



NEWSBRIEFS

Texas Guardsmen

Texas Guardsmen from the 736th Component Repair Company, 36th Infantry Division, working alongside partner emergency responders from the Harris County Police officers, firefighters, Sheriff's Office and Texas Task Force 1, rescued 140 people from severe flooding in the Ponderosa neighborhood of Houston on April 19, 2016. "Many Harris County residents underestimated the dangers of rising flood waters; they lost all power and were cut off from society. Simple things like going to the doctor became very dangerous," said Chief Bob Royall, Assistant Chief of Joint Emergency Operations, Harris County Fire Marshall's Office. "Had it not been for the National Guard's high water vehicles, we would not have been able to get to many of these folks. There are untold hundreds, possibly thousands, we would not have been able to get to." Currently, more than 150 Texas Guardsmen are mobilized to support flood response operations across Texas. Additionally, both high profile military vehicles and military helicopter crews remain prepositioned on standby across other portions of the state. Members of the Texas State Guard are mobilized to the State Operations Center. Texas Guardsmen have conducted approximately 24 missions, rescuing more than 240 civilians and 40 animals, thus far and ground crews in Wharton are currently supporting local emergency responders with mandatory evacuations of the entire city. "This is what we train for," said Brig. Gen. Patrick M. Hamilton, Commander of Domestic Operations Task Force. "And we're proud to stand beside our civilian partners, first responders and volunteers to serve the citizens of Texas." The mission of the Texas Military Department (TMD) is to provide the Governor and the President with ready and trained forces in support of the citizens of Texas and State and Federal civil/military authorities at home and abroad. For more information about the Texas Military Department visit <https://tmd.texas.gov>.

— Laura Lopez

TEA approves Rams Early College HS

Rams Early College, the Socorro

See BRIEFS, Page 3

Some wit said that society invites the crime, and criminals accept the invitation.

— Quips & Quotes

Estrada Jr. promoted to brigadier general

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – A special ceremony was held recently in Detroit, Michigan to honor a native resident of Clint, Texas; and several of his family



— Photos courtesy of Lou Ann Estrada

MOVING UP THE RANKS – Brigadier General Pablo (Paul) Estrada Jr., of Clint, TX.

members and friends traveled the nearly 1,800-mile trip (from El Paso to Detroit) to observe this prestigious event.

The Estrada family members- the nine sons and five daughters of Pablo

Estrada Sr. and Paulina Carbajal Estrada- who have lived in Clint since 1958, are beaming with pride after they received the remarkable news that the youngest of them, Pablo (Paul) Estrada Jr., was assuming the duties of Land Component Commander, MIARNG (Michigan Army Reserve National Guard) and was being promoted to Brigadier General (BG) in the Michigan Army National Guard Forces.

BG Estrada's one-star general presentation was held April 11 at the Detroit Light Guard Armory. Numerous family members and friends were on-hand to witness the distinguished occasion.

The Estrada brothers include Antonio, Reymundo, Samuel, Jose (Franky), Ruben, Victor, David and Jaime. Sisters are Alicia, Gloria, Grace, Susan and Lou Ann. Paul, who turns 52 years old this month, is the youngest of 14 children.

"We are so proud of his achievement. He has reached a level of responsibility and service to our country that few Americans are privileged to earn that we want to scream it out loud to the whole wide world. We love and miss him and continue to support him in his future endeavors. We know that our parents are in heaven glowing with pride," stated Lou Ann Estrada, sister, adding that she spoke on behalf of the entire family.

The Clint hometown boy is a graduate of Clint High School (CHS), Class of 1982. While there, he said that he participated in different activities including band, football, basketball, student council, student government, and was selected Mr. CHS his senior year.

The new BG now lives in Michigan. He moved there from Fort Hood, Texas in 1996 after leaving active duty, according to BG Estrada. He and his wife, Roberta,

along with their two children- Natalie, 21, and Christopher, 17- live in Troy, which is about 25 miles north of Detroit.

"Being the Land Component Commander in Michigan is a great honor and a coveted position in any military organization. I am engaged about 30 percent of my time with this role and am actively engaged in the decisions that strategically affect the Michigan Army National Guard Forces continuously," BG Estrada stated.

BG Estrada enlisted in August 1982 in the regular Army. He was selected to attend United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS) in 1983 and received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. He graduated in May 1988 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He was commissioned a second lieutenant of field artillery and was stationed with the 1st Brigade 3rd Infantry Division, Schweinfurt Germany. He also holds a Master of Science degree in Management from Kettering University in Flint, Michigan, according to the recent ceremony's program.

Among the military schools that BG Estrada has attended are: Field Artillery Basic and Advance Course, Combined Arms Services Staff School, Command and General Staff College, Military Police Transition Course, Field Artillery Pre Command Course, Joint Command Training Course, and the U.S. Army War College- Fellowship Program (Tufts University).

BG Estrada left active duty in 1996 and had a three year break from military service. Then in 1999, he joined the Michigan Army National Guard, and he

See ESTRADA, Page 5



A HAPPY GET TOGETHER – Estrada family members and friends gather around Clint's favorite son, Paul Estrada Jr., for a memorable group picture after Estrada's promotion ceremony.

Finances By Nathaniel Sillin

Personal finance gifts for the new graduate

It's true—good health really does save money.

College graduation season is upon us. How about a gift that will really mean something to a student in your life?

