



— Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

**ALL IN A ROW** – The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is looking to open an immigration detention center in three large warehouses (above) located on Eastwind Avenue between the City of Socorro and the Town of Clint. The detention center, which is just a couple of blocks off of Interstate-10 East, is projected to hold up to 8,500 detainees.

## Residents protest planned lower valley detention center

By Alfredo Vasquez  
*Special to the Courier*

EL PASO COUNTY – A resounding public outcry mushroomed throughout El Paso County after Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials disclosed recently that they purchased three massive warehouses on Eastwind Avenue, which is located on the outskirts of the City of Socorro, and that they will be used as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facilities.

Soon after DHS's plans were reported, hundreds of borderland residents went to their county and city leaders and voiced their opposition. Subsequently El Paso County commissioners, City of El Paso representatives, and City of Socorro council members, in their respective meetings, voted to mobilize their resources to prevent the federal government from opening another ICE detention center in the region.

The buildings that DHS acquired consist of nearly 827,000 square feet and were completed in 2025 to initially serve as distribution centers. However, when DHS went looking for space to expand its immigration detention system, the property owners, Delaware-based El Paso Logistics II LLC, decided to sell them instead to the federal government for approximately \$123 million, according to news reports.

The Eastwind warehouses are part of plans to open at least 23 new processing and detention centers in mega-distribution centers across the U.S to add over 80,000 more beds for President Donald Trump's \$45 billion immigration detention center expansion program, which he signed into law in 2025.

To counter DHS's detention center plans for this area, El Paso County commissioners court adopted

measures to express the community's opposition of new ICE detention centers; El Paso city representatives approved a plan of action to look into ways to prevent the installation of any new ICE detention centers in their neighborhoods; and Socorro city council members moved to direct an investigation into methods to deny a new ICE detention center within their city limits.

The local officials' proposals are intended to address the growing concerns of borderland residents about the detention facility that ICE is planning to build in the county's lower valley community. Among the concerns cited were the lack of transparency and alleged human rights abuses at the current Camp East Montana ICE detention facility that opened last summer on Fort Bliss land. According to recent reports, there are over 3,100 migrant detainees currently held in Camp East Montana.

"We are trying to collect as much information as we can," stated El Paso County Commissioner Iliana Holguin, whose Precinct 3 encompasses the Socorro municipality. "Unfortunately, one of the things we've seen is that the federal government has tried to say as little as possible about what it plans for those facilities," she noted.

County commissioners are also supporting the

efforts of the cities of El Paso and Socorro to find ways to fight the proposed detention center.

El Paso city council is moving ahead with a plan to resist new ICE detention facilities and unanimously approved a plan of action to have the city manager and city attorney look into ways to prevent the installation of any new ICE detention centers within the city.

"The city has no plans or future plans to have a detention facility in the city of El Paso," stated City Representative Chris Canales during a recent public meeting. "I don't want ICE in El Paso and, frankly, I don't think ICE should exist at all," Canales emphasized.

City Representative Lily Limón, took issue with the argument that the city government has no role in federal matters. "It might be true that we don't unilaterally have the authority... but it is not true that we have no power to rise together to oppose detention facilities," she stated during the public meeting.

Also, after a recent City of Socorro public meeting, Mayor Rudy Cruz Jr. said that council members requested staff to research and create an ordinance prohibiting the installation of these detention facilities within its city limits. Cruz pointed out



Congresswoman Veronica Escobar

— File

See CENTER, Page 2

# The greatest sports story ever told

Everyone who witnessed it remembers where they were. The victory of the gold-medal-winning U.S. men's hockey team over the Soviets at the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, New York, was the greatest American sporting event of the 20th century, featuring the greatest call of all time – broadcaster Al Michaels indelibly counting down the final seconds before exclaiming, "Do you believe in miracles?... Yes!"

On the occasion of this year's Winter Olympics, Netflix has released a new documentary on the team, "Miracle: The Boys of '80." It is a story that has been oft-told, but never grows old. David vs. Goliath. Amateur vs. Professional. Freedom vs. Tyranny. The backdrop of U.S.-Soviet geopolitical

competition and our national humiliation in the late 1970s gave the victory extra emotional punch. Malaise, at least for a time, gave way to joyful flag-waving and exultant chants of "USA!"

