



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Canutillo ISD bond election

The Canutillo Independent School District (CISD) Board of Trustees approved an order calling a bond election to be held on November 2, 2021. The Board voted to move forward with the proposed \$187.5 million bond to address District needs to meet the growth and development of the Canutillo area over the next seven years. The proposed bond includes certain new facilities but, if approved by the voters, it will also provide funds to help address needed maintenance, renovations and enhancements to existing campuses and facilities. “This bond will allow us to provide increased opportunities, resources and security for our students and teachers. Our community is growing and we must grow with it to adequately support the uptick of school-aged children to the areas we serve in the coming years. We must also provide current and prospective students with adequate space, opportunities for advancement and access to facilities and resources that bolster success,” said CISD Superintendent Dr. Pedro Galaviz. Visit [www.canutillo-isd.org](http://www.canutillo-isd.org) for more information regarding the bond election.

— Liza M. Rodriguez

### Babies

With the average birth costing around \$4,500 for mothers with insurance, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2021’s Best & Worst States to Have a Baby, as well as accompanying videos and expert commentary. To determine the most ideal places in the U.S. for parents and their newborns, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 31 key measures of cost, health care accessibility and baby-friendliness. The data set ranges from hospital conventional-delivery charges to annual average infant-care costs to pediatricians per capita. Texas was rated 34th in the report, ranking (1-Best; 25-Avg.):

- 29th – Hospital Cesarean-Delivery Charges;
- 29th – Hospital Conventional-Delivery Charges;
- 30th – Avg. Annual Cost of Early Child Care;

See BRIEFS, Page 5

*There is no sure cure for a lazy man, but the choice between working or going hungry often helps.*

— Quips & Quotes



— Uncredited internet image

**BITING SUBJECT** – The difference between a mosquito, above, and other biting flies is their needle-like mouthparts. Water is necessary for the development and life cycle of a mosquito, so these pests frequent stagnant ponds and marshes where they can breed and lay eggs. They also may be found around the home in standing water, such as in birdbaths, kiddie pools, or yards with poor drainage.

## Health officials warn public of virus-spreading mosquitoes

By Alfredo Vasquez  
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – With the monsoon rains flooding the El Paso County region in recent weeks, borderland residents will have to contend with an increase in the mosquito population that can cause severe illnesses in people if left unchecked.

Add to that, the persistent COVID-19 virus that is still pervasive in the area and health officials are obliged to send out an alarm urging everyone to take extra precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites.

This means borderland residents should be making sure there are no standing water issues around their living quarters and working environments, especially since state health officials reported recently that they have identified the first pools of mosquitoes to test positive for the St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) virus.

The encephalitis virus is spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people afflicted with the SLE virus experience mild symptoms, but individuals who do become ill may experience fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, and tiredness.

The SLE virus was found in a group of mosquitoes collected from traps set by the Environmental Services Department-Vector Control in the 79936 ZIP code vicinity, according to local health officials.

“Vulnerable populations for COVID-19 are some of the same persons who could be affected greatly by diseases from a mosquito bite,” said Angela Mora, director of El Paso’s city and county public health services. “We need to be vigilant and proactive in order to prevent mosquito breeding and mosquito bites,” she said.

Mora stated that vector control specialists will continue monitoring and testing mosquitoes for not only the encephalitis virus but also for other threats like the West Nile virus, which is transmitted by birds that are exposed to a mosquito with the SLE virus.

Although humans cannot infect other humans with the SLE virus, nonetheless, severe illness can occur in people of any age, and people older than 60 years of age are at greater risk.

SLE symptoms are similar to the West Nile virus in that it can cause a high fever, headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, numbness, muscle weakness, vision loss,

as well as more serious symptoms like tremors, convulsions, paralysis, or coma.

Health officials advised that residents should use an insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, or IR3535- as well as wear long sleeves and pants when outdoors- to keep mosquitoes at bay. They added that solutions that contain some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol also provide good protection. However, officials pointed out that individuals should not apply repellents containing permethrin directly to the skin. Instead, permethrin-containing products should be sprayed only on clothing for extra protection.

Other precautionary measures include avoiding outdoor activities from dusk to dawn as these times are the peak hours for mosquitoes; draining flowerpots, gutters, buckets, pool covers, pet water dishes, discarded tires, and birdbaths on a regular basis, and mosquito-proofing a home by installing or repairing screens on windows and doors.

Mosquitoes can bite people and pets, leaving itchy, irritating bumps, and sometimes causing more severe reactions in those persons who are allergic to them. This pest breeds quickly and infests both homes and commercial spaces.

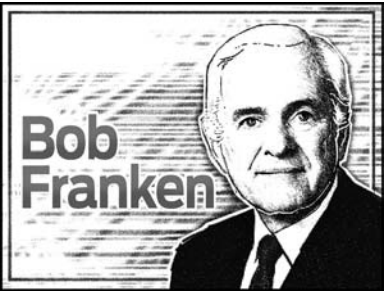
Because they carry and spread a variety of deadly virus diseases including the West Nile, yellow fever, malaria, and Zika, mosquitoes are considered one of the most dangerous critters on earth.