The way I see it, the best graduation gift isn't just a check in an envelope—it's coming up with a few great, memorable ideas to help a new grad get a great financial start in life. At a time when money skills for young adults have never been more important, consider the following:

Buy them a session (or more) with a money coach. If you already work with a qualified financial planner or professional tax preparer, why not pay for a session or two for the new grad to help them work out their first budget as a working adult? Take the time to talk with the professional about specific financial issues the grad will need to address as well as their first, formal budget setup if they've never budgeted before.

Help them get a start on their retirement savings. Again, most of these gift ideas can come from one person or a group throwing in cash contributions. Consider taking your new grad out to open a Roth IRA (<https://www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Roth-IRAs>) or Traditional IRA (<https://www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Traditional-IRAs>). Early retirement investing is one of the most important lessons any new college grad can learn.

If they're continuing school, create a 529 plan or contribute to an existing one. Many new college graduates return to school to start a master's degree or other advanced training. If such an idea makes sense for your finances, consider opening or contributing to a 529 college savings plan (<https://www.irs.gov/uac/529-Plans:-Questions-and-Answers>) to support their continuing education. A 529 plan is a college savings plan set up by a state or educational institution that offers tax advantages and potentially other incentives to make it easier to save for college and other post-secondary training for a designated beneficiary, such as a child or grandchild. A friend or a relative can set one up and name anyone as a beneficiary—the new grad, another relative, even yourself—and there are no income restrictions on doing so. You'll also be free to change the beneficiary if necessary. One suggestion—before you act, talk it over with the new grad or his or her family members to make sure this is the best approach for helping with their future education.

If your new grad loves a company, consider buying them a few shares. Again, evaluate this decision against your own finances and parental opinion, but if there is a particular company the new grad has bought merchandise from or otherwise has taken a great interest in, consider going with them to a brokerage to buy a few shares in the company. Make it a lesson not only in the purchase process, but in the valuation, tax and ownership issues anyone has to deal with as a long-term shareholder. Even though he or she will probably own more investments in mutual funds over a lifetime, understanding the ownership of individual stocks will inform all the investing they do.

Bottom line: Money issues can be daunting for today's new graduate. Why not disarm their concerns with some solid advice from experts you trust? By offering up basics in budgeting, saving and investing, you just might become one of their favorites.

This article is intended to provide general information and should not be considered legal, tax or financial advice. It's always a good idea to consult a tax or financial advisor for specific information on how certain laws apply to your situation and about your individual financial situation.

Veterans Post By Freddy Groves

Centralized archives

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced recently that the Dayton VA Medical Center will be the new site for the National Department of Veterans Affairs Archives. The plan is to renovate two existing buildings, built in 1871 and 1881.

Ideally they will completely gut the old buildings and start fresh, with fire safety a big consideration. Anyone who has requested military records from the National Archives' National Personnel Record Center in St. Louis and been told that the records burned up in the 1973 fire will appreciate that sentiment. The fire damaged or destroyed as many as 18 million Army and Air Force records. In the aftermath, it ordered that records from around the country not be destroyed anymore, since they could be used to piece together the history of veterans who apply for benefits or for future generations doing genealogy.

Now the VA is trying to get all records from all sources digitized. Different branches have different methods of producing records, and not all are digitized. Some historic records and artifacts are stored at National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. Others are scattered at 150 facilities around the country. The plan to centralize all of it is theoretically a good one.

However, until the VA has caught up on all current records requests, any plans to centralize historical documents and objects should be put on hold until all records are digitized.


Meanwhile, make a copy (paper and digital) of every single piece of paper you have pertaining to your military service. Make a list of dates, locations and personnel who served with you. Put it in a bank box. You never know when it will be needed.

To read the full reports and keep track of new ones as they come in, check www.va.gov/oig.

