

## NEWSBRIEFS

### Winner on, off field

When all is said and done, it was a pretty good day for quarterback Daniel Bronson who plays for the University of Rochester in upstate New York, says the Association of Mature American Citizens. Despite his team's loss to rival Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Bronson rallied on the football field and racked up several impressive plays, completing 21 of 32 passes for 195 yards and a touchdown. After the game, he, his girlfriend and her family had dinner at a local restaurant and when they were leaving to go home they saw a mugging in progress. A thief had snatched the purse of an elderly woman in the parking lot, ABC News reported. Bronson made his last play of the day, chasing the perpetrator, tackling him to the ground and holding him for the police.

— John Grimaldi

### Here's to your health

It's okay to have a drink now and then as you get on in years, as long as you don't overdo it, according to new research reported in the journal Age and Ageing. But, rules apply, says the Association of Mature American Citizens. In fact, the report says that moderate alcohol intake may be beneficial. And that means a small glass of wine or a bottle of beer daily could improve cardiovascular health for older men and women. The team that conducted the research says that more study is required before any definitive recommendations can be made,

— John Grimaldi

### Elder orphans

The number of aging Americans with no one to look after them is growing at a fast pace, says the Association of Mature American Citizens. The increasing population of what the American Geriatrics Society calls the "unbefriended" has prompted the non-profit group to call for a national effort to come to their aid. Geriatrics specialist Maria Torroella Carney says that 22 percent of seniors over 65 can be classified as "elder orphans." The problem can only become more severe in the future, says AMAC, noting that an updated U.S. Census report estimates that by 2050 the U.S. population of those 65 and older will stand at 83.7 million, almost twice the number estimated in a 2012 report.

— John Grimaldi

*A good leader inspires men to have confidence in him; a great leader inspires them to have confidence in themselves.*

— Quips & Quotes

## Accessing mental health care

By Alfredo Vasquez  
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Today, individuals are just as likely to struggle with mental illness issues in their lives and the lives of their family members and friends as they are to have to deal with the maladies incurred by cancer, according to a recent local healthcare research report.

In El Paso County alone, estimates are that over 150,000 residents and their families are dealing with some kind of mental challenges like anxiety, depression, or behavioral and emotional illnesses.

Children are of particular concern in the region. Over half of mental illnesses begin by age 14. The recent study showed that about 44,000 local children and adolescents need care for mental health or substance use disorders. About 13,000 of them live in poverty, and only about two in five end up receiving formal behavioral healthcare.

The endemic mental health problem has government officials and health care services providers looking for answers.

Locally, the El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium, in conjunction with the Paso del Norte Health Foundation, is spearheading efforts to help ameliorate the mental health services need in the borderland. Consortium members agreed during a recent summit meeting that they want to work jointly to help transform the current behavioral healthcare offerings into an ideal, accessible, person-centered system of care.

The consortium's goal is to build an inclusive collaborative system including criminal justice, law enforcement, veterans services, juvenile justice, child welfare, schools, homeless providers, and health systems and to develop programs that would help eliminate the negative bias associated with mental illness, according to its website.

At the state level, Texas House Speaker Joe Straus this summer formed the Select House Committee on Mental Health to come up with recommendations for the 2017 legislative session. This select committee is charged with undertaking a comprehensive examination of Texas' behavioral health systems for children and adults.

El Paso's state representative Joe Moody serves as vice-chair of the select committee. Moody stated that the select committee will review the state's overlapping and fragmented behavioral health systems, including those for substance use disorder treatment.

Moody related that committee members will work to identify methods to ensure accountability and to take a close look at underserved and rural areas, as well as



Efforts are underway to improve mental health care in the El Paso region. Studies show that untreated psychiatric disorders can lead to substance abuse, poor work performance, unemployment, homelessness, domestic strife, suicide, and even mass shootings. A group of health care stakeholders, called the El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium, has come together to identify community-based best practice programs that include preventive care approaches to help detect a mental health issue at its early stage.

### Estrada is Chicago bound



— Photo courtesy Fabens ISD

Senior Rodrigo Estrada from Fabens High School has been selected for admission to the University of Chicago with a QuestBridge College Match Scholarship in the amount of \$288,000. Questbridge is a non-profit organization that pairs high-achieving high school seniors with full scholarships to the nation's top colleges. After receiving a record-high of 14,491 applications, QuestBridge chose 5,338 as finalists. 767 exceptional students have been selected as this year's College Match Scholarship Recipients. Estrada will be one of only 80 finalists to attend the University of Chicago.

— Denise Peña

## Veterans Post

By Freddy Groves

# VA pushes research on prostate cancer

The headline on the Department of Veterans Affairs news release cited a grim fact: 12,000 veterans are diagnosed annually with prostate cancer. The VA's partnership with the Prostate Cancer Foundation can't come too soon. Their goal: to prevent, screen and promote research to speed the development of treatments and cures among veterans.

To that end, they're bringing together the big guns: researchers, data, cancer experts, advanced screenings and diagnostics. The PCF kicked in \$50 million to get things started.

PCF will be partnering with many groups around the country to enroll more veterans in studies, provide data for studies, increase the number of VA facilities applying to them for funding and much more. Key in cancer treatment will be the development of precision medicine. The research and data also will be shared with public agencies and corporations.

This won't be the VA's first

time partnering with others to search for cancer prevention and cure answers. In 2016 alone, it was part of 262 projects.

The new efforts include the Million Veteran Program, the world's largest database of health, military and genetic data; VA Precision Oncology Program, providing state-of-the-art care; and VACooperative Studies Program, a colonoscopy screening, which wants to enroll 50,000 veterans.