If you have mosquitoes on your property, to help take care of the problem contact El Paso County’s Vector Control services, at (915) 212-6000. Residents can also report mosquito breeding and standing water areas by calling 311.



*The Greek name for the mosquito is “anopheles,” and translates to “good for nothing.”*





# Glitz platitudes

Olympic Committee, said it best: “For the first time since the pandemic began, the entire world came together.”

But by saying it best, he said it worst when it comes to taste.

Speaking of taste, it’s a good thing the Obamas give no indication that they read my drivel. They’d be offended by the way I reacted to the celebration of former President Barack Obama’s 60th birthday. First of all, in the face of the world’s problems, they clearly were a bit sheepish about all the glitz at the fam’s Martha’s Vineyard mansion. They had strict rules for guests: no pictures and no interviews – a news blackout.

Funny how news blackouts don’t work. They leak like a sieve, including a report that a policeman who was managing the chauffeur-driven cars (aka, rolling egos) called it a “[expletive]show.”

Secondly, your 60th birthday is not something worth celebrating. In Obama’s case, it probably means that his dream of being an NBA player is fading. Certainly he did accomplish something: He was president of the United

States for two terms, which is better than his successor, but no basketball.

Better, perhaps, than a self-indulgent party to mark his 60th birthday, Barack Obama could

have visited some of the sites of such peril for his fellow human beings. We live in a glass-half-empty world, and he could have provided a morale boost for those suffering the effects of the planet burning up – the floods, and the forest and brush fires that consume entire towns

– or for those struck down by COVID because of the new delta variant organism. But worse than that are the human organisms, the demagogic politicians who have left us defenseless against ignorance by those

See FRANKEN, Page 7



View from here

By Jane M. Orient, M.D.

# We need to know the real cause of death

In this age of supposed scientific medicine and a pandemic, we are relying on death certificates<sup>1</sup> for statistics on the cause of death, even though they are known to be extremely unreliable.

Thousands of healthy people are dying unexpectedly, but our public health agencies are assuring us that their death was not caused by the COVID jab. The toll of post-vaccine deaths has reached nearly 7,000<sup>2</sup>, according to the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS). It’s the best system we’ve got, even though it misses 90

percent<sup>3</sup> or more of the actual events.

But I have seen a report of just one autopsy<sup>4</sup>. This patient had had one dose of the Pfizer shot and died four weeks later. Although there were no characteristic features of COVID-19, almost all tissues tested positive on PCR for SARS-CoV-2.

A 45-year-old mother just died<sup>5</sup> of heart issues and brain swelling, shortly after getting the COVID shot required before she could begin her job at Johns Hopkins University. There will be tears and flowers, but probably

no autopsy – and no pause in the shots demanded for mothers and potential mothers if they want to work at JHU.

My internal medicine training was in the dark ages before CT and MRI, but we were still supposed to make an accurate diagnosis. A patient who died without a medical history was an “ME case.” We had to call the medical examiner that would decide whether an autopsy was indicated. Anything potentially related to the death, such as pill bottles, was evidence. If an injection had been given, the vial would be recovered if possible. With

vaccines, one is supposed to record the lot number, so it would be possible to check a sample for contaminants.

If the patient died in hospital, the medical resident was required to request permission for an autopsy. Survivors might be persuaded by the possibility that their loved one may have had a hereditary condition or an infection that might affect them. In any event, we assured them that their loved one would be treated with respect and the funeral arrangements would not be affected. A chaplain would volunteer to attend.

The most important reason was that the “altar of truth” was the ultimate “quality assurance” mechanism. Hospitals were required to perform autopsies on a certain proportion of decedents in order to maintain their accreditation. A classic study of 100 randomly selected autopsies from each of three years (1960, 1970, and 1980) revealed that major diagnoses had been missed in about 22 percent of cases in all three eras despite the introduction of modern imaging methods.

Unfortunately, autopsy rates have fallen from 25 percent to less than 5 percent over the past four

See CAUSE, Page 6

1973  
48  
Years  
2021

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**PUBLISHED:**  
Published each Thursday (minimum 50 issues) by Homesteader News, Inc. Office open Monday through Thursday.

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# The Biden blowout is just beginning

A trillion dollars used to be a lot of money, even in Washington.

Now, a trillion-dollar spending bill is a trifle barely worth arguing over and the stuff of bipartisan consensus.

Oscar Wilde famously said that nothing succeeds like excess, but even he might blanch at the shameless profligacy that is America’s new normal.

In their wisdom, Senate Republicans decided to help President Joe Biden pass a portion of his blow-out fiscal agenda, a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill that is a prelude to an even bigger, vastly more consequential \$3.5 trillion reconciliation bill.

The infrastructure bill itself is, as fiscal analyst Brian Riedl of the Manhattan Institute notes, “one of the largest non-emergency spending bills of the past 50 years.”

Republicans told themselves that only about half, \$550 billion, is new spending, and that by going along they can take the heat off of Democratic moderates Kyrsten Sinema and Joe Manchin, who are being constantly pressured to ditch the filibuster.