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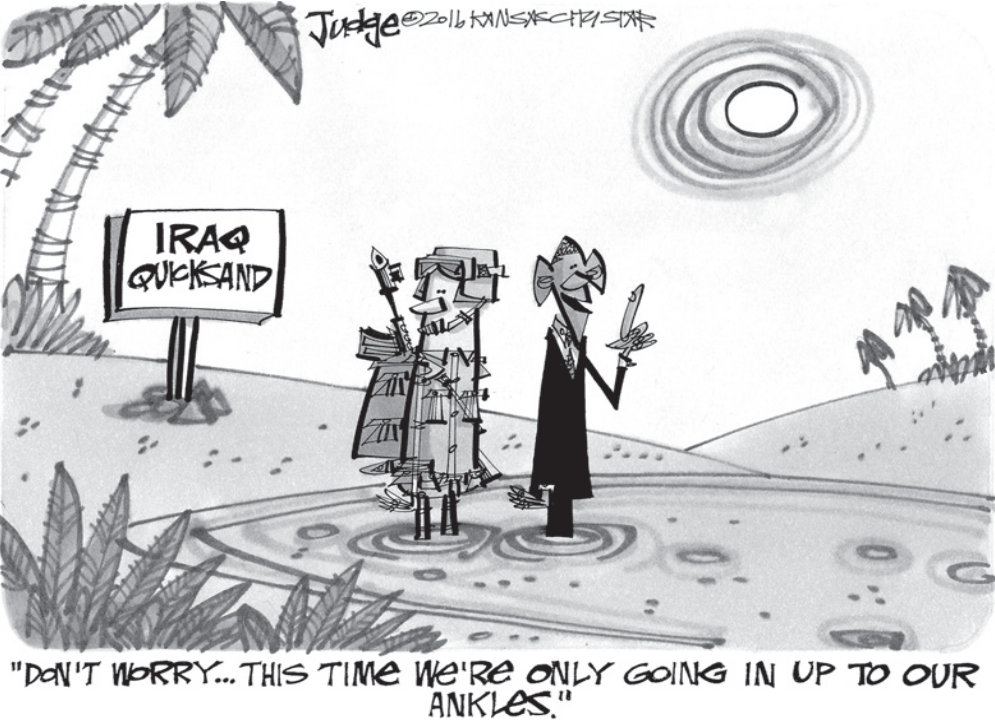
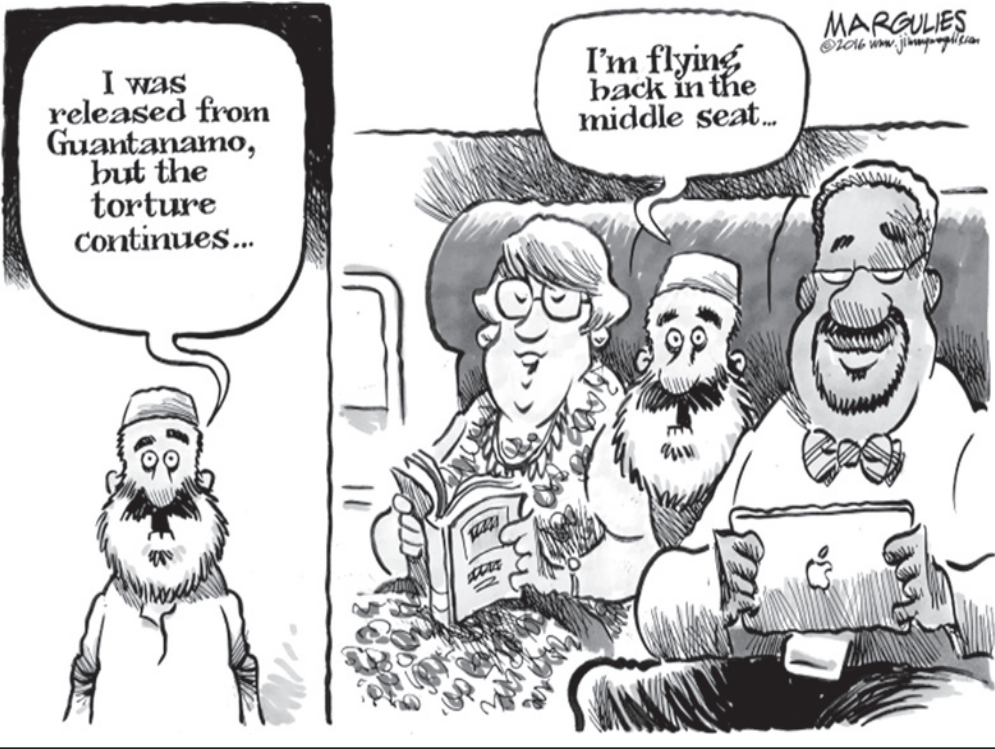
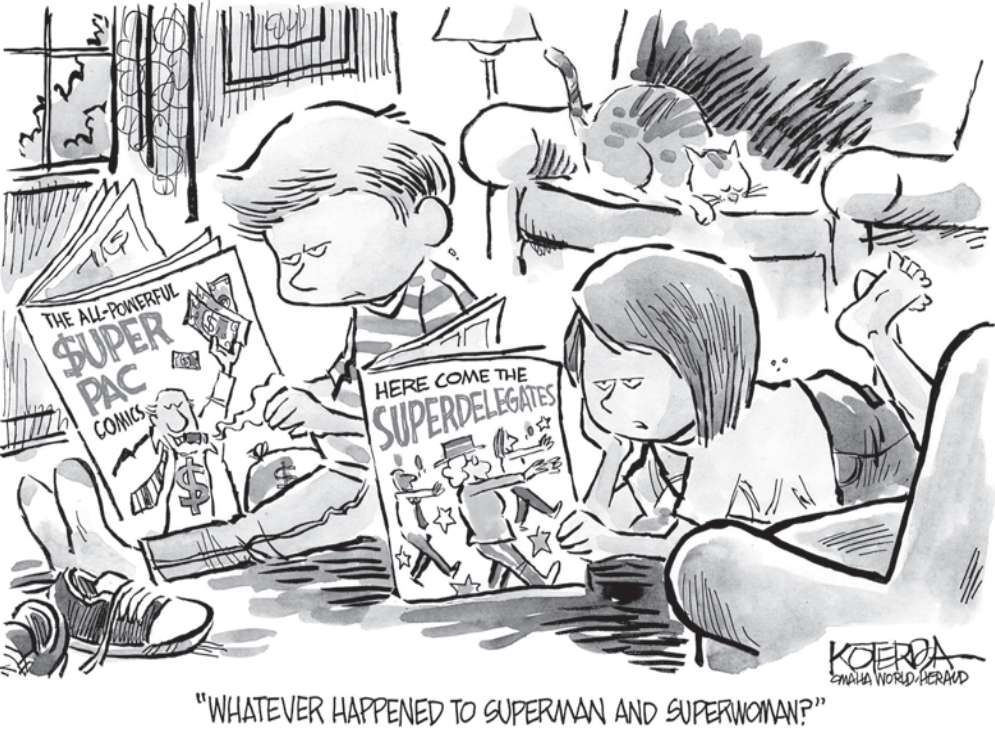
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Briefs