The centerpiece of "Miracle" is the interviews with the players, now old men, individually and sitting together on their old bench in the Lake Placid arena. There are plenty of tears, as the players think about their youth, about their achievement, about lost family members.

The missing figure looming large is the late coach Herb Brooks. His strategic insight, psychological acuity and extremely demanding style forged a group of college kids into a historic team. (The Olympics back then were for amateurs, although

the Soviets were professional in all but name.)

Brooks was obsessed with Soviet hockey and wanted to turn its insights against it.

His team would be physically tough, but would be able to skate and pass too, and be better conditioned than anyone else, giving it better legs in the third period.

The U.S. team compiled an impressive record during the exhibition season. But the Soviets were giants. They'd won the gold at every single Olympics since 1964. During this run, their combined Olympic



See LOWRY, Page 7



– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

**PROPERTY TRANSFER** – Delaware-based El Paso Logistics II LLC sold its warehouse complex (above) to the federal government for approximately \$123 million, according to news reports. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) plans to use the buildings, which are located within Socorro city limits, as part of its immigration detention system.

## Center

From Page 1

that the new ICE detention center, which is projected to hold 8,500 people, would strain the already fragile infrastructure including water, sewer and electric utilities.

"We understand the strain that it is going to place on our infrastructure," Cruz said. "I have residents who live in my city right now who for over 40 years still don't have the basic utility... and for a private contracting entity to come in here and get it overnight, it is unjust and it is unfair."

Additionally, on multiple occasions U.S. Congresswoman Veronica Escobar, who represents the West Texas district, has expressed her opposition to any new migrant detention facilities in El Paso County.

Escobar stated that she has sent a letter to DHS Secretary Kristi Noem and acting U.S. ICE Director Todd Lyons expressing her rejection of any new facility in El Paso County. She cited community opposition to the project and the lack of transparency at Camp East Montana as to why she doesn't want to see another facility.

"El Pasoans do not want more detention facilities in our community. During a weekly meeting of the El Paso County Commissioners Court, over 200 El Paso County residents spoke out against the construction of further detention facilities in the area," Escobar wrote. "I stand firmly with the wishes of my constituents, neighbors, and community and urge DHS to suspend any and all plans to build further detention facilities."

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# Fabens HS Mariachi Los Gatos Salvajes earn First Division UIL State rating

By Sofia Maciel  
Special to the Courier

FABENS – The Fabens High School Mariachi Los Gatos Salvajes has earned its first-ever First Division rating at the University Interscholastic League State Mariachi Contest. This achievement marks a milestone for the program that has qualified for and competed at the state level every year since its inception four years ago.

This victory makes the Mariachi Los Gatos Salvajes the first 4A mariachi program from El Paso County to earn a UIL State First Division rating – a distinction that places the ensemble among the very best in Texas.

In addition to the group's top honor, sophomore musicians Yuliana Bañez (flute) and Jada Reyes (violin) were awarded Outstanding Performer medals, recognizing their exceptional individual musicianship at the state level.

"I am beyond proud to congratulate the FHS Gatos Salvajes Mariachi and their outstanding director, Natalie Carrasco, on their historic achievement of earning a UIL State Mariachi First Division rating," said Superintendent Dr. Rogelio Segovia. "This remarkable accomplishment reflects not only their extraordinary musical talent, but also their discipline, dedication, and deep commitment to excellence.

"I also proudly recognize Sophomores Yuliana Bañez and Jada Reyes for earning Outstanding Performance honors, an



– Photos courtesy Fabens ISD

**ONE FOR THE CASE – Gatos Salvajes UIL Director Natalie Carrasco with the trophy for the band's State UIL Frist Division performance.**

incredible distinction that highlights their individual talent and dedication to their craft. Their achievement further exemplifies the excellence and commitment that define this exceptional mariachi program.

