



– Photos by Alfredo Vasquez

WIDE OPEN SPACE – Franklin Mountains State Park, just 15 minutes from downtown El Paso, is a high-desert mountain park in the northern Chihuahuan Desert. The park offers a variety of hiking, biking and rock-climbing opportunities.

El Paso’s desert landscapes offer easy access to nature

1,054 acres added to Franklin Mountains State Park

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso County is one of the best American communities to live in when it comes to having easy access to nature. Nearly 20 percent of the county offers some sort of parkland amenities, according to a recent national survey.

From exploring the Native American pictographs within the boulder constructs of Hueco Tanks State Park to the vast outdoor adventures provided by Castner Range National Historical Monument and Franklin Mountain State Park, this region offers a desert landscape that subtly fades into the boundaries of surrounding communities. It shows that proximity to nature depends less on lush scenery than on thoughtful urban planning and everyday accessibility.

Now, Texas Park and Wildlife Department (TPWD) park planners and resource specialists are in the process of developing a public-use plan to determine the most appropriate use for the addition of 1,054 acres to the Franklin Mountains State Park eastern slopes.

The latest land acquisition will help protect the view of the mountains from the Northeast and will add more trailheads, according to TPWD officials.

“I am excited about this acquisition,” said Cesar Mendez, superintendent of Franklin Mountains State Park recently stated. He said the additional property extends the park’s buffer zone all the way to Martin Luther King Boulevard, which adds some lower elevation and flatter land to Franklin Mountains State Park and secure more access

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ROCKY GROUND – Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site is an 860-acre state park and National Historic Landmark site located in El Paso County. The land was obtained from the county by special deed in 1969 and by purchase of 121 acres of additional land in 1970. The park is named for the large natural rock basins or “huecos” that have furnished a supply of trapped rainwater to dwellers and travelers in this arid West Texas region for thousands of years.

A foreseeable and dire munitions crisis

During the 1979-1980 hostage crisis, a defiant Iran starkly demonstrated the limits of American power. Forty-five years later, it is doing the same thing, although in vastly different circumstances. Back then, when the post-Vietnam military was at a low ebb, we didn't strike Iran, and a long-shot rescue operation ended in abject failure.

Now, with the U.S. military at its most proficient and professional in history, we have inflicted punishing blows against the regime but still haven't been able to impose our will, in part because we are running low on the munitions necessary to prosecute the war. Not only is this embarrassing, it is dangerous.

If Operation Midnight Hammer – last year's lightning strike against Iranian nuclear facilities – demonstrated the prowess of the U.S. military and

sent a useful deterrent message to our enemies, the Iran War is now doing the opposite. We're running low on missiles and interceptors in a months-long conflict with a beleaguered second-rate power. What would happen in a drawn-out war with a major adversary?

President Trump has posted a thunderous denunciation of leaks to the media about our depleted weapons stocks, and the leaks are indeed irresponsible. But this problem is a matter of public record and has been tracked by outside organizations.

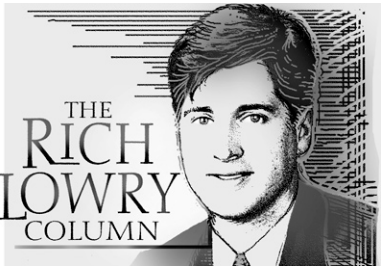
At the end of July, the Center for Strategic and International Studies estimated that, out of an arsenal of 2,330 Patriot interceptors before the Iran war, we had roughly 800 remaining. We were down to roughly 250 THAAD interceptors from 450 at

the start of the war.

On top of this, news organizations are reporting that we are almost out of ATACMS – a ground-launched precision-strike missile – and Precision Strike Missiles, the newer, longer-range successor to ATACMS.

This isn't comforting at a time when a war with China could be in the offing. Even before Operation Epic Fury, a war game involving a conflict in the Taiwan Strait conducted by CSIS had the U.S. running out of key munitions in days or weeks.

What happened? This is a crisis a long time in the making. As defense analyst Mackenzie Eaglen of the



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Parks

From Page 1

points (trailheads). This acquisition provides access to the northeastern portion of the park, including existing trailhead access to world-class mountain bike trails, while also curbing urbanization encroachment by providing a buffer, according to TPWD officials. Furthermore, the added property will help safeguard the main mountain area of desert bighorn sheep habitat.

