

NEWSBRIEFS

‘Blue Light’ special

It’s the stuff of SciFi: a drug that lies dormant in your body until you turn on the lights. In fact, according to the Association of Mature American Citizens, researchers have been experimenting with the elusive process since the 19th Century. But it is only recently that they’ve been able to master the science. Scientists from the Imperial College London and Munich’s Ludwig-Maximilians University published their findings in the journal, Nature Communications. They reported that they have adapted a drug for the treatment of type 2 Diabetes so that it becomes active in a patient only when it’s targeted by blue LED light. Dr. David Hodson, from Imperial College London, told the Medical News Today that: “In principle, this type of therapy may allow better control over blood sugar levels because it can be switched on for a short time when required after a meal. It should also reduce complications by targeting drug activity to where it’s needed in the pancreas.”

— John Grimaldi

Dangerous dentures

Seniors who sit in a draft are likely to catch a cold; those who leave their dentures in overnight could be at a higher risk for pneumonia, the Association of Mature American Citizens concludes from a new study published by the International and American Associations for Dental Research. The researchers studied 526 men and women in their 80s over a three year period and found that nearly 41 percent of the 453 denture wearers among them had an array of oral hygiene problems and that they were more than twice as likely to develop the dreaded respiratory disease. Their conclusion for geriatric patients: take those dentures out of your moth before nodding off for the night.

— John Grimaldi

Wanted

A man robs a Northeast El Paso restaurant and Detectives from the Northeast Regional Command Center, are asking for your assistance in identifying this robber through the Crime Stoppers, “Crime of the Week.” Twenty minutes after six, on the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, a man walked into the Cici’s Pizza located at 4654 Woodrow Bean. When the man walked in, he made his way to the counter. The man made a threat of having a handgun to the employee at the counter, and demanded money from the cash register. The suspect ordered the employee to place the money in a dark colored bag that the suspect had brought with him. Once the suspect

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Too many people pick a quarrel before it’s ripe.

— Quips & Quotes

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – A local group of businessmen and a national hotel brand are the latest investors to join the revitalization of downtown El Paso movement.

The ownership group and Starwood Hotels & Resorts announced recently that the 15-story, 85-year-old O.T. Bassett Tower, located on the corner of Stanton and Texas streets and in the middle of the downtown area, will be converted into a 100-room Starwood Aloft Hotel.

In August, another group of investors announced that the vacant Artisan Hotel on Kansas Street, just a couple of blocks away from Bassett Tower, would become an upscale Hotel Indigo – an urban, boutique hotel brand started in 2004 by InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) and now one of the world’s largest hotel companies. Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn

See BASSETT, Page 3



— Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

BRAND BUILDING – Starwood Hotels & Resorts officials asserted recently that converting the historic O.T. Bassett Tower, above, into an Aloft Hotel will be a great match for the dynamic city of El Paso and will appeal to the next generation of travelers with its urban design, live music at the WXYZ bar, and unbeatable location at the heart of downtown.

San Elizario ISD named to prestigious honor roll

By Cynthia P. Marentes
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO – The San Elizario Independent School District (SEISD) is one of 547 school districts in the U.S. and Canada being honored by the College Board with placement on the 5th Annual Advanced Placement (AP) District Honor Roll. SEISD

is the only school district in El Paso to receive the designation for increasing access to AP course work while simultaneously maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP exams. Reaching these goals indicates that the district is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for the opportunity of AP.

Since 2012, SEISD has increased the

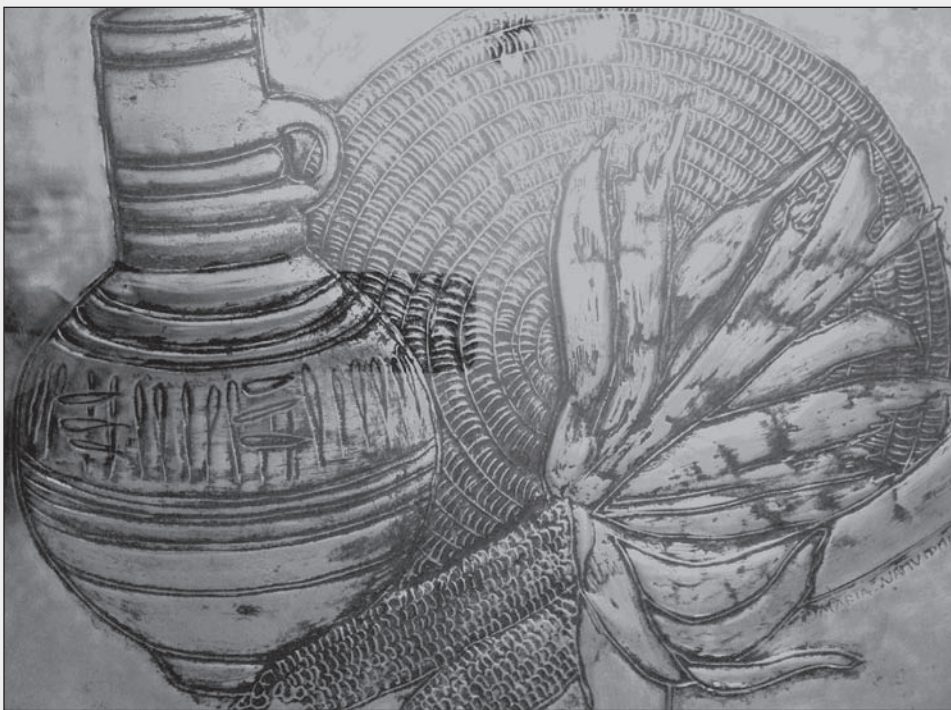
number of students participating in AP while improving the number of students earning AP exam scores of 3 or higher. SEISD has only one high school campus with a student population of slightly over 1,000 students. According to Maribel Guillen, who became principal at the campus beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, San Elizario High School has expanded its repertoire of AP and Pre-AP courses.

“Being named to the College Board honor roll means this school has increased Pre-AP and AP course offerings while maintaining a high rate of students passing their AP exams with a score of 3 or better,” Guillen added.