Perhaps, but there’s no doubt that the GOP has blessed, and lent a bipartisan imprimatur, to a portion of the president’s hoped-

for historic spending spree. In so doing, they have taken at least a little ownership of an agenda they should want no part of.

Republicans will have much less influence, and perhaps none, on the next spate of spending, which is the so-called “soft” infrastructure (aka, a wish list of progressive social programs) after the “hard” infrastructure in the bipartisan bill (roads, bridges, rail).

Under the reconciliation process, tax and spending bills evade the filibuster in the Senate, so Democrats can pass whatever they want so long as they hold all 50 of their senators.

The sheer numbers here are jaw dropping. Including the \$1.9 trillion so-called COVID-19 relief bill from earlier this year, Biden wants to spend nearly \$6 trillion in three measures passed within months of each other. In 2019, by point of comparison, the entire federal budget was \$4.4 trillion (and at the time, President Trump wasn’t exactly tightening the country’s fiscal belt).

The tide of new spending will add to already extraordinary levels of red ink.

The White House projects that the U.S. debt will reach 109.7% of GDP this year, higher than at

the end of World War II when we had abandoned all fiscal restraint to win an existential struggle against two expansionistic totalitarian empires.

The Senate instructions for the reconciliation bill say that only half of it has to be paid for. Democrats will claim a dog’s breakfast of purported savings and painless revenue increases, but the bulk of the new dollars will have to come from a tax increase that easily could rank as one of the biggest ever.

The parameters of the reconciliation bill were crafted by the socialist chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, Bernie Sanders, and it shows.

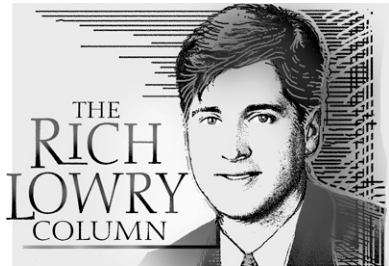
The priorities read like crib notes from his old presidential campaigns. The bill would add new government programs for the young and the old, from universal pre-K to tuition-free community college, to family and medical leave,

to expansions of Obamacare and Medicare.

It would make a big nod to the Green New Deal with a slew of new clean energy initiatives, including “smart agriculture” and “environmental justice,” and the creation of a Civilian Climate Corps, a climate-alarmist homage to FDR.