Meanwhile, don't wait for a call. Take charge of this. If you haven't had a prostate-specific antigen test in a while, go get one. It's a simple blood test that could save your life. Even if you have no symptoms at all, get the test. The result will tell you the likelihood that you'll ever develop cancer. You might just be told to come back for another test so the results can be compared.

The earlier you get on this, the better. So, go.

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## Finances

By Nathaniel Sillin

# When joint bank accounts make sense

Did you recently get married, move in with a new roommate, see a child off to college or start managing a relative's finances? The change in relationship dynamics could prompt you to consider tying part of your financial lives together by opening a joint bank account.

You might enjoy the conveniences a joint account offers, or you could see it as a symbolic step in your relationship. But before you open a bank account with someone else, consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of the arrangement.

**First, here's a quick introduction to joint accounts.** Individual and joint accounts are similar in many ways. You can open a joint account at an online-only bank or local bank branch. However, with a joint account both co-owners can deposit or withdraw money as if it was an individual account. The account holders can also write checks, make online payments or transfers and use the account's debit cards (if it offers them) to make purchases or withdrawals.

Let's start with a few situations where you might want to use a joint bank account, followed by examples of why the arrangement might not make sense for you.

**You might want a joint account if you share financial responsibilities with someone else.** Sharing a joint account could be a good option if you're married or living with a significant other. Some couples keep their individual accounts and also create a joint account where they deposit a portion of their paychecks and use the money to pay for household expenses or a shared savings goal.

With two people contribution to and watching a shared account, it could be easier to meet minimum balance requirements and identify savings opportunities. Some accounts also offer higher interest rates the more money you have in the account.

**A shared account could also help you care for a family member.** A joint bank account could help you care for relatives, whether they live nearby or in another state. With co-owner access, it'll be easy to deposit or transfer funds online and at a bank branch, pay the person's bills from the account and keep an eye on the account's activity and balance.

**But beware, joint accounts give everyone full ownership of the money.** No matter who makes the deposit, once money is in a joint account, each member "owns" it and can legally spend it however he or she wants. In other words, you might not have any recourse if your new roommate raids a joint account and spends the rent money on a weekend getaway.

**A joint account holder's debt could also spell trouble for everyone on the account.** Because every joint account holder has equal rights to the money, creditors can go after the money in a joint account if they sue one of the account holders. Meaning all the money is risk if one person gets sued, falls behind on bills or doesn't pay taxes.

If you're considering using a joint account to help manage an older relative's finances, a convenience account or getting power of attorney may be potentially safer alternatives.

**Communication and trust are vital to managing a joint account.** Lack of communication between joint account holders could lead to overdrawn accounts or low balances, and the corresponding fees. It can also lead to disputes if the owners have different ideas of how the money should be spent.

Some co-owners make an informal agreement before opening an account together. Although it won't have legal backing, you could create a rule that you have to ask the other person before spending \$150 or more. Using a mobile app to check a joint account's balance before making a purchase could also help you avoid mistakes.

**Bottom line:** While joint bank accounts let two or more people share access to an account, the convenience of the arrangement can sometimes be outweighed by the risks it poses to the co-owners. Even if you trust the other co-owner, having a clear understanding of the intention behind the account and how the money will be used are important to avoiding arguments and mismanagement of your joint funds.

*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.*

1973  
43  
Years  
2016

WEST TEXAS COUNTY  
COURIER

SEWING, ANTHONY, VINTON, CANUTELLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINE, FARENS, SAN ELIZABIO AND TORNILLO