From Page 1

Independent School District’s newest early college program, is one of only 16 schools in Texas to be designated as an Early College High School for 2016-2017 by the Texas Education Agency. Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath announced the Early College High School designations this past week. With the designation, the Rams Early College, which will be housed at Montwood High School, is set to open for the 2016-2017 school year. “We are thrilled to receive this designation as it signifies the opening of another wonderful program for our students,” said Montwood High School Principal Rosa Mireles-Menchaca. “Rams Early College High School will have a great, positive impact on our students.” Rams Early College will focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and give students the opportunity to earn an associate’s degree in science concurrent with their high school diploma. Eighth-graders in the Montwood feeder area may apply to the program. “The TEA’s approval of Rams Early College energizes our continuous efforts to prepare all students for college, careers and beyond,” said SISD Superintendent Dr. José Espinoza. “We are proud to open a third Early College High School in Team SISD in partnership with El Paso Community College. It will give students more options and preparation for a successful future.” TEA will review applications for renewal of existing ECHS campuses in the coming weeks. More information about early college high schools can be found on the TEA website at <http://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/echs/>.

—Christina Flores-Jones

Early College HS

The Valle Verde Early College High School in Ysleta ISD has been awarded a grant for an Early College High School (ECHS) Demonstration Site by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The ECHS Demonstration Site Grant provides financial and technical support to high-performing ECHS campuses that are implementing defined best practices. ECHS demonstration site campuses will provide mentoring, technical assistance, webinars and open house opportunities to new and prospective ECHS school leaders. The selected ECHS demonstration sites will also share best practices content through the ECHS website and regional and statewide conferences. The grant period runs from April 1, 2016 through May 31, 2017. Campuses eligible for funding were required to have been a Texas Education Agency-designated ECHS for at least four years (with a graduated class) and be at an exemplar level in at least three domains of the ECHS Blueprint. To learn more about early college high schools, visit the Texas Education Agency website at <http://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/echs/>.

tea.texas.gov/curriculum/echs/.

— Jim Heiney

The painful truth

No one has to tell you that Alzheimer’s Disease is a devastating way to spend the rest of your life; the Alzheimer’s Association says that the prognosis for family and friends can be almost as distressing and demoralizing, according the Association of Mature American Citizens. Here are a few random facts from the Alzheimer’s Association that show just how bad things have gotten for patients and their loved ones. Some five million Americans were diagnosed with the disease and more than 15 million volunteer caregivers provided more than 18 billion hours of their own time last year to care for loved ones. Caring for a relative or friend with the disease can set you back upwards of \$5,000 a year. The annual price tag for the nation is currently estimated at \$236 billion. Meanwhile, the disease is spreading at a rapid rate. New cases of Alzheimer’s are diagnosed at a rate of one every 66 seconds and by 2050 the pace will skyrocket a new diagnosis every 33 seconds. The disease is already killing people faster than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined. But perhaps the most chilling news of all is that “Alzheimer’s is the only disease among the top 10 causes of death in America that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed,” reports the Alzheimer’s Association.

— John Grimaldi

Wanted

A woman is killed as a result of a hit and run driver in Northeast El Paso. Investigators from the El Paso Police Department are asking the public to help in identifying the driver involved, through the Crime Stoppers. The deadly crash took place in the early morning hours of Wednesday, March 2nd 2016, on U.S. 54 North near Hondo Pass. At about 3:25a.m. 33-year old Ruth Naomi Desoto was driving, a silver 2007 Jeep Liberty, and had become involved in a single vehicle crash. Desoto was ejected from her Jeep in the crash and was being attended to by witnesses. During that time, a dark colored car made no attempt to stop and struck Desoto killing her. The vehicle fled the scene southbound on US-54. The vehicle will have damage to the front and is only being described by witnesses as a sedan. The vehicle could be missing a headlight as a result of the crash. Investigators are certain that someone has the identity of the person involved in this deadly crash. Desoto was the mother of a 6-year old girl. Anyone with information on the identity of the driver involved in this deadly crash 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

The History Channel

- On May 9, 1671, in London, Thomas Blood, an Irish adventurer known as "Captain Blood," is captured trying to steal the Crown Jewels from the Tower of London. King Charles was so impressed that he made Blood a member of his court with an annual pension.
- On May 10, 1869, the presidents of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads meet in Utah and drive a ceremonial last spike into a rail line, making transcontinental rail travel possible for the first time.
- On May 11, 1934, a massive storm sends 350 million tons of topsoil flying across the parched Great Plains as far east as New York. Even ships some 300 miles offshore saw dust collect on their decks.
- On May 12, 1975, the American freighter Mayaguez is captured by communist government forces in Cambodia. In response, President Gerald Ford ordered the bombing of the Cambodian port where the gunboats had come from. Forty-one Americans died, most of them in an accidental explosion during the attack.
- On May 13, 1985, in Philadelphia, police drop a small bomb on the roof of a row house on Osage Avenue in an attempt to end a standoff with the radical cult group MOVE. The explosion sparked a fire that killed 11 people and burned down 61 homes.
- On May 14, 1999, President Bill Clinton apologizes directly to Chinese President Jiang Zemin on the phone for the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia. The Chinese president had refused to accept a phone call from Clinton for four days.
- On May 15, 1942, legislation creating the Women's Army Corps becomes law, granting women official military status. However, it would not be until 1980 that 16,000 women who had joined the early WACs would receive veterans' benefits.