Data from 2014 show that among African American, Hispanic, and Native American students with a high degree of readiness for AP, only about half of students are participating. The first step to delivering the opportunity of AP to students is providing access by ensuring courses are available, that gatekeeping stops, and that the doors are equitably opened so these students can participate. SEISD is committed to expanding the availability of AP courses among prepared and motivated students of all backgrounds.

“The devoted teachers and administrators in this district are delivering an undeniable benefit to their students: opportunity” said Trevor Packer, the College Board’s senior vice president of AP and Instruction. “We applaud your conviction that a more diverse population of students is ready for the sort of rigor that will prepare them for success in college.”

In 2014, more than 3,800 colleges and universities around the world received AP scores for college credit, advanced placement, and/or consideration in the admission process, with many colleges and universities in the United States offering credit in one or more subjects for qualifying AP scores. Inclusion on the 5th Annual AP District Honor Roll is based on the examination of three years of AP data, from 2012 to 2014, looking across 34 AP Exams, including world language and culture.



— Image courtesy of El Paso Museum of History

BANG AWAY – The metal embossing artwork, titled **Basket and Corn**, above, was created by artist Maria Almeida Natividad. Natividad will be guest presenter at the Museum of History’s upcoming holiday workshop, Saturday, Dec. 6.

History museum offers metal embossing/repujado workshop

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

of History invites the public to a Holiday Family Workshop in Metal Embossing/Repujado for adults and children (ages

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Museum

See WORKSHOP, Page 5

Finances

By Jason Alderman

Smart tax moves to consider before New Year’s Eve

The flurry of activity during the last weeks of December can make it difficult to pay attention to finances. If you want to save on your tax bill come April, now’s the time to make some critical moves.

If you have a tax advisor or financial planner, it’s wise to run these ideas by them first. Here are some suggestions to investigate by year-end with follow-up in the new year:

1. Accelerate your deductions and defer your income.

It makes the list every year because it works. To keep your 2014 tax bill low, try to defer bonuses, consulting income or self-employment income until 2015 while taking as many deductions as you legally can in 2014. Deductions may include paying your January federal and state income taxes before Dec. 31, real estate taxes and interest payments.

2. Bunch non-urgent medical expenses this year or move them to 2015.

If you have non-emergency medical procedures coming up, it’s a good idea to pack them into the same year so people under age 65 can exceed the 10 percent adjusted gross income (AGI) minimum for medical expenses. For those over age 65, the AGI minimum is 7.5 percent.

3. Make last-minute withholding adjustments.

If you’ve started making more money later in the year, make sure your withholding or estimated tax payments are adjusted before Dec. 31 so you don’t face underpayment penalties later.

4. Evaluate your traditional and Roth IRA holdings.

Many people who expect their tax rate to go up in retirement convert traditional IRAs to Roth accounts in advance. Those who don’t do so keep their traditional accounts as-is. No matter how close you’re getting

to retirement, it’s a good idea to take inventory of your IRA investments to make sure they’re accessible and to contact your tax advisor if you have questions about strategy.

5. Contribute as much to retirement accounts as possible.

Putting money away for retirement is always a good idea – for your tax bill and for your future. For tax year 2014, individual 401(k) (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/401k>) contribution limits are \$17,500 and \$5,500 for an IRA (not including catch-up contributions for taxpayers 50 or over). In 2015, those contribution limits will go up to \$18,000 and \$6,000 respectively.

6. Consider HSAs and FSAs.

High-deductible insurance plans may offer a health savings account (HSA) option that allows you to deposit pretax dollars to pay for medical expenses high-deductible plans don’t cover. Flexible Spending Accounts (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/fsa>) also allow pre-tax dollars to pay for dental care, vision checkups and glasses and over-the-counter drugs.

7. Gather state and local sales tax receipts.

If you itemize your deductions, consider whether to deduct state and local sales taxes instead of state and local income taxes.

8. Consider a gift.

Individuals can give up to \$14,000 a year per beneficiary to as many people as they’d like during 2014 free of gift or estate tax. That amount goes up to \$28,000 per beneficiary per year for spouses (both individual and spousal numbers will stay the same in 2015).

9. Make last-minute charitable deduction.

If you itemize, you can deduct for charitable contributions – but do some homework first. GuideStar.org lists every IRS

See FINANCES, Page 5

Veterans Post

By Freddy Groves

Choice cards have gone out

The Department of Veterans Affairs is making good on a promise to get veterans into appointments more quickly, especially those who live far from medical facilities or have waited too long for appointments.

During the first week of November, the VA sent out the first batch of Veterans Choice Cards to veterans who are eligible because of where they live: more than 40 miles from a facility, must travel extra miles to get around bodies of water or mountains, or must travel by plane or boat to get to a facility.

During the third week of November, the second batch went out. These went to veterans who were waiting more than 30 days either from their preferred appointment date or past the date they should have been seen as determined by their doctor. Costs will be covered only for VA-approved physician-ordered care.

This effort is part of the new Accelerated Care Initiative, wherein opportunities for care have been increased through mobile medical units and having clinics open more hours on more days (evenings plus weekends).

Here are some of the stats the VA holds out as proof the program is working:

- Wait times for primary care for new patients has been reduced by 18 percent nationwide.
- Ninety-eight percent of appointment dates preferred by the veteran or his doctor have been completed.
- More than 1 million authorizations for care outside the VA system were granted, which is nearly a 50 percent increase over the past year, and which will be increased even more by the latest batches of care cards.

For more information about the Choice Program or to schedule an appointment for non-VA care, call 866-606-8198. Also to see more information, including eligibility, go online to www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.

Freddy Groves regrets that he cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into his column whenever possible. Send email to columnreply2@gmail.com. (c) 2014 King Features Synd., Inc.

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COURIER

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Letter 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.


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Take the First Step to a Heart-Healthy Life.

Start! Walking. Start! Something.

Heart disease is the number one killer of men and women in America. But did you know that just 30 minutes a day of physical activity can improve your health and decrease your risk of heart disease?