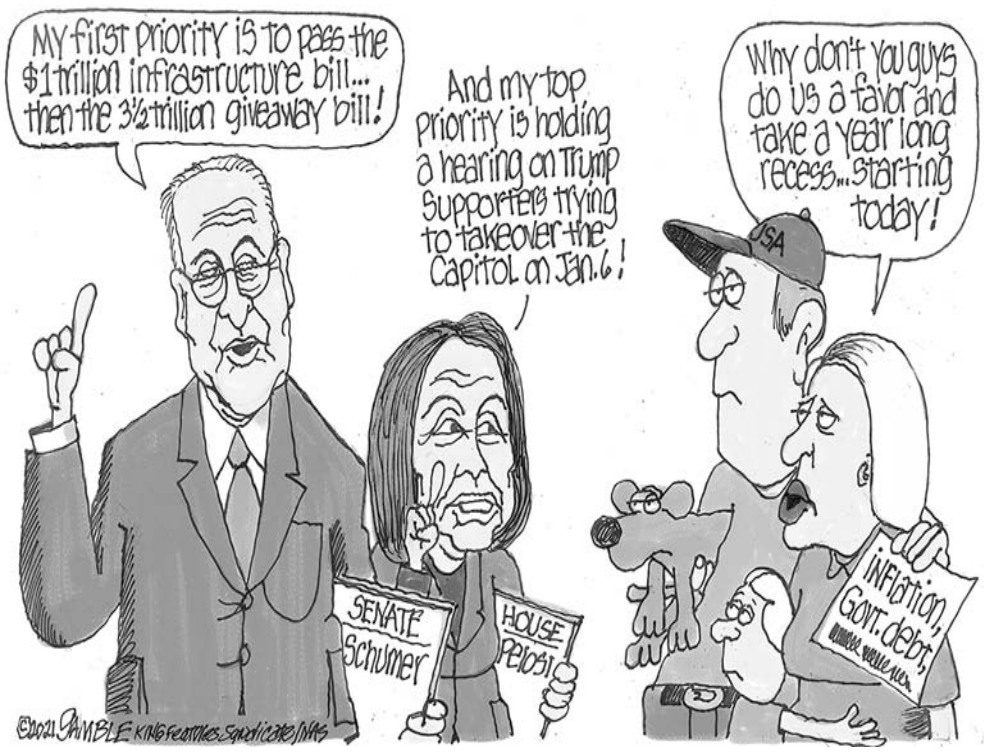
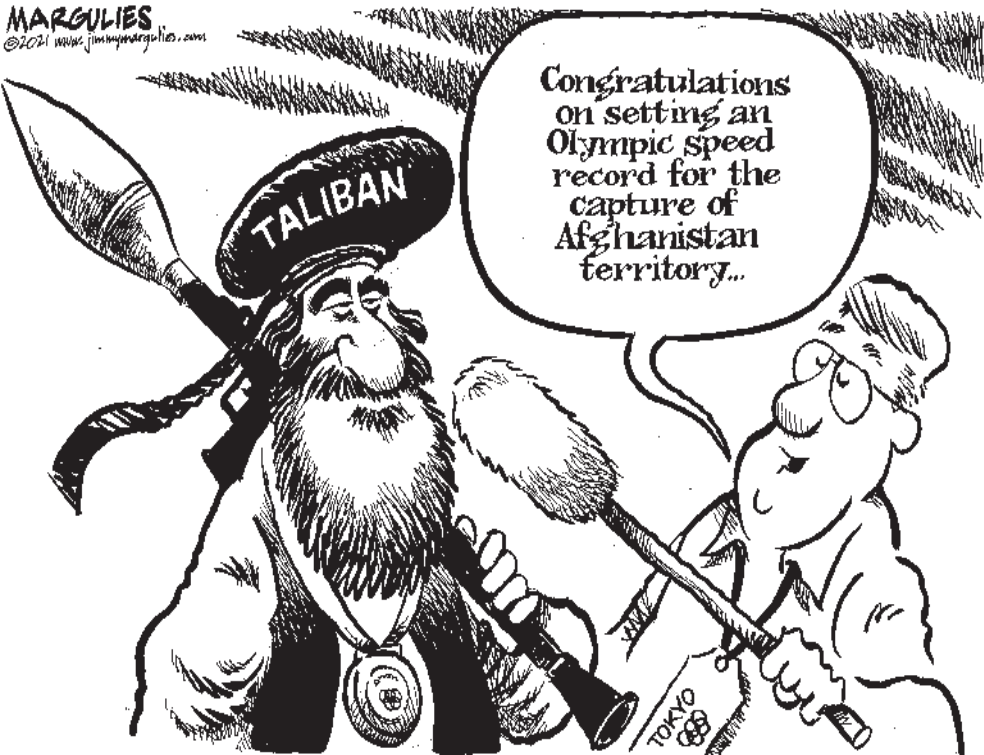
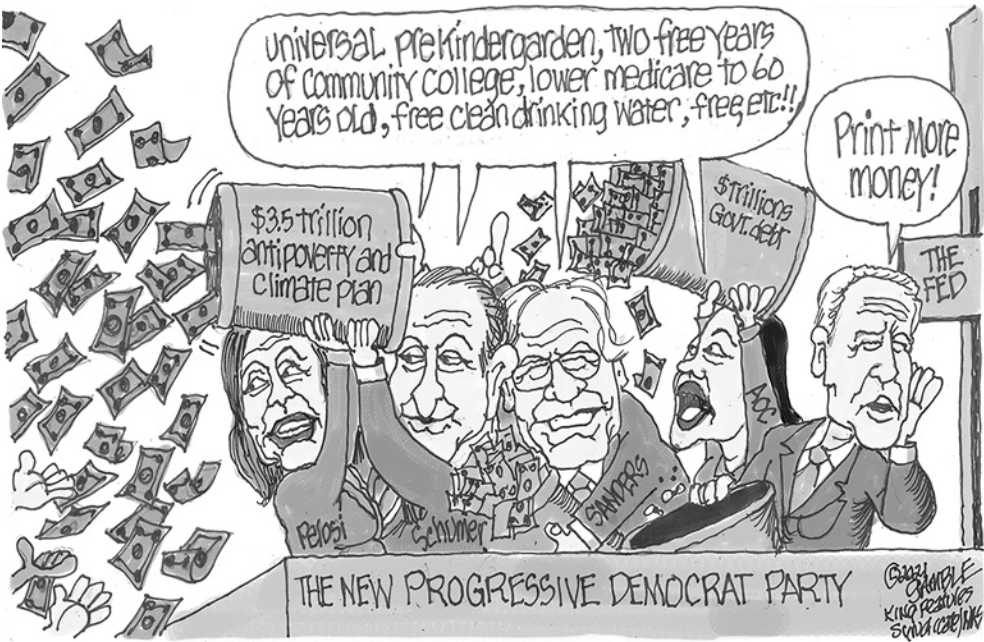
It is a sign of the insane ambition of Biden’s Democrats that they hope as well to include a sweeping amnesty for illegal immigrants in the bill, a measure that is sure to be struck by the Senate parliamentarian on procedural grounds.

Relatively moderate



Democrats in the Senate and the House, where the party also has little margin for error, have grumbled about the size of the reconciliation bill. It will be up to them to decide whether the party steps back from the precipice or goes all-in on Biden-Sanders fiscal radicalism.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2021 by King Features Synd., Inc.





Food for thought

By John Grimaldi

# Beware the plastic clamshell

Consumers are victims of a packaging industry so focused on protecting the goods they’re selling that they are ignoring the needs of buyers, particularly seniors. Perhaps they are ignorant of the fact that shoppers of all ages are fed up with the agony of struggling to cut through the plastic wrapping used to protect goods such as razor blades, toys and even medications. They’ve had it with childproof pill containers. And they reel against those directions and warnings on packages that are so tiny you need a magnifying glass to read them.

