



– Internet

AGAINST THE SKYLINE – University Medical Center, above, is located in South-Central El Paso County.

El Paso's county commissioners commit support to elderly care

By **Alfredo Vasquez**
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso County's University Medical Center (UMC) recently announced that the hospital district had achieved Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA) from the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and a Level 2 Age-Friendly: Committed to Care Excellence Recognition for its outpatient clinics from the Institute of Healthcare Improvement (IHI).

The prestigious milestones mean that El Paso County and UMC are committed to ensuring the specialized care that El Paso County senior citizens need, according to David Stout, El Paso County Commissioner for Precinct 2.

"As a person ages, simple things like chewing and swallowing may become more difficult. Skin becomes more prone to damage, so a cut that for younger people may heal with a band aid can require specialized treatment for elders. Physical therapy that focuses on balance might be needed," Stout stated in a recent press release. "Chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes become more deadly. Mental health issues, social isolation, and many other areas of need are unique to our elders. Thus, specialized health care for older adults often requires a coordinated team approach, involving physicians, nurses, therapists, social workers, and caregivers to address their unique needs effectively," he pointed out.

According to the commissioner, the number of elderly county residents is growing and ensuring that health care systems are equipped to meet the unique needs of older adults is no longer optional but rather essential.

Stout cited that in El Paso County, nearly 113,000 residents are aged 65 and older and that in 2022, these residents made up nearly 30 percent of the 91,455 emergency department visits at UMC. He continued that in the 2000 U.S. Census, 5,669 El Pasoans were age 85 or over and the number of 75 to 84-year-olds was 18,900. By 2020, those numbers were 13,106 aged 85 or older and 25,592 aged 75 to 84. Also in 2000, the median age was about 28, now the median age is 34.

"Not only do elder adults have specific health concerns, but El Paso has specific challenges, such as socioeconomic status, language barriers, too few care providers, literacy issues, and trust concerns," the commissioner emphasized. "Generally, elder adults face ageism, which can manifest in various ways, such as making assumptions about someone's abilities, behaviors, or worth. Ageism can result in the withholding of treatment or the provision of inadequate care based on harmful stereotypes," he added.

"The GEDA accreditation helps address the lack

of geriatric training in some health care settings, which can lead to overtreatment or inappropriate prescribing that may harm older individuals. Tackling ageism in health care involves not only training but also raising awareness among health care professionals to deliver more equitable care for older adults," Stout stated.

These facts, coupled with a lifetime of professional experience and years of personal experience, led Davie Johnson to approach Stout's office to discuss the issues and make recommendations, which they brought to UMC's attention.

Stout said that Johnson is not a typical constituent. At age 95, with a master's degree in nursing, and a master's in aging, as well as a degree in social work, and she recently taught a fall prevention class for UMC.

Johnson in collaboration with journalist Alicia De Jong Davis, coordinator of the Sanctuary for Longevity Project and a member of the Texas Silver Hair Legislature, joined a group that included UMC CEO Jacob Cintron and other senior UMC staff on a site visit to Houston in 2023.

In support of their efforts, El Paso County Commissioners Court subsequently passed a resolution that committed the county to work with UMC to establish an accredited

Geriatric Emergency Department and Geriatric Specialty Clinic to serve El Paso County's growing older adult population.

Because of that community-driven work, both

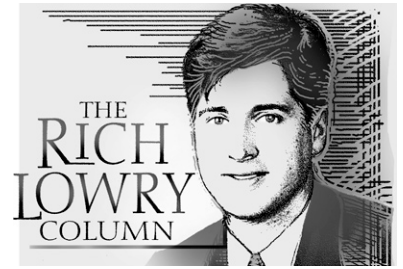


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SERVING – David Stout, El Paso County Commissioner Precinct 2.

See UMC, Page 3

Yes to English as the official language



“Official” is a very English word. It has its roots in the Old French “oficial” and the Latin “officialis,” and now – thanks to a new Trump executive order – describes the status of the English language.

President Trump’s executive action making English our official language repeals a Bill Clinton executive order that required the government, as well as groups receiving federal funds, to provide language assistance to non-English speakers.

Trump’s move will have little practical effect, since the increase in bilingualism in the United States has been driven by high levels of immigration from Spanish-speaking countries rather than direct government action.

Still, the executive order is an important symbolic statement, and its basic premises are correct.

“A nationally designated language,” the executive order says, “is at the core of a unified and cohesive

society, and the United States is strengthened by a citizenry that can freely exchange ideas in one shared language.”

This is certainly true of having an overwhelmingly dominant language, whether it is technically designated the official language or not.

But the order is hateful and threatening to all those groups for whom “e pluribus unum” – to resort to a long-dead language – no longer has appeal.

The communications director for the pro-immigration group United We Dream huffed: “Trump is trying to send the message that if you’re not white, rich and speak English, you don’t belong here. Let me be clear: Immigrants are here to stay. No matter how hard Trump tries, he can’t erase us.”

Notably, she made her statement in English. About half of immigrants in the U.S., by the way, are proficient English speakers. Are

they “erasing” themselves?

And the Congressional Hispanic Caucus

commented: “Trump’s plan to make English official is a direct attack on our diversity and history. Millions of Americans speak other languages and that doesn’t make them any less American.”

It’s no disrespect to speakers of, say, Tagalog or Haitian Creole to send the message that English has been and will continue to be our predominant language. Anyone not learning English is excluding themselves from the mainstream of American life, and limiting their educational and economic opportunities.

A *New York Times* headline snarked, “Trump

See LOWRY, Page 7

View from here By Tony Reza

Making sense of Socorro ISD’s financial woes

(March 20, 2025) – The recent headlines pertaining to Socorro ISD’s financial troubles allude to the fact that this has been going on for some time due to the adoption of deficit budgets by the district. While hindsight is twenty-twenty, it is imperative to understand some of the background as to why the district adopted those deficit budgets going all the way back to 2017.