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Have an event you want to publish?

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– Photos courtesy Fabens ISD

SPRUCE IT UP – To beautify the Veterans Memorial Park in Fabens, Fabens High School's National Art Honor Society spent the morning of Saturday, April 16 painting the skate ramps using a patriotic theme. We were struggling at first because the weather was not working with us. It was windy and gusty," senior Samantha Estrada said. "But, the end product was definitely an improvement. I'm glad I was able to give back to my community." Ten students participated in the beautification project. Among the volunteers are Sergio Gallardo, above, and Byana Garcia, below.

— *By Denise Peña*



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CryptoQuip Answer

If a hot dog connoisseur adores a certain topping, could you say he really relishes his food?

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Estrada

From Page 1

has been steadily climbing the ranks ever since. He has served as Battalion Assistant S3, Battalion Operations Officer, Battalion Executive Officer, and Battalion

Commander of the 1st Battalion, TroopCommandfromJune2006 to June 2009. He commanded 119th Field Artillery. BG Estrada also served as the the 63rd Troop Command executive officer of the 63rd from June 2009 to December



– Photo courtesy of Lou Ann Estrada

PROUD WIFE – Brigadier General Pablo Estrada Jr.’s wife, Roberta, left, joins her husband as he receives his one-star general pins during the promotion ceremony in Detroit, Michigan.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

- It was 20th-century American politician and diplomat Adlai Stevenson who made the following sage observation: “The hardest thing about any political campaign is how to win without proving that you are unworthy of winning.”
 - According to a 2015 survey, more American adults would rather admit their weight than disclose their salary.
 - You might be surprised to learn that actor James Doohan, best known for his role as Scotty in the original “Star Trek” series, served in the Royal Canadian Artillery during World War II. He saw combat for the first time at the invasion of Normandy on D-Day, where he led his men through a field of anti-tank mines to reach higher ground. After defensive positions had been established that night, he was crossing between command posts when he was shot six times – by a Canadian sentry. One of the bullets hit his chest, but it was stopped by a silver cigarette case that his brother had given him.
 - Researchers in the United Kingdom have developed what they’re calling the “SlugBog” – a robot that eats slugs and is powered by the bio-gas created by their decay.
 - If you’ve ever had to explain yourself the morning after a raucous night out, you might be glad to know that the Tsonga people of southern Africa have a word that can be useful in certain of these circumstances. “Rhwe” means to sleep on the floor without a mat, while drunk and naked.
 - The University of Gottingen, in Germany, is in possession of a rare Bible – it’s printed on 2,470 palm leaves.
- Thought for the Day: “A fellow of mediocre talent will remain a mediocrity, whether he travels or not; but one of superior talent (which without impiety I cannot deny that I possess) will go to seed if he always remains in the same place.”
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Horizon City sets movie night program

Horizon City Police Chief Michael McConnell is inviting people to come out to the annual “Movies in the Park” summer series. Movies are held at “Corky” Corcoran Park located at Rodman St. and Warren Belin St. in Horizon City, TX. The movies start at sundown and are sponsored by area businesses. This program is family safe and free. It provides members of the community an opportunity to get to know each other and meet Horizon’s police officers. Residents with questions and concerns to about their neighborhoods can meet with an officer in a relaxed environment. Food trucks and vendors will be on site during the movies and activities. This year’s sponsors are Household Furniture, Express Employment Professionals, XPress Cleaning Professionals, Farmers Insurance (Elizabeth Rayas), Dr. Dyer Family Dental, Hakes Brothers and Edge Taekwondo.



Movies in the Park

- June 4 - Jurassic World
- June 11 - Minions
- June 18 - Star Wars The Force Awakens
- June 25- Max
- July 2 - Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- July 9 - Pan
- July 16 - Inside Out
- July 23 - The Good Dinosaur
- July 30 - Hotel Transylvania
- August 6 - Maleficent

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2011. He then served as OIC/ Brigade Command Mentor to the Armed Forces of Liberia, Liberia Africa from January 2012 to March 2014. His next assignment was as the Deputy Chief of Staff Operations/ OIC of the 46th MP Command while they were on the federal C2CRE-B mission from April 2013 to September 2014. He then served as chief of staff until his current assignment as the Land Component Commander, MIARNG. As a civilian, BG Estrada has worked as a maintenance manager and manufacturing engineer for Delphi Automotive, a project engineer on the Stryker Vehicle for General Dynamics Land Systems, and is currently employed as a maintenance area manager for Fiat Chrysler Automobile.

“The last time my brother Paul visited Clint was this past April 15 through 17 for our brother’s, Jose (Franky), funeral,” related Lou Ann. “Besides being proud of Paul we were very sadden by our recent loss of my brother at age 67. Franky was the sixth child born in the family,” she commented. “Paul was unable to stay longer because he had to report to Boston for training due to his new position,” she added.

Clint Independent School District Public Notice

Destruction of Special Education Records

Attention Parents/Guardians, Former Students, Eligible (Adult) Students: Special Education records collected by the Clint Independent School District (CISD) related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of Special Education services must be maintained under state and federal laws for a period of five years after Special Education services have ended for the student. Special Education services end when the student no longer is eligible for services, graduates, completes his or her educational program at age 22, or moves from the district. Clint ISD intends to destroy Special Education records of those students that ceased receiving services during the school year 2010-2011.