As one of the largest urban wilderness parks in the world, Franklin Mountain State Park now covers about 28,000 acres – or 43 square miles – to explore, including more than 120 miles of trail and an incredible site for birds, reptiles and other small mammals.

– Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

DON'T MESS WITH THE SHELLS – Castner Range National Monument, right, covers 6,672 acres of the Franklin Mountains. Much of the range is off-limits. The monument, a former weapons testing range, is part of Fort Bliss and is managed by the U.S. Army as the only land conservation national monument within the Department of Defense.



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Years
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COURIER

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CryptoQuip
Answer

If there were a pious religious group founded by one of the Beatles, would they be Lennonites?

King Crossword

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Average Solve Time 26 Minutes

ACROSS

1 URL ending

4 "Now I get it!"

7 Shimmering fabrics

12 Texter's "I think"

13 Young bloke

14 Mover's rental

15 H.S. proficiency test

16 Held in trust

18 Census stat

19 Wonderland visitor

20 Hindu deity

22 Moray, for one

23 Ski lift type

27 TV screen choice

29 Beekeeper's place

31 Blood line?

34 Sweetie

35 Monastery

37 Play part

38 Romanov ruler

39 College URL ender

41 Appear

45 Chopin piece

47 Roman 56

48 Branch of government

52 Puzzle

53 "... Called Wanda"

54 Actress Ruby

55 Before

56 Give up amateur status

57 Pink Floyd's Barrett

58 Rds.

DOWN

1 Humidor item

2 Alpha's opposite

3 Cable company device

4 _ Romeo

5 Saluted

6 "Paper Moon" tyke

7 "Time" co-founder

8 Sushi fish

9 Goat's plaint

10 Where Lux. is

11 Devious

17 Bruins' sch.

21 Wedding setting

23 Leans

24 Sheepish "Hello!"

25 Branch

26 Bagel variety

28 One for the road?

30 Cpl.'s subordinate

31 Sternward

32 Hosp. areas

33 Estuary

36 Bigfoot's kin

37 Hollywood's Hepburn

40 Couples

42 Santa's crew

43 Tennis great Chris

44 Blends

45 Repeat

46 Sized up

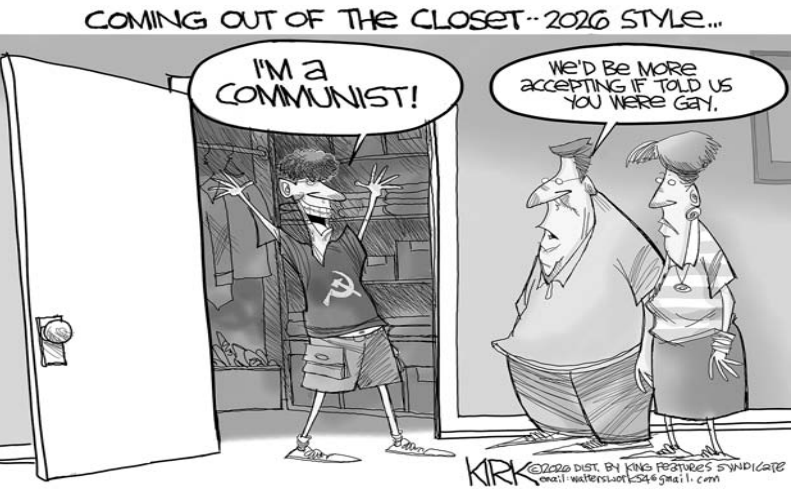
48 Binge

49 "Avatar" craft

50 Chips go-with

51 Leb. neighbor

Answer Page 8



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Clint Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 5:30 p.m., on Tuesday, August 25, 2026 in the Clint ISD Office Board Room, 14521 Horizon Blvd. El Paso, TX 79928. **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\$0.720400/\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)

School Debt Service Tax

Approved by Local Voters\$0.370000/\$100 (Proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

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

Maintenance and Operations	2.84%	Increase
Debt Service	7.51%	Decrease
Total Expenditures	2.04%	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	\$ 3,977,063,230	\$ 4,390,862,667
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$ 204,070,717	\$ 307,428,349
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ 2,127,009,314	\$ 2,306,743,261
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$ 154,424,504	\$ 225,071,573

* "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* \$115,812,506

* 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	\$ 0.752400	\$ 0.370000*	\$ 1.122400	\$ 2,610	\$11,739
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$ 0.711000	\$ 0.328000*	\$ 1.039000	\$ 2,667	\$11,668
Proposed Rate	\$ 0.720400	\$ 0.370000*	\$ 1.090400	\$ 2,798	\$11,718

*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	\$ 223,600	\$ 212,410
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$ 55,454	\$ 58,773

Last Year's Rate Versus

Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$ 1.122400	\$ 1.090400
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$ 622	\$ 641
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$ 18

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 \$1.030700. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of \$1.030700.