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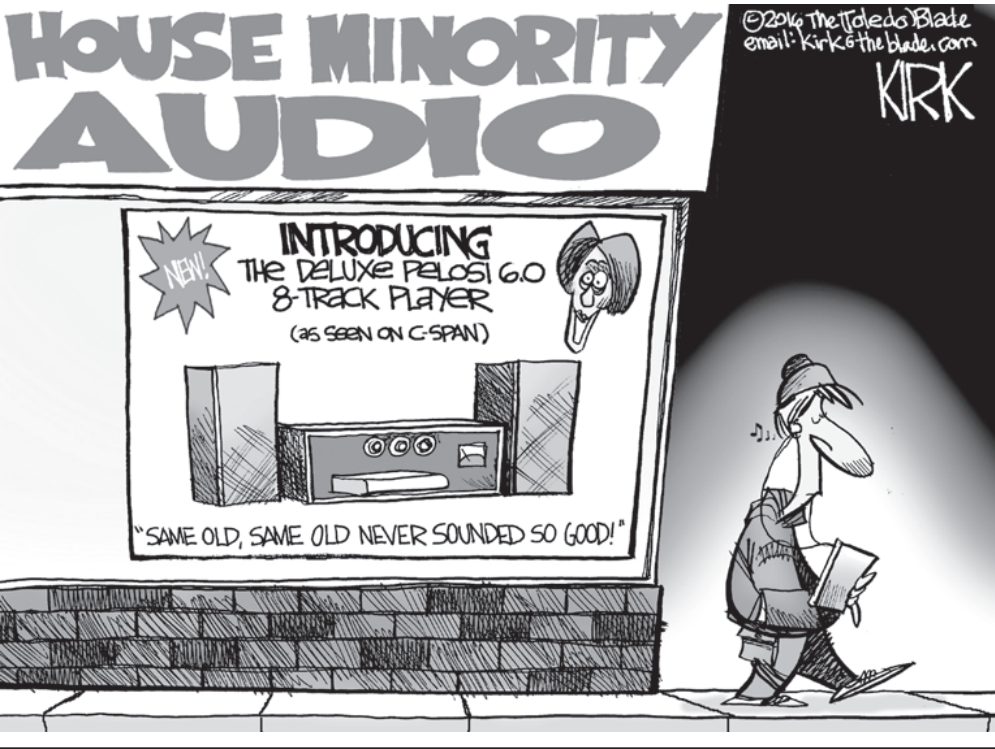
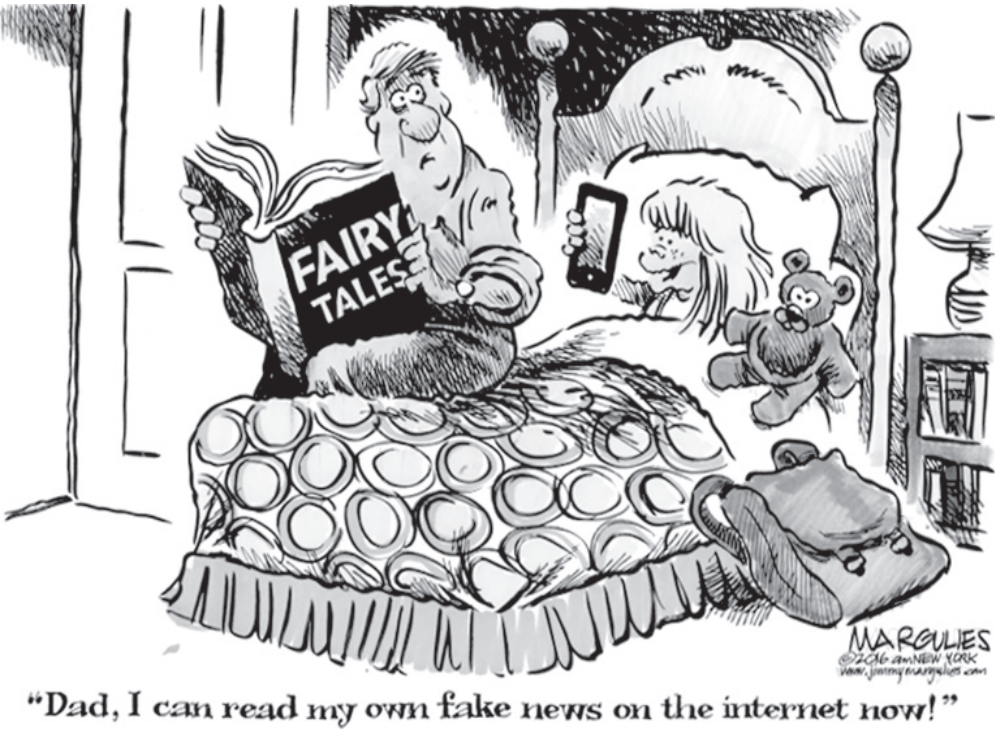
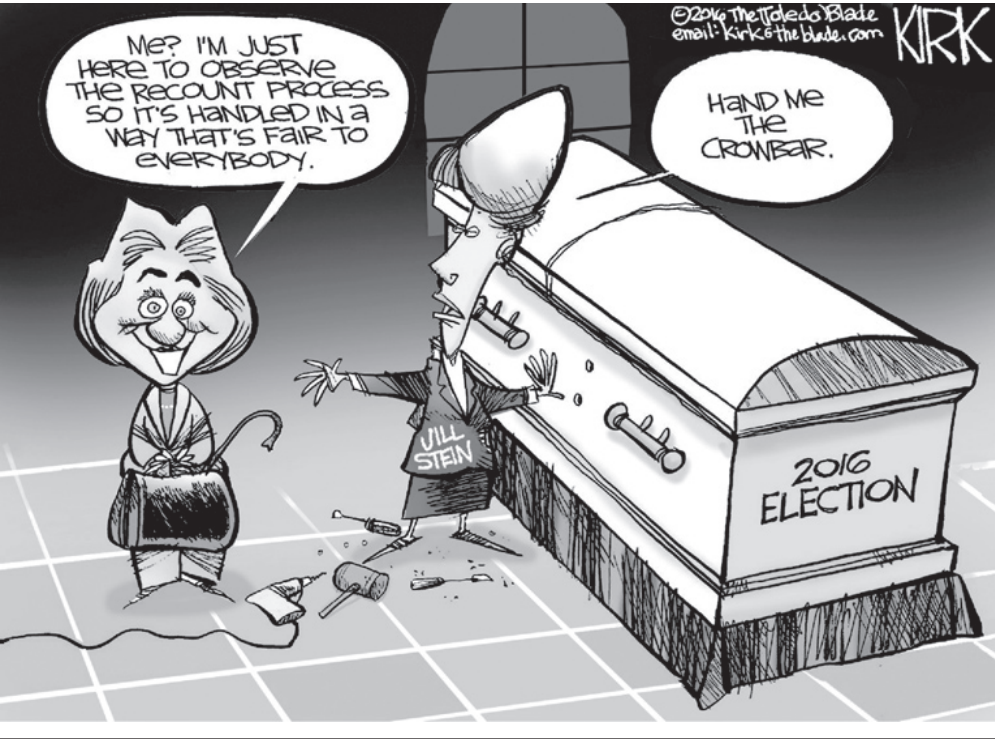
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## Moore Texas

by Roger Moore

# Dec. 10, 1854: Richard King marries Henriette Chamberlain and over time they make the King Ranch great.





## Health

From Page 1

special populations like veterans and the homeless.

Data shows that in times of a mental health crisis, sufferers often end up in the criminal-justice system. “Unfortunately, county jails are one of the biggest providers of mental-health care in the state,” Moody stated. He related that providing such care in jails and emergency rooms are two of the least-efficient, most-expensive methods of doing so.

Moody acknowledged that the state legislature over the past few sessions has improved funding for mental health and must continue to do so. “However, it’s not just an issue of adding more dollars,” he stated.