Surveys show that the packaging crisis is real. One such poll of 2,000 consumers found that a large majority – 66% of them – say they “suffer from wrap rage” when they get home and try to open over-packaged goods. Forty percent of them reported that they have hurt themselves in the process and 25% say they have had to use scissors, knives, screwdrivers and even hammers to get through the packaging. Another survey found that 75% of respondents believed that packaging these days is harder than it needs to be and that 67% are downright “frustrated” by modern-day packaging.

It’s no contest. Plastic clamshell packaging

takes the cake when it comes to the “hard-to-open” category. Consumer Reports magazine used to have an annual feature focused on packaging. In one of the last such articles it published were invariably those wrapped in clamshells: a toy that took more than 15 minutes to open; a cordless phone that took nine minutes to unpack; and a toothbrush “housed in a sealed, hard-plastic clamshell package and has such a tight fit between the plastic skin and cardboard that it was all but impossible to open with scissors. When the tester finally succeeded in opening the packaging her worktable was littered with sharp plastic shards.”

So why doesn’t the packaging industry heed the message and do away with clamshells? It’s all about shoplifting. Razor blades are packed in those plastic bubbles for that reason, notwithstanding the fact that most retailers keep them locked up, requiring store staff to personally hand over the merchandise. After all, razor blades are small and easy to hide, they are expensive and, thus, are easy to sell in the black market.

There are other reasons plastic clamshells are preferred by retailers. They are see-through and allowing a potential customer a

chance to take a peek at what they are buying makes it easier to make the sale. And then there is transport. Clamshells help protect sensitive products in the shipping process.

Okay. But what about hapless consumers who risk injury and frustration trying to open their purchases when they get home?

Perhaps the trade publication *Plastics Today* answered that question when it made this suggestion to the makers of plastic clamshells: “While it might seem a bit unlikely to envision people hurting themselves with packaging, I have to say I’ve resorted to using scissors before when trying to open clamshell packaging. Luckily, I haven’t received an injury (yet) as a result of using a ‘weapon.’ But it might just make good business sense for packaging designers to come up with a package that still utilizes the clamshell design but is just easy to open. Now that would be a great display of innovative packaging.”

*The Association of Mature American Citizens (http://www.amac.us) is a senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. We act and speak on their behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today.*



- By Lucie Winborne
- Scotland has 421 words for snow.
  - Coca-Cola can remove blood stains. Pour a whole can into your wash, along with the blood-stained clothing and your usual detergent, then run a normal cycle. The laundry will come out stain-free.
  - “Albert Einstein” is an anagram for “ten elite brains.” Hmm, seems fitting to us.

- Sales data gathered by the National Hot Dog and Sausage Council indicates a strong link between the number of hot dogs and sausages sold at Major League Baseball stadiums and their team’s ability to win games.
- “Prison Inside Me” is a hotel of sorts in South Korea where people pay to be locked away in solitary confinement for 24 hours. “Jail mates” wear matching uniforms, sleep on the floor in 54-square-foot cells and are forbidden to speak to each other. Meals are minimal – a steamed sweet potato and banana shake for dinner and rice porridge for breakfast. Like any good getaway, the prison stay comes with a souvenir: a certificate of parole upon completing one’s stint in solitary confinement!
- Who says there’s no such thing as truth in advertising? Nebraska’s recent advertising campaign slogan, complete with T-shirts and coffee mugs, was “Nebraska: Honestly, it’s not for everyone.”

• Tickling has been divided into two types. Knismesis refers to “light featherlike” tickling, and gargaesis refers to “harder laughter-inducing” tickling.

Thought for the Day: “There’s something beautiful about keeping certain aspects of your life hidden. Maybe people and clouds are beautiful because you can’t see everything.”

– Kamenashi Kazuya

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48  
Years  
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Moments in time  
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Aug. 16, 1841, President John Tyler vetoes a second attempt by Congress to re-establish the Bank of the United States. In response, angry supporters of the bank, many from his own party, the Whigs, burned an effigy of Tyler outside the White House.
- On Aug. 17, 1969, the Woodstock Music & Art Fair ends after three days of peace, love and rock ‘n’ roll in rural New York. Promoters expected no more than 200,000 people, but almost half a million showed up, with most getting in free when the gates had to be opened.
- On Aug. 18, 1920, a dramatic battle in the Tennessee House of Representatives ends with ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving women the right to vote. The decisive vote was cast by a 24-year-old representative, who changed his vote after receiving a note from his mother.
- On Aug. 19, 1953, the

- Iranian military, with U.S assistance, overthrows the government of Premier Mohammed Mosaddeq and reinstates the Shah of Iran. As thanks, the Shah signed over 40% of Iran’s oil fields to U.S. companies. The Shah was toppled from power in 1979.
- On Aug. 20, 1804, Sgt. Charles Floyd, quartermaster of the Lewis and Clark expedition, dies near present-day Sioux City, Iowa, becoming the first U.S. soldier to die west of the Mississippi. Floyd likely died from acute appendicitis.
- On Aug. 21, 2004, American swimmer Michael Phelps wins his eighth medal of the Athens Olympics, six gold and two bronze, tying him with Soviet gymnast Aleksandr Dityatin for the most individual medals won at a single Olympic Games.
- On Aug. 22, 1776, the British arrive at Long Island, between Gravesend and New Utrecht, with 24,000 men. They captured New York City on Sept. 15. It would remain in British hands until the end of the war.

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CryptoQuip Answer

My advice: Don’t hold loose change around vending machines. They are coinivorous.

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Briefs

From Page 1

- 23rd – Infant Mortality Rate;
  - 30th – Rate of Low Birth-Weight;
  - 32nd – Midwives & OB-GYNs per Capita;
  - 38th – Pediatricians & Family Medicine Physicians per Capita;
  - 48th – Child-Care Centers per Capita;
  - 27th – Parental-Leave Policy Score; and
  - 36th – Positive COVID-19 Testing Rate in the Past Week.
- Visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-to-have-a-baby/6513> for the full report.

– Diana Polk

The right thing

A Goodwill employee in Norman, OK was surprised when she sorted through recently donated clothing and found a stash of \$42,000 in cash. Meanwhile, the unidentified donor must have had the shock of her life when she discovered that she had lost a good deal of money. But it was all settled when Andrea Lessing, the Goodwill staffer, reported the find and helped locate and return the money to the hapless donor. She got a \$1,000 reward for her good deed but, as she put it: “I didn’t return the money expecting a reward or expecting to be on the news, I just believe if you do something good, it will come back to you eventually. And it did.”

– John Grimaldi

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Notificación Publica

Es a norma de conducta del Distrito escolar de San Elizario prohibir la discriminación en base de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad ó deshabilidad en la admisión ó el acceso a programas, entrega de servicios ó empleo.

El distrito escolar de San Elizario esta comprometido a cumplir con las responsabilidades especificadas por el Título VI del Acta de Derechos Civiles de 1964, como enmendado, el Título IX de la Enmienda de Educación de 1972, como enmendado, que prohíbe la discriminación sexual, la Sección 504 del Acta de Rehabilitación de 1973, como enmendado, la Ley de Discriminación por Edad de 1975 como enmendado, y el Acta de Americanos con Deshabilidades.

Para información tocanta a sus derechos comuniquese con Rogelio Segovia, Superintendente Asociado, 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd., Por Correo: PO BOX 920, San Elizario, TX 79849, (915) 872-3900.

WTCC: 08-19-21

DATE CORRECTED NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING  
TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Tornillo Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 5:30 p.m., Monday, **August 30, 2021** in the W.E. Neill Service Center, 19210 Cobb Avenue, Tornillo, Texas 79853. **The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district’s budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.**

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed tax rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

Maintenance Tax	\$0.931500/\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)
School Debt Service Tax	
Approved by Local Voters	\$0.494869/\$100 (Proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year’s Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories:

Maintenance and Operations	2.80%	Decrease
Debt Service	1.57%	Decrease
Total Expenditures	2.68%	Decrease

Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value  
(as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)

	Preceeding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value* of all property	\$ 108,347,775	\$ 115,574,880
Total appraised value** of new property**	\$ 878,134	\$ 1,491,371
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ 84,823,477	\$ 93,472,111
Total taxable value**** of new property**	\$ 875,181	\$ 1,364,985

\* “Appraised value” is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code.  
\*\* “New property” is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code.  
\*\*\* “Taxable value” is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness\* \$ 16,051,687  
\* Outstanding principal.

Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year’s Rates

	Maintenance & Operation	Interest & Sinking Fund*	Total	Local Revenue Per Student	State Revenue Per Student
Last Year’s Rate	\$ 1.002900	\$ 0.482366*	\$ 1.485266	\$ 1,320	\$12,240
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$ 0.929760	\$ 0.521080*	\$ 1.450840	\$ 1,623	\$12,951
Proposed Rate	\$ 0.931500	\$ 0.494869*	\$ 1.426369	\$ 1,484	\$13,399

\*The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both.  
The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year’s Levy on Average Residence

	Last Year	This Year
Average Market Value of Residences	\$ 69,768	\$ 70,438
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$ 44,768	\$ 45,438
Last Year’s Rate Versus		
Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$ 1.485266	\$ 1.426369
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$ 664.92	\$ 648.11
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$ (16.81)

Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in the tax rate or property value.

Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is \$1.426369. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$1.426369.

Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment:

Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$ 6,789,501
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$ 17,800

A school district may not increase the district’s maintenance and operations tax rate to create a surplus in maintenance and operations tax revenue for the purpose of paying the district’s debt service.







Comix

OUT ON A LIMB

By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES

By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS

By Jeff Pickering



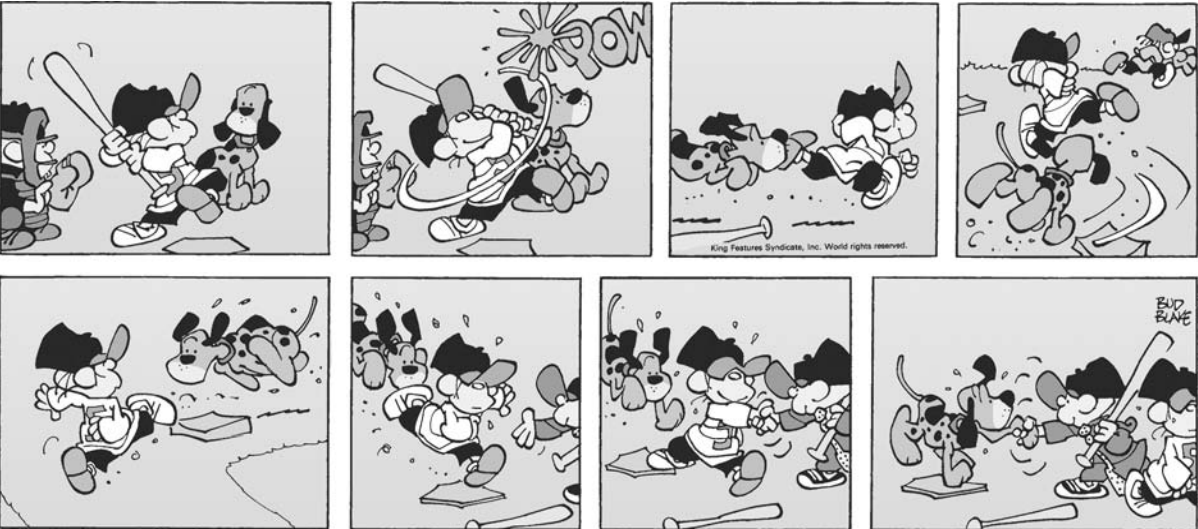
R.F.D.

By Mike Marland



TIGER

By Bud Blake



Franken

From Page 2

whose jingoism can be so easily manipulated. Or Obama could, as he used to when he called the White House home, visit the sites of mass slaughter by deranged individuals who wield their guns with devastating effect. During his administration and in the succeeding years, the politicians

have continued useless in taking away or at least reducing the number of these killing machines. We'll see if they're useless at doing much else. Congress is currently engaged in trying to bring the various squabbling factions together in an effort to pass what's left of an infrastructure bill that would repair a disintegrating United States and also once again increase the vital debt ceiling

legislation to allow the borrowed money to pay for it. The Republicans were not about to sign on to a bipartisan committee with true power to investigate the outrageous invasion of the U.S. Capitol building on Jan. 6. Any pursuit of the truth would lead directly to Donald Trump. Trump's refusal to accept the fact that he was beaten by Joe Biden has led to excusing the insurrection, adopted as the GOP's official

Does oatmeal contain Roundup herbicide?

DEAR DR. ROACH: Experts advised us to “throw out sugar-laden cereals” and eat a healthy breakfast, such as oatmeal. Now we are told that oatmeal contains a significant amount of glyphosate, which they say is an ingredient in Roundup! Are we poisoning our children? – A.D.



There have been traces of glyphosate (an herbicide) found in oatmeal and other cereals. However, as always, the dose makes the poison. The Environmental Protection Agency has set a level of 30 parts per million, below which the exposure is considered safe. A 2018 study by the Environmental Working Group found levels of glyphosate in oatmeal breakfast cereals to be between 0.5 and 1 parts per million. It is unlikely that consumption of these cereals causes any significant health risks. Nobody likes the idea of eating an herbicide, but these are very low amounts, and some experts have questioned the specificity of the detection method used. The same EWG report found that organic cereals had less, but often still some, glyphosate in them. Although the levels in both conventional and organic cereals were safe, glyphosate itself is found at generally lower levels in organic products. Unfortunately, there have not been good studies on residual amounts of organic pesticides (some of which are substantially more toxic than glyphosate) that might be found in organically grown food. I agree with reducing the simple sugars found in many cereals, especially those marketed to children. However, I recommend more protein for breakfast than is found in oatmeal. You can add more with nuts, egg whites or seeds.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was diagnosed with high LDL cholesterol 20 years ago. I have been taking higher statin doses and now take Crestor 20 mg. Due to muscle pain, my cardiologist prescribed Praluent injections of 75 mg every two weeks to lower my LDL to below 77. I am 74 and have two heart stents in my right coronary artery, but have never had a heart attack. Praluent is a monoclonal antibody, and the literature states that it can lower your immunity. I also have low-grade (Gleason 3+3) prostate cancer that has been stable since diagnosed in 2012. Is there a risk that Praluent could cause my prostate cancer to advance? – J.E.

Although taking a statin (such as the Crestor you were taking to reduce cholesterol) was once thought to increase cancer risk, multiple studies have since found no convincing evidence that this is the case. Praluent (alirocumab) is in a new class of drugs, called the PCSK-9 inhibitors. They have not been used for very long, but I found no evidence that these drugs increase cancer risk either. There was some concern that the increase in bile acids seen in people treated with these drugs might predispose them to colon cancer, but initial studies have not shown any problems so far with either Praluent or evolocumab (Repatha).

I believe that for you, heart disease is a larger risk to your life than your prostate cancer. Since you can't tolerate a statin, a PCSK-9 inhibitor is more likely to prolong your life by reducing heart disease risk than it is to shorten your life by increasing prostate cancer risk. There is no evidence that it does so.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu). (c) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

line, and means the constitutional concern for the little man or woman – seem to be little more than idle slogans. In fact, the institutions – whether they be the Olympics, or Republican belief in our system of government, or a potent symbol of the Democratic





Moore Texas by Roger MOORE  
Shiner, TX claims to be the cleanest little town in Texas.

## 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: L equals O

QO WEDKIA: ELJ'Z CLFE  
FLLUA ICWJVA WMLTJE  
DAJEKJV QWICKJAU.  
ZCAO WMA ILKJKDLMLTU.

Answer Page 4

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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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## OIG holds the VA accountable



by Freddy Groves

The Office of Inspector General for the Department of Veterans Affairs has been busy. Despite COVID, the OIG managed to keep working, and it has checked in with its congressionally required six-month report. The eye automatically zips to the bottom line: The dollar impact from its efforts during the past six months amounts to \$1,923,417,054.

You don't need to count the commas; that's 1.9 billion dollars it identified in one way or another. For every dollar in the OIG budget, it got back \$21 in return.

During the six months, the OIG made 109 arrests, issued 652 administrative sanctions, put out 124 publications, talked to 14,129 hotline contacts and made 389 recommendations to the VA.

The biggest category in that \$1.9 billion is "Fines, Penalties, Forfeitures, Restitution and Civil Judgments," which brought in a cool \$755 million.

The OIG put out some excellent reports during that time as well. Here are two:

– The VBA (Veterans Benefits Admin) didn't test the skills of claims processors from 2016 to 2019, even though it's a congressionally mandated requirement. Not only did the VBA not provide additional training to many of those who failed the tests, it didn't even bother to give skills tests to 4,700 of the 10,800 people who are processing claims.

– VA health care had no way to track patients who had received various medical implants, such as cornea or dental. That means if there was a problem or a recall, there was no system in place to find those veterans. Of 10,000 purchases of implant material, 2,900 purchases were either miscategorized or not even put in the system, making

them impossible to track. For 18 months, 45% weren't tracked and \$1.1 million in material (714 items) could not be located. Nearly 300 unrecorded items were found in storage.

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by Jo Ann Derson

• If you've lost a zipper pull, you can create a temporary one with a paperclip.

• Remove all of the air from a plastic storage bag with a drinking straw. Slip the straw into the bag and close as much as possible. Then suck any air out through the straw, and quickly pull out and close in a single motion. Your leftovers will stay fresh longer, and foods may stack better in the freezer.

• And speaking of straws, did you know you can use them to curl your hair? Wind sections of damp hair around a plastic straw and secure the ends with a bobby pin. Dry in the sun or use a hair dryer on low heat. Remove and spritz with hair spray.

• Here's an oldie but a goodie! Iced coffee is at its best when brewed with twice the usual amount of ground coffee, because the coffee is diluted by the melting ice cubes. Or use regular-strength brewed ice coffee and serve over coffee ice cubes. They're easy to prepare: Pour cool brewed coffee into ice-cube trays and freeze.

• Lemon juice can bring out the flavor of mushrooms. I keep a little spray bottle to keep lemon juice accessible in the kitchen. I find it's good for all kinds of things, like avocados and apples. I spray the cut side to keep them from browning. It's also great for salad greens. – T.T. in New Jersey

• Keep a bottle of club soda handy for spot stains on carpets or upholstery. It's good for more than just drinks.

• Make your own camping lamp: Strap a headlamp to a full gallon jug of water. It fills the tent with a soft light, and you can still drink the water!

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

## 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

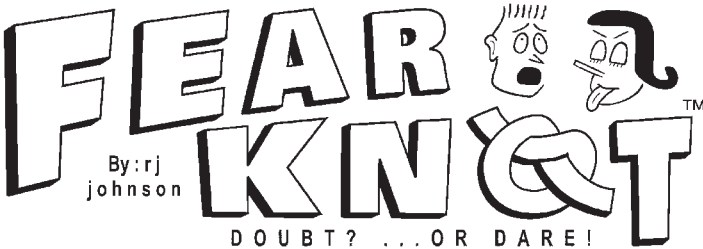
★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 4

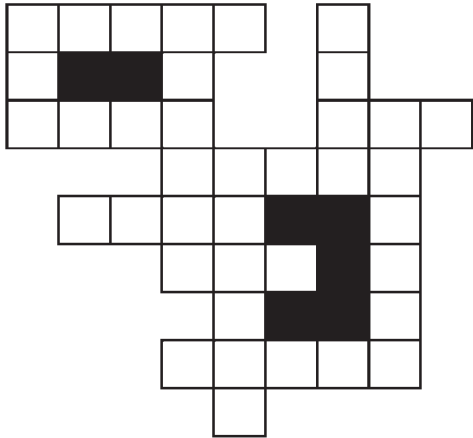
	+		÷		8
-		-		×	
	+		÷		2
×		×		÷	
	+		+		5
3		1		4	

1 1 2 3 4 6 7 8 9

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URO  
♥AURLN  
♥DATEC  
♥SPCU  
♥RUSTUE  
♥UPT  
♥OSEL  
♥NEOST  
♥RCA  
PRETOX  
UTSAL  
♥ERPA



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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