While we can all agree that public entities who adopt deficit budgets are not conducting “best practices”, there are at times legitimate and warranted reasons for doing so. For Socorro ISD, there were reasons why this occurred starting in fiscal year (FY) 2017. First, by the

beginning of FY2016, the district had a total fund balance in the general fund of \$128M, and an unassigned (meaning the board could use the fund without legal restrictions) of \$100.6M. This represented 141 days of expenditure in total funds, and 111 days of the unassigned fund balance. This fund balance amount had increased 214% since FY2009 when it was just above \$40M.

While this was all well and good, there was an issue. This total fund balance resulted in the district being out of compliance with its local policy with respect to fund balance. The problem was the fund balance was TOO HIGH as per the CE-Annual Operating Budget-local policy. It stated

(if memory serves) that if the balance was over 105 days, it would take steps to reduce this fund balance.

Therefore, by adopting a deficit balance, the district could reduce the excess and be in line with policy. Moreover, just because an entity adopted a deficit budget, it didn’t necessarily mean that an entity would end the fiscal year with an actual financial deficit. Indeed, in the first five years this occurred (FY2017 through FY2022), there were two actual financial “surplus” that resulted from beginning deficit budgets, and in the other three years, the actual deficit was lower than the budgeted deficits.

More importantly, the district’s maintenance and operations tax rate were only 97.6 cents, about 6.5 cents lower than what the board could approve without voter approval. The district knew that they had the option of



– Photo courtesy Tony Reza

Tony Reza

raising property taxes in the future if they needed to get back to balance budgets due to a significant downturn in the finances. This tax situation resulted due to the

See SISD, Page 3

Tony Reza headed Socorro Independent School District’s (SISD) financial operations for thirteen years, from 2009 to 2022, and worked under the leadership of three different superintendents – Xavier De La Torre, Jose Espinoza, and Nate Carman. He also served under two interim superintendents Pat O’Neill and Marta Carmona.

Reza oversaw an annual budget of about \$269.7 million in his first year at SISD and steadily grew it to more than \$480.9 million in fiscal year 2021, an increase of 78 percent in the operating budget.

During his tenure, Reza was instrumental in the supervision of the district’s facilities’ expansion program – from 42 school campuses to 50 campuses – that served nearly 48,000 students, over 2,900 teachers, and about 1,230 support services employees and aides.

Upon his retirement at the end of 2022, Reza left the district in a stronger financial position than when he first started, almost tripling the unassigned fund balance.

– Alfredo Vasquez

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52 **COURIER**
 Years 2025

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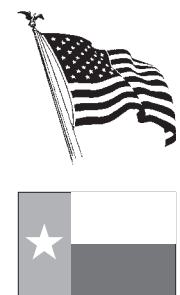
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"SO, ANY IDEAS ON WHERE WE COULD CUT GOVERNMENT SPENDING?"

SISD

From Page 2

prudent efforts of the board to keep taxes to a minimum and not tax their stakeholders more than what was actually needed.

Unfortunately, all good deeds don't go unpunished. That is because the Texas Legislature in 2019 adopted House Bill 3 (HB3) which forced school districts to lower their maintenance and operations tax rate. For SISD, the tax rate was reduced to 94 cents, with the possibility of going up to 95 cents and anything above that needed voter approval. In the meantime, all the other surrounding school districts that were at \$1.04, or \$1.17 (due to penny swaps), were also forced to reduce their rates but they ended up

with tax rates much higher. Therefore, Socorro ISD was penalized by the Legislature for its low tax effort, for while HB3 provided short term relief (it increased the basic allotment), it implemented a long-term financial straitjacket on the district by taking away the ability to raise the tax rate. This took away the trump card it had in its pocket to address possible financial issues in the future when it started adopting deficit budgets.

Even with this restriction, the district did an admirable job in limiting the negative financial impacts to the district for the first five years. From FY2017 to FY2022, the cumulative actual decrease in the fund balance was \$11.8M, about 9%. In fiscal year 2022, the unassigned fund balance in the general fund had 82 days of operating expenditures, while

El Paso ISD had 89 days of expenditures, and Ysleta ISD had 61 days of expenditures.

Consequently, SISD's days of expenditure were very comparable to the other two big districts (and much higher than YISD), yet if we move to FY2026, one does not see those districts looking at laying off people. They have significant financial challenges for sure, but not to extent that SISD has. Why is that? Because in the years 2023 and 2024 SISD had a cumulative \$66M charge to their fund balance. A decrease of 45%. That is why they are now laying off people. If they had just lost half of that, I do not believe they would be laying off people for the upcoming fiscal year, and we would not be talking about the adopted deficit budgets in the years 2017 to 2022.

King Crossword

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Average Solve Time 26 Minutes

ACROSS

- 1 Solo of "Star Wars"
- 4 Dandy guy
- 7 Sir's counterpart
- 12 Coach Parseghian
- 13 Lab eggs
- 14 Mountain crest
- 15 Roulette bet
- 16 "Absolutely not!"
- 18 Genetic letters
- 19 Long journeys
- 20 Informal pronoun
- 22 JFK's predecessor
- 23 Slightly wet
- 27 Id counterpart
- 29 Small burger

DOWN

- 31 Majestic
- 34 Paris school
- 35 Diocese part
- 37 Iota
- 38 Tennis score
- 39 Author Umberto
- 41 Slightly open
- 45 Stand-in
- 47 Japanese sash
- 48 "Absolutely not!"
- 52 Eggy quaff
- 53 Love, Italian-style
- 54 Indian lentil dish
- 55 Citric beverage
- 56 Already
- 57 Magic, on scoreboards
- 58 French salt

DOWN

- 1 Wizard Potter
- 2 Sports venue
- 3 Tennis star Rafael
- 4 Type choice
- 5 Go too far
- 6 Macadamized
- 7 Earth's neighbor
- 8 Common verb
- 9 "Lion" actor Patel
- 10 Chowd down
- 11 Sea, to Henri
- 17 Stretches (out)
- 21 Bolshevik leader
- 23 Formal decrees
- 24 Fuss
- 25 Singer Torme
- 26 Season opener?
- 28 Dept. store inventory

- 30 Luau souvenir
- 31 Transcript no.
- 32 "Awesome!"
- 33 "Entourage" role
- 36 Olympian queen
- 37 Freight train unit
- 40 Homebuyer's option
- 42 Singer Nick
- 43 Home
- 44 Star in Orion's foot
- 45 "Close one!"
- 46 Holler
- 48 "Terrif!"
- 49 Author Tan
- 50 Heavy weight
- 51 _Magnon

Answer Page 4

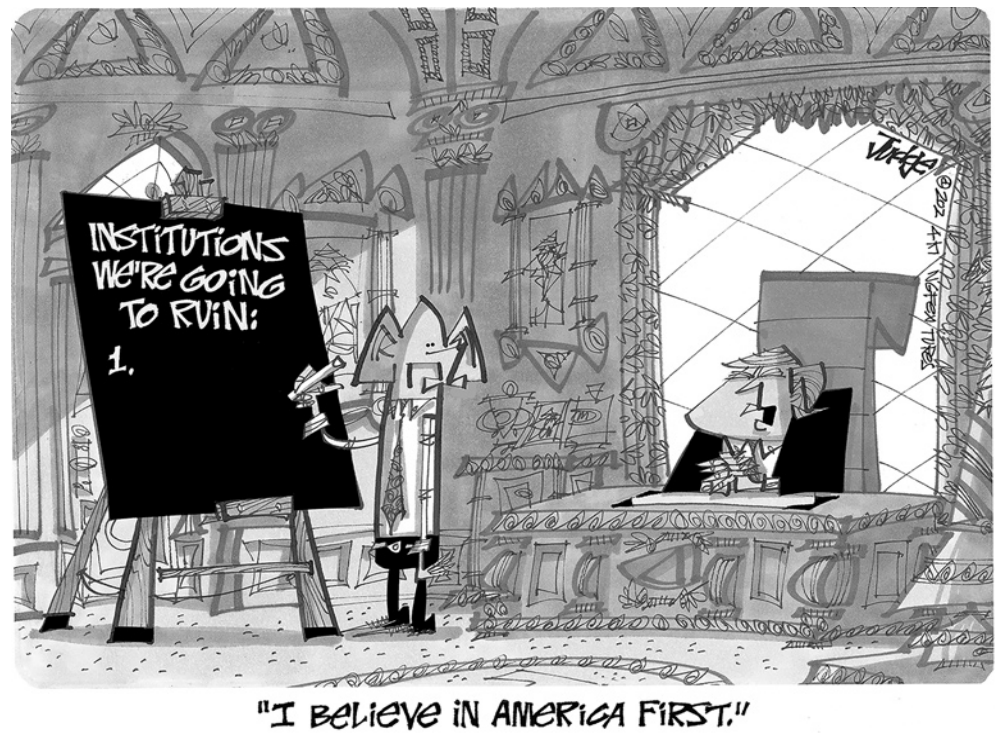
UMC

From Page 1

items moved forward – the accreditation and the voter-approved geriatric clinic. "I am so grateful to Davie, Alicia, Jacob Cintron and his team, and everyone else who worked on this effort, and to the voters for approving the clinic," Stout stated.

"Together, El Paso is continuing to build its health care capacity, from the development of Texas Tech medical and dental schools to the private hospitals to the UMC clinics and to the El Paso Children's Hospital. Now, with the geriatric accreditation in place and the geriatric clinic on the way, we also are showing our commitment to support aging with dignity in El Paso County," Stout stressed.

Archives: www.wtxcc.com



EPCC, partners, host FAFSA workshop

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC), along with partners from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) and Texas Tech, held a Free Application for Federal Student Air (FAFSA) workshop, free for community members, students, and parents on Saturday, March 22 at the Region 19 Education Service Center (ESC).

“This financial aid workshop demonstrates the power of partnerships and provides our community an opportunity to receive one-on-one assistance from financial aid experts from EPCC, UTEP & Texas Tech at a time and place accessible for all,” EPCC Vice President of Student and Enrollment Services Dr. Carlos Amaya said. “It’s an excellent opportunity for graduating seniors, their families, and community members looking to start or continue their educational journey.”

The workshop, with financial aid administrators from the three institutions, was aimed at providing valuable guidance and resources for students and families navigating the college financial aid process. Special thanks to ESC Region 19 staff for hosting and support of the event.

“This collaboration between EPCC, UTEP, Texas Tech University, and Region 19 ISD represents a powerful, unified front dedicated to empowering students in our region,” EPCC Assistant Director of Financial Aid and Intake Services Elizabeth Estrada said. “It transcends mere institutional cooperation; it embodies a shared commitment to educational equity and access.”

The workshop was designed as a collaborative approach to help students and families with the process and complexities of financial aid; reach a wider audience by the three institutions pooling their expertise; strengthen the pathway from community college to four-year universities; create a community of support; and invest in the future of our region.

“In essence, this partnership is a testament to our collective belief that every student deserves the opportunity to pursue their educational aspirations,” Estrada added. “It’s about dismantling obstacles, fostering hope, and building a brighter future for El Paso. By working together, EPCC, UTEP, Texas Tech, and Region 19 ISDs are demonstrating a profound commitment to the students and families we serve, ensuring that the dream of higher education is within reach for all.”

Attendees were assisted with step-

by-step guidance on completing the FAFSA application; given information on available financial aid options;

given tips for maximizing financial aid awards and meeting important deadlines; and one-on-one assistance from financial aid experts.

Visit www.epcc.edu/Admissions/FinancialAid for more information on the EPCC Financial Aid Department.



– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

SHOW ME THE MONEY – James Jacobson, Jr. fills out a FAFSA application with help from EPCC’s Itzel Miranza.

Socorro ISD schools recognized on 2024 honor roll

By Christy Flores-Jones
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – Nine top-performing schools in the Socorro Independent School District have been named to the Educational Results Partnership

Texas Honor Roll for outperforming other schools by narrowing achievement gaps, particularly among low-income and historically disadvantaged student populations.

This is the tenth year that ERP has completed the Honor Roll in collaboration with the

Campaign for Business and Education Excellence (CBEE) and the Texas Business Leadership Council. The program applies data science and predictive analytics to identify successful public education systems, practices, programs, and policies that are delivering the best results for students.

The SISD schools that earned this distinction are Col. John O. Ensor Middle School, Spec. Rafael Hernando III Middle School, Horizon Heights Elementary, Lujan-Chavez Elementary, Loma Verde Elementary, Dr. Sue A. Shook Elementary, Sgt. Jose F. Carrasco Elementary, Sgt. Roberto Ituarte Elementary, and Cactus Trails Elementary.

“Socorro ISD is proud to have nine of our exceptional schools represented on this prestigious honor roll,” said SISD Interim Superintendent James P. Vasquez. “This accomplishment reflects our commitment to providing an excellent education, as well as the hard work of our dedicated educators and students.”

This year, 762 schools and 63 school districts in Texas

made the Honor Roll. This is approximately 12 percent of eligible schools and nine percent of eligible school districts in the state.

The annual ERP Honor Roll program is part of a national effort to engage business leaders in recognizing successful schools and educational systems and promoting best practices that improve student outcomes. Honor roll schools are recognized for demonstrating consistently higher levels of student achievement, improvement in achievement over time, and a reduction in achievement gaps among student populations.



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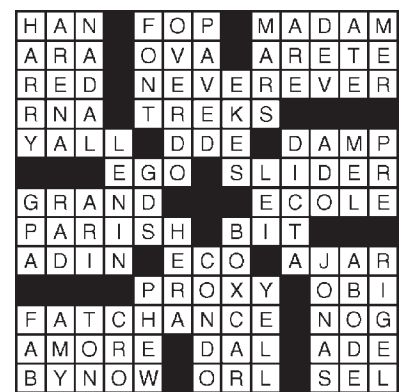
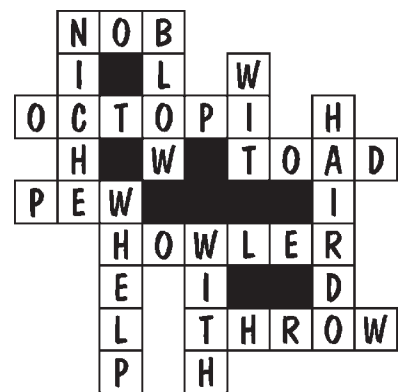
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CryptoQuip Answer

Future superhero who might wear a long-sleeved, belted robe instead of a cape:
Caftan Marvel.

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Food for thought By Dr. Glenn Mollette

How would you feel if someone burned your car?

My wife's grandfather Lyle Harlow was a prisoner of war in World War II and survived the Bataan Death March. He had an attitude about the Japanese soldiers and people. My father-in-law also fought in WW II and was hurt in the Battle of the Bulge. He had negative comments to make about the Japanese. When I bought a Toyota Celica back in 1978 my father-in-law was not impressed since he had worked many years for General Motors and always drove a Chevrolet. However, never in either of the two men's wildest imagination did they ever express any desire or interest in burning my Toyota or anyone else's Toyota.

My \$7000 Celica was a great car but it was hard for me to make the payments back in 1978. My wife and I were in school struggling to just get by from one small check to the next. Our \$150 a month car payment was stratospheric for us back then. I don't know how we could have handled the threat of

someone possibly damaging our car simply because they hated the Toyota brand or anyone associated with making Toyotas. Today, Toyota and other foreign car manufacturers have revolutionized several American communities with thousands of good jobs.

The very idea of anyone destroying anyone's property is criminal and deserves punishment. Regardless if it's riots in Louisville, Baltimore, Portland or Los Angeles, no one deserves a bunch of hoodlums marching in and setting buildings, businesses or cars on fire.

The recent reports of Tesla dealerships and charging stations being vandalized and set on fire is outrageous. Not any of the person's doing this would feel good about their car being burned or the place where they fill up with gas being destroyed.

Anyone who has a business is paying the price. It's a miracle to be able to stay in business today.

The overhead costs are astronomical and it's often very difficult to really see a profit. Every day restaurants, grocery stores, churches, newspapers and car dealerships close somewhere in America. This could very well be your job or a job of someone you know.

Elon Musk is a billionaire and right now a lot of Americans don't agree with the role he has in America as appointed by our President. Burning his cars and charging stations are only going to hurt fellow Americans who own or run the dealerships and the many other Americans trying to hold down a daily job. Destroying the charging stations only hurts your fellow Americans who bought most of the Teslas on the road before President Trump was even reelected.

Protest verbally, buy whatever car or product you want but don't do to others what you would not want anyone to do to you.

Operation College Bound offers Socorro ISD HS seniors on-site enrollment services

EL PASO COUNTY – The Socorro Independent School District has partnered with El Paso Community College and The University of Texas at El Paso to provide high school seniors with convenient on-site enrollment services at Operation College Bound at the district's six comprehensive high schools. The first event will take place on March 27 at Socorro High School.

Operation College Bound aims to provide SISD seniors with information about the opportunities at both EPCC and UTEP, from courses offered to student life. EPCC and UTEP staff will assist students throughout the enrollment process and address any questions they may have.

Seniors interested in EPCC can meet with an admission counselor, register for fall courses and receive their class

schedule. For students interested in UTEP, assistance will be available to complete admissions applications, register for New Student Orientation, and enroll in an anchor course. Additionally, students will receive guidance on applying for financial aid.

SISD high school administrators and counselors also will be available to assist during the event.

– Laura Acosta

Service Schedule:
All campuses, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- March 27 at Socorro High School
- April 1 at Eastlake High School
- April 2 at Americas High School (The school also will host Options High School seniors.)
- April 7 at Montwood High School
- April 9 at El Dorado High School
- April 14 at Pebble Hills High School

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- When Katherine Johnson was little, she loved to count things. By the age of 10, she was in high school. In 1961, she calculated the trajectory of NASA's first trip into space. She was so consistently accurate that when NASA began to use computers, they had her check the calculations to make sure they were correct.
- In Norse, the name Siri means "a beautiful woman that leads you to victory."
- And speaking of Siri... she will flip a coin for you if you can't make a decision.
- Looney Tunes was created to promote the Warner Brothers music catalog in the 1930s, hence the name "Looney Tunes" instead of "Toons."
- James Vernor put the basic components of a new beverage into a barrel in 1861 before heading off to serve in the 4th Michigan Cavalry during the Civil War. When he returned four years later, he tasted the barrel's contents and, voila!, Vernor's Ginger Ale was born.
- Norway's Bouvet Island was discovered in 1739,

then "lost" again for the next 69 years due to the original spotter's mislabeling its coordinates.

- Canada has a strategic maple syrup reserve to ensure global supply in case of emergency.
- There actually aren't "57 varieties" of Heinz ketchup, and never were. Company founder H.J. Heinz thought his product should have a number, and he just happened to like 57.
- March 3 is known as "What if Cats and Dogs Had Opposable Thumbs Day."
- The number of permutations within a deck of cards is mind-bogglingly large: an 8 with 67 zeroes after it. That means there are more card combinations than stars in the Milky Way, which amount to as many as 400 billion!
- Cataract surgery was possible as early as the 6th century B.C.
- Barbie's physical appearance was inspired by a German doll named Bild Lilli, created in 1952 and based on a high-end call girl named Lilli who was featured in the comic strip "Bild-Zeitung." She was sold as an adult novelty in bars and tobacco shops – definitely not as a children's toy. Barbie inventor Ruth Handler saw

the doll while vacationing in Europe and brought it home.

- The Gate Tower Building in Osaka, Japan, has a highway that passes through the building, between the fifth and seventh floors.
 - When President Donald Trump asked the Guggenheim Museum to loan the White House an original Van Gogh painting, they responded with the counteroffer of a solid-gold toilet.
 - Elvis Presley wore a cross, a Star of David and the Hebrew letter chai because he didn't want to "miss out on heaven due to a technicality."
 - A single person's DNA contains as much information as 50 novels.
 - Soccer player Mohammed Anas accidentally thanked both his wife and girlfriend in a post-match speech.
 - Mob boss Vincent Gigante would wander around New York in his bathrobe to convince the police he was insane, and thus avoid capture.
- Thought for the Day: "The road to success is dotted with many tempting parking spaces."

– Will Rogers

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On March 24, 1965, the first "teach-in" was conducted at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, in which 200 faculty members led special anti-war seminars while regular classes were canceled and rallies and speeches held sway for 12 hours.
- On March 25, 2001, Icelandic actress and pop singer Bjork made an unforgettable appearance at the 73rd annual Academy Awards in a nude body stocking draped with a large, fake white swan. As if that weren't enough, the artist then proceeded to "lay" six giant ostrich eggs. Whatever popular opinion said about the look, the dress went on to be honored by the Museum of Modern Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- On March 26, 1804, President Thomas Jefferson attended a public party at the Senate and led a diverse crowd in eating an enormous loaf of bread dubbed the "mammoth loaf." The bread had been baked to go with the remnants of a giant block of cheese.
- On March 27, 1929, President Herbert Hoover had a phone installed at his desk in the Oval Office of

the White House. It took a while to get the line working correctly and Hoover complained to aides when his son was unable to reach him from an outside line. Previously, Hoover had used a phone located in the foyer just outside the Oval Office.

- On March 28, 1814, the funeral of Dr. Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, inventor of the execution device that bore his name, took place outside of Paris, France. Guillotin had given the contraption to the French as a "philanthropic gesture" and was upset at how his reputation had suffered afterward when it became closely identified with political executions and abuses during the French Terror after the Revolution.
- On March 29, 1982, 19-year-old North Carolina freshman Michael Jordan scored a 16-foot jump shot with only 15 seconds left to give the Tar Heels a 63-62 win over Georgetown for the NCAA tournament championship. "To tell the truth," he said to New Orleans reporters, "I didn't see it go in. I didn't want to look."
- On March 30, 1949, actor Robert Mitchum was freed from a Los Angeles County prison farm after spending the final week of a two-month sentence for marijuana possession there.

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From thrills to grills, Big George left a lasting impression

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

I know that because of the growth of the UFC, mixed martial arts is the top full-contact fighting sport in the world.

But there was a time, especially in the United States and Latin America that the sport of boxing was king.

From the 1920s through the 1990s, boxing was so popular that whenever there was a big championship fight, pay-per-view orders, as well as sports bar attendance, were through the roof.

The world seemed to stop for those two-to-three hours of watching the preliminary bouts that lead up to the big fight of the night.

And when it was over, that fight was all everybody talked about for days, especially if they were heavyweights.

Back in the day there were names like Rocky Marciano, Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson and Jack Johnson.

Then came Muhammad Ali, Joe Frazier, Sonny Liston, Evander Holyfield, Lennox Lewis and Larry Holmes.

The most recent heavyweight superstars were Tyson Fury, Vitali Klitschko and of course, Mike Tyson.

Unfortunately, the boxing world, and the sports world, lost one of the most-loved boxers of all time last week, George Forman.

From the 1960s to the 1990s, Big George was one of the scariest guys who ever put on a pair of boxing gloves. While outside of the ring, he was known as one of the gentlest

giants in the sport.

Foreman died last Friday, and the entire sports world felt the sting. The news really saddened me as well.

His story is an amazing one and his life can be broken up into four parts.

The first part was of the young George Foreman who got into trouble as a kid but found a way out through boxing and with an angry scowl on his face, destroyed everybody on the way to winning an Olympic gold medal. He eventually turned pro and quickly became a world champion and remained undefeated until he was knocked out by Ali in the famous Rumble in the Jungle.

Part two was when he quit boxing for 10 years to become an ordained minister in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He returned for part three by becoming an entrepreneur and selling his famous George Foreman grills. Heck, even I bought one back in the day. By allowing the company to use his name, be in the commercials, and

eventually selling his rights, Foreman made over \$220 million selling those cool little grills.

And yes, for you "The Office" fans, that is the grill that Michael Scott burned his foot on.

Then Foreman did the unthinkable for part four, he returned to boxing at the age of 38.

Everybody thought he was crazy and was going to get severely hurt by doing this. But not only did the big guy do it, he went on to knock out Michael Moorer to win the heavyweight championship for a second time at the grand old age of 45.

The loveable behemoth went on to appear on talk shows and was hired by HBO to be a commentator for their biggest boxing matches.

I remember, much like when Mike Tyson fought, everybody had to stop and watch George Foreman. Everyone was waiting for that one devastating punch that would send his opponent to the canvas not sure of what planet he was on anymore.

There have been big punchers in boxing like Tyson, Ernie Shavers, Marciano and Liston, but none of these guys had the raw power that Foreman possessed.

That's why he was must-see TV back in his prime – and many years after that.

A few minutes after I learned of his death, I called a couple people to tell them about it and they were as devastated as I was. That's how much he was adored.

It's true, he wasn't well-liked when he won his first world championship belt. He was known as mean and uncaring.

But Foreman went through a transition during those 10 years off and completely changed his persona for the better.

How many people do that? How many have the self-awareness to fix what is broken?

George Foreman did it and that's why so many are mourning his passing.

Rest in Peace Big George.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Downsizing help

Sometimes we just don't want to face the truth, so we ignore it as long as we can. But eventually it becomes clear: We need to downsize.

Just the word can be painful as we contemplate moving to a smaller place and likely needing to get rid of many of our belongings. And then there are all the details – what to keep, how to pack, lifting those heavy boxes.

The good news is that we don't have to do it alone. The National Association of Senior & Specialty Move Managers (www.nasmm.org) can steer you toward move managers in your area, people who are trained in all aspects of moving seniors. In the Find A Move Manager section of their website, put in your ZIP code to find people in your area.

In my town I found three companies. All advertise stress-free moves and help with organizing, downsizing

and relocating. It seems they can do it all – starting with the decluttering that will be necessary for any move to a smaller place. They organize which belongings go to which family members, arrange for the sale of valuables or donations to charity and even take care of trash disposal. And that's just the first step in the process.

What I like best is that they'll do the packing. Then on moving day, they'll be there supervising the movers, dealing with the utility companies to get the power turned on in the new place and, surprise, they'll even unpack on the other end and haul away the empty boxes.

Moving to a smaller place might not be what we'd like to do, but when it becomes necessary, it's good to know that we don't have to do it alone. There are experts who know what to do and when. That should make the whole process much easier.

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- INTELLECTUAL TREAT ACROSS
- 1 Accord, Civic and Pilot
- 7 Blue toon
- 12 Hubbubs
- 16 Honorary deg. for a jurist
- 19 Unicellular organism
- 20 Subdued, with "down"
- 21 Receives a salary, say
- 23 Boston baseballers
- 24 Verb form in "I used to solve puzzles," e.g.
- 26 Position of advantage
- 28 Stuff in some viral genes
- 29 How- (manuals)
- 30 Detroit-to-Philly dir.
- 31 Job opening
- 33 Literary finale
- 36 War deity
- 40 Pre- (replace)
- 44 What's allotted in soccer when a player is hurt
- 46 Sell in stores
- 49 Thinned out
- 51 Bohemian lager
- 52 "Fathers and Sons" novelist
- 54 Notion, in Nice
- 55 Story
- 56 Lions' locale
- 57 L-Q linkup
- 58 "Little" co-star Rae
- 62 In the best-case scenario
- 65 Sibling who looks the same
- 68 Japanese menu item
- 69 Fall mo.
- 70 Suffix of superlatives
- 71 Korean, e.g.
- 72 Molar requiring extraction, maybe
- 76 Title for Gandhi
- 78 "Good Will Hunting" director Gus Van _
- 79 Virtuosos
- 80 Screening airport org.
- 81 Oodles
- 82 Love deity
- 83 Dog with a reddish, wiry coat
- 88 Beirut's land
- 92 Barney Fife
- 93 Charred
- 94 Retreat in the clouds
- 96 Downs food
- 98 Good friends
- 99 River mouth features
- 100 From scratch
- 102 Horse's kin
- 105 San Francisco's Valley
- 106 Aged
- 107 Invention of Rorschach
- 115 Painful podiatric problem
- 119 Geronimo's people
- 120 2003-16 Cowboys quarterback
- 121 Large spoon
- 122 "Peanuts" girl
- 123 Former United rival
- 124 Has- _
- 125 Lectern, e.g.
- 126 Group of PC experts... or what this puzzle's 10 theme answers are?
- DOWN
- 1 Mata _
- 2 Boding sign
- 3 Signals "OK"
- 4 Lucy's Arnaz
- 5 House
- 6 "Wailing" instruments
- 7 Rouse
- 8 NYC cultural center
- 9 Like many insensitive jokes
- 10 Smells awful
- 11 32nd prez
- 12 Will Smith's role in "Men in Black"
- 13 Ten: Prefix
- 14 Hitter Mel
- 15 Concorde, e.g., in brief
- 16 Ointment base
- 17 Thin, supple and graceful
- 18 34th prez
- 22 _ fours (teacakes)
- 25 Fern leaf
- 27 Golf ball prop
- 32 "Salt" co-star Schreiber
- 33 Port city near Buffalo, NY
- 34 TV's Gomer
- 35 Neighbor of Belg.
- 36 Grande of pop, to fans
- 37 Gun, as an engine
- 38 Greek vowel
- 39 Christmas party headwear
- 41 Fuel efficiency stat
- 42 Forecasts
- 43 Found on a radio dial
- 45 "What's _?" (Baug's Bunny's greeting)
- 47 Like tilted type
- 48 Break in the action
- 50 State bird of Hawaii
- 53 Marina del _
- 54 Beginning ltr.
- 57 Volcano in Calif.
- 58 "We're in danger here!"
- 59 Loretta of "M*A*S*H"
- 60 Thailand, once
- 61 Noted visitor to 60-Down
- 62 Wife of Osiris
- 63 Part of Russia's parliament
- 64 Fox Sports competitor
- 66 Webpage
- 67 Pakistani city
- 69 Lyric poems
- 73 Occult cards
- 74 Low-budget, in adspeak
- 75 Other, in Oviedo
- 76 Wrestling pad
- 77 Stein drinks
- 82 "Watermark" singer
- 83 Apropos of
- 84 33rd prez
- 85 Radio host Glass
- 86 Japanese menu item
- 87 Tpk., e.g.
- 88 Cornea cover
- 89 Still, at this late date
- 90 Salami alternative
- 91 Vein's cousin
- 92 Japanese fencing style
- 95 Sam of Sam's Club
- 97 Actor Mineo
- 101 Be victorious in
- 103 "Same goes for me"
- 104 Honoree on Mar. 17
- 106 "I'm buying"
- 108 Zilch
- 109 Potter's oven
- 110 Ran, as dye
- 111 Sharp-tasting
- 112 Brutus' "Behold!"
- 113 Actor LaBeouf
- 114 Burst (with)
- 115 Hairy sitcom cousin
- 116 Celestial ball
- 117 Suffering
- 118 Golf's Ernie

Answer Page 4

Super Crossword

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	32			33	34			35			
36	37	38	39			40	41	42	43		44			45						
46				47	48		49			50				51						
52						53						54								
55								56			57				58	59	60	61		
62	63	64						65		66				67						
68							69			70				71						
72						73	74			75			76	77						
78						79				80			81							
82									83			84					85	86	87	
88	89	90	91						92					93						
94								95			96		97		98					
99								100		101		102	103	104						
105							106			107	108	109	110				111	112	113	114
115					116	117				118					119					
120										121					122					
123										125					126					

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



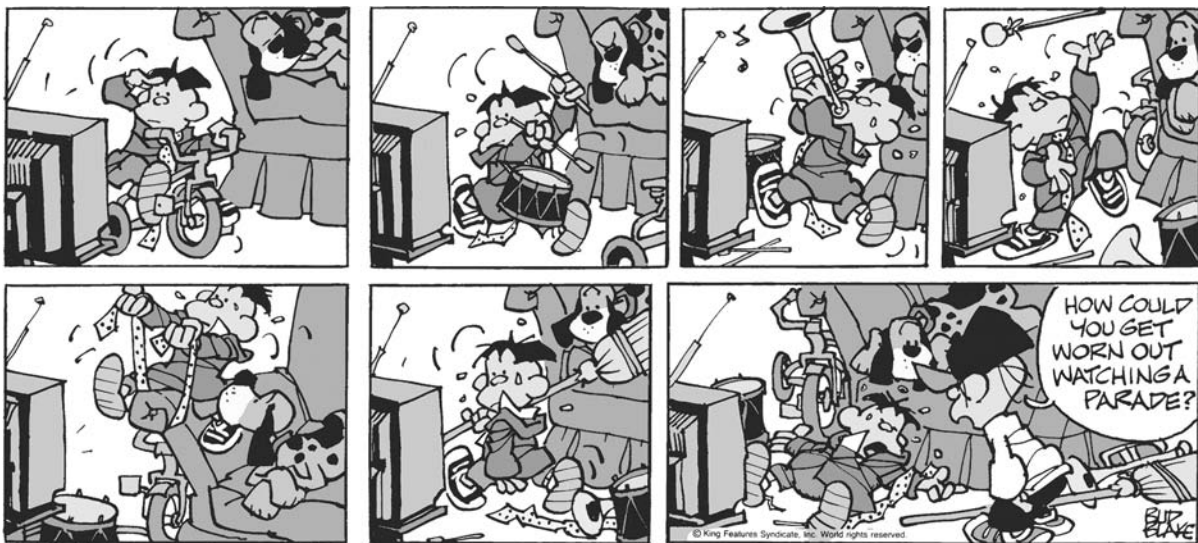
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

Made English the Official Language in a Country with 350 of Them.”

That’s part of the impetus, rather than a contradiction. The language police obviously aren’t going to show up in ethnic neighborhoods with copies of Strunk & White. Nevertheless, it is very important that the leading status of the English language not be challenged. Language-based divisions can cause deep ruptures in otherwise peaceable, well-run societies – just ask the Canadians, Belgians or Spanish, all of whom have been riven by secession movements in regions that speak different languages.

If the U.S. ever adopts a more fully merit-based immigration system, English-language ability should be one of the criteria.

Ours, it should be noted, is a very good language. The vocabulary is incredibly rich. Thanks to copious borrowings over the centuries, especially from Latin and Norman French, there are more than half a million words in the Oxford English

Dictionary, whereas German has about 185,000 words and French not even 100,000.

The co-authors of the delightful book “The Story of English” note that the English language didn’t exist when Julius Caesar invaded Britain a couple of millennia ago. Then, 500 years later it was spoken by as many people as speak Cherokee today. By Shakespeare’s time in the 16th century, several million Englishmen spoke it, and a couple of hundred years after that, it had exploded around the globe.

Today, about 1.5 billion people speak English. Only about 400 million of those speak it as their first language. It is the language of business, entertainment and the internet. There are more English speakers in India than the U.K. and roughly as many English speakers in Nigeria as in Britain.

No language has ever been as ubiquitous, and the U.S. government is now giving it its official due.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. ©2025 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Unexpected osteoporosis calls for celiac disease test

DEAR DR. ROACH: I’ve been diagnosed with silent celiac disease at the late age of 62, but I’ve probably had it for decades. (It may have led to my serious osteoporosis.) A biopsy revealed totally flattened villi. I am gluten-free and will be getting celiac-antibody, nutrient and other regular lab work from now on. But my doctors stated that no further scopes are needed unless my blood work reveals a problem, or I get symptoms while on a gluten-free diet. But for asymptomatic people like me, there are no symptoms, and blood work doesn’t show whether the small intestine has physically healed. I tried to ask my doctor this follow-up question but never received an answer. Should I get a second opinion? I hear from other patients that their doctors did schedule a follow-up scope one to two years after their diagnosis to check their physical healing. For senior patients who can tolerate a scope and have had major villi destruction, is a follow-up scope prudent or unnecessary? – W.C.S.



People with unexpected osteoporosis should be considered for celiac disease testing. Celiac disease is a condition of damage to the small intestine due to gliadin sensitivity. Gliadin is a protein that is found in gluten, wheat and other cereals, and it is thought to directly damage the lining of the intestine. This causes flattening of the villi, which is the absorptive surface of the small intestine. The only treatment for celiac disease is strict avoidance of gluten in the diet.

The inability to absorb nutrients can lead to symptoms such as diarrhea and weight loss, but symptoms can also be very subtle. Some people have mild abdominal discomfort after eating, but the symptoms usually disappear once they’re on a gluten-free diet.

People with celiac disease often have low calcium levels, the reasons for which are complex and involve parathyroid hormone and vitamin D, in addition to the direct malabsorption of calcium. I had one colleague with undiagnosed celiac disease who woke up after yet another colonoscopy, and she was unable to move her muscles due to low blood calcium levels. Since the major reservoir of calcium in the body is the bone, calcium is taken from the bone to preserve blood calcium levels, which can lead to severe osteoporosis over the years.

Blood tests can be highly suggestive of a celiac disease diagnosis, but small bowel biopsies remain the definitive way to diagnose celiac disease. Blood tests can turn out negative if a person is on a gluten-free diet, so the blood tests must be done while a person is consuming gluten.

Your question about getting another biopsy after being on a gluten-free diet is debated. However, the consensus of opinion as published by the American Gastroenterological Association is that people like you with severe celiac disease should get another biopsy within 12 months to confirm the original diagnosis and establish that your diet has allowed the intestine to heal.

In your case, carefully monitoring your vitamin D, parathyroid hormone and calcium levels, as well as keeping up with your bone density, will be important ways of confirming whether your treatment was successful. Unfortunately, bone is slow to change, and it will take years to be sure that your osteoporosis is improving through bone density tests.

You can read a lot more about celiac disease at celiac.org.

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. ©2025 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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Moore Texas by Roger Moore
March 30, 1870: Texas is readmitted to the United States.

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: A equals D

GYNYJV EYFVJSVJQ USQ LPOSN
UVKJ K CQIO-ECVVRVA, ZVCNVA
JQZV PIENVKA QG K TKFV:
TKGNKI LKJRVG.

Answer Page 4

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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The VA in the news



by Freddy Groves

So much is going on right now. With the new administration making many changes on a daily basis across the federal government, some of those changes were sure to affect the Department of Veterans Affairs. Here is one thing that has happened: The VA let go 1,000 employees.

For the most part they were probationary employees (deemed non-mission critical) with less than one year on the job or those in another employment category who had worked for less than two years.

This 1,000 is out of the 43,000 probationary employees they didn't fire because they were mission critical and out of a total of 473,000 employees at the VA. One year ago the VA had planned to reduce their numbers by 10,000 employees in 2025. Then there are the many

thousands who took the deferred resignation offer, which will allow them to stay home and still be paid through September. So the 1,000 fewer employees isn't a massive number.

The financial bottom line from this recent move is that \$98 million was saved, money that will be plowed back into services and benefits for veterans, per Secretary Doug Collins.

While this move was effective immediately, there is a catch: Management can ask that certain employees not be terminated to ensure that the work can go on, that benefits and services aren't effected.

Rumor has it that some of the employees who were let go had handled the phones at the suicide crisis line. A senator stepped in and asked that two of the employees be reinstated.

While it might be a bit unnerving to see cuts at the VA for the benefits and services we depend on, I say we should just wait it out and not let panic set in. We have a new VA secretary,

and for now we should trust him to fight for what's right for us, despite all the loud naysayers who excel at stirring up anxiety. I think it will all be OK.

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- Have your carpets cleaned. High-traffic areas may require it as much as every three or four months, but bedrooms can go as long as 18 months. Use runners and area rugs to safeguard spots that may be vulnerable, like under a vanity or by your sofas.

- "I had some residue on my bathroom ceiling from hard water condensation. I happened to have a set of crutches lying around. I used a hair elastic to secure a hand towel to the arm rest of one crutch. Then I sprayed it with water and used it to scrub the ceiling. It worked really well. I was done in no time." – A.A. in Florida

- A baking soda and water mix is great for tile floors if you want a quick mop up. If a lot of your floors are tile, do yourself a favor and invest in a steam mop. They clean and sanitize, leaving your floors brilliant.

- "One of the things I do each spring (and fall) is to go through my makeup and toss the old items. I also freshen up my first aid kit, and get new bottles of sunscreen and bug spray to keep in my car kit, so I will always have it around." – E.A. in California

- Be sure you use a trivet or other protectant when placing flowerpots on wood floors. Also, purchase felt pads for the bottoms of furniture. This will eliminate divots or other kinds of depressions or scratches in the floor.

- "Tiny tears in your window screen can be secured with clear nail polish. I dab the spot, then use tweezers to line up the tiny wires, then dab again. Just make sure the window is open, or the screen might stick to the windowpane." – T.T. in Indiana

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	+		-		=	2		
+		+		+				
	+		×		=	52		
×		÷		×				
	+		÷		=	1		
=		=		=				
21		8		60				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

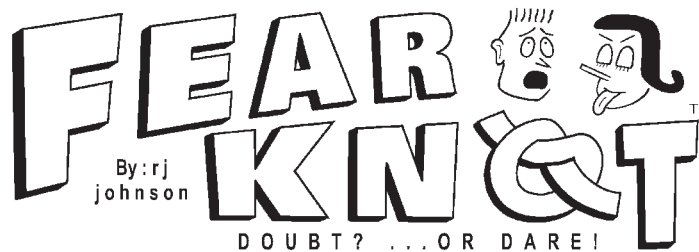
DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult

★★★ GO FIGURE!

Answer Page 4

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TWI

ORLHEW

HINEC

♥LBWO

HORDIA

WEP

♥TWHI

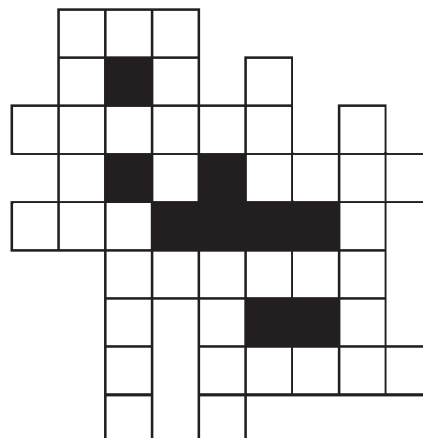
♥HWRT0

♥NBO

POCITO

LWPHE

ADOT



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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