Moody pointed out that leading mental health experts are recommending that Texas change the focus of its mental-health services. According to experts, presently the state aligns most of its resources to handle mental health issues once they have reached the crisis stage, the most expensive stage of mental illness. Instead, these experts claim that more resources should be redirected to existing, effective programs that can address concerns earlier and prevent expensive trips to jails or emergency rooms.

About \$2 billion a year is spent on mental-health and substance-abuse visits to Texas emergency rooms and jails, according to state reports. Moody stated that those resources would be better spent deploying care to keep people facing difficulty from becoming a crisis. And an important way of doing that, he said, is by surveying community resources and coordinating them to meet each region’s unique needs.

At the national level, U.S. Congressman Beto O’Rourke has focused on the mental health needs of veterans. According to the

### For information about mental illness treatment and support services contact:

- **Emergency Health Network Crisis Line** at (915) 779-1800 or visit website at [www.emergencehealthnetwork.org](http://www.emergencehealthnetwork.org)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (El Paso)** visit website at <http://namiep.org>
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** call 1-800-273-8255; or visit website at <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- **Veterans Crisis Line** - call (800) 273-8255, Press 1
- **Crisis Text Line – Text – 741741**
- **U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA]** call at (800) 662- 4357 or visit website at <http://www.samhsa.gov>

congressman, the El Paso region has an acute need for effective and accessible services for veterans and their families. He said that he has been urging the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to fill this need by utilizing a flexible VA and community services partnership.

Nonetheless, healthcare advocates asserted that the multi-level approach has an enormous obstacle that is keeping resources from being able to significantly help children, veterans, and others who need mental health services and that hindrance is the shortage of trained mental healthcare workers that currently exists statewide.

Mental healthcare professionals warn that until all stakeholders address the lack of qualified personnel predicament, those seeking mental health care will not be able to expeditiously access the services they need, when they need them.

THE BEST TIME TO LEARN THE SIGNS OF STROKE IS BEFORE YOU HAVE ONE. STROKES ARE THE NUMBER-THREE KILLER IN THIS COUNTRY, YET MANY PEOPLE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THEY ARE. THEY DON'T KNOW THAT MORE OF THE BRAIN CAN BE SAVED IF A STROKE IS DETECTED AND TREATMENT IS RECEIVED IMMEDIATELY.

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STROKES BEGIN WHEN A BLOOD VESSEL IN THE BRAIN BECOMES BLOCKED OR BURSTS. BLOOD FLOW IS CUT OFF. TISSUE IS STARVED FOR OXYGEN, AND PARTS OF THE BRAIN DIE. IF NOT TREATED QUICKLY, ABILITIES AND PRODUCTIVE LIFE CAN BE LOST. YOUR BRAIN IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION. GUARD IT WITH YOUR LIFE.

**WITH A STROKE, TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST.**

If you suddenly have or see any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately: Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body • Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding • Difficulty seeing in one or both eyes • Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination • Severe headache with no known cause

Learn more at [StrokeAssociation.org](http://StrokeAssociation.org) or 1-888-4-STROKE.

Ad Council

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American Stroke Association  
A Division of American Heart Association

PUBLIC NOTICE  
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

The *West Texas County Courier* will publish its last issue of 2016 on December 15, 2016.

The *West Texas County Courier* office will close beginning Tuesday, December 13, 2016. The office will open again on Tuesday, December 27, 2016.

Because

# TEXAS IS SPECIAL

This calendar **BEGINS**

## MARCH 2<sup>ND</sup>

TEXAS


## INDEPENDENCE DAY

The *real* Texas New Year!

\*\* STILL A 12-MONTH CALENDAR – JUST STARTS WITH MARCH 2ND – THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY IN TEXAS! \*\*



A law which outlawed Jack Rabbit roping was enacted in 1978 although it was wildly popular with the humans.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 Here's January & February for you folks havin' trouble adjustin'.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 JANUARY 2017	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 FEBRUARY 2017	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 FEBRUARY 2017	1836: The Texas Declaration of Independence is adopted at Washington-on-the-Brazos. <b>TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY</b>	1857: Congress authorizes Butterfield Mail & Stage Line.	
	5 1836: The Alamo falls.	6 1901: The bluebonnet is named the state flower.	7	8	9	10 1836: Sam Houston assumes command of the army at Gonzales.
	12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20 1888: Governor Coke Stevenson is born in Mason County.	21	22	23	24 1883: The first cowboy strike in Texas begins in the Panhandle.	25 1843: Prisoners of Mier Expedition draw black and white beans from a pot; 17 who draw black beans are executed by the Mexicans.
26	27	28	29	30	31	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

TO ORDER: [www.TexasCalendars.com](http://www.TexasCalendars.com) or P.O. Box 155, Merkel, TX 79536 ★ (512) 413-0392

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CryptoQuip  
Answer

If you're surrounded by several wisecracking folks, then I guess you have your wits about you.

Strange  
But True

By Samantha Weaver

• It was notoriously prolific American author and academic Isaac Asimov, who died in 1992, who made the following sage observation: "There is a cult of ignorance in the United States, and there always has been. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that 'my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge.'"

• If you're like 10 to 20 percent of the U.S. population, you suffer from "coulrophobia," a fear of clowns.

• In Linden, California, a man saw a rabbit scurry into an irrigation pipe. Worried about the animal's safety, he got two other men to help him lift the 44-foot-long pipe and urge the rabbit out. Their kindly behavior wasn't rewarded, however; while the men were lifting it, the pipe touched a 12,000-volt electrical wire, electrocuting all three of the Good Samaritans.

• Those who suffer from Moebius syndrome are incapable of showing expressions on their faces – not a frown or a smile or a quizzical lift of an eyebrow. They often are found sleeping with their eyes open.