Parents or adult students need to recognize that these records may be needed by the student or the parent for Social Security benefits or other post-school benefits. Records scheduled for destruction may be requested no later than the end of the work day on June 15, 2016 by calling the CISD Special Education Office at 915-851-8383.

Distrito Escolar Independiente de Clint Notificación Pública

Destrucción de los Expedientes Académicos de Educación Especial

Atención Padres/Tutores, Ex–estudiante, Estudiantes (Adultos) Elegibles: Expedientes académicos de educación especial que han sido recogidos por el Distrito Escolar Independiente de Clint (CISD) relacionado con la identificación, evaluación, colocación educativa, o la provisión de educación especial en el distrito, deben mantenerse bajo leyes estatales y federales por un periodo de cinco años después de que los servicios de educación especial se han terminado para el estudiante. Servicios de educación especial terminan cuando el estudiante ya no es elegible para los servicios, gradúa, completa su programa educacional a los 22 años, o se mueve del distrito. El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Clint tiene intención de mandar los expedientes programados para destrucción de el año escolar 2010-2011.

Los padres o estudiantes adultos deben reconocer qué estos registros pueden ser necesarios por el estudiante o el padre para los beneficios de Seguro Social u otros beneficios post-escolares. Los expedientes programados para destrucción se pueden solicitar a más tardar al final del día de trabajo el 15 de junio de 2016 llamando a la oficina de educación especial de CISD al (915) 851-8383.

Ready or not, here comes the NFL draft

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

It has become known as the unofficial start of the professional football season. The NFL draft gets underway Thursday evening and the future blood pressure of fans all across the nation will be affected by choices made by general managers, owners and coaches this weekend.

And like with the presidential race, experts have come out of the woodwork with their predictions.

Everyone seems to be fascinated with the first four picks that will be made by Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Diego and Dallas.

The first three are interesting just because they are the first three picks, Number Four is intriguing because it's being made by the Dallas Cowboys. That team you either love or hate, but can't ignore.

The consensus is that the first two picks will be quarterbacks. It looks like California's Jared Goff will go to the Rams and North Dakota State's Carson Wentz will be chosen by the Eagles.

Then things get interesting. Mississippi's offensive tackles Laremy Tunsil has been projected to go to the Chargers.

Then come the Cowboys and the circus atmosphere that can only be provided by Jerry Jones and company.

Many rumors have swirled around concerning this pick. Many believe that either Ohio State linebacker Joey Bosa or Florida State cornerback Jalen Ramsey will go to the 'Boys.

But there are some, including myself, who hope the Cowboys select Ohio State running back Ezekiel Elliott.

Of course these are the Dallas Cowboys, the only team in the NFL with a totally unqualified general manager who can never be fired.

So expect the unexpected.

The other big mystery on Thursday is how many quarterbacks will be taken in the first round.

Many of the experts have said that only the two at the very top will be taken. Some have even said that as many as five will go in the opening round.

Five is an ambitious number for a year in which many believe the quarterback pickins' were slim at best.

Everyone seems to be on board with Goff and Wentz, but they are all over the place on Michigan State's Connor Cook, Memphis' Paxton Lynch and Penn State's Christian Hackenberg.

In the past, NFL teams have gone into the draft knowing that they have specific needs to fill and those specific needs don't include a quarterback.

But something always seems to happen in the middle of the first round. It never fails, one team does the unexpected by taking a quarterback and then all the others get nervous and start doing the same thing.

They totally abandon their plans and end up suffering for it for years.

So the big question remains. How many quarterbacks will go in the first round? How many quarterbacks are worthy of being selected in the first round?

Cook comes from a big program in a big conference and he seems to have all the physical tools. His question marks are located between the ears.

As a fifth-year senior he wasn't even selected as a team captain and seems to have a little immaturity running through his veins.

And everyone knows that NFL

quarterbacks need to be smart as well as mature. Right, Johnny Football?

Then there's Lynch, who is a towering 6-foot-7 and considered to have an above-average arm. Some think he's too tall to be an effective NFL quarterback.

He'll have to learn how to play in an NFL-style system so he's good for a team who doesn't need him to go in right away.

Hackenberg set the world on fire during his freshman season at Penn State.

The last two years have seen his production steadily decline. But the big question is why?

Was it his talent, or was it the fact that Penn State was hit with all those sanctions, a change of coaches, and ended up with an atrocious offensive line?

That's what makes the draft so intriguing. That's why fans are so addicted to the drama of it all.

Whatever happens with your favorite team this weekend, whether they make you cheer or yell at the TV screen, just be thankful that the start of the NFL season is here.

Is it just me or does it seem like the Super Bowl just ended a couple weeks ago?

A sporting view By Mark Vasto

No more drama from Black Mamba

In my lifetime, I cannot recall a player as great and more despised as Kobe Bryant, the self-proclaimed greatest Laker of all-time.

Some will immediately point

to Barry Bonds as an example, but really, there's not as much to dislike about Bonds. Both were great players. Bonds, however, will forever be known as the guy who ruined the baseball record book; Kobe will never be remembered as having "ruined" the game – at least on the court. Bonds is different in other ways. He had two careers, the one before

the allegations of steroid use, and the one where his head size literally became too big for his helmet to handle. In both stages of his career, Bonds was always something special to watch.