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees and

See FABENS HS, Page 4

## King Crossword

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59					60					61		

Average Solve Time 25 Minutes

### ACROSS

- 1 Canine cry
- 4 Dalai \_
- 8 Sultry Horne
- 12 Uncle, to Juan
- 13 Bard's river
- 14 401(k) relatives
- 15 Provider of free groceries
- 17 Lapel jewelry
- 18 Fawn's mom
- 19 Nome resident
- 21 Nuanced
- 24 English cathedral city
- 25 100%
- 26 Poseidon's realm

### DOWN

- 28 Follow
- 32 L-Q bridge
- 34 Cover
- 36 Gear teeth
- 37 Avid
- 39 Kauai souvenir
- 41 Last (Abbr.)
- 42 Conducted
- 44 Justice Antonin
- 46 Movie promo
- 50 Sprite
- 51 Campus mil. group
- 52 Eats for parakeets
- 56 Jazzy James
- 57 Singer Braxton
- 58 French assent
- 59 Twain hero
- 60 Jazz legend Getz
- 61 ER workers

### DOWN

- 1 Justice Dept. agency
- 2 2016 Olympics city
- 3 Gourmand's online journal
- 4 File stickers
- 5 Director DuVernay
- 6 " \_ Lisa"
- 7 Bracelet site
- 8 Feign singing
- 9 Composer Satie
- 10 "Peter Pan" dog
- 11 Professional gp.
- 16 Speck
- 20 Pub pint
- 21 "Ditto"
- 22 Forearm bone
- 23 Snaky fish
- 27 Be sick
- 29 1997 Vanessa

- Williams film
- 30 Hybrid fruit
- 31 "Como \_ usted?"
- 33 Louisiana symbol
- 35 \_ Moines
- 38 Seminary subj.
- 40 Stranded during a blizzard
- 43 Unpaid bills
- 45 TV alien
- 46 Not kosher
- 47 Indian flatbread
- 48 Envelope abbr.
- 49 Funny person
- 53 Genetic letters
- 54 Wilder's " \_ Town"
- 55 Insult, slangily

Answer Page 4



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– Photos courtesy Anthony ISD

COMPETITION – Anthony High School's Percussion Ensemble performs during the UIL Regionals meet held at Hanks High School in February.

# Anthony HS band students qualify for State UIL

By Oscar A. Troncoso  
*Special to the Courier*

ANTHONY, TX – Thirteen out of twenty-nine Anthony High School Band students recently qualified for the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest that will be held later in May. This is a new milestone for the Wildcat band, as it broke last year's record of eleven state qualifiers. For a band that totals 29 student musicians, it represents 45% of the overall 2025-26 band.

Band students competed in early February at the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Region Solo and Ensemble Contest at Hanks High School. To qualify for state, students needed to perform a high-level piece (Grade 1) as determined by UIL's Prescribed Music List (PML). Soloists performed a memorized piece while wind soloists perform with an accompanist (piano). Anthony

High School had seven soloists, six who earned a first division and four who qualified for state. Soloists who advanced to state were Francisco Hernandez (First Division Tuba Solo), Nick Ortiz (First Division Clarinet Solo), Cesar Arreola (First Division Drum Set Solo) and Jacqueline Levario (First Division Marimba Solo). Hernandez and Ortiz are sophomores while Arreola and Levario are seniors.

It was the third time advancing to state for Senior percussionist, Jacqueline Levario. "This year I definitely put in the work for the solo that I chose. As a senior, this was my last year to perform and make it to state. I'm super happy to have made it the last three years. I'm so proud of everyone who made it and I am looking forward to the memories we'll make at state."

For Francisco Hernandez, a sophomore and tuba soloist, it was his first time advancing to state. "Ever

since I joined band, I've wanted to be the best player I could be and to me that meant competing and showcasing my skills. My first year I unfortunately did not advance to state, so having the opportunity to go further is amazing. Through hard work and dedication, I hope to grow and push myself further than I've ever been."

Two different ensembles earned a first division to also advance to the state competition. The Saxophone Ensemble includes Giselle Castillo (12), Emily Lara (11) and Fernanda Sanchez (11). The Percussion Ensemble includes Jacqueline Levario (12), Cesar Arreola (12), Alan Garcia (12), Andrea Salazar-Renteria (11), Montgomery Salas (9), Maximus Richardson (9) and two middle school students – Natalia Castillo (8) and Aiden Fino (7).