• Between 1976 and 1987, no red M&M candies were produced.

• A collection of items that belonged to Eva Braun, Adolf Hitler's longtime companion (and, very briefly, his wife), recently went up for auction. Among the items was a pair of her underwear, lilac with white lace and ribbon trim, embroidered with her initials. An unnamed collector bought the undergarment for more than \$3,500.

• If you want to get a karat's worth of diamond, you'll have to mine, on average, 23 tons of ore.

Thought for the Day: "Every normal man must be tempted at times to spit upon his hands, hoist the black flag and begin slitting throats."  
– H.L. Mencken

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# El Paso Sports Commission to bring in premier softball event

By Margaret Gallardo  
*Special to the Courier*

EL PASO COUNTY – One of the biggest sports competitions in the nation is coming to El Paso.

Under the leadership of President and CEO Brian Kennedy, the El Paso Sports Commission has won the official bid to host the 2017 Senior Softball-USA Texas State Championships in El Paso, officials announced Nov. 28.

“The Texas State Championships, hosted by the



El Paso Sports Commission, is the premier senior tournament in Texas,” said Terry Hennessy, chief executive officer with Senior Softball-USA. “Top senior teams from throughout Texas and the surrounding states have been competing in the Texas State Championships for the past decade, and we are very excited to be working with the El Paso Sports Commission on this premier event.”

The event, scheduled for June next year, is expected to bring in more than 50 teams and thousands of players and tourists, with an estimated economic impact for El Paso of about \$3 million, according to Senior Softball-USA officials. The El Paso Sports Commission has selected the El Paso County Sportspark as the venue for the event and is simply awaiting park approval by county officials.

“We are thrilled and excited to host such a prestigious tournament here in El Paso,” Kennedy said. “Senior Softball-USA has been around for quite a while now, and has set the foundation

for senior softball across the nation. It will be a wonderful collaboration, and it’s great that they are coming to such a softball city like El Paso, where the weather and the people shine.”

Senior Softball-USA became the first national senior softball organization in 1988 and has remained the leader in one of the fastest growing sports in America. The organization founded a variety of regional championships, including the Texas State Championships, as well as the Tournament of Champions and the Senior Softball World Championships, which has established itself as the largest and more prestigious championship in the sport. Players range in age from 40 through 75-plus.

Winners of the regional tournaments, such as the Texas State Championships, earn a berth into the elite Tournament of Champions.

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[www.texaslung.org](http://www.texaslung.org)

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Canutillo Independent School District				
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance				
Governmental Funds				
For the Year Ended June 30, 2016				
Data Control Codes	10 General Fund	50 Debt Service Fund	Other Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES:				
5700 Total Local and Intermediate Sources	\$ 20,740,915	\$ 6,170,856	\$ 755,923	\$ 27,667,694
5800 State Program Revenues	32,801,104	1,376,120	842,660	35,019,884
5900 Federal Program Revenues	5,145,865	–	4,088,101	9,233,966
5020 Total Revenues	58,687,884	7,546,976	5,686,684	71,921,544
EXPENDITURES:				
Current:				
0011 Instruction	30,192,881	–	2,750,413	32,943,294
0012 Instructional Resources and Media Services	757,010	–	219,212	976,222
0013 Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	477,068	–	1,112,603	1,589,671
0021 Instructional Leadership	1,057,951	–	233,011	1,290,962
0023 School Leadership	3,405,406	–	36,618	3,442,024
0031 Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	1,749,341	–	75,908	1,825,249
0032 Social Work Services	152,006	–	–	152,006
0033 Health Services	701,718	–	8,417	710,135
0034 Student (Pupil) Transportation	1,794,000	–	–	1,794,000
0035 Food Services	5,019,935	–	40,680	5,060,615
0036 Extracurricular Activities	1,392,194	–	27,941	1,420,135
0041 General Administration	2,965,824	–	23,935	2,989,759
0051 Facilities Maintenance and Operations	5,723,320	–	114,344	5,837,664
0052 Security and Monitoring Services	435,784	–	12,796	448,580
0053 Data Processing Services	1,740,997	–	–	1,740,997
0061 Community Services	45,185	–	427,805	472,990
Debt Service:				
0071 Principal on Long Term Debt	251,784	2,927,153	–	3,178,937
0072 Interest on Long Term Debt	118,112	4,208,563	–	4,326,675
0073 Bond Issuance Cost and Fees	–	217,586	–	217,586
Capital Outlay:				
0081 Facilities Acquisition and Construction	994,319	–	5,264,035	6,258,354
Intergovernmental:				
0099 Other Intergovernmental Charges	331,542	–	–	331,542
6030 Total Expenditures	59,306,377	7,353,302	10,347,718	77,007,397
1100 Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	(618,493)	193,674	(4,661,034)	(5,085,853)
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):				
7911 Capital Related Debt Issued (Regular Bonds)	–	8,645,000	–	8,645,000
7915 Transfers In	168,101	–	–	168,101
7916 Premium or Discount on Issuance of Bonds	–	1,271,728	–	1,271,728
8949 Other (Uses)	–	(9,709,093)	–	(9,709,093)
7080 Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	168,101	207,635	–	375,736
1200 Net Change in Fund Balances	(450,392)	401,309	(4,661,034)	(4,710,117)
0100 Fund Balance – July 1 (Beginning)	12,754,209	3,398,586	8,948,905	25,101,700
3000 Fund Balance – June 30 (Ending)	\$ 12,303,817	\$ 3,799,895	\$ 4,287,871	\$ 20,391,583

# College football playoff needs a little tweaking

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

Ever eat at that restaurant, or watch that movie, or listen to that song that was pretty good, but not quite as good as it could be?

Many times the final product does what it sets out to do – and nothing more – when just a little bit more would have made it perfect.