And yes, while Bonds was never a favorite in the clubhouse, and reporters took a quick dislike to him whenever he refused to be cordial, one can always argue that the steroid scandal that seemed to only grip baseball and forever tarnished his reputation was magnified by that surliness. I mean, Sammy Sosa was always a happy-go-lucky guy. Mark McGwire wasn't ever going to

be confused for a standup comic, but he seemed like a pretty-standup guy.




Let me state this: I personally believe that Kobe was the best player of the post-Jordan era. I can't imagine anybody arguing that from a statistical standpoint. Twenty years playing for the same team, the second highest scoring game (81), five championship rings, most points in LA Lakers history, 18-time all-star and a league MVP award. A product of Philadelphia, he probably is that legendary city's best high-school player ever, and

See SPORTS, Page 8

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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 Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I just wanted to touch base with you about my diabetes. While my weight has stayed stable around 320 pounds, my sugar numbers have been increasingly hard to keep in line. I've maxed out on the oral medications we use. My latest A1c was 6.6. The doctor says it should be under 6 and that our next step is insulin. He asked me to try to lose 50 pounds over the next six months in order to get my sugar back under control. I agree and want it to happen. I'm counting calories and cutting out carbs, and have started walking in the morning. I know I can't run, with no discs in my bottom three vertebrae. But even walking is hard. I walk until my leg goes numb, but I don't think it will be enough, and I may not even be able to keep that up. Even walking easy makes my hip hurt and leg go numb after about 20 minutes. – S.A.

I am surprised by your doctor's advice, because it's very clear now (from the ACCORD study) that an A1c (a measure of average sugar levels) of 7 percent has lower overall risks than an A1c of 6 percent for someone like you.

Exercise is always good, and my first thought is water. Getting in a pool will take pressure off your back, and you should be able to swim, walk in the water or do water-exercise classes to your heart's content.

Readers: Start reaping the benefits of exercise the moment you begin. To learn more, order the booklet on Aerobics, Fitness and Abdominal Exercises by writing: Dr. Roach – No. 1301W, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. 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. ROACH: What can you tell me about laser iridotomy for angle-closure glaucoma? What are the risks? What is the success rate? Any other things that would help make a decision? – J.K.

Glaucoma is increased pressure inside the eye. Without treatment, it damages the optic nerve and can lead to vision loss, even permanent blindness.

Angle-closure glaucoma is caused by abnormal anatomy inside the eye, where the lens blocks the pupil, "closing" the channels that allow fluid to leave the eye. In acute closed-angle glaucoma, symptoms include headache, a "halo" around lights and severe eye pain. This is an emergency, since permanent vision changes may occur within hours to days, so the surgery is done immediately.

Ophthalmologists can suspect the condition based on exam, and if confirmed, will recommend treatment to prevent this emergency. It sounds like that is what has happened in your case.

I resist making a recommendation of laser versus non-laser surgery. In my mind, you trust your surgeon to use the right technique for you. However, in this case, laser is the standard treatment. I have read effectiveness rates of 60 percent to 95 percent. Complications

See HEALTH, Page 8

Super Crossword

- EMPLOYEE-CONSUMER POLICY ACROSS
- 1 P.E. place
- 4 Honey pies
- 9 " _ the time!"
- 14 FBI tactics
- 19 Kauai necklace
- 20 Muslim's god
- 21 Range brand
- 22 Forever, in poetry
- 23 Cask wood
- 24 "Resident Evil" actress Jovovich
- 25 Of warships
- 26 Tribal groups
- 27 Start of a riddle
- 31 Writer Wolfe
- 32 "Pow!"
- 33 Longtime NBC host Jay
- 34 "Right back _!"
- 36 Buy
- 39 German for "love"
- 42 Parish leader
- 44 Riddle, part 2
- 49 Pressing tool
- 50 "... or _ gather"
- 51 Big blue body
- 52 Feel pain
- 53 Darted
- 54 Insufficient
- 56 No, in Russia
- 58 Slaughter on a diamond
- 62 Riddle, part 3
- 67 Inmate's wish
- 70 Voice one's approval

- 71 Almost
- 72 Riddle, part 4
- 77 Weapon filler
- 78 "Eraser" actor James
- 79 Aristocratic
- 80 See 83-Across
- 83 With 80-Across, starts a golf game
- 85 Hypothetical cases
- 88 "Casual" day: Abbr.
- 89 Having what it takes
- 90 End of the riddle
- 97 Hungers
- 98 Some Iroquoians
- 99 Some sushi bar suppliers
- 100 Bombeck with wit
- 101 Mensch lead-in
- 104 Brand found at Petco
- 107 Blemish
- 108 Riddle's answer
- 115 "A Lesson From Aloes" playwright Fugard
- 116 Piano exercise
- 117 Keats' " _ a Grecian Urn"
- 118 Seemingly forever
- 119 Diplomat Silas
- 120 Old fax alternative
- 121 Tooth: Prefix
- 122 Tango team
- 123 Curving billiards shot