The thirteen Anthony ISD students will be traveling to the Texas State Solo and Ensemble contest in Austin

over the Memorial Day weekend. The Anthony High School Band is under the direction of Janella Saad, a designated Master Teacher by the Texas Education Agency's Teacher Incentive Allotment program. Hilario Lozoya, Finance Coordinator at Anthony ISD, works as a percussionist coach for the Wildcat Band.

Janella Saad, Anthony High School Band Director for the past seven years, continues to be impressed with her students' work ethic. "Our band students continue to make us proud with their advancement to the UIL Texas State Solo and Ensemble contest. The achievement reflects countless hours of individual practice, focused rehearsals and dedicated lessons with Mr. Lozoya and myself. Their willingness to embrace challenges and commit to excellence is truly commendable. I am incredibly proud of their hard work and honored to serve as their band director."



MAKING PERFECT – AHS seniors Jacqueline Levario, left, on the marimba and Cesar Arreola on drums practice for their State UIL competition.

# Miners and Aggies could hit rock bottom

By Steve Escajeda  
Special to the Courier

There's no doubt that UTEP and New Mexico St. have enjoyed a great NCAA basketball history.

Everyone knows that UTEP (known as Texas Western back then) won the national championship back in 1966.

Yes, the same national championship that Florida won last year and that UConn won twice before that, and that UCLA has won 11 times and Kentucky eight.

Then throw in the fact that they were the first team in history to start five black players in the championship game against the all-white Kentucky Wildcats. That solidifies UTEP's place in NCAA history.

What a lot of young people don't know is that just four short years later, NMSU made the Final Four in 1970. They lost to UCLA in the semis but beat St. Bonaventure to finish third in the country.

That's two fantastic national finishes for two small schools in the southwestern United States just 45 miles apart from each other.

So how did UTEP (Don Haskins) and NMSU (Lou Henson) land two of the best coaches to ever coach the game?

But it wasn't just back then, in 1992, both the Miners and the Aggies made it to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament at the same time.

From 1983 to 1992, the Miners qualified for the NCAA Tournament in eight out of nine years.

From 2009 to 2021, NMSU made the NCAA Tournament nine times in 13 years.

Like I said, both programs have had a rich history when it comes to their basketball programs.

Okay, it's time to zoom from those good memories to these bad ones.

Over the last 10 seasons, UTEP has gone from one of the best basketball programs in the nation, to putting up a losing 143-165 record in that span.

While NMSU has still had better seasons recently than UTEP, over the last four years, the Aggies have plummeted to a 52-62 record.

But it gets worse for these two former successful programs.

Nowadays the Miners and the Aggies aren't battling for any championship rings, it has gotten to the point that they're battling each other just to stay out of last place in Conference USA.

Let's be honest, with teams like Missouri State, Sam Houston St., Delaware, Florida International, Kennesaw St. and Jacksonville St., CUSA isn't taken very seriously as a basketball power, or a powerhouse in anything.

And with UTEP and NMSU's

history, you would think these two programs would be at the very top of the league every year.

But that is certainly not the case.

In fact, with the Aggies' 67-63 win over the Miners last Saturday, both teams are tied at 6-10 in the league.

What makes that important is that in the 12-team league, only the top 10 teams will advance to the conference tournament, the winner of which will go to the NCAA Tournament.

With just four games left in the regular season, Delaware is in last place (12th) at 5-11.

In the battle to stay out of the 11th place spot, UTEP, NMSU and FIU (Florida Intl.) all sit at 6-10.

So very realistically, it could be that both the Miners and the Aggies could be the two teams that don't qualify.

All four of these teams have four games left, and all four have two home games and two road games remaining.

Of the four teams, Delaware (9-18)

and UTEP (10-17) have, by far, the worst overall records.

Could the problems for UTEP and NMSU just come down to coaching?