That’s kind of the way I view this year’s college football playoff.

Don’t get me wrong. I’m very glad there’s a playoff and I’d been wishing for one since I was just a little football fan.

But the four-team playoff system, especially this year, has left fans with far more questions than answers.

Questions like, “does anyone have a clue what the criteria is for choosing one team over another?”

The four teams this year are Alabama, Ohio State, Clemson and Washington. And cases can be made for all four teams.

But legitimate cases can also be made for Michigan, Penn State, Oklahoma and USC.

Except for Alabama, the seven other

teams can be substituted in or out for one another.

So, the question remains, how did the committee determine one team was more deserving than the other?

The answer: your guess is as good as theirs.

On one hand, the committee took into consideration Ohio State’s opponents and the fact that they scheduled Oklahoma during the regular season. So strength of schedule went a long way toward their nod.

On the other hand, Washington had only one loss, but had an easy schedule, piling up victories over the likes of Rutgers, Idaho and Portland State. So getting as many wins as possible, despite the easy schedule, got the Huskies in.

Surely, strong consideration would have to go toward achievement, like a conference championship.

But Penn State won the Big Ten Conference by beating Wisconsin in the championship game. And by virtue of their win over Ohio State in the regular season, Penn State would be automatic right?

Ohio State in, and Penn State out.

With all that Penn State accomplished,

Michigan, with just two losses by a combined four points, crushed them by the score of 49-10.

The idea is to select the four most dominant teams in the country. Clemson finished the season with a 12-1 record. Impressive, but six of those wins were by just seven points or less.

The two teams nobody wants to play right now were kept out of the playoff for the same reason – they got off to slow starts.

Oklahoma started the season 1-2 and are now on a nine-game winning streak and are averaging 48 points a game in that span.

Southern Cal got off to an even worse start at 1-3. The Trojans have won eight in a row, including victories over the two teams that played in the PAC-12 title game, Colorado and Washington.

So having gone through many of the scenarios involving the best eight teams, what did the committee use to choose its top four?

They’ve never provided a clear answer. But here’s mine – expand the playoff to eight teams already.

And a two-fold process would make everybody happy.

For those who want clear-cut, no-debate accuracy, take the big five conference champions. Like in basketball, you win the conference championship game, you’re in.

For those who like to use the eye test, there are three at-large bids still out there that can be filled by the next three best teams the committee feels are deserving.

How easy is that?

Of course there are those who will say that if you choose eight teams to make the playoffs, the ninth and tenth teams will feel slighted and wonder why they weren’t chosen.

That’s always true, but there’s a big difference between the top five or six teams in the country and non-conference winning teams hovering around #10.

At least this will give teams a clear path to the playoff; something to play for, instead of hope for.

If it were eight teams this year, the first round would probably be Alabama-USC, Ohio State-Oklahoma, Clemson-Penn State and Washington-Michigan.

Tell me the ratings for games like that wouldn’t be sky high.

Then we can say that we’ve truly made the college football playoff great again.

## A sporting view By Mark Vasto

### Penn State heartbreak

Penn State fans and alums knew there were going to be years like this, didn’t they? In what can only be described as a minor controversy for the Penn State Nittany Lions, their Big Ten championship season will end with a trip to Pasadena’s Rose Bowl, their Top 10 ranking all but ensured, win or lose.

The Rose Bowl matchup with USC is very compelling and will no doubt be a well-contested game. Still, after reeling off nine straight wins – several of which were major massacres – and a

dramatic, come-from-behind win over Wisconsin in the Big Ten championship game, it can only be seen as a consolation prize for some and a more expensive cross-country commute for most.

The College Football Playoff series, with its 12 wise men selection committee, was inherently flawed from the start. That’s what happens when you build the playoff formula based

on five “power” conferences with only four playoff spots. This year, Penn State ended up with the square peg, despite having won the Big Ten conference championship.

The entire point of having a power-conference structure was to help ensure against situations where teams with great records and strong schedule bona fides like, say, Ohio State, weren’t picked over teams that did what they were supposed to do by winning their conference. It was supposed to add a little stability.

But we live in unstable times. The playoff committee is always

quick to point out and tout the “human” side of the selection process. I’m not feeling it. While Michigan removed itself from the mix with two losses, Ohio State, which beat Michigan, gets the nod, despite losing to Penn State, who lost to Michigan but, again, won the Big Ten.

Alabama and Clemson are clearly the No. 1 and No. 2 teams in the country. I can see how Ohio State would be considered three or four. Washington, with 12 wins and one loss, can be seen as a contender for the four

See SPORTS, Page 8

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Years

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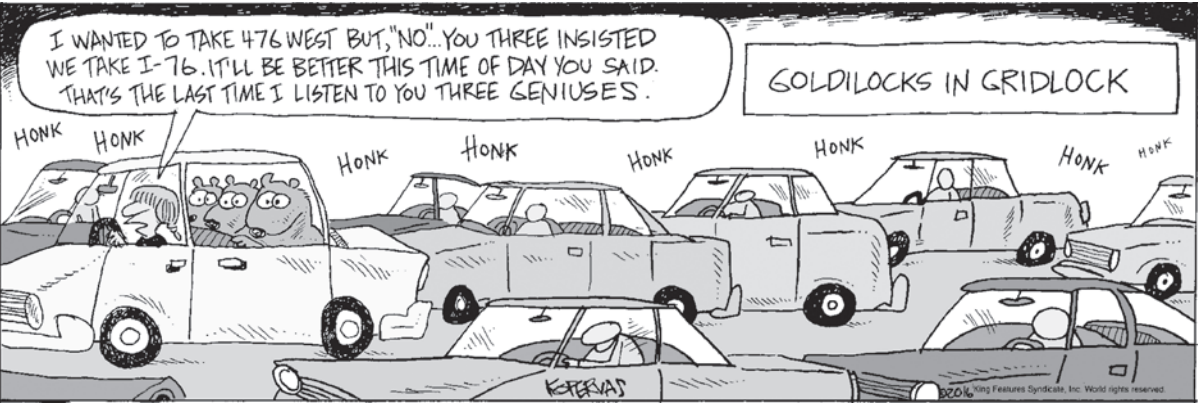
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25 words - \$10 per week; 40 words - \$15 per week

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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.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you tell me if there is any hope of a cure for tree-nut allergy, particularly for a child? – X.M.