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)	\$ 68,321,538
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$ 6,422,572

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 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.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- First cousins may marry in Utah, but only after age 65.
- The first Star Trek series was originally marketed as “Wagon Train to the Stars,” after the popular 1957 western TV series “Wagon Train.”
- In 1951, Sir Hugh Beaver, the managing director of Guinness Brewery, got into a spat with someone over the world’s fastest game bird. When the pair couldn’t locate an answer in a book, Beaver had the idea of writing a book that would solve pub arguments.

- Chickens can see color better than humans.
- Simply thinking about sex can trigger sneezing in some people. Scientists think this may be due to crossed nerve signals in the automatic nervous system.
- In 1955, Vietnamese Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem printed his ballots on red paper, which the Vietnamese consider a very lucky color, and the ballots for his opponent on green paper, which is considered just the opposite. (He won, but not because of color.)
- To cut down on high pollution levels, car owners in San Jose, Costa Rica, are prohibited from driving into the city one day out of the week. That day corresponds to the last number on their car’s license plate.

- Los Angeles has more museums than any other city in the world.
- The sun is actually white. It appears yellow from Earth because our atmosphere tints it that hue.
- Cats don’t have a sweet tooth. A genetic mutation prevents our feline friends from tasting sweetness, making them indifferent to sugary foods.
- When psychologist Timothy Leary entered prison in 1971, he knew how to answer the psychology tests given to inmates because he’d helped design some of the questions. He then manipulated the answers to get a gardening job, which he used to escape.

- After pornography, ancestry websites are the most commonly visited on the internet.
- Being in love and being high on cocaine activate the same portions of the brain.
- The U.S. Supreme Court has its own police force.

Thought for the Day: “You cannot have a positive life and a negative mind.”
— Joyce Meyer

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Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Aug. 17, 1579, Francois, Duke of Alencon and Anjou, visited Queen Elizabeth I of England with the design of winning her hand in marriage – the only suitor to court her in person. He was 23 and Elizabeth 45. Though they became quite close, the queen’s subjects heartily disapproved of the idea of a French king, and two years later Elizabeth declined the proposal with what appears to have been genuine regret. She remained single for the rest of her life.
- On Aug. 18, 1826, Scottish explorer Alexander Gordon Laing made his way across the Sahara and became the first European to reach the fabled trading city of Timbuktu. Merely weeks after leaving it, he was murdered in his sleep by his own Arab escorts.
- On Aug. 19, 1914, Elmer Rice’s courtroom drama “On Trial” debuted at New York City’s Candler Theatre. It ran for 365 performances and became famous for pioneering the use of the cinematic “flashback” and reverse chronology on stage.
- On Aug. 20, 1957, the U.S. Air Force’s ultra-high balloon flight Project Manhigh broke the existing altitude record by reaching 101,516 feet over Minnesota and South Dakota with physician and scientist David G. Simons in an aluminum capsule suspended from a helium balloon. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for the achievement.
- On Aug. 21, 1980, the animal-rights organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) was incorporated in a basement office in Takoma Park, Maryland.
- On Aug. 22, 1992, FBI sniper Lon Horiuchi, while aiming at a fleeing suspect, shot and killed Vicki Weaver during an 11-day siege at her home at Ruby Ridge, Idaho. Weaver was unarmed and holding her infant daughter behind the door of her cabin. Horiuchi was initially charged with manslaughter but the charges were dismissed.
- On Aug. 23, 2018, the discovery of a bone from a 90,000-year-old hybrid human, half Neanderthal, half Denisovan and thought to be a girl of at least 13 years old, from Anuy River, Siberia, was published in Nature magazine.