NMSU had winning seasons in 11 of the last 12 years prior to hiring Jason Hooten. Hooten is 43-47 in his three years with the Aggies.

From 2003 to 2020, UTEP had put together a 339-240 record. In the five years Joe Golding has been the head coach, the Miners are 80-80 (and 38-50 in CUSA).

And now the Miners are headed to the Mountain West Conference where the competition is much tougher.

Fans from both El Paso and Las Cruces have accepted that they have horrible football programs, but at least they had basketball to look forward to.

And unless they both get hot in the final two weeks of the season, both basketball programs could hit rock bottom and enjoy the CUSA Tournament from home.

## Senior moment By Matilda Charles

### Almost hacked!

I received a text message from a company I do a lot of business with, this time thanking me for my recent order and saying the automatic payment would be made that night as soon as I verified one little piece of information. I hear from them frequently, and have for many years. When I heard from them again, in that text message on my phone, I didn't think much about it at first. I went to press the link in the message... almost.

Wait, I said to myself, that company doesn't have my cellphone number. They only have my email address. They couldn't have sent me the text message. At the last minute I pulled my hand away and did not click that link.

I called the company in question and asked if they had sent me a text message about an order. No, they said. I asked for the fraud department, beginning to panic.

The man on the other end of the call was professional,

and fast, firing off a lot of questions, but most especially asking if I had clicked the link. No. After asking several more questions, he determined that I was safe - this time.

The moral of this little story is, for me, to slow down! I was all too willing to jump right ahead with what I thought was a genuine text message from a company I know. I won't make that mistake again.

Some hints:

- Don't do banking or any kind of internet business on your cellphone.
- Keep a throwaway email address for the times you are in contact with companies; and
- Most of all, do not click any links in text messages unless you are one hundred percent certain you know who sent the message.

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**NBA PLAY ACROSS**

1 Relatives of pistachios

8 Mail-related

14 Baio and Turou

20 Wife of Nero

21 Fingers-in-ears syllables

22 Headwear for Mr. Peanut

23 Golden State hoopster who lives for Saturdays and Sundays?

25 Existence

26 Days of yore, archaically

27 Ruling group

28 Schlepped through the entrance

30 Ballesteros of golf

33 Groom, e.g.

35 Exemplary

Houston hoopster?

38 San Antonio hoopster scaling a mountain?

42 Suffix with lion

43 Guy in the fam

44 High peak

45 Heavenly

46 Health club

48 Gyro bread

49 Semi fuel

51 Cowardly Denver hoopster?

55 "Mom" actress Jaime

58 Start eating

59 Org. against pollution

60 Redding of R&B

61 Event for stunt pilots

64 \_Z (total)

65 Foot part

68 Brooklyn hoopster using a rod and reel?

71 Phoenix hoopster preparing a typeface for printing?

74 Frau's "Oh!"

75 Girl in the fam

76 Name originally proposed for Utah

78 Gas guzzler

79 Reindeer kin archaically

80 Notion, to Fifi

81 Damsels

84 Los Angeles hoopster originally from New England?

90 Train in the pool

92 All excited

93 Mtn. stat

94 Tested for fit

97 "\_ culpa!"

98 "Stillmatic" rapper

99 Footed vase

101 Sacramento hoopster holding power?

103 Eco-conscious

Charlotte hoopster?

107 Livy's lang.

108 Words in an analogy

109 Some nobles' domains

110 Jamaican pop genre

112 Baby wolf

114 Justification

116 Chicago hoopster devoid of spontaneity and emotion?

122 Sock with diamond patterns

123 "Seinfeld" character

124 Shrunken Asian lake

125 Some vowel sounds

126 Phrase structure

127 Lower than

**DOWN**

1 Mooing beast

2 High card

3 Fr. holy woman

4 Olajuwon of the NBA

5 Daredevil Knievel

6 Power sources with spinning sails

7 Tearful

8 Strategize

9 Rowers' tools

10 35mm camera inits.

11 Alteration pro

12 Not silently

13 Huge

14 Directs

15 Buyable apartments

16 Vision-related

17 Have high aspirations

18 Bit of ink art

19 Pigpen

24 Flying needs

29 Collect bit by bit

30 Cousin of a jack mackerel

31 Oval-shaped

32 Spiteful

34 Even one

35 Capital of Bavaria

36 One-named Deco master

37 Exactly

39 Pollen eaters

40 "Get 'em, Spot!"

41 Syllable after "oom"

46 Broiling bar

47 Church seat

48 Club swingers' gp.

50 Meeting period, informally

52 Picked

53 \_pot (sinus-cleaning product)

54 "Once \_ a time..."

56 Dillydallies

57 Dark half of a Chinese circle

60 Birds \_ feather

62 News aggregation website

63 Precipitous

64 "\_ girl!"

65 Giant waves

66 Paid more than

67 Musician Brian

69 Capri, e.g.

70 Adidas rival

72 Pro \_

73 Celtic speaker

77 Piece for seven

79 Heart test, for short

80 Ailing

82 Apathetic response

83 Ding\_

84 Light half of a Chinese circle

85 Lab gelatin

86 Horse feed holders

87 Body of rules

88 Verdi's "\_ tu"

89 Fix illegally

91 Pudding starch

95 China's Zhou

96 Day, in Peru

99 Open, as a new rug

100 Some French wines

101 Make a new digital image of

102 Dry dog food

104 Class that's a cinch

105 "Blue" singer LeAnn

106 Hockey great Cam

110 Capital of Yemen

111 Lego alternative

113 \_ Bator

114 Jogged, e.g.

115 History unit

117 Smack

118 Taxi

119 D.C.'s nation

120 Tennis call

121 "\_ -di-dah!"

Answer Page 4

### Super Crossword

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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

record was 27-1-1, and they had outscored the opposition 175-44.

The U.S. played an exhibition game against the Soviets at Madison Square Garden right before the Games and got crushed 10-3.

At the Olympics, the U.S. managed a last-minute tie against Sweden and then manhandled a good Czech team, 7-3. As they racked up more wins, they caught the nation's attention, but the Soviets awaited in the medal round.

No one gave the U.S. a chance. Al Michaels says he was just hoping it'd still be close, say, the Soviets up 3-1, in the middle of the game.

Brooks delivered a famous pre-game St. Crispin's Day speech to his team: "This moment is yours." The coach's grown children show the documentarians the card that he wrote his notes on – surely one of the most precious relics in the history of U.S. sports.

The U.S. emerged tied with the Soviets 2-2 after one period, and survived an onslaught in the second, getting outshot 12-2 but trailing

only 3-2. Then, magic happened in the third. Team captain Mike Eruzione scored his iconic goal to put the U.S. up 4-3.

Ten minutes of Al Michaels-narrated agony ensued as the U.S. had to protect the lead against an explosive Soviet team. The U.S. still had to beat the Finns for the gold. True to form, Brooks ran his team through punishing drills to prepare, even after they'd become national heroes.

Ordinary sports creates an ersatz nationalism, with fans feeling a deep connection to their own team, to its history, colors and past heroes. When this sports patriotism was combined with the real thing in 1980 – especially when arrayed against an aggressive, malign rival power – the effect was explosive.

The documentary shows the U.S. players walking down the street in Lake Placid. Forty-five years later, people still stop them and yell out their thanks. They showed that miracles happen, and did it for the red, white and blue.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. ©2026 by King Features Synd., Inc.

**Proper inhaler technique a must for medicine to work**

*DEAR DR. ROACH: In a recent column, you noted that many patients do not properly use their inhaled asthma/chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) medications, but you didn't tell us how to properly use them. I'd hate to think that I've been doing Advair and albuterol incorrectly all these years. A little help, please? – Anon.*



The proper inhaler technique is much more easily demonstrated than it is described. I found a good video showing the proper technique from the American Lung Association at [tinyurl.com/inhaler-video](http://tinyurl.com/inhaler-video), but the ideal way is to have your doctor or nurse watch you use your inhaler.

I have seen people make several common mistakes, including not taking the cap off the inhaler; activating the inhaler, waiting, and then breathing in; and breathing in, then activating the inhaler while breathing out. For it to work, the person needs to breathe in while the inhaler is activated.

*DEAR DR. ROACH: When you get a letter from a patient who is really sick, does your response take precedence over other people's emails? – B.N.*

My column is primarily to help educate readers about common and uncommon medical issues. While I hope that I can be of some value to the readers who are writing in, I can't act as their doctor. Furthermore, due to the time that it takes to edit and publish these columns, there are several weeks between when I write my column and when it's published. So, I am often not much help to readers for urgent matters.

There have been a handful of times when a reader has written to me with a concern that has terrified me. Very early on when I started writing this column, a reader wrote in that he had an aortic aneurysm of over 7 centimeters and didn't think that he needed surgery. (The risk of a rupture at this size is very high, and it would likely be immediately fatal.)

This letter came via the postal service, so I had no way to get a hold of him beyond taking my response (for him to please get this repaired as soon as possible) to the post office and mailing it back to him.

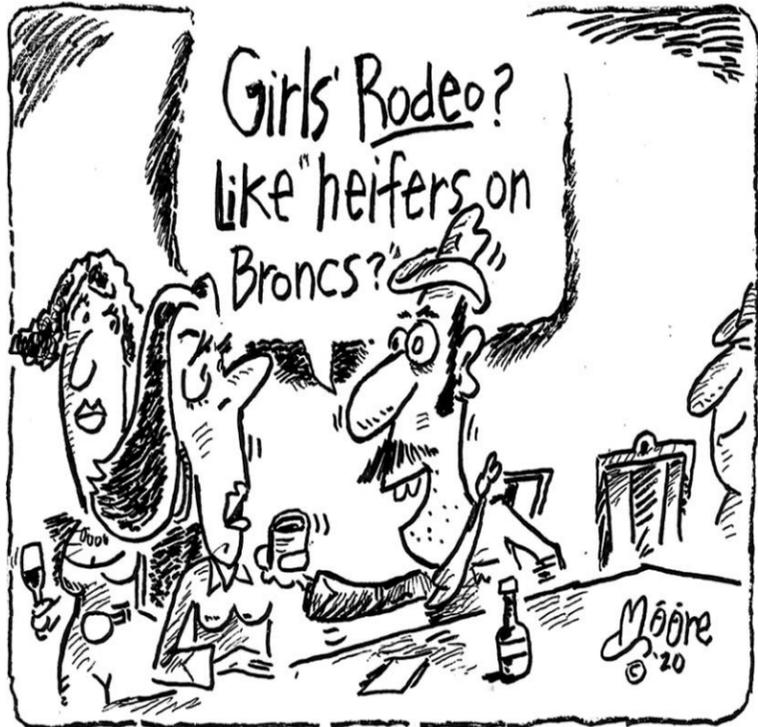
*DEAR DR. ROACH: I am confused by your remark in a recent column about blood thinners being a good thing to take for the rest of your life. My brother was put on them after suffering from a stroke and ended up dying due to esophageal bleeding because of them. Why can't doctors prescribe a natural way to thin blood without medication? Are there not natural alternatives like apple cider vinegar or something else? This confuses me, as I would not take any long-term medication. – G.B.*

Anticoagulants, which reduce the blood's ability to clot, are only a "good thing" to take if you are at a high risk for a dangerous blood clot. In the column that you mention, the reader actually had his heart stop due to a large blood clot in his lung before being brought back by his wife.

In this case, anticoagulants are more likely to keep people alive by preventing a fatal blood clot than they are to cause serious bleeding. I am sorry for the experience of your brother, but physicians always need to weigh the risk of doing something against the risk of not doing something.

Apple cider vinegar has no effect on blood clotting. There are natural products that do. Warfarin (Coumadin) is based on a compound made by a fungus that grows on wet, sweet clover hay. For decades, it was the most common anticoagulant. Newer drugs are safer and more effective for most people, but there are still a few conditions that require warfarin.

*Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu). ©2026 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.*



**Moore Texas** by Roger Moore  
February 28, 1948: 23 women meet in San Angelo to form the Girls Rodeo Association.

## 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: Q equals C

COEHOEMQK YVEY E TKOCRGK  
QWGTEML NMYKMJKJ YW  
QETYROK YVK FKOL EOWGE  
WC TEOEJNBK: VKEFKM-BQKMY.

Answer Page 4

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## Weekly SUDOKU

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

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  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Answer Page 4

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## Two very different scammers



by Freddy Groves

Scammers come with varying motives, intelligence levels – and with different intentions.

While it's disturbing that anyone steals from the VA, it's twice as bad when the scammer is a veteran. Here is a guy, a veteran, who claimed he was disabled and couldn't work due to service-connected injuries; he therefore received VA disability benefits.

You'd think he would stay home, being so disabled, but instead he used his benefit money on luxury international vacations, worked out several times a week, ran his own business and had a very active lifestyle.

His scam netted him nearly a quarter of a million dollars before he was stopped. After pleading guilty to 10 counts of theft, he was only sentenced to 18 months in prison (not long enough) and will have

to pay back the money as well as a \$20,000 fine.

Then there's the young computer hacker who broke into the U.S. Supreme Court 25 times, as well as the VA health system computers and AmeriCorps, by using stolen login credentials. Bragging about what he'd done, he took screenshots of someone's personal information and posted it all online. Then, using other stolen credentials, he got into the VA's "MyHealthEVet" website and grabbed his victim's personal information – and posted it online.

Among other pieces of information, he got the victim's name, email address, phone number, home address, date of birth and the answers to three security questions. For other victims he was also able to get (and post) information about citizenship status, Social Security number, veteran status, blood type and list of medications prescribed.

For all this fraud against others, leaving them

shocked and feeling violated and at risk for identity theft, he could get a mere one year in prison (not long enough) and a \$100,000 fine. It appears that he didn't try to sell the information, that he only wanted the bragging rights for his hacking.

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• "Jazz up your pancakes by adding pureed frozen blueberries or strawberries. It turns the mix either blue or red, and it's fun for the kiddos." – V.R. in Florida

• "Purchase colorful laundry baskets for each child in your home. In the evening, you can have the child find all his or her stray items, put them in the basket and then put them away. In our house, the kids also use their basket to hold anything they need for school the next day – backpack, coats and outerwear, even boots. We stack the baskets by the door and nothing gets left behind." – P.W. in Missouri

• Tissue boxes have so many uses after they are emptied of tissues. Try lining one with a plastic grocery bag and keeping it in your car for stray trash. Or you can use it to corral all those plastic grocery bags until you need them, just stuff them in one at a time. Lastly, and probably my favorite, cut out doors and windows to use as a house for a toy. Imagination makes the possibilities endless.

• "To make an eraser for our dry-erase board, I cut a washcloth in half and folded it into a rectangle. Then I used a magnetic chip clip (with a strong magnet) to hold the open ends of the cloth. I can use the magnetic clip as a handle and it's stored right on the board." – D.I. in Arizona

• Spread a teaspoon of peanut butter thinly on a paper plate, then when the dog is busy with his treat, you can trim his nails. Or sometimes just having it nearby as a promised treat can do the trick to distract your pet. Good luck!

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. ©2026 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.

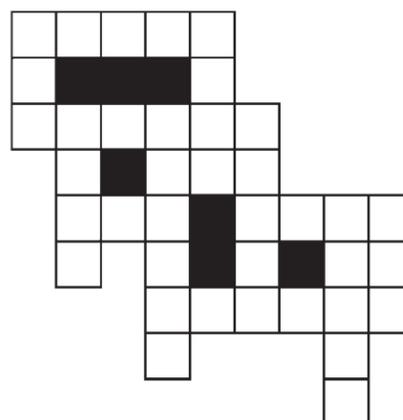
	+		×		=	36		
-		+		+				
	+		+		=	17		
×		-		×				
	+		+		=	15		
=		=		=				
10		11		10				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Answer Page 4

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- AMN
- ARTLEE
- ♥NOLRE
- ♥ATHE
- PRITMO
- SDI
- VAAL
- HDTIC
- ♥APL
- ♥HERVIS
- PLIME
- ♥DERU



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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