Tree-nut allergies, like all allergies, vary in severity from mild to life-threatening. Allergies to tree nuts (these include walnuts, cashews, almonds and others) are common, are more likely to be severe, and tend to persist throughout lifetime. People with one tree-nut allergy may have others, and about 30 percent to 40 percent also may be allergic to peanuts (despite their being legumes, they share enough characteristics for co-allergic reactions). Peanut and tree-nut allergies appear to be increasing in prevalence over time. The mainstay of treatment is avoiding the allergen, which requires constant vigilance, careful reading of nutritional labels and a plan for treatment in case of ingestion, such as an epinephrine auto-injector.

Only about 15 to 20 percent of younger children will develop tolerance to (“outgrow”) their allergy; an allergy that develops later in life usually is life-long. Your allergist can do skin testing to see if the allergy is resolving.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I’m a retired ob-gyn and am married to a practicing MD. I’m writing you today about autism and its use as a diagnosis. My view is that each individual is unique, mentally and physically. While autism may be one way to describe a personality, each person must deal with the world on its terms, not because of a diagnosis. I personally believe I am a variant

of Asperger’s, but who knows? I don’t qualify as an Asperger’s if given a test prepared by psychologists/psychiatrists. Yet, I have had many life experiences that are best explained by an Asperger’s diagnosis. What are your thoughts on Asperger’s syndrome? – A.G.

Since I recently published a letter by an adult who believed he was autistic despite never having received a diagnosis, I have had several letters like this.

Autism, including its variant Asperger syndrome, is a spectrum of illnesses that share deficits in social interaction, communication and stereotyped, repetitive behaviors. In Asperger syndrome, there is no clinically significant delay in language and intellectual development.

I certainly agree with you that each person is unique and that the label of a psychiatric condition, such as autism, bipolar or a personality disorder, has only limited usefulness. In the best case, it can give a person a way to start learning how to overcome challenges that similar people have faced. At worst, a label predisposes others to look at the person through a certain lens and to expect certain behaviors.

I have had many patients with psychiatric diagnoses ask me not to put that into their medical record, after having built up enough trust to share the diagnosis with me. People have had such negative experiences based on their diagnosis, their label, that I don’t blame them for wanting to avoid being stereotyped. There is so much variation in all of these conditions – even in those of us

See HEALTH, Page 8

# Super Crossword

- UNSPOKEN

BEVERAGE OF CHOICE

ACROSS

1 Out on \_ (in potential danger)

6 "I'm just sayin'," in a text

10 Letters after chis

14 Apple variety

18 \_ de Mayo

19 Indian melodies

21 "Don't say it!"

22 Famed flood figure

23 Challenges

24 School, in France

25 Card game for one

27 Start of a riddle

30 Popular Eli Lilly brand

31 Sacred vow

32 Tidies

33 Riddle, part 2

38 Fit \_ bill

39 Sodium hydroxide, chemically

40 Lean-\_ (shacks)

41 Octet count

46 "You Got It" singer

Bonnie

49 Ghostly spirit

52 Trivial lies

53 Riddle, part 3

58 Cozy spot

59 Publishes

60 Morales of Hollywood

61 Citrate, e.g.

63 Burrito topper

64 Riddle, part 4

68 Like a king

71 Pupa-to-be

73 Microwave, informally

74 Islamic holy city

75 Turn liquid

77 Riddle, part 5

82 "\_ Lama Ding Dong" (1961 hit)

83 Like a scornful villain's face

84 "Fuer \_" (piano classic)

85 Annual sports awards

87 TV actress Arthur

88 Roosevelt's terrier

90 \_ West (life jacket)

93 End of the riddle

100 Devotee

104 Tombstone

105 Theater area

106 Riddle's answer

111 Sent by plane, as a letter

112 Ghostly

113 Pop singer Lopez

115 Word after a noun, often

116 Snow glider

117 "Fear Street" author R.L. \_

118 Perfect spots

119 Big ice cream brand

120 Old fast jets, for short

121 Finger sound

122 TV "explorer" and others

DOWN

1 Have a role on stage

2 Depend upon, as a decision

3 Physically fit

4 "Blind Willie \_" (Bob Dylan song)

5 Partner of Herzegovina

6 At no charge

7 1993 siege site in Texas

8 1952 Walt Kelly comic strip collection

9 "The Misfits" actor

Eli

10 Swank

11 "Flee, fly!"

12 Off the coast

13 Evening do

14 Out of place

15 Silk pattern

16 RBI king Hank

17 The mating game?

20 Catches sight of, biblically

26 Josh

28 \_Ops (CIA mind games)

29 "\_ ya up to?"

30 Curious pet

34 See 70-Down

35 "Taboo" cable chan.

121 Finger sound

36 Copy a tiger

37 "Keep dreaming!"

42 Assuming it's necessary

43 Fashion's Armani

44 "Veep" cable channel

45 "Tut" relative

46 Flees

47 Perfume from flower petals

48 "\_ my fault"

49 Singer Houston

50 Stocking tips

51 168 in a wk.