An easy way to work physical activity into your regular routine is to start walking. For every single hour of regular, vigorous exercise, you can add two hours to your life expectancy.

It's easy to Start! whether you're by yourself or with friends, family and co-workers. You'll all feel a difference and live longer, heart-healthier lives.

Join the movement.

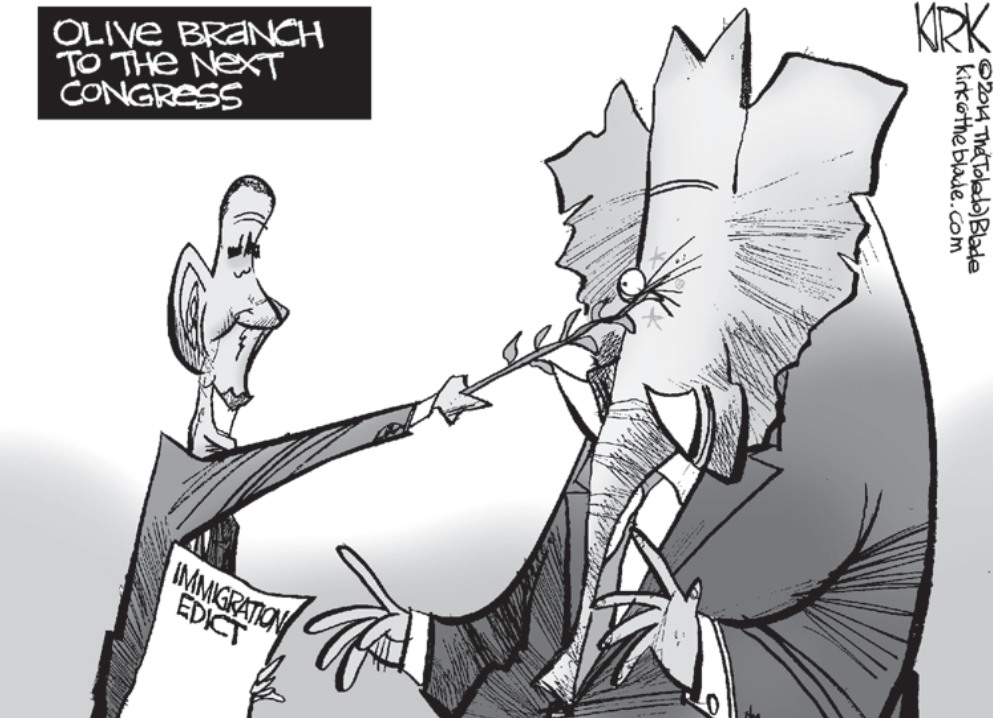
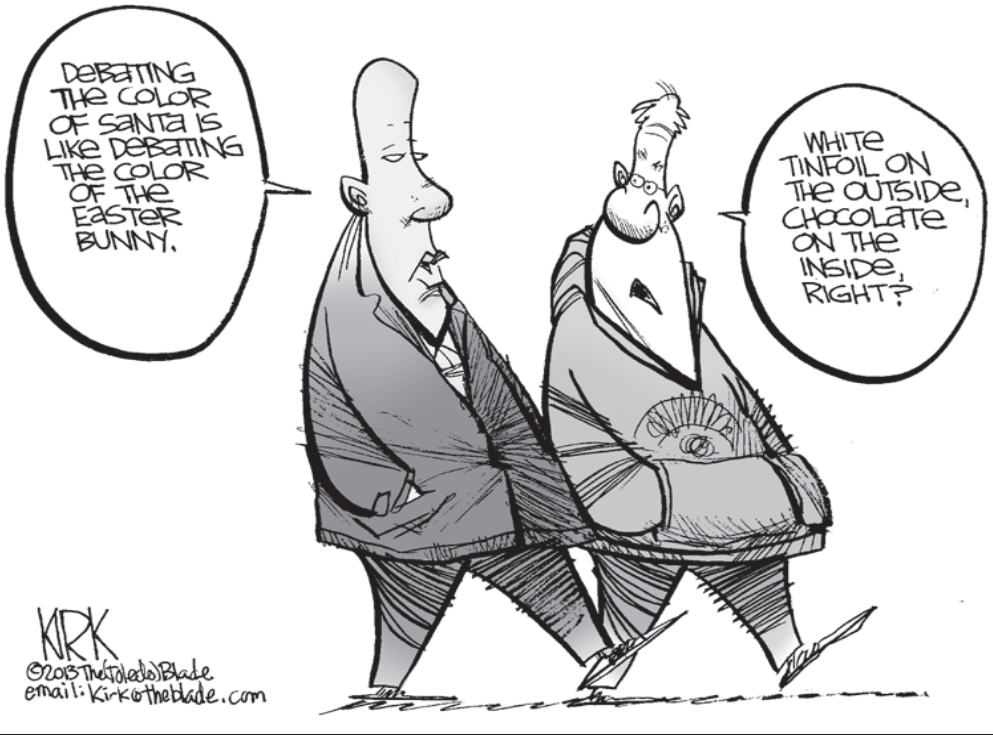
heart.org/start

start!

American Heart Association

Learn and Live

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– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

LOOK UP – The O.T. Bassett Tower, located at 303 Texas Ave. in downtown El Paso, is 196 feet tall and has 15 stories. It was the tallest structure in El Paso when it was finished in 1930. The tower was commissioned by Charles N. Bassett who named it in honor of his father.

Bassett

From Page 1

Express are its best known and largest chains.

As the redevelopment of downtown continues to pick up steam, Joe Gudenrath, executive director of the El Paso Downtown Management District, stated in a recent news report that getting a new use for the historic buildings is a great sign for El Paso.

The Aloft rooms are Starwood’s hip brand with a modern design, loft-like accommodations, and high-tech features aimed largely at youthful travelers. The remodeled downtown hotel will include an indoor pool, a bar, fitness center, and 3,000 square feet of meeting space, Starwood officials related.