- 124 A Lott of politics
- 125 "Bullitt" director Peter
- 126 Hem, e.g.
- DOWN
- 1 Luminesce
- 2 "You bet"
- 3 Evander Holyfield rival
- 4 Moistened floor wiper
- 5 Nobelist Wiesel
- 6 Let happen
- 7 "Wreck-It _" (Disney film)
- 8 Clinton cabineteer Donna
- 9 Ma's ma
- 10 Sharif of Hollywood
- 11 Ripple
- 12 Bowled over
- 13 Styling site
- 14 Big lamb cut
- 15 Start of a simple request
- 16 Volunteer's declaration
- 17 "A pox upon thee!," updated
- 18 The "S" of GPS: Abbr.
- 28 Not at all exciting
- 29 Arab VIPs
- 30 One using a lasso
- 35 Museum pieces
- 36 Au _
- 37 Gillette offering

- 38 Savior
- 40 Manage, with "out"
- 41 Slow cooker of a sort
- 43 Facade
- 45 Speckled horse
- 46 Diner freebie
- 47 Huntley of news
- 48 Jabba the _
- 54 Dover fish
- 55 Ice dancing gold medalist Virtue
- 57 Alaska river
- 58 Fabergé collectibles
- 59 Utmost in degree
- 60 "Well, well, well!"
- 61 One of a D.C. 100
- 62 Chanel of fragrances
- 63 Wetter, weatherwise
- 64 Similarly defined wd.
- 65 Gradient
- 66 "Swoosh" shoe brand
- 67 FedExCup org.
- 68 Bracelet spot
- 69 DVD-_
- 73 "Law & Order: SVU" co-star
- 74 " _ of Eden"
- 75 Far from firm
- 76 " _-Ca-Dabra" (1974 hit)
- 80 Certain instrument inserts

- 81 Bloom, in Barcelona
- 82 Gangbusters
- 83 Unit of bricks
- 84 Result
- 86 "By the way" memo abbr.
- 87 "Try to _ my way ..."
- 89 Without _ (perfect)
- 90 Ex-zee linkup
- 91 Celestial
- Seasonings offering
- 92 Japanese motorcycles
- 93 Hot-breathed beasts
- 94 Christie sleuth Poirot
- 95 En masse
- 96 Natives of 110-Down
- 102 Football player Favre
- 103 Perfume compound
- 105 Jason jilted her
- 106 Aroma
- 109 Elation
- 110 Mideastern oil port
- 111 Adjacent (to)
- 112 Table d'_
- 113 Libertine guy
- 114 Winter fall
- 115 USN honcho

Answer Page 4

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MOORE TEXAS

by Roger Todd Moore

April 25, 1875 Pecos : 3 black Seminole scouts save their horseless white commander from Indians. All get the Medal of Honor.



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!

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Answer Page 4

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Social Security Q&A

By Ray Vigil

Q: Will my disability benefits be reduced if I get workers' compensation or other public disability benefits?

A: If you get either workers' compensation or public disability benefit payments, we may reduce Social Security benefits for you and your family. Public disability benefit payments paid under a federal, state, or local government law may affect your Social Security benefit. This includes civil service disability benefits, temporary state disability benefits, and state or local government retirement benefits based on disability. Disability payments from private sources, such as a private pension or insurance benefits, don't affect your Social Security disability benefits. However, in some cases, private disability insurers may require you to apply for Social Security disability benefits before they pay you. You may want to check to find out about your private insurer's policy. We reduce the Social Security disability benefits you and your family get if the combined total amount, plus your workers' compensation payment, plus any public disability payment you get, exceeds 80 percent of your average earnings before you became injured or ill. See the publication *What You Need To Know When You Get Social Security Disability Benefits* at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs for more information.

Q: Why is there a five-month waiting period for Social Security disability benefits?

A: The law states that Social Security disability benefits begin with the sixth full month after the date your disability began. You're not entitled to benefits for any month prior to that. Learn more at our website: www.socialsecurity.gov/disability.

For more information on questions listed above, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us at 1-800-772-1213. If you 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.

Sports

From Page 6

arguably the best player the city ever produced. Sorry, I'd still pick Wilt Chamberlain overall (but not at shooting guard).

There are, unfortunately, other stories from this storied career, and let those also be a great lesson to every young athlete out there: The way you comport yourself off the court or field, in the locker room and in your hotel room Jacuzzi does most definitely help define you. Kobe scored the most points in Laker history, but he also missed the most shots in NBA history and gave up almost as many turnovers as he had assists. He was the guy who didn't want other players looking at him in the locker room, the guy who lacked humility, who often sabotaged himself and the team due to his desire to be the sole center of attention. He wasn't the guy in the band; he was a solo act, the before and after party.

Most Laker fans will argue that they would certainly take the 15 playoff appearances and five rings, the show he put on every night, including the final game of his career where he scored 60 points on 50 shots and took so much air out of the room that, literally, a bag of air from the game sold for \$15,000 on eBay. For me, his career ended in that Jacuzzi in Colorado. He said he liked being the villain on the court. Mission accomplished.

The next time we hear from Kobe will be his (rightful) induction to the NBA's Hall of Fame. Time softens the heart and bad memories fade, but there will be more than a few fans who at that time also will reflect on one additional, perhaps larger and more important fact: That sort of drama has passed. You don't have to live like that anymore.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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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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FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

OTO
HIFLES
DARRO
♥DRIA
HEDRIT
♥TGU
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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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Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in New Jersey. (c) 2016 King Features Synd., Inc.

Health

From Page 7

are uncommon but can include inflammation and “ghost” images. Repeat surgery is occasionally needed.

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 Good Health, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2016 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.