53 Car navig. aid

54 Man-mouse link

55 Old indoor light source

56 "Go back" PC key

57 "... we'll \_ a cup o' kindness...": Burns

62 Deuce beaters

64 Lyricist Sammy

65 Neighbor of Switz.

66 34th prez

67 Lowest tier of a parking garage, perhaps

69 "Further..."

70 With 34-Down, chew out

72 Beetles, e.g., briefly

74 CAT scan relative

75 Three, in Milan

76 \_been

78 "Judge not, lest \_ judged"

79 Roe, e.g.

80 Spouts forth

81 Biblical kingdom

86 "Yes and no"

88 Mink cousins

89 Pain-relief pill

90 More clouded

91 Insect feeler

92 Conceit

94 Careless

95 Boring tools

96 Devil's place

97 Notable time

98 Leaning

99 Afro, e.g.

100 Tequila plant

101 Dehydrated

102 Cheerful

103 Feet, in verse

107 Cross paths

108 Roush and Byrnes

109 Singer Simone

110 Don't discard

114 Mag. printing

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13		14	15	16	17	
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119						120										122				

### Here’s a Tip

By JoAnn Derson

- If you are chopping a lot of tomatoes and need to remove seeds, this tip will leave you spinning. Get out your salad spinner, add chopped tomatoes and give it a whirl!
- “When you are slicing flank steak or chicken breasts (anything you need to cut thin that has a lot of skin pieces or fat that make it hard to cut), try partially freezing the meat first. It defrosts quickly when it is cut thin, and it is much easier to slice.” – C.O. in Indiana
- Need to hang something on a wall? Here’s a trick to get your nails in just the right place. Use a dab of toothpaste on the back where the nails should go. Press against the wall. The toothpaste will leave behind a superb guide, which can be wiped right off the wall after the nail is in. Hang and admire!
- Use a Bundt pan to roast a chicken. Season and prepare your bird, then slip the bird upright on the center of the greased pan, cavity down. Fill the pan with veggies for a complete meal.
- “I store my loose charging cables in an eyeglass case in my purse. It all stays together, and the cords don’t get damaged or crimped.” – E. in Massachusetts

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.  
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### 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!

	+		÷		5			
×			−		×			
	÷		×		7			
+		+		−				
	−		×		8			
10		10		6				
1	2	4	4	5	6	7	8	9

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Answer Page 4

### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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### Moments in Time

The History Channel

- On Dec. 26, 1966, the first day of the first Kwanzaa is celebrated in Los Angeles under the direction of Maulana Karenga, the chair of Black Studies at California State University at Long Beach. The seven-day holiday celebrates African-American family, community and culture.
- On Dec. 27, 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, thousands turn out for the opening of Radio City Music Hall, an Art Deco theater in a formerly derelict neighborhood in Manhattan. Since its opening, more than 300 million people have attended events at Radio City.
- On Dec. 28, 1973, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s “literary investigation” of the police-state system in the Soviet Union, “The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956,” is published in the original Russian in Paris. Soviet officials were livid, and Solzhenitsyn was arrested, stripped of his citizenship and deported.
- On Dec. 29, 1940, London suffers its most devastating air raid when German planes firebomb the city. The next day, a newspaper photo of St. Paul’s Cathedral standing undamaged amid the smoke and flames seemed to symbolize the city’s unconquerable spirit.
- On Dec. 30, 1903, a fire in the Iroquois Theater in Chicago kills more than 600 people. The fire inspector had declared the theater “fireproof beyond all doubt,” even though it had no fire alarm and no sprinkler system over the stage. An asbestos curtain turned out to be made of paper, and the exits were locked.
- On Dec. 31, 1985, former teen idol Rick Nelson dies in plane crash in Texas. Nelson launched his pop career in 1957 by singing in an episode of “The Adventures of Ozzie And Harriet.”
- On Jan. 1, 1959, a popular revolution led by Fidel Castro quickly takes over Cuba. After Castro nationalized American-owned property and allied himself with the Soviets, the U.S severed diplomatic and economic ties, and enacted a trade and travel embargo.

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### CryptoQuip

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

Clue: **N** equals **R**

UC SZV’NK HVNNZVXQKQ FS

HKPKNJI MUHKDNJDAUXB CZIAH,

GOKX U BVKHH SZV OJPK SZVN

MUGH JFZVG SZV.

Answer Page 4

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### FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

ATO

IGNOEL

FYTIN

♥EOLP

♥SOPRET

GFI

OTOT

RATPI

♥APN

♥GRIENF

♥RONGE

FAFG


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.

NEW! 30 Fear Knot puzzles \$3.50 • Six Volumes • Order at rbmamall.com

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### Sports

From Page 6

spot despite having a weaker schedule. It doesn’t add up for me. My top four are Alabama, Clemson, Ohio State, Penn State, with Michigan or Washington as your shafted No. 5. What’s truly peculiar about the situation is the nagging feeling you get about Michigan. The Wolverines still inspire a certain menace, and they could be the best team to take on Alabama and win.

Nonetheless, Penn State, under the wise leadership of the East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania-bred James Franklin, has been gracious, it has shown humility. The Rose Bowl IS an honor, and it is a fitting cap to a great season. Take heart, those of you in Nittanyville, the bad days are finally over. You didn’t get the go ahead this year, but there is no doubt you’re back. Your future looks bright, and that is a welcome sight.

Mark Vasto is a veteran sportswriter who lives in New Jersey. (c) 2016 King Features Synd., Inc.


### Health

From Page 7

considered neurologically typical – that we need to recognize the good and the bad side of making such a diagnosis.


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](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu). To view and order health pamphlets, visit [www.rbmamall.com](http://www.rbmamall.com), or write to Good Health, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2016 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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