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Paseo del Este Municipal
Utility District No. 10
of El Paso County

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The Paseo Del Este Municipal Utility District No. 10 of El Paso County will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2026 on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, at 12:00 p.m., in person at the offices of Paseo del Este MUDs, 13034 Eastlake Boulevard, Suites D-E, El Paso, Texas 79928. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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.

- FOR the proposal:

Directors Greg Spence, Ysrael Valencia and George Mendez
- AGAINST the proposal:

NONE
- PRESENT and not voting:

NONE
- ABSENT:

NONE

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
	Adopted	Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 value)	0.6313/\$100	0.6130/\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value	– \$0.0183	
Percentage increase / decrease in rates (+/–)	– 3.22 %	
Average appraised value	\$ 337,224	\$ 347,250
General exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person’s exemptions)	\$ –	\$ –
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$ 337,224	\$ 347,250
Tax on average residence homestead	\$ 2,128.90	\$ 2,128.64
Annual increase / decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/–)	– \$0.25	
and percentage of increase (+/–)	– 0.01%	

NOTICE OF VOTE ON TAX RATE

If the District adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 3.5 percent, an election must be held to determine whether to approve the operation and maintenance tax rate under Section 49.23602, Water Code.

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.

Haciendas del Norte
Water Improvement District

Notice of Public Hearing
on Tax Rate

The Haciendas Del Norte Water Improvement District will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2026 on September 1, 2026 at 13931 Sagebrush Circle, El Paso, Texas 79938 at 7:00 pm. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

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.

- FOR the proposal:

Joseph McCandless, Daniel Diaz
Michael Spicer and Ed Brown
- AGAINST the proposal:

NONE
- PRESENT and not voting:

NONE
- ABSENT:

George Gibson

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
	Adopted	Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 value)	\$0.043219/\$100	\$0.267390/\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$ 0.224171
Percentage increase / decrease in rates (+/–)		518.686%
Average appraised value	\$ 397,063	\$ 406,884
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person’s exemptions)	\$ –	\$ –
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$ 397,063	\$ 406,884
Tax on average residence homestead	\$ 171.61	\$ 1,087.97
Annual increase / decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/–)		\$ +916.36
and percentage of increase (+/–)		+533.98%

NOTICE OF VOTE ON TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 3.5 percent, an election must be held to determine whether to approve the operation and maintenance tax rate under Section 49.3602, Water Code. An election is not required if the adopted rate is less than or equal to the voter-approval tax rate.

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.

WNBA needs to change its ways fast break fast

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

There’s an old saying about how when you’re desperate to be noticed, any news about you is good news. And normally I guess that is the case. But the kind of news the WNBA has received over the last year – and especially the last month – has been horrible. It’s true that people are talking about the WNBA more than ever right now. However, that talk is mixed in with a ton of criticism and laughter. And all of this negative stuff is taking place when the league has just started to be relevant among the American sports public. Wherever you stand on the subject, the WNBA has failed to define one fairly important question – who actually qualifies to play in its league, only biological women or anyone who says they are a woman?

And because of that they now have a big problem. Two former NBA players, Enes Kanter Freedom and Royce White, have sarcastically said they feel like women occasionally and will enter the next WNBA draft. After all, since the league has taken a pro-transgender stance, the two men are going to test how dedicated the league is to it. So now, the league has to make a decision about its player admission guidelines. But let’s be honest, it’s their own fault, somewhere along the way the league forgot what the “W” in WNBA stands for. The league has another problem, it’s starting to make more news for the fighting and shoving and name-calling and accusations among players and coaches, than for the actual games on the court. What happened? It looked like this league was about to take off, but it

can’t seem to get out of its own way. Along with the two NBA players (so far), there’s the problem of the Indiana Fever’s Sophie Cunningham and DiJonai Carrington, of the Chicago Sky. I’m sure many of you have seen the hard foul Carrington committed on Cunningham while she was driving to the basket. The foul was correctly called a flagrant-2 foul and Carrington was ejected for the rest of the game. It happens, it was a hard foul, we’ve seen it a thousand times in men’s sports, and it should have ended there. But it didn’t. Carrington, who is African American, went on to post the words “White Privilege,” on her social media account after the game. If you aren’t aware, Cunningham is white. It’s that kind of divisive action that makes the league look so bad, because this is not the first time color has been

brought up. The league has allowed an environment of racial tension when there absolutely shouldn’t be any. What made that hard foul even worse was the fact that during the postgame press conference, Cunningham’s coach Stephanie White, seemed to back the other player more than her own, who got clobbered. The coach also said she didn’t see the hard foul when it happened, although there is a photo of her clearly looking directly at the players when the foul occurred. After receiving a bunch of heat from the media and being booed by fans, the coach read a speech to the media the next day in which she banged angrily on the table several times. She said that she disagreed with all the negative stories, and that love would win, and that kindness would win, and that grace would win, then she closed with, “and the rest of you can go to hell.”

I guess she forgot about the “love” and “grace” part of her speech. For 25 years, the WNBA has lost millions of dollars because frankly, nobody cared about the league. Fans spend their money on things they want to see. If it wasn’t for the NBA pumping money into it, the league would have gone bankrupt years ago. But since Caitlin Clark joined the league, fans have started to take an interest. And since Caitlin Clark joined the league, the league has treated her like the enemy. Like the person who wins the lottery and then destroys his life, the WNBA’s attendance is up, the pay for players is up and the ratings are up. But the league’s ability to make good business decisions is still way down. Remember Aesop’s fable called *The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs*? Look it up.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

The danger of old cookware

When I was expecting a large crowd I needed to pull out all of my old cookware and see if I had enough pieces. Yes, I had enough pieces. No, I didn’t just wash them up and start cooking. Some of the pots and pans were so old I was concerned about PFAS, PFOA and PTFE and whether my cookware was manufactured when use of those chemicals was common. I went online, and boy, did I learn some things. The label on my supposedly “free of PFOA” pans doesn’t necessarily mean they’re safe, because other chemicals could be present. It’s the same with “free of PTFE,” the nonstick compound used in pots and pans. The reason: PFOA and PTFE are only two of 9,000 different PFAS chemicals. To explain: PFAS is called a “forever chemical” because it takes nearly forever to break down in the environment and in our bodies. Long-term use can lead to serious health complications. PFOA is where the age of some of my cookware became a problem. PFOA is now illegal to use in the manufacture

of cookware and has been since 2015. A pan will be especially problematic if it has scratches or is used on high heat. PTFE, on the other hand, is still used. It’s the compound that makes our pans nonstick – and it’s unregulated. And, when you heat PTFE, you get PFAS and toxic fumes. So what do we do (other than panic) when we clearly need to replace our kitchen cookware with something that’s safe to use? If we want to change our cookware, we need to be certain we purchase pieces that really are PTFE-free and PFAS-free. Best bets are stainless steel, titanium (no coating) and ceramic-coated pieces. Be sure to research each one you consider. To get up to speed on these chemicals before you shop, see LeafScore.com, DefendOurHealth.org, MayoClinic.org or CANCER.org.

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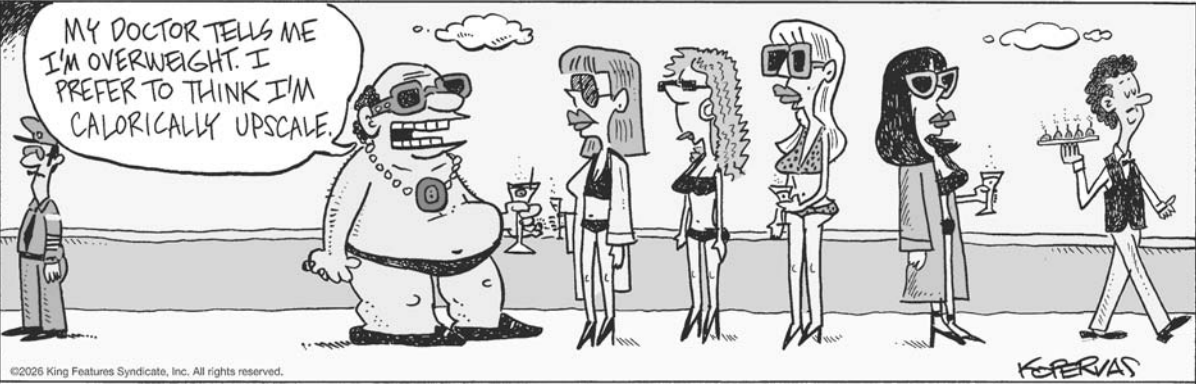
Super Crossword

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122							123														
125							126														

ODD DUCKS	maker of Tater Tots	113 Jason bounces the	27 Mrs., in Berlin	78 "The Lady" star
ACROSS	62 Philadelphia's La _	basketball?	29 Burglarize	Michelle
1 Arctic footwear	University	117 Kitchen tools	30 Gourmet	80 Farr or Foxx
item	63 WWII battle city in	122 Architect Jones	31 Tenths of centuries	81 Fighting for
9 Triaging concern	France	123 _ d' (headwaiter)	32 "Judge _" (Stallone	change
15 "Rope-_" (Ali ring	64 Adaptable truck, in	124 Cubic _ (fake	film)	82 Called for a pizza,
tactic)	brief	diamond)	33 Slip up	say
20 Study of forces	65 Christ, in Cremona	125 De Mille the	34 Piece of mail: Abbr.	83 Like Cardiff natives
acting on mechanisms	67 Oldham fashions	dancer	35 Court org.	84 Write hastily
21 Twinkled	clothes?	126 Less than retail	36 Mothers, informally	85 City in Iraq
22 Adversary	70 Cheer shouts	127 How this puzzle's	38 Undercoat for an	87 Go- _ (no idler)
23 Brief seconds	74 Court org.	nine longest answers	oil painting	89 Climbing roses
24 Diane plays her	76 "Look at Me"	are viewed?	42 Skilled sorts	92 "Am _ blame?"
role flawlessly?	novelist Jennifer		43 Evening eats	93 Refusals
26 See 61-Across	77 Bunk	DOWN	45 People who are	94 Cuts off
27 Dandy dudes	79 Gunk	1 Do the slopes	hoofing it	95 Pink Floyd's
28 On guard	80 "ATM" rapper	2 Writer Anais	46 Rock layers	Barrett
29 Foxx amuses his	83 Small warbler	3 Carry- _ (flight	48 _ Moines	97 Evening hrs.
audience?	84 Wynonna puts out	totes)	49 Perfectly	101 Add while proofing
34 Flock babies	her first album?	4 Sweaty, say	51 Song for one	104 Paul who
37 Droop	86 Orchestrate	5 Straitlaced	54 Hazy stuff	published many math
39 Phone button abbr.	88 Miracle- _	6 Indian tongue	55 Not as young	papers
40 Special span	90 Brown ermines	7 Scale's span	56 Pigeon perch,	106 Surprise win
41 Granola snack	91 Roger describes a	8 Road curve	maybe	107 Tennis legend
option	news event?	9 Certain opening	58 Yale for whom	Chris
43 Flood preventer	96 "C'mon, quit it!"	for a bolt	Yale is named	108 Park seat
44 Muscles called	98 "It's all clear"	10 Elated bliss	59 "I swear _!"	110 Threshold
"guns"	99 Lightning source,	11 Gives help	63 Capitol fig.	111 Countertenor
47 Paul acts in a	informally	12 German link	64 No longer	113 Rio carmaker
serious film?	100 TV "Science Guy"	13 Rx request	bothered by	114 " _ bad boy!"
50 Military pupils	Bill	14 Suffix with lime or	66 Remove the cargo	115 Slugging club
52 One of a pair of	102 Put in a juicer	Gator	from	116 Razor brand
sense organs	103 One of a pair of	15 Seed casings	68 Hazard	117 Israeli weapon
53 Expiators	sense organs	16 Belly flop, say	69 Motions "yes"	118 College org. of
54 Elmer greatly	104 Cultural spirit	17 Unusually big	71 "Equus" actress	sisters
anticipates catching	105 Billy steps off his	18 People eating	Jenny	119 Suffix with opal
Bugs Bunny?	ship?	meals, e.g.	72 Time in a Jacuzzi,	120 Tell fibs
57 Favored ones	109 Plow inventor John	19 High trains	e.g.	121 Mournful
60 "Hence..."	111 Swiss mounts	25 Maze-running	73 "Rescue us!"	
61 With 26-Across,	112 " _ had it!"	rodent	75 Road curve	

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

American Enterprise Institute has warned for years, skimping on the acquisition of munitions was an easy way to meet constrained Pentagon budgets, and we relied on optimistic scenarios about potential wars to justify chronically insufficient production.

For some understandable reasons, we also emphasized sophisticated missiles and interceptors over “good enough” systems. This led to Iran, for instance, forcing us to use highly expensive, difficult-to-replace interceptors against cheap, bulk threats from drones. All this means that we’ve expended ordnance that it will take us years to build again. According to media reports, we’ve used about half our supply of Tomahawk cruise missiles, when we’ve been manufacturing fewer than 100 a year.

We need to put missile production on a wartime footing, and leverage hungry new defense firms to produce cheaper precision missiles and interceptors at scale. In World War II terms, it’s the difference between the easy-

to-maintain and mass-produced Sherman tank and the exquisite and powerful, but ultimately impractical Tiger. Whatever advantages the Tiger had in armor and punch, you’d still rather be the U.S. with 50,000 Shermans than the Germans with 1,500 Tigers.

The Trump administration has been talking the right game, and there have been encouraging moves. It has signed agreements to acquire 10,000 cruise missiles over three years at a cost of a few hundred thousand dollars each, far less than a Tomahawk at more than \$2 million.

Wars always bring surprises. It should have been a shock to no one, though, that contemporary military conflict is largely missile warfare, or that we’d have trouble sustaining prolonged hostilities given that we started out with inadequate stocks. The American way of warfare is often to mess it up before adjusting and getting it right. The course correction here should be considered the most urgent priority of U.S. national security.

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

‘Tumor Seeding’ is very rare during biopsies

DEAR DR. ROACH: I read your recent column on prostate biopsies. I’m not a doctor, but I’d advise against them. My boyfriend got a biopsy in 2012, which I believe caused his cancer to spread beyond his prostate into his bones. He died three years later in 2015. Think about this: A needle is inserted to extract cells so that they can be tested. When the needle is pulled out with its open end, and cancer is present, cells in the needle can then come out of the open end, causing cancer to spread throughout the prostate. It may be rare, but this is documented (called tumor seeding). – B.S.



I must disagree with you in the strongest possible terms. A biopsy is an essential piece of information to know how to treat a patient. Over decades and tens of millions of biopsies, there have been 42 total cases of seeding that were reported worldwide from the needle tract. This extremely rare event shouldn’t prevent a man from understanding what the best treatment of his prostate cancer will be. Other studies haven’t shown an association between a biopsy and a subsequent spread of the disease.

I’m very sorry about your boyfriend, but given the slow growth rate of prostate cancer, it’s likely your boyfriend had prostate cancer that spread to his bones years before the biopsy was done.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I read about a new weight-loss drug that is still in its clinical trials. It’s called retatrutide, and it may have the ability to reduce body weight by as much as 28% over a relatively short period of time. What are some of the dangers of losing weight too quickly? – B.G.

I also read the initial studies on retatrutide, and I’m very impressed with the results. The level of weight loss that was seen is in the range of what’s expected with bariatric surgery. It acts similar to semaglutide (Wegovy) by stimulating the GLP-1 receptor, but like tirzepatide (Zepbound), it also stimulates the GIP receptor.

Unlike either of these drugs, it also acts on a third receptor called glucagon, and this combined action has shown remarkable results, with nearly two-thirds of study subjects no longer being classified as obese while on the drug.

You’re wise to ask about the side effects of so much weight loss at one time. Regardless of the underlying reason for the weight loss, there’s the potential for harm whether you lose weight through medications, surgery, or careful adherence to diet and exercise. Gallstones are common during rapid weight loss, and some experts use medication to prevent them.

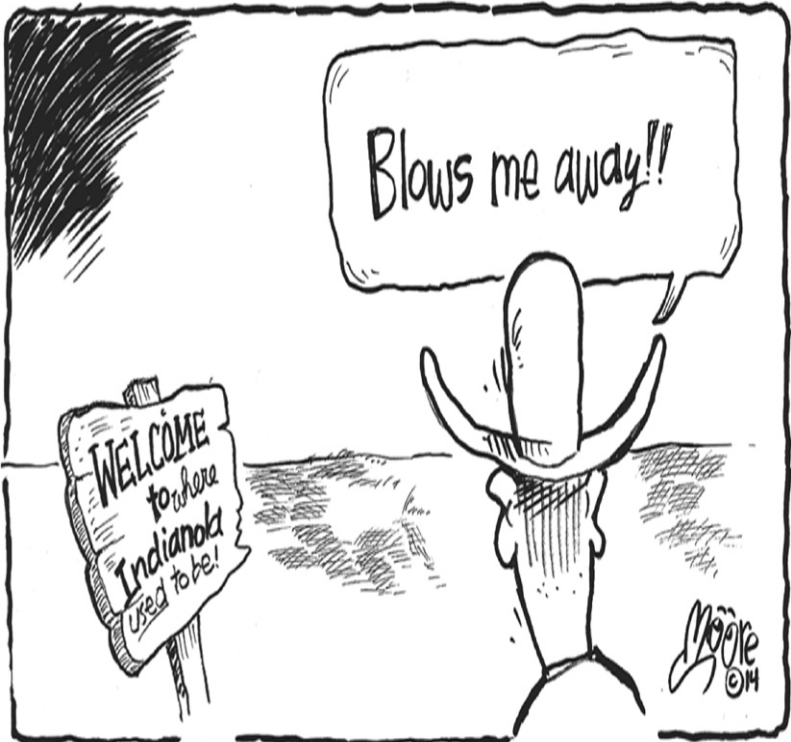
Bone mass can also be lost by both men and women during weight loss. Making sure that a person gets enough protein and vitamin D can reduce this, and people who are at risk (such as those who had low bone mass to begin with) may be recommended medications to prevent the progression to osteoporosis.

We’ve seen loss of muscle mass with the existing GLP-1 drugs. To some extent, this is because a person no longer carts around so much weight. Regular exercise, especially weight lifting, and adequate protein intake can help reduce muscle loss as well.

When eating only a few amount of calories to lose weight, a person needs to be careful that they get all the micronutrients they need. I recommend working with a registered dietician or nutritionist to avoid deficiencies.

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. ©2026 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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Moore Texas by Roger Moore
August 19, 1886: Indianola, on Matagorda Bay, is completely destroyed for a second time by a hurricane. It was never rebuilt.

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: G equals R

VL NZPGP QGP S OVBRY
GPEVHVBRY HGBRO LBRXCPC
AD BXP BL NZP APSNEPY,
QBREC NZPD AP EPXXBXVNPY?

Answer Page 2

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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 2

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Confusion over non-VA medical care payment



by Freddy Groves

Let’s hear it for whistleblowers, especially when big money is involved, and most especially when some of that money should have gone into the pockets of veterans.

Specifically, starting in 2001, non-VA medical providers and veterans had 90 days to file for reimbursement for veterans who had sought emergency care. Then in 2022 the Cleland-Dole Act added the requirement that non-VA providers submit payment requests within 180 days for providing non-emergency care. However, there was no mention of veterans having that same 180-day time limit to file for reimbursement, or any time limit at all.

The VA continued, however, to apply the original 90-day payment limit.

Enter the VA Office of Inspector General because

of the whistleblower. When asked, the VA identified 78,000 claims – to the tune of \$373 million – that had been denied because they didn’t meet the 90-day limit. And no, they hadn’t reviewed those 78,000 denied claims. Apparently there was confusion due to the fact that the law was written to give non-VA providers that 180 days, but not veterans.

Further confusion (or so it was said) arose because it wasn’t clear whether the 90-day filing period should begin on the date of discharge, the date of a veteran’s death during emergency treatment or the date it became clear that a third-party payer would not cover the claim. The VA sought clarification from the policy department... and promptly dropped the ball, not pursuing answers.

The VA began processing those claims, leaving it to the individual claims processors to decide whether they would use the 90- or 180-day limitation.

If you need to get emergency care at a non-VA medical facility, there are some rules you need

to know so it will be paid for. You can read the info at www.va.gov/resources/getting-emergency-care-at-non-va-facilities so you’ll know what you should do in an emergency. For example, going to urgent care doesn’t count. And someone needs to tell the VA within 72 hours that you’ve had a medical emergency. You can notify the VA at 844-724-7842.

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• “I have a pair of pants I wear to garden in. The knees wore out, naturally, and I went to sew patches on the knees. I left the top of the patch open, and when needed I slip a piece of foam rubber in the knee. Magical knee pads!” – R.E. in Oregon

• To clean your tarnished silver jewelry, simply line a tray or shallow bowl with aluminum foil, lay the pieces on the foil and fill with a hot water and detergent solution (NOT bleach-containing). You may also use baking soda and hot water. Swish and allow the tarnish to transfer to the foil. Use a soft cloth to dry.

• “If your windshield or back window fogs over, try this trick, borrowed from the bