



UTEP students compete in tech tournament

*UTEP bests other Texas teams
including UT Austin and Texas A&M*

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – A team of six University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) students recently showed their mettle by placing among the elite eight at the first annual Hack the Madness cybersecurity tournament. The competition, modeled after the NCAA basketball tournament, started with 64 teams from colleges and universities across the United States and organized in regional brackets.

“Cybersecurity is a rapidly growing field and UTEP is one of the industry’s leading universities,” said Baltazar Santaella, who is the team’s supervisor and UTEP’s deputy chief information security officer. “To have our students participate and perform at an elite level is a testament to their teamwork, discipline, and the excellent cybersecurity education they receive at UTEP,” he added.

Hack The Box, a leading cybersecurity performance center, hosted the competition. Beyond being a means for friendly competition, the event served as an opportunity to educate and develop future cybersecurity professionals – a field where employment is projected to grow by 33 percent by 2033, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The UTEP team consisted of undergraduate students including Mason Bishop, Andrea Davila, Damon Fernandez, Brianna Flores, Daniel Fuentes and Luis Fuentes. Over the course of two weekends, the UTEP team, comprised of student employees from across the University’s information technology department, competed against other universities in challenges that tested students’ abilities in forensics and hacking through events that ranged from real-world incident response scenarios to strategic cyber defense exercises, according to UTEP officials.

“The opportunity to compete in Hack the Madness fueled my passion for cybersecurity even further,” said Daniel Fuentes, a senior and computer science major. “Working alongside my talented teammates, while representing UTEP on the national stage and in a high-pressure environment, built my confidence

See UTEP, Page 2



Mason Bishop



Brianna Flores



Luis Fuentes



Andrea Davila



Damon Fernandez



Daniel Fuentes

SECURITY MATTERS – University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) students, above, recently placed eighth at a national cybersecurity competition with 64 other college and university teams from throughout the nation.

– Photos courtesy of The UTEP Communications Department

AISD sets high bar for teacher pay in El Paso County

By Adriana Candelaria
Special to the Courier

ANTHONY, TX – Anthony ISD teachers and staff are set to see a pay increase for the 2025–2026 school year as a result of two factors, Texas House Bill 2 (HB 2) and a new compensation plan approved by the Board of Trustees.

In addition to the pay increase, all district employees will continue having their basic health insurance plan covered by the district this school year.

Under House Bill 2, a public school funding bill recently approved by the Texas Legislature, teachers who work in school districts with 5,000 or fewer students are set to receive a Teacher Retention Allotment

funded by the State of Texas. AISD has a student population of fewer than 800. HB 2, combined with an already competitive salary scale, has led AISD to become the highest-paying district for teachers in the El Paso area.

Here’s a look at what teacher pay will look like at AISD due to HB 2:

- Teachers with 5+ years of experience will receive an \$8,000 increase; and
- Teachers with 3–4 years of experience will receive a \$4,000 increase.



Dr. Oscar A. Troncoso

– Photo courtesy AISD

The Board of Trustees also approved a 2 percent increase for all other district personnel, including teachers who do not qualify for the state’s HB 2 retention allotment due to having less than three years of experience. As part of the board’s continued commitment to being responsible stewards of the school budget, teachers receiving the HB 2 allotment will not receive the additional 2 percent raise.

The Board also approved an increased contribution toward employee health insurance,

meaning the district will once again fully cover the cost of the basic plan despite rising insurance costs. The district will now contribute \$452 per month, or \$5,424 annually, per employee.

“We are thankful to our state legislature for passing this law to incentivize teachers to stay in the classroom, and we’re thankful to our Board of Trustees for supporting our other district staff while being realistic of the capabilities of our school budget,” said Superintendent Dr. Oscar A. Troncoso.

“As the highest paying district in El Paso County, we are committed to attracting the most dedicated and talented teachers and staff. We are starting the school year

See AISD, Page 2

Public broadcasting lived past its time

Big Bird deserved to lose this time.

In the past, whenever Republicans have tried to cut federal funding for public broadcasting, the 8-foot-2-inch-tall yellow bird has been trotted out as an exemplar of all that is good and necessary about public broadcasting, and the federal dollars were preserved.

Our Jim Henson-created feathered friend could not continue his undefeated streak. A Trump-backed recessions bill was the best chance to defund public broadcasting in decades – and it did – being signed into law on June 24.

The bill, clawing back previously appropriated funding, passed both the House and Senate. The measure targeted \$9.4 billion in federal spending, including around \$1.1 billion in funds for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The CPB previously received about \$500 million a year from the federal government, and parceled it out to NPR, PBS and local public radio and TV stations.

NPR maintained that it only gets about 2% of its funding from the federal government, with more coming indirectly via member stations. PBS gets about 15% of its funding from the feds.

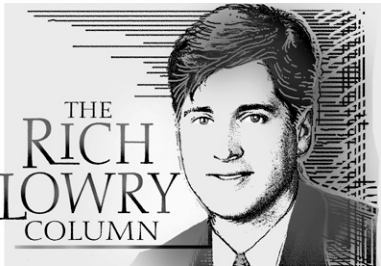
If NPR and programming is as necessary as its defenders say, it shouldn't be a heavy lift to get foundations, philanthropists and devoted listeners and viewers to fill in the funding gap. The organization's already given out a lot of tote bags during fundraising drives. Surely, they can give out some more.

Decades ago, with the rise of cable TV and a proliferation of sources of news and entertainment, it seemed absurd for the government to have to prop

up a few select media sources. How much more ridiculous it is now, in the age of YouTube, social media, satellite radio, Substack, streaming services and podcast platforms.

Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Public Broadcasting Act, creating the CPB in 1967, and like many other Great Society programs, public broadcasting is an anachronism that won't go away. Big Bird himself is approaching the age when he'll soon begin to be eligible for senior-citizen discounts.

Supporters of public broadcasting extol the



See LOWRY, Page 7

AISD

From Page 1

on a positive note, and we will continue to provide our students with the best education possible.”

While HB 2 is making a sizeable impact on teacher

pay, AISD also offers other opportunities that can help teachers earn more in exchange for positive student outcomes, such as the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) bonuses which rank among the highest in El Paso County due to the district's rural status. The district

also has opportunities for extracurricular activities stipends.

Employees are set to see the changes reflected in their paycheck starting the new school year. Anthony ISD is an open enrollment school district. Anthony ISD began the school year July 28.

UTEP

From Page 1

and proved to me that I can perform when the stakes are high and that I can compete with the best in the country.”

UTEP team's eighth place finish was also the highest ranking among other groups from Texas including UT Austin, UT San Antonio, UT Rio Grande Valley, Texas A&M Corpus Christi and Laredo College. Making it to the Final Four were the University of Maryland Global Campus, the University of Central Florida, Arizona State University, and Western Governors University.

“Unlike many of the other schools we matched up against, our team didn't have a history of competing,” said Brianna Flores, a rising senior and computer science student. “For us, Hack The Madness was a way of showing that the knowledge and skills we gain at UTEP are hands-on and prepare us to be the leaders in cybersecurity.”

UTEP is America's leading Hispanic-serving university with 84 percent of its more than 25,000 students coming from a Hispanic background, and more than half of these students are the first in their families to obtain a higher education. UTEP offers 171 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs at the only open-access, top-tier research university in America.

Individuals interested in UTEP's cybersecurity programs are advised to investigate the university's secure cyber systems through its computer science degree program. For more information, visit UTEP's website.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of **\$0.100000 per \$100 valuation** has been proposed by the governing body of **El Paso County Emergency Services District #1**.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$0.100000 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$0.095121 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$0.108739 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2025 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for El Paso County ESD #1 from the same properties in both the 2024 tax year and the 2025 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that El Paso County ESD #1 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that El Paso County ESD #1 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2025 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON August 14, 2025 at 6:30 PM at 14151 Nunda Ave., Horizon City, TX 79928 or virtual meeting: virtual meeting: Microsoft teams; access code: 296 051 232 326 4; Passcode: wJ6m3sS7

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the voter-approval tax rate. As a result, El Paso County ESD #1 is not required to hold an election at which voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate. However, you may express your support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate by contacting the members of the Board of Commissioners of El Paso County ESD #1 at their offices or by attending the public hearing mentioned above.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE TAX RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:
Property tax amount = (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property) /100

FOR the proposal:	Bill Mayberry Jeff Booth	Deanne Rankins Amanda Anaya
AGAINST the proposal:	None	
PRESENT and not voting:	None	
ABSENT:	Jose Berumen	

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by **El Paso County ESD #1** last year to the taxes proposed to the be imposed on the average residence homestead by **El Paso County ESD #1** this year.

	2024	2025	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.100000	\$0.100000	No change of 0.100000 per \$100, or 0%.
Average homestead taxable value	\$232,959	\$238,368	Increase of 2.29%.
Tax on average homestead	\$232.96	\$238.37	Increase of \$5.41, or 2.30%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$6,893,184.44	\$7,964,269,294	Increase of \$1,071,084.85 or 14.42%.

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for **El Paso County ESD #1** at **915-771-2300** or ctaxassessor@epcounty.com, or visit epcounty.com for more information.



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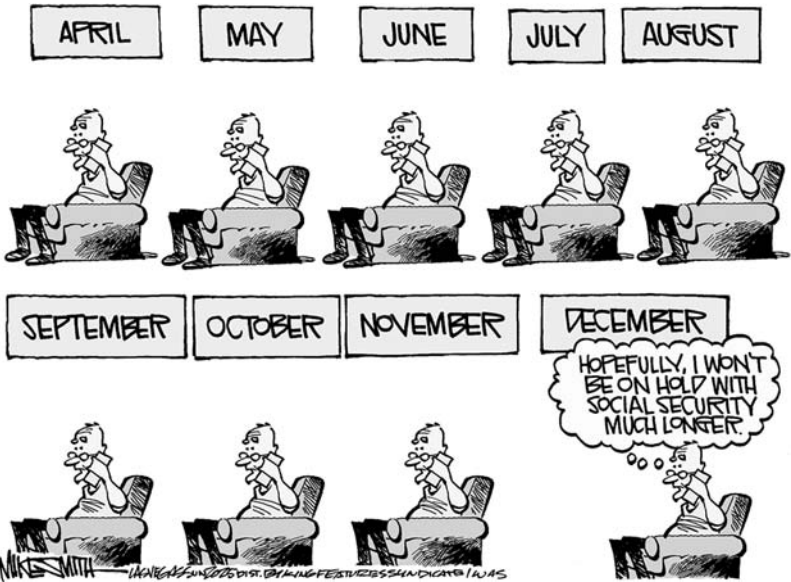
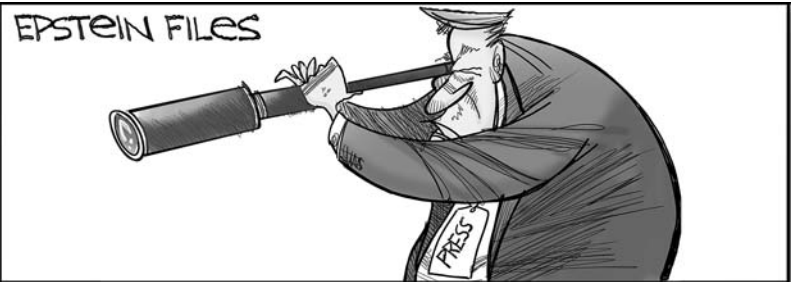
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Anthony Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, August 20, 2025 in the Anthony ISD Board Room, 813 Sixth Street, Anthony, Texas 79821. **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	\$0.786900/\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)
School Debt Service Tax	
Approved by Local Voters	\$0.140000/\$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	13.04%	Increase
Debt Service	0.16%	Increase
Total Expenditures	12.49%	Increase

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

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value* of all property	\$ 394,942,699	\$ 397,734,051
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$ 443,113	\$ 1,194,474
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ 243,063,422	\$ 253,466,396
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$ 443,113	\$ 1,129,002

* "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* \$2,255,000

* Outstanding principal.

Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

	Maintenance & Operations	Interest & Sinking Fund*	Total	Local Revenue Per Student	State Revenue Per Student
Last Year's Rate	\$ 0.786900	\$ 0.127700*	\$ 0.914600	\$ 3,303	\$ 12,919
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$ 0.786900	\$ 0.140000*	\$ 0.926900	\$ 3,162	\$ 14,632
Proposed Rate	\$ 0.786900	\$ 0.140000*	\$ 0.926900	\$ 3,162	\$ 14,622

*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	\$ 170,002	\$ 179,557
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$ 70,002	\$ 39,557
Last Year's Rate Versus		
Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$ 0.914600	\$ 0.926900
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$ 640.24	\$ 366.65
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$ - 273.59

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 \$0.929486. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$0.929486.

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)	\$ 3,556,021
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$ 97,095

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.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the State.

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. on Monday, August 18, 2025 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	\$0.738900/\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)
School Debt Service Tax	
Approved by Local Voters	\$0.468900/\$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	1.94%	Increase
Debt Service	0.18%	Decrease
Total Expenditures	1.72%	Increase

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	\$ 162,634,065	\$ 267,574,602
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$ 1,907,176	\$ 2,534,659
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ 102,107,695	\$ 208,737,520
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$ 1,603,709	\$ 2,285,816

* “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* \$12,835,800

* 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	\$ 0.666900	\$ 0.468900*	\$ 1.135800	\$ 1,533	\$14,025
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$ 0.568900	\$ 0.594110*	\$ 1.163010	\$ 3,522	\$12,627
Proposed Rate	\$ 0.738900	\$ 0.468900*	\$ 1.207800	\$ 3,714	\$15,816

*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	\$ 109,255	\$119,220
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$ 9,255	\$ 0
Last Year’s Rate Versus		
Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$ 1.135800	\$ 1.207800
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$ 105.12	\$ 0
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$ – 105.12

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 \$1.124694. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$1.124694.

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)	\$ 5,300,455
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$ 149,234

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.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.



By Lucie Winborne

• The sun emits sound through pressure waves, but their wavelength makes it impossible to be heard by humans.

• In 1989, PepsiCo introduced a breakfast drink called Pepsi A.M., with a caffeine content that was 25% higher than a cup of coffee. Unfortunately for the beverage maker, most Pepsi consumers didn’t really care for the idea of mixing soda with breakfast.

• A laser can get trapped in water.

• The 2007 film “Ratatouille,” about the alliance between a garbage boy and a rat, spurred an uptick in adoption of the rodents. As rat expert Steve Fairburn noted, the film helped to promote the fact that “contrary to popular opinion, rats are one of the cleanest and least smelly pets you can own.”

• The Hollywood sign used to say Hollywoodland.

• Want to be a little more creative? Try taking a hot shower. The warmth increases dopamine flow, which in turn helps increase creativity.

• There is no number before 1,000 contains the letter “a”.

• In Japanese, the word “kuchisabishii” refers to eating not when you’re hungry, but when your mouth is lonely.

• In the village of Brockworth, England, folks gather on every spring bank holiday to chase wheels of Double Gloucester cheese down Cooper’s Hill. First one over the finish line wins. The tradition was first recorded in 1826 but may actually be around 600 years old and is world famous.

• Popsicles were originally marketed as a health food.

Thought for the Day: “Weak people revenge. Strong people forgive. Intelligent people ignore.”
– Albert Einstein

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Moments in time
THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On Aug. 4, 2012, in London, Oscar Pistorius of South Africa became the first amputee to compete at the Olympic Games. He finished second out of five runners in the opening heat and went on to the semifinals, where he finished eighth out of eight runners.

• On Aug. 5, 1951, 38-year-old Canadian daredevil William “Red” Hill Jr. attempted to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel made of 13 rubber innertubes, canvas webbing and fish netting that he dubbed “the Thing.” It broke apart under the high water pressure two hours after he set out, but his badly injured body was not recovered until the next morning.

• On Aug. 6, 1975, The New York Times printed a front-page obituary for Agatha Christie’s Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot – quite the honor for a fictional character! Christie had announced her decision to dispose of him in her next book; indeed, as the Times noted, “The news of his death, given by Dame Agatha, was not unexpected. Word that he was near death reached here last May.”

• On Aug. 7, 1967, the U.S. Congress overwhelmingly approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, giving President Lyndon B. Johnson nearly unlimited power to oppose “communist aggression” in Southeast Asia and marking the beginning of America’s expanded military role in the battlefields of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

• On Aug. 8, 1942, six German saboteurs who’d secretly entered the United States on a mission to attack its civil infrastructure were executed by electric chair for spying. Two others who notified the FBI of the plot and aided authorities in their manhunt for the collaborators were imprisoned but freed six years later on President Harry Truman’s orders, and returned to Germany.

• On Aug. 9, 1995, legendary Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia died of a heart attack in a California residential drug-treatment facility at age 53.

• On Aug. 10, 1927, President Calvin Coolidge arrived in South Dakota on horseback wearing a cowboy hat to dedicate Mount Rushmore two months before its carving began and presented sculptor Gutzon Borglum with a set of steel drill bits.

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Food for thought

By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Don’t wait – do it while you can

Do it while you can, while you feel like it.

The chances of you doing something now are greater than ten years from now. First, you may not be here ten years from now. If there is a career change you want to make then make it as soon as possible. The sooner the better. If there is education or training you are thinking about pursuing then begin now. The longer you wait to start the longer it will take to finish.

The younger you begin a career the better the chance you have of it being better, bigger and greater. The young people who take off to New York City, Hollywood or Nashville to pursue musical or

acting, typically have a better chance of success. It’s easier to catch fish, where there are fish to catch.

People who enter the military in their early twenties can have a retirement in their forties or they can stay in service even longer if they wish.

The person who begins working at an early age and faithfully saves money every month can have a million dollars or more in their retirement account by the time they are sixty.

The earlier we start the better we do. However, not everyone has the opportunity to start early. This is why you start when you can. Life is different for all of us. We all were raised

in different environments. Often, information, mentoring and life coaching were not available. Some had to figure it out on their own. That’s not easy, but we do the best that we can.

The Bible reminds us to “Remember your creator in the days of your youth before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, ‘I find no pleasure in them’” (Ecclesiastes 12:1) On the heels of this verse is one to keep in

mind as well, “Youth and the prime of life are fleeting, but a life lived for God is forever.” (2 Samuel 22:4)

One section of scripture that should be a waving flag to us is Luke 12. A man reaches a state in life where all he can say is “I have so much laid up in store for many years. All I have to do is take it easy, eat drink and be merry.” But God called him a fool and he died that very day and went out into eternity.

Thus, we never know when our time will end. Therefore, take your vacation sooner rather than later. Enjoy what

you can see, hear and do today. Love on the significant people in your life today. Do the good deed today. Do what you want to do. Do what you can do and do good things, whatever that may mean or look like to you.

Help those you can, but there is only so much you can do. You are one person and you can’t save the world. Don’t live your life in such a way that you end up saying, “I wish I had done this. I wish I had done that.”

We all deal with being good stewards of our time and minds. It’s not easy but why not start today?

Town of Horizon City

In an effort to provide a safe, healthy and clean environment the Horizon City Code Enforcement Department asks that all residents please follow property maintenance requirements. Visit www.horizoncity.org for complete Ordinance requirements about the following topics and more:

- **Yards and Trees** – keep yards, including parkways and gutters, clear of weeds and debris; trees shall be trimmed to maintain proper clearance;
- **Stagnant Water** – items such as tires shall not be stored on properties in order to prevent mosquito growth; up to 5 tires may be brought to City Hall;
- **Outdoor Storage** – do not store indoor furniture/appliances outside;
- **Illegal Dumping** – violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law;
- **Vehicle Parking** – only allowed on approved parking surfaces; do not park on yards;
- **Garage Sales** – maximum of 4 per year with a permit; and
- **Signs** – illegally placed signs will be removed; contact City Hall for further clarification.

Notice of Violation

Individuals or property owners must comply with a Notice of Violation.

If the property is not brought into compliance, the City may request a court order that would give the City authorization to access the property and correct the violation; all associated costs will be billed to the property owner.

Call 915-852-1046 with any questions and/or to report violations.

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CryptoQuip Answer

If two people are planning a conspiracy while golfing, are they on a collusion course?

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX INCREASE

A tax rate of \$0.087138 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$0.087138 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$0.074137 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$0.083709 per \$100
DE MINIMIS RATE	\$0.087138 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2025 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 from the same properties in both the 2024 tax year and the 2025 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate, unless the de minimis rate for EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 exceeds the voter-approval rate for EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2.

The de minimis rate is the rate equal to the sum of the no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate for EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2, the rate that will raise \$500,000, and the current debt rate for EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2025 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON August 12, 2025 AT 6:00 PM AT 16001 Socorro Road, Fabens, TX 79838.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the voter-approval tax rate but not greater than the de minimis rate. However, the proposed tax rate exceeds the rate that allows voters to petition for an election under Section 26.075, Tax Code. If EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 adopts the proposed tax rate, the qualified voters of the EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 may petition the EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 to require an election to be held to determine whether to reduce the proposed tax rate. If a majority of the voters reject the proposed tax rate, the tax rate of the EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 will be the voter-approval tax rate of the EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property tax amount = (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property) /100

FOR the proposal:	Adrian Santana	Michael Diaz	Antonio Bernal
	Rick Avalos	Roland Glidden	
AGAINST the proposal:	None		
PRESENT and not voting:	None		
ABSENT:	None		

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 this year.

	2024	2025	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.078856	\$0.087138	Increase of 0.008282 per \$100, or 10.50%
Average homestead taxable value	\$160,206	\$172,550	Increase of 7.71%
Tax on average homestead	\$126.33	\$150.36	Increase of 24.03, or 19.02%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$5,500,555	\$6,754,973	Increase of 1,254,418, or 22.81%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for EL PASO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT #2 at (915) 212-0106 or citytaxoffice@elpasotexas.gov, or visit <https://www.epcountyesd2.org/> for more information.

Jerry Jones does it again – Parsons demands a trade

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Over the decades, the sports world has produced plenty of people that everybody loves to hate.

Bad guys and girls who have done things that were either mean or cruel, or they just always broke the rules, or they just drove you crazy with their arrogant behavior.

When you think of these hated sports figures maybe you think of names like Ty Cobb and O.J. Simpson, who are thought to have committed murder. There's Tonya Harding, who tried to injure her Olympic competitor. Lance Armstrong acted like he was Mr. All-American guy while taking illegal drugs to cheat his way to the top of the cycling mountain. Also Michael Vick, who was involved in dog fighting events. And then there are guys who just acted so arrogantly, it just turned everybody off, like Barry Bonds, Alex Rodriguez, Pete Rose, Marion Jones and LeBron James, just to name a very few.

Sometimes the most hated sports figures don't just participate on the field. Sometimes they own the team.

And the owner who is most hated right now is Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones.

It's no crime to make a mistake, but at his age, 82, you would think he'd be smart enough to learn from his mistakes.

A couple of years ago, he waited a long time to sign Dak Prescott to a

long-term contract. The issue was in the news everyday and it took a toll on the team with everyone wondering if they were going to have a quarterback or not.

Then last year, Jones waited forever to sign CeeDee Lamb. The same thing happened; Lamb grew more frustrated with the process until Jones finally gave him his extension just before the start of the season.

Now, since the last two seasons were so disruptive, Jerry decided he should do it again.

But now his arrogance may get the best of him.

Jones has waited forever to sign his best player, maybe the NFL's best defensive player, Micah Parsons. He's even taken time to trash Parsons in the media, saying Parsons gets injured too much.

And again, everyone in the media has been talking about why it's taking Jones so long to sign Parsons.

Now that Jones has waited and waited and waited, Parsons has demanded that the Cowboys trade him

to another team.

Parsons has done nothing but be a great leader, a great player, and a great teammate. He doesn't know what else he has to do to get a new contract.

By the way, his current contract ends at the end of this season.

It's no secret that the Jerry Jones-led Cowboys haven't even played in the NFC Championship Game in 29 years. This is poor for a team that has won eight Super Bowls.

And the downfall started when Jones' arrogance got the best of him and then Dallas coach Jimmy Johnson. After winning two straight Super Bowls in the nineties, decided Johnson no longer wanted to lead the Cowboys anymore and quit.

Sound familiar?

And since Jimmy left Dallas, the franchise has been a joke. Jones' worth has grown to over \$16 billion. While the Cowboys are still known as Americas' Team they no longer have the swagger they used to.

Another thing Jones' arrogance is going to lead to is other free agents

not wanting to sign and play for this man in Dallas. They'll fear that Jones will treat them with the same kind of disrespect.

And I don't think any of us want to be disrespected anywhere, especially at work.

Now do I really believe Parsons will be traded?

No.

I believe Jones will come around and make Parsons the highest paid defensive player in the league. Parsons will go in front of the camera and say that everything is okay and that all he's ever wanted is to be a Dallas Cowboy for life.

I've seen it from other players who demanded to be traded. It's a bargaining play.

So, I'm sure that Parsons will still be a Cowboy.

And because Jerry Jones will still be the Cowboys' owner, the team will struggle to have a winning season. And they will fall apart in the playoffs – if they make it.

Sound familiar?

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Video games for seniors

A recent annual report by the Entertainment Software Association indicates that over 50 million seniors are playing video games. That's over one-quarter of the total number of people playing video games.

Color me shocked. The reason: I thought I was the only one, or at least one of a very few. Little did I know that so many other seniors are also playing video games – and that more than half of those are females.

When asked why they play, 77% of seniors responded that they play video games to relax, 51% to have fun and 65% to keep minds sharp. There's social interaction, which helps combat isolation. We can improve memory, problem-solving skills and hand-eye coordination. We can slow cognitive decline, reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease and improve mental flexibility. In other words, playing video games can be good for us.

How to get started if you don't already play? I started

playing video games right after I got my first computer, back in 1994. While I've gone through several computers over the years, I still have some of the original games, and they're now classics. For several years I had a membership that sent me a new game every month as well.

To get started now, if you'd like to try playing video games, begin with something easy, either for your computer or tablet. You have so much to choose from. There are word games and puzzles. There are classic games where you can play chess against the computer. There are trivia games, community builders (you build an online town) and shooter games where you kill enemies or monsters. You can play by yourself or in groups online.

One place to start is the AARP Games Center (aarp.org/games), where you can play dozens of games for free and even more if you're a member.

Have fun!

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Super Crossword

“WHERE’S THE BEEF?”

ACROSS

1 Predicaments

9 Metallic car trims

16 Sporty German cars

20 Cosmos

21 What a flushed person has

22 Uncommon

23 Start of a riddle

26 Advance, as money

27 Japanese pond fish

28 Bad with musical pitches

29 Letter-shaped girder

33 Feared fly

37 Wine barrels

38 Riddle, part 2

44 Before now

45 Indent keys

46 Poodle, e.g.

47 Org. fighting trafficking

48 Particular mag. edition

51 Letter following 36-Down

52 Supports for broken arms

55 Supersonic speed unit

57 Scissor cut

58 Fetuses-to-be

60 Riddle, part 3

64 BLT offerer

65 Listen (to)

67 Post-workout discomfort

68 Swelled head

70 Queued up

72 Comedic sort

73 Like the pope

77 Trattoria rice dish

80 Wee bits

83 Riddle, part 4

85 Ottawa’s province

87 Seoul soldiers

88 “A little dab’ll _”

89 Noisy napper

91 Marina _ Rey

92 Corrosive cleanser

93 Place to input a PIN

94 Frat party dispenser

97 Language of Pakistan

98 _ Fridays (restaurant)

99 End of the riddle

104 Father of Hector and Paris

107 Ready to go, as a car

108 Actor Dick Van _

109 Reaps

112 Spunk

114 Use a keypad

118 Riddle’s answer

125 Beef cut

126 Attacked with a jump

127 Refrigeration

200 slows it down

212 Paquin of “The Piano”

229 Intertwists

230 Tinkered (with)

DOWN

1 Two-in-one

2 Facts or stats

3 _ fire under (roused)

4 No matter whether

5 Sea, to Jules

6 “Rocky III” actor

7 Bat wood

8 Try to find

9 Sailing outing

10 “You! Look over here!”

11 Nutrition fig.

12 Frequently, poetically

13 Lusterless photo surfaces

14 Cave sound

15 Not hidden

16 Like many white gowns

17 Features of zebras’ necks

18 Inflict, as havoc

19 Medieval menials

24 Cousin of emo

25 Joe causing no jolt

30 Itsy-_

31 Like a clock with hands

32 Giovanni of “Avatar”

34 Roush of baseball

35 Albeite, for short

36 18th Greek letter

38 Abhorred

39 Best competitive effort, slangily

40 Surprised second look

41 IRS datum

42 Like Popeye and Rambo

43 Former anesthetic

48 Apropos of

49 Knights, e.g.

50 1974 CIA spoof flick

53 Pop’s Stefani

54 Big scissors

56 “Plus” point

57 Hyundai model

59 The “R” of ERA

61 College “Eli”

62 Bracelet sites

63 Hem, e.g.

66 French spa city

69 “Nice one!”

71 Twelve p.m.

73 Key near Alt

74 Cry on a ship

75 Samsung or LG product

76 “Where _ from...”

78 Really hot

79 In the future

81 San _ Padres

82 Not at all iffy

84 Made of a certain sturdy wood

86 Place for a car

jack

90 “_ Lips Are Sealed”

93 “Bibleman” star Willie

95 Nest nugget

96 “Aw, shucks”

99 Cuban capital

100 Sight-related

101 Simple putts

102 Greek Mars

103 In fine _ (doing well)

104 Big city in Penna.

105 Betray by blabbing

106 Novelist Shaw

110 Store lure

111 Subsequently

113 “You! Look over here!”

115 Calendar unit

116 Calendar unit

117 _ out a living (barely scraped by)

119 H.S. transcript stat

120 & so forth

121 “The Simpsons” tavern keeper

122 Fed. cleanup group

123 DeLuise of “Silent Movie”

124 Drink a little

Super Crossword

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125					126								127							
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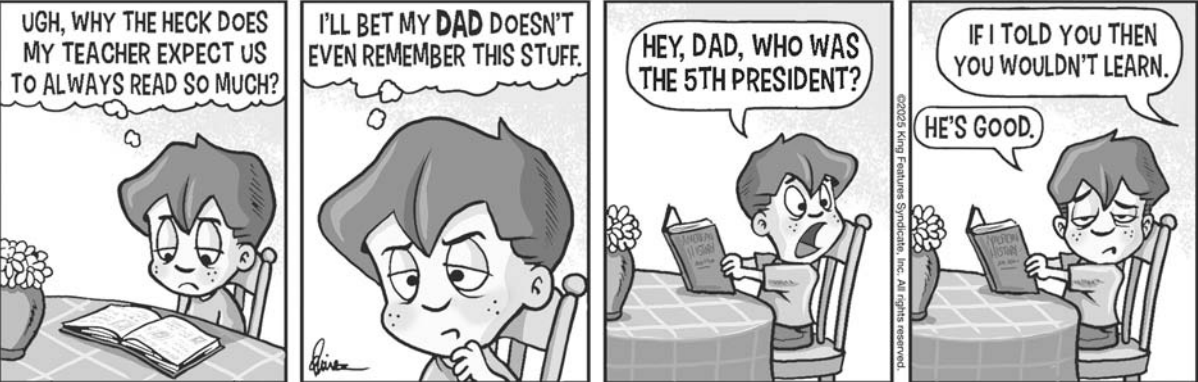
Answer Page 5

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



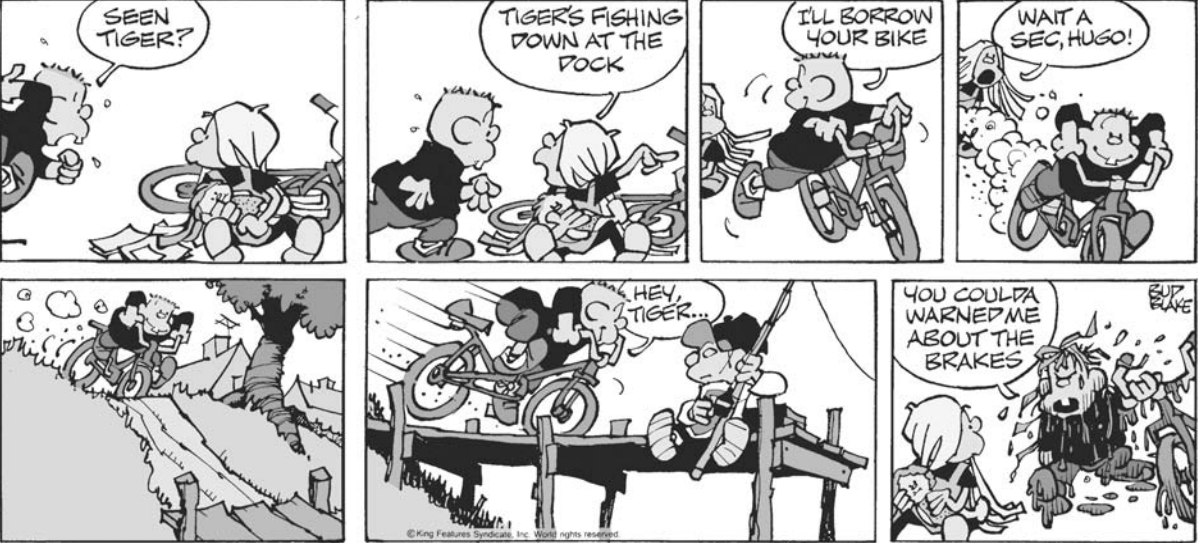
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

virtues of “All Things Considered,” the “PBS NewsHour” and “Frontline,” and yes (political bias aside), journalists do some good work for these programs. They also (again, political bias aside) do some good work at *The New York Times* and CBS News, yet neither of these outlets depend on federal tax dollars.

Oh, defenders also ask, “How can we possibly do without the wonder of educational programming like *Sesame Street* and *Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood*?” *Sesame Street* is, indeed, an American institution. Even if PBS collapsed tomorrow, the show would certainly go on. For about a decade now, new episodes have been featured on HBO or Netflix, demonstrating how a venerable 50-year-old project can adapt to the times.

It’s simply not true, by the way, that we depend on PBS for good shows for kids. There’s been educational programming developed by Nickelodeon (*Blue’s Clues & You!*), Scholastic Entertainment (*The Magic School Bus*) and Netflix (*Ask the StoryBots*

and *Ada Twist, Scientist*). And somehow, such iconic children’s programming as *Dora the Explorer*, *Peppa Pig* and *Bluey* were created without the involvement of PBS.

Then there’s the argument that any cut-off of federal funding will be devastating to local public radio stations in rural communities. It’s true that small stations could go out of business, but as anyone who has been paying attention has noticed, we live in an era of great media churn. Private media entities are going out of business – and being created – all the time. The government does not need to extend its favor to a few select outlets. Especially when these outlets are so blatantly and pervasively biased. NPR and PBS provide left-of-center content for left-of-center audiences under the guise of objectivity. As many legacy media organizations have long demonstrated, there is a business model there, but it’s not one that deserves or needs taxpayer support.

Big Bird will finally have to make his own way in the world.

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

PSAs and DREs help identify cancer

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 53-year-old healthy male, and I always request to check my PSA levels each year. My 57-year-old brother’s new doctor denied his request for a routine PSA check on their initial visit. She said that the test now produces more false positives as well as unnecessary procedures and surgeries, so she said “no” and wouldn’t order it. Are primary care physicians discouraging the PSA test for older men now? I don’t get any push back when I request to check it. Also, I heard the digital rectal exam (DRE) isn’t as valid anymore for screening. His new doctor also did not do a DRE. I’m curious to know your thoughts on the current DRE and PSA screening guidelines for primary care physicians. – C.C.



The prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test is a screening blood test for cancer, and the recommendation for its use has gone back and forth over decades since it’s been introduced. Since screening and prevention are my areas of expertise, I have followed the literature on the use of PSAs and other screening tests very closely.

In my opinion, your brother’s doctor was wrong to refuse to order the test. She was right that it does produce false positives, which could potentially lead to unnecessary surgeries; however, there are good ways to reduce unnecessary treatment while still ordering the test, which can save lives.

Most prostate cancer is so slow-growing that it is likely never to bother a man until he dies from something else. So, we don’t want to operate on these relatively indolent cancers because there’s a possibility of a serious side effect from surgery, such as urinary incontinence or erectile dysfunction (neither of which any man wants).

Before operating, careful testing is done on the prostate cancer, including imaging (ideally by an MRI scan), a biopsy with pathological examination, and often genetic testing of the tumor. Along with the PSA results, we can separate prostate cancer into categories of very low risk and low risk versus intermediate and high risk.

Once we have the diagnosis, we can make good recommendations so that we can identify the rare high-risk cancers while not unnecessarily treating the low-risk cancers. Without screenings, we can’t keep rare, small and aggressive tumors from spreading until it’s too late.

Now I have to tell you that 57 isn’t so much “older” than 53, at least from the perspective of prostate cancer screening. The most important time for prostate cancer screening is ages 50-70. There are some men who benefit from starting screening at a younger age (those with a family history, Black men, and men with certain genetic risks), and there are some who benefit from starting screening when they’re older than 70.

The DRE does not add much to the results of the blood test. Approximately 1% of men will get prostate cancer that is diagnosed by the DRE as part of combined screening. Many men will refuse screening if it includes a rectal exam, and it’s estimated that 90% of abnormal rectal exams will be false positives. On the other hand, I’ve had instances where quite a few men don’t feel like they have been adequately screened unless they get the DRE.

I have a discussion with every man about PSA testing, and I recommend it for most men in this age group. But I only rarely have had a man say that he doesn’t want it once he understands that we won’t recommend surgery unless the combination of all the studies show this is a high-risk situation.

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
August 10, 1909: Beaumont’s Howard Hughes patents his rotary bit. It’s still an oilfield favorite.

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: Z equals P

EG MUJ ZAJZOA KWA ZOKIIEIP
K VJIXZEWKVT UDEOA PJOGEIP,
KWA MDAT JI K VJOOSXEJI
VJSWXA?

Answer Page 5

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A big thumbs-up to the VAOIG



by Freddy Groves

A recent report says that during this year’s multi-agency health care fraud takedown, they’ve nailed 324 criminals to the tune of \$14.6 billion.

That’s “billion” with a “b.” And that dollar amount is over double what they’ve seized before. This time they also seized cars and cryptocurrency. They stopped \$4 billion in fraudulent claims payments. They stopped millions from going overseas to foreign banks. And those weren’t just street-thug-level criminals they nabbed. These were bigger guys, including 96 doctors, pharmacists, nurses and other medical professionals. Scammers included foreigners sent here to pull off schemes that used stolen identities of Americans.

Working with several other agencies, all the way from federal level (including the IRS, Homeland Security,

the Department of Labor and more) down to local law enforcement, the OIG has brought charges to keep thieves from stealing money from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Here are a few examples of the lowlifes they corralled.

One group was shipping out medical equipment that wasn’t really necessary and then billing for it. Working with a marketing company, they pressured recipients to receive and keep the equipment, even if it wasn’t needed. Scammers even pressured doctors to sign the orders by repeatedly faxing them documents claiming that the patient had specifically requested the equipment. Eventually the doctor would sign the forms. This scam was good for a cool \$39 million.

And there was the wound care scam – where wound patches were applied to vulnerable patients who should not have had them – that netted \$600 million.

Then there was the massage therapist who billed over \$2 million for services never rendered. For example, they

billed for aquatic therapy when they had no pool, for wheelchair therapy for veterans not in a wheelchair and for pacemaker monitoring for veterans who did not have a pacemaker.

Once again I’m hoping the VA’s Office of Inspector General has seen their operating budget increased so they can do even more of what they’ve been doing.

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• Mix a quarter cup of salt in with two tablespoons of bath wash for a sudsy, refreshing, skin-soothing salt scrub.

• “Here is a fun game to play with a group of kids (and adults). Everyone gets a piece of paper and begins to draw something. The group leader (mom or dad, usually) says “Pass it left (or right)” and you pass your paper to the next person, who continues your drawing, and so on. We play this at the restaurant until the food gets there. The drawings are fun to look at later.” – T.T. in Ohio

• Here’s a cheap trick to keep cut flowers fresh longer: Stir a tiny bit of sugar into the water in your vase. Then drop a penny in the vase.

• Always have a couple bottles of water and a roll of duct tape in your trunk. You never know when you will need these items, and they seem to be pretty handy when traveling by car.

• Long-sleeve shirts make great beach or lake coverups. They can be tied around your waist if you aren’t using it, and they cover your whole arm.

• “Do you have trouble keeping ants out of your hummingbird feeders? How about giving them their own cup of sugar water? Put 1/2 cup of sugar water on the ground near where you hang feeders. Then check it when you change the feeder.” – G.B. in Pavilion, NY

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.

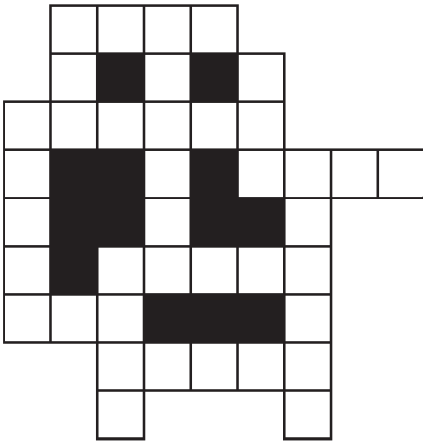
Answer Page 5

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	+		×		=72			
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6		16		12				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



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HELTA
♥DEWL
HALCUN
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♥MPLA



Answer Page 5

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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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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