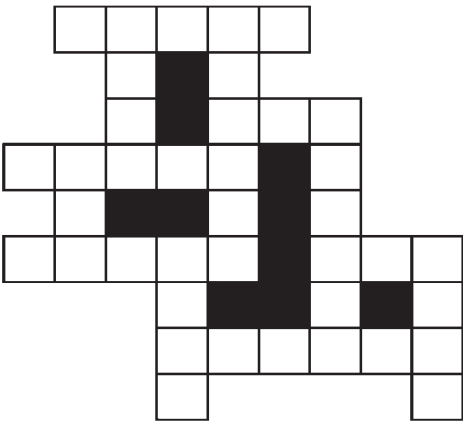
- Community Health Center Veterans Hiring Challenge: The administration is challenging community health centers to hire 8,000 veterans over the next three years – approximately one veteran per health center. The health reform law provides funding for community health centers to serve more Americans and hire more workers.

- Helping Veterans Become Physician Assistants: To fast-track medics into jobs in community health centers and other parts of the health care system, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) pledged to open up career-paths beyond nursing and expand opportunities for veterans to become physician assistants. Through this initiative, HRSA will begin to give priority in physician assistant grant awards to universities and colleges that help train veterans for careers as physician assistants.

For more information about these services visit the veterans’ website at www.whitehouse.gov/vets.



LIL
ZORNEF
DOLUA
♥ELZA
LIDDNR
PZI
DOUN
AFILP
FAO
♥OFDORE
ZERUA
♥ELPA



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.

© 2012 King Features Syndicate. All rights reserved.