The remake of El Paso’s Bassett Towers is among a number of tourist-destination cities that are getting conversions of old, urban buildings into new Aloft Hotels. Starwood officials reported that historic downtown

buildings in New Orleans and Little Rock, Ark., are being converted into Aloft Hotels and that others are also planned for Miami, Tampa and Orlando, Fla.; Tulsa, Okla.; Dallas; and Detroit.

Lane Gaddy, an El Paso businessman who heads Bassett Partners (the investors’ group that bought the Bassett Tower), told reporters recently that the building will require extensive renovation but that no cost estimates were yet available.

The art deco Bassett Tower building was designed by famed El Paso architect Henry Trost and has been vacant since 2007, when the Borderplex Community Trust, a downtown real estate investment trust bought the property.

Bassett Tower’s conversion into a hotel should be completed by 2017, according to officials, and that Aimbridge Hospitality, a Dallas hotel investment and hotel management firm, would manage the El Paso Aloft Hotel.

For more information about the new hotel, visit the company’s website at alofthotels.com.

To Advertise Call 852-3235
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Socorro Independent School District
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance
Governmental Funds
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

Data Control Codes		10 General Fund	50 Debt Service Fund	60 Capital Projects	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:						
5700	Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 80,833,942	\$ 24,282,095	\$ 119,931	\$ 3,707,981	\$ 108,943,949
5800	State Program Revenues	231,468,956	20,195,775	–	6,246,922	257,911,653
5900	Federal Program Revenues	3,023,119	–	–	41,777,025	44,800,144
5020	Total Revenues	315,326,017	44,477,870	119,931	51,731,928	411,655,746
EXPENDITURES:						
Current:						
0011	Instruction	178,641,989	–	2,145,681	19,020,690	199,808,360
0012	Instructional Resources and Media Services	4,872,551	–	115,786	211,521	5,199,858
0013	Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	1,124,976	–	–	4,054,281	5,179,257
0021	Instructional Leadership	3,601,391	–	–	176,778	3,778,169
0023	School Leadership	21,667,603	–	273,731	–	21,941,334
0031	Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	8,303,764	–	39,909	2,619,798	10,963,471
0032	Social Work Services	1,726,730	–	–	367,500	2,094,230
0033	Health Services	3,673,564	–	31,913	102,253	3,807,730
0034	Student (Pupil) Transportation	10,745,278	–	–	–	10,745,278
0035	Food Services	–	–	–	24,626,256	24,626,256
0036	Extracurricular Activities	8,846,608	–	–	44,087	8,890,695
0041	General Administration	7,322,612	–	–	133,429	7,456,041
0051	Facilities Maintenance and Operations	34,854,452	–	685,162	11,728	35,551,342
0052	Security and Monitoring Services	6,307,032	–	83,340	8,343	6,398,715
0053	Data Processing Services	3,516,824	–	184,023	–	3,700,847
0061	Community Services	754,865	–	–	1,044,348	1,799,213
Debt Service:						
0071	Principal on Long Term Debt	–	14,174,943	–	–	14,174,943
0072	Interest on Long Term Debt	–	23,429,061	–	–	23,429,061
0073	Bond Issuance Cost and Fees	–	780,912	289,623	–	1,070,535
Capital Outlay:						
0081	Facilities Acquisition and Construction	1,830,835	–	63,255,863	25,478	65,112,176
Intergovernmental:						
0099	Other Intergovernmental Charges	1,448,210	–	–	–	1,448,210
6030	Total Expenditures	299,239,284	38,384,916	67,105,031	52,446,490	457,175,721
1100	Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	16,086,733	6,092,954	(66,985,100)	(714,562)	(45,519,975)
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):						
7911	Capital Related Debt Issued (Regular Bonds)	–	100,520,000	95,290,000	–	195,810,000
7916	Premium or Discount on Issuance of Bonds	–	12,659,394	5,012,500	–	17,671,894
8949	Other (Uses)	–	(112,067,643)	–	–	(112,067,643)
7080	Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	–	1,111,751	100,302,500	–	101,414,251
1200	Net Change in Fund Balances	16,086,733	7,204,705	33,317,400	(714,562)	55,894,276
0100	Fund Balance – July 1 (Beginning)	85,865,271	40,113,444	66,162,626	10,835,328	202,976,669
3000	Fund Balance – June 30 (Ending)	\$101,952,004	\$ 47,318,149	\$ 99,480,026	\$ 10,120,766	\$ 258,870,945

Briefs

From Page 1

grabbed the money he fled the scene. The suspect is described as a Hispanic male, approximately 5’8” to 5’10” in height. He was wearing a dark colored hooded jacket, a scarf covering his face, and dark colored pants. Investigators are certain that someone has information on the identity of the man involved in this robbery. Anyone with any information on the identity of this robber is asked to call Crime Stoppers of El Paso immediately at 566-8477 (TIPS), on-line at www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org or you can send a text message by entering the key word “CRIME1” (no space and include the quotation marks) plus your tip information, and text it to CRIMES (274637). You will remain anonymous, and if your tip leads to an arrest, you can qualify for a cash reward.

– Javier Sambrano

Wanted II

A man causes approximately \$100 damage to a daycare in Central El Paso. The El Paso Police Department are asking for assistance in identifying this man through the Crime Stoppers “Crime Spot.” In the early morning hours of Sunday, Nov. 16, 2014, a man entered the back part of Niki and Clair’s Daycare located at 1600 N. Copia. Once the man was in the back he began to damage window screens and break off sprinkler heads. The man at one point goes to the company’s van and begins to break the windshield wipers. The man additionally takes a hose and attempts to fill the van with water. The man is described as a Hispanic male and appears to use eyeglasses. The man was wearing a dark and light colored baseball cap, a plaid long sleeve shirt and blue denim jeans. The incident took place just minutes after midnight. Anyone with any information on this case is asked to call Crime Stoppers of El Paso immediately at 566-8477 (TIPS), on-line at www.crimestoppersofelpaso.org or you can send a text message by entering the key word “CRIME1” (no space and include the quotation marks) plus your tip information, and text it to CRIMES (274637). You will remain anonymous, and if your tip leads to an arrest, you can qualify for a cash reward.

– Javier Sambrano



Click It or Ticket. Even in the back seat.

Buckle up every rider for every trip.

State law now requires both adults and children to be buckled up in the front or back seat. A child less than 8 years old, unless taller than 4 feet 9 inches, must ride in a child safety seat. Most children between 4 and 8 years old will need a booster seat to be safe and comply with the law. Fines range from \$25 to \$250, plus court costs. TexasClickItorTicket.com



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CryptoQuip
Answer

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Workshop

From Page 1

6 years and up). The free workshop will be held from 1 to 3 p.m., Saturday, December 6. Interested participants are encouraged to pre-register.

The workshop will be facilitated by well-known artist and educator Maria Almeida Natividad. An El Paso native, Natividad has served as both organizer and presenter in numerous art workshops and conferences locally and nationally for years.

Natividad studied her art at Modesto Junior College, the University of Arizona, and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master’s degree in art education at UTEP. She also holds elementary, secondary, and Advanced Placement (AP) teaching certificates. She has taught in local area public schools for more than 20 years.

Natividad stated that the art workshop will focus on the ancient art of embossing or pressing shapes into metal to create a design. The theme of the workshop will be holiday designs, she said.

According to Natividad, aluminum metal

foil is the material used for this workshop, where participants will be able to produce a design on paper then transfer it to a metal plate. “This technique requires applying pressure to the metal plate with special tools to stretch the metal to create a three dimensional design. The metal is thus tooled to achieve the embossed look,” she stated.

Natividad explained that acrylic paint is used to add an antique look to the design, or permanent ink markers can be used to add color. She stated that this technique is called *Repujado*, an art form that arrived in Mexico during the Spanish colonization. “It was born out of the necessity to protect the icons of the churches from the chandelier smoke, the environment, and time itself,” she related.

Natividad added that Mexican and South American artisans have used copper and tin for centuries to produce jewelry and ornamental items. Religious images were embossed on tin metal sheets initially, and today this technique is used for many decorative popular arts.

For more information and to register for the upcoming holiday workshop, contact El Paso Museum of History Educator Jaime Knoedler at 915-351-3588 or send email to knoedlerjm@elpasotexas.gov.

Finances

From Page 2

registered nonprofit organization, so you can do full research on the organization’s work and legitimacy as well as its tax status.

10. Take that home office deduction. If you use part of your home for business or if your office is an unattached structure, you may qualify for a home office deduction up to \$1,500 a year.

11. Watch the news and keep your tax preparer’s number handy. Congress may spend its final days arguing over a variety of expired tax breaks still pending. It’s important to keep an eye on tax news between now and New Year’s Day.

Bottom line: Use the end of the year to gather records and advice and make smart choices taxwise and otherwise.

Jason Alderman directs Visa’s financial education programs.

Archives: www.wtxcc.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

The *West Texas County Courier* office will be closed from Friday, December 19 to Friday, December 26, 2014.

The last issue for 2014 will be December 11, 2014. Our next publication will be January 1, 2015.

The office will open again on Monday, December 29, 2014.

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Counting up the multiple blessings of El Paso

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Just like many of the rest of you, the turkey, ham, stuffing, cranberry sauce and all the other waste-line-expanding treats that make up the Thanksgiving Day menu, left me a little fat and lazy over the weekend.

But as long as we don’t make it a weekly habit, I guess that’s okay.

In fact, it’s one of the things we should be thankful for. We’re very fortunate to be living in the country that provides opportunities to its citizens.

Everyone knows it’s not perfect. How could it be – it’s run by humans. But it’s far and away the best place to live on this little blue marble floating around in space.

I guess the same thing can be said about sports. There is no other country on this planet that competes in, watches and bets on as many different sporting events as the United States.

Let’s face it, if you happen to be a human being and you happen to be a human being that loves athletic competition – there are worse places you can live in.

And within these United States there is the West Texas Town of El Paso.

Yeah I know it looks a little uninviting when you see nothing but brown as your airplane approaches the city from high above.

But we all know that you can’t judge a city by its dirt and tumbleweeds.

When you see all the turmoil around the country concerning race relations and spiraling unemployment and weekend murder sprees and total bankruptcy – El Paso has stayed above the fray.

While other cities are dealing with hurricanes, earthquakes, mudslides, floods, tornados, snowstorms and the occasional flow of lava in the living room, El Paso enjoys yet another day of incredibly beautiful weather.

How many other cities saw golfers playing in their shorts and shirt sleeves this past weekend?

And even when it comes to the world of sports, El Paso has had a lot to be thankful for.

The UTEP women’s basketball team advanced all the way to the championship game of the WNIT against perennial powerhouse Rutgers.

The Miners lost in a thriller, 56-54, but there wasn’t a fan in the city that wasn’t as proud as could be of the team and what they accomplished. And when have you ever heard of the Don Haskins Center being sold out for a women’s game?

The UTEP football team actually posted a winning season and will be going to a bowl game. What makes this even more significant is the fact that they were just 2-10 a year ago in coach Sean Kugler’s first season.

The UTEP men’s basketball team is off to a fast start and as always, will be in the thick of the Conference USA championship battle this season.

The El Paso Chihuahuas took the Triple-A baseball world by storm in their inaugural season. The franchise made national news on countless occasions and is leading the way toward revitalizing the downtown area.

The El Paso Rhinos won the Western States Hockey League championship last season and is already making their mark again this season. The Rhinos have made winning a habit and are quickly becoming a staple in the city.

If all that isn’t enough, how about the

EPCC female runners? They just won the school’s first National Junior College Athletic Association cross country championship three weeks ago.

They then followed that up by winning their second straight NJCAA half marathon championship a week later.

Last year’s Sun Bowl game featured UCLA and Virginia Tech. In recent years, El Pasoans have had the pleasure to watch the likes of USC, Georgia Tech, Notre Dame, Miami (FL), Oklahoma, Stanford, Oregon, Missouri, Wisconsin and Pitt.

How many cities have the opportunity to host a horserace that will qualify a horse for the Kentucky Derby?

I know, I know, technically, the Sunland Derby takes place in Sunland Park, NM, but c’mon...

So as we hit the gym this week to try to rid ourselves of the poundage we put on last weekend, let’s remember to be thankful.

Look at what we have in our backyard; friendly people, safety, great food, fantastic weather and great sports.

Dorothy was right, there is no place like home field advantage.

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

No more cinnamon Christmas Eve

He forgot the doughnuts every year.

“No crullers, huh?”

“No, Hank... guess we’ll have to go out and get some.”

It was a ritual they repeated for the past dozen years or so, every Christmas Eve, a ritual that began ever since he got nostalgic for the old neighborhood. He was surprised to learn that his old elementary school had been converted into something called “workforce retirement housing” and that the old Greek

diner where his mom worked was still there. That’s where he found Hank... a guy that could have been a boxing world champion, could have been his adopted dad, but instead was just the guy who walked him to school safely every morning while his mom worked the early shift.

Hank had on his best suit pants and black patent leathers for the holiday trip to the diner, but he took the spot in the well-worn booth seat under a faded picture of a fighter from the 1930s in a boxer’s stance, ordered

a cinnamon cruller and Sanka, and began chain smoking like he had never left. They would reminisce about the walks to school that Hank didn’t seem to remember, even the important ones like the time he forgot his lunch and Hank gave him a dollar or the time he taught him how to fight and stand up to that fink Jimmy Rotniski. But his eyes would light when he told the waitress Hank was the boxer in the picture.

“Sure!” Hank would say. “Golden Gloves champion!”

“Who?” the waitress snapped. “You, cinnamon cruller?”

“Yes, him,” he would say, a bit protective of the man. He would send the doughnut back, too. “Come on... don’t skimp on the cinnamon.”

Over the years, the ritual never changed, nor did the stories. Hank never remembered the lunch money story, but he remembered the first purse he won fighting.

“Go on, tell the waitress,” he’d say to him.

“Forty dollars! Like Rockefeller I thought!”

Years later, Hank would win a few more and Hank bought a...

“Pontiac!”

Never got married, but his mother?

“Always had a crush on her!”

Never got the chance? Hank doesn’t remember. But he does remember the time he clocked Joe Louis on the chin in a sparring match.

Hanks eyes would light up like

one of his smokes.


“Right before the Max Schmelling fight! The one he lost! I had something to do with that! I loosened him up! After that wouldn’t fight me! Would not let me sit at the table!”

His voice would trail off. “No place to sit.” The cinnamon would get all over his jacket after he took a bite.

Same story every year. Hank never gets the girl from the diner, never gets to fight Joe Louis. Soon, Hank has to stop smoking indoors and they stop serving Sanka. He long ago stopped asking if he remembered Jimmy Rotniski, and last year, he arrived on Christmas Eve to find the old elementary school deserted.


The diner is a doughnut shop now anyway. Hank would have had no place to sit.

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in Dallas. (c) 2014 King Features Synd., Inc.



UTEP MEN'S BASKETBALL

VS ARIZONA | DEC. 19 | 9 PM



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HOOPS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

UTEP

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
VS EASTERN NEW MEXICO
DEC. 2 | 2 PM

VS HOUSTON BAPTIST
DEC. 6 | 7 PM

MEN'S BASKETBALL
VS INCARNATE WORD
DEC. 8 | 7 PM

VS SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA
DEC. 16 | 7 PM

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Comix

OUT ON A LIMBBy Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVESBy Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATSBy Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Your good healthBy Keith Roach, M.D.

DR. ROACH WRITES:

In February, I answered a question from a woman who wanted to help her husband cut down on alcohol use. I recommended against ever drinking more than five drinks a day. Five per day (four for women) is the usual definition of binge drinking, and linked with high risk for serious medical and social problems.

In no way did I mean to suggest that this is a healthy amount of drinking. While some studies have shown a reduced risk of heart disease among moderate (one to two drinks per day for men, one-half to one for women) drinkers, this is not proof that drinking is good for you. And for people with a history of problem drinking, ANY alcohol probably is too much.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a reasonably healthy 62-year-old male. During a recent checkup, my doctor observed that I have "abnormal breast development" and suggested that I see an endocrinologist. Besides being embarrassed to take my shirt off in public, are there other reasons I should be concerned about this? What treatment would an endocrinologist be likely to recommend? – Anon.

The appearance of breast tissue in men (gynecomastia) is common, and can have several causes. In adolescents, some transient gynecomastia is normal and usually resolves by itself. In middle-age and older men, medications (such as spironolactone, a common diuretic), liver disease and abnormal hormone levels (both sex hormones and thyroid) are the most common causes, but much of the time, no cause can be found. Since gynecomastia in rare circumstances can be a symptom of a serious disease, and endocrinologists are commonly expert in this evaluation, I would agree that you should get evaluated.

It is important to be sure you do

not have male breast cancer, and a mammogram may be necessary. A careful exam, blood hormone levels and sometimes a testicular ultrasound to look for hormone-producing tumors are part of the evaluation. Treatment is of any underlying cause that may be found. If no cause is found, many men prefer surgery or liposuction to remove the breast tissue.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have arthritis in both knees, injuries from the past. My knees hurt when going up and down stairs, not level ground. How do I go about finding a good orthopedic doctor to check out my knees? There are so many doctors who do knee surgery. – D.M.P.

Well, I must admit to some bias here as an internist. I would recommend starting with a rheumatologist, an expert in medical treatment of joint problems, or an internist, rather than going first to a surgeon. While orthopedic surgeons certainly have expertise in all kinds of treatment (both medical and surgical), I reserve the expertise of the orthopedic surgeons for the people with knee pain who, after a medical evaluation, I think might benefit from surgery.

Knee pain is such a common problem that any rheumatologist will be expert in diagnosing your condition. There are many kinds of arthritis, each with different treatments and prognoses. It's a good rule of thumb not to see a surgeon unless you think you need surgery, and you don't know enough yet to make that decision.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. To view and order health pamphlets, visit www.rbmamall.com, or write to P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. (c) 2014 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Super Crossword

SHARED FEATURES

- ACROSS**
- 1 Empress of old Russia
- 8 Unwakeful state
- 12 Part of BYO
- 15 Political coalition
- 19 Choose for jury duty
- 20 Lang. spoken in Milan
- 21 1959 John Wayne film
- 23 What a maestro studies
- 25 Christian, for one
- 26 Braggarts have inflated ones
- 27 Student transcript nos.
- 28 Penitentiary division
- 30 Laid eyes on
- 33 What "My Bonnie lies over"
- 34 Home for a pet rodent
- 38 Fort Knox feature
- 44 Meyers of "Think Big"
- 45 Wriggly swimmer
- 46 "Now _ be told"
- 48 Having much land
- 49 Crop lopper
- 51 Mournful ring
- 52 Groups of wharf-supporting beams
- 54 Taj _
- 55 Relaxing facility

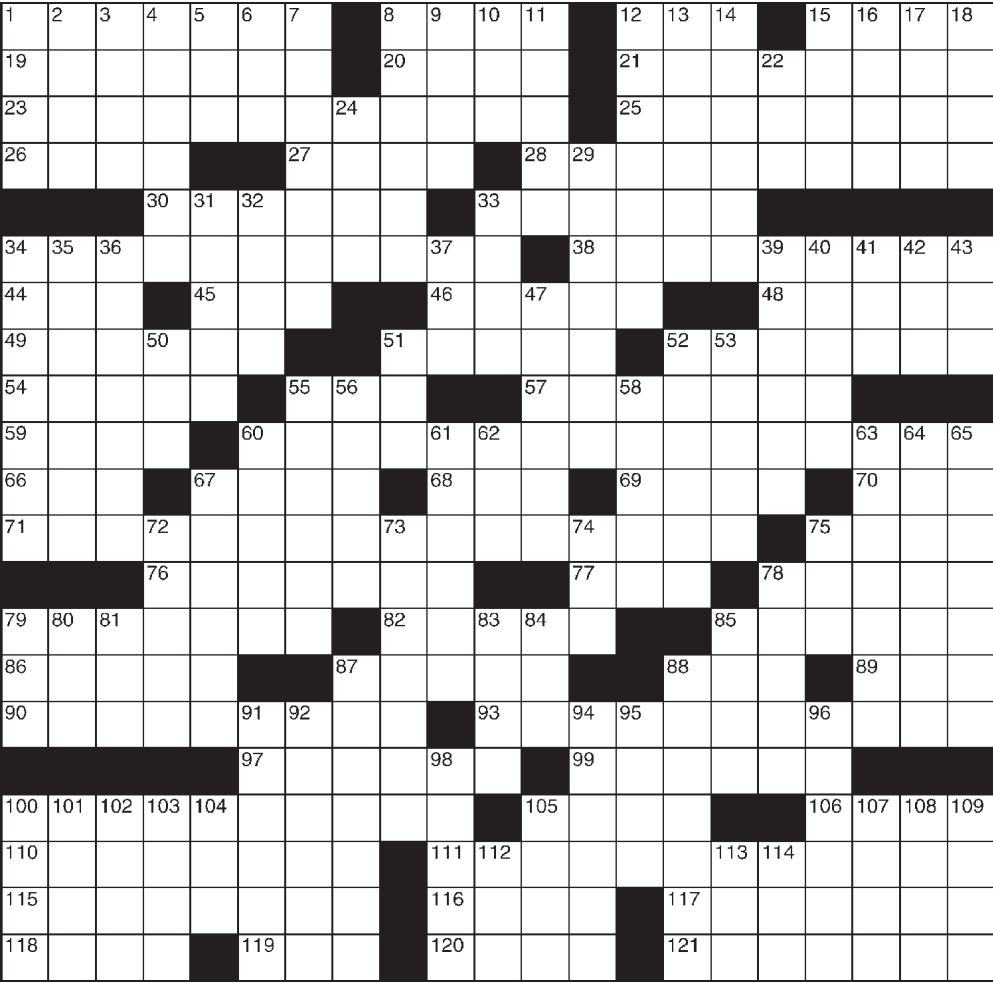
- 57 Sci-fi writer Harlan
- 59 "_ just wondering"
- 60 Mark of a sergeant, e.g.
- 66 "The Hanoi Hilton" locale
- 67 White cheese
- 68 A mean Amin
- 69 Track beams
- 70 Discontinue
- 71 Its students tumble
- 75 "_ grown apart"
- 76 Represented
- 77 Wayfarer's refuge
- 78 Try to win at eBay, say
- 79 First, in terms of transmission
- 82 Holland bloom
- 85 Marine "motorcycle"
- 86 "So long, Pierre!"
- 87 "_ directed" (medicine box warning)
- 88 Freckle, e.g.
- 89 Royal flush card
- 90 Nokia offering
- 93 Scanned supermarket symbol
- 97 Close by
- 99 Squabble
- 100 Busy shop before Halloween
- 105 Mosquito net material
- 106 "_ boy!"
- 110 Into the wind

- 111 Statement about nine answers in this puzzle
- 115 Successful CPR performers
- 116 Dressed in
- 117 Chinese Checkers pieces
- 118 Fruit-flavored drinks
- 119 MI-to-SC dir.
- 120 Ticked
- 121 Skit
- DOWN**
- 1 Clock datum
- 2 Overproud
- 3 Lhasa _ (dog breed)
- 4 Boosts
- 5 Business mag
- 6 Teachers' union: Abbr.
- 7 Allowing only female students
- 8 Loud insect
- 9 Western Amerinds
- 10 Tarnish
- 11 Initial Hebrew letter
- 12 Singer Roy
- 13 Nobelist Elie
- 14 Like some mutual funds
- 15 Make coffee
- 16 Molten rock
- 17 See 91-Down
- 18 Strong rope
- 22 Storage unit

- 24 Project particular
- 29 In a majestic manner
- 31 Stainless _
- 32 Squint (at)
- 33 Head, in Pau
- 34 Hurting
- 35 Sunken space in front of a cellar window
- 36 She's a soccer star
- 37 Gibson liquor
- 39 Philip VI's house
- 40 Serving perfectly
- 41 Vase variety
- 42 Piano part
- 43 NFL goals
- 47 Bishop, e.g.
- 50 Fathers
- 51 China's Chiang _-shek
- 52 Rack-and-_ steering
- 53 Hoops Hall of Famer Dan
- 55 Parents' hiree
- 56 Kilt pattern
- 58 Arrived at by chance
- 60 Hostess Perle
- 61 Kleenex, say
- 62 Some inserts
- 63 Really must
- 64 Called upon
- 65 Nucleic acid base
- 67 Showing, as a card
- 72 Actor Conrad
- 73 Dandelion

- lookalike
- 74 Tuned in puzzle
- 75 Cleverness
- 78 Davis of film
- 79 Erié or Supérieur
- 80 Lyrical work
- 81 "Stand by Me" actor Wheaton
- 83 SoCal squad
- 84 It's S. of Leb.
- 85 Athletic type
- 87 Dismount
- 88 Artist Marcel
- 91 With 17-Down, discusses at length
- 92 Weasels' kin
- 94 Fell in line
- 95 Menu listing
- 96 Grouchy
- 98 Food carton abbr.
- 100 Singer Irene
- 101 Electrified
- 102 "54" co-star Campbell
- 103 Platform for a lectern
- 104 Canadian cable channel for children
- 105 Piddling
- 107 Like giants
- 108 Bark source
- 109 Mgr.'s aide
- 112 Garden tool
- 113 Actor Kilmer
- 114 Epoch

Answer Page 4



MOORE TEXAS

by Roger Todd Moore

Corpus Christi 1950: Famous burger joint WHATABURGER begins operations...the name is an ad agency's dream.



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.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	×		-		19
-		×		÷	
	+		×		21
×		-		+	
	×		-		4
12		18		11	

1 2 3 4 6 6 7 8 9

Answer Page 4

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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: I understand that to get Social Security disability benefits, my disability must last at least a year or be expected to result in death. But I'm disabled now. Does this mean that I must wait a year after becoming disabled before I can receive benefits?

A: No. You do not have to wait a year after becoming disabled. If you're disabled and expect to be out of work for at least a year, you should apply for disability benefits right away. It can take months to process an application for disability benefits. If we approve your application, your first Social Security disability benefit will be paid for the sixth full month after the date your disability began. For more information about Social Security disability benefits, refer to *Disability Benefits* at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

Q: What information do I need to apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

A: Here are some of the things we will ask for when you apply for SSI. Even if you do not have all of the things listed below, apply anyway. The people in the Social Security office can help you. But keep in mind that the more information you can provide, the faster the decision process will be. You will need:

- Your Social Security number;
 - Your birth certificate or other proof of your age;
 - Information about the home where you live, such as your mortgage or your lease and landlord's name;
 - Payroll slips, bank statements, insurance policies, burial fund records, and other information about your income and the things you own;
 - The names, addresses and telephone numbers of doctors, hospitals, and clinics that you have been to, if you are applying for SSI because you are disabled or blind; and
 - Proof of U.S. citizenship or eligible noncitizen status.
- If you have a bank or financial institution account, you should have the account number available so we can deposit your benefits directly into your account. Learn more about SSI by reading our online publication, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), available at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

For more information on any of the questions listed 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, 1111 Gateway West, Attn: Ray Vigil, El Paso, Texas 79935.

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: S equals O

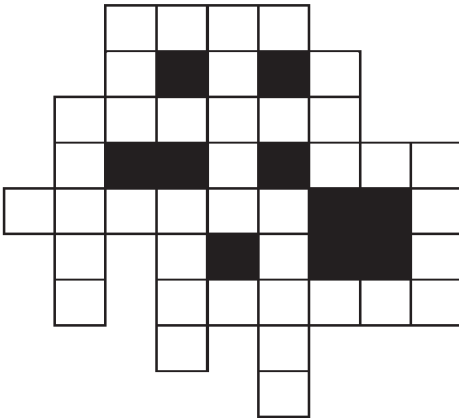
GL HSJ NOXQ O XQFH YSSC
FQOPSB ZS PZQOT ZNGBYP LFSA
PSAQVSCH, G'C EOTT ZNOZ
FSVVOVTQ EOJPQ.

Answer Page 4

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EVR
YIVTER
HUNCR
♥RAYN
♥TUNSIL
NVA
♥ELVA
UNIEN
RER
NERGIC
DRAYT
ENVE



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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STRANGE BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

- It was American author and illustrator Oliver Herford who defined a manuscript as "something submitted in haste and returned at leisure."
- A football in an NFL game lasts, on average, only 6 minutes.
- If you're planning to visit Chicago anytime soon, you might want to keep in mind that in that city, it's against the law to dine in any establishment that is on fire.
- One Washington state prison offers inmates cats to aid in their rehabilitation.

• In 1856, a soldier of fortune (who was also a journalist, doctor and lawyer) by the name of William Walker and his hand-picked group of mercenaries took over Nicaragua. Walker appointed himself dictator, thus securing for himself the distinction of being the only native-born American citizen to become head of state of a foreign nation.

• You might be surprised to learn that the Earth experiences a million earthquakes every year; however, most of them are so small that they aren't even noticeable.

• If you counted up all the McDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts, Pizza Hut, Burger King, Domino's Pizza, KFC, Wendy's and Taco Bell locations in the United States and added them together, you still wouldn't reach the number of pharmacy locations across the country.

• Barbra Streisand once had a shopping mall installed in the basement of her Malibu, California, home.

• The next time you see a group of cats together, you can call them a "clouder." If the cats are young ones, though, the appropriate term for a group of kittens is a "kindle."

• Those who study such things say that cockroaches can run as fast as 3 mph.

Thought for the Day: "A man can't be too careful in the choice of his enemies."
— Oscar Wilde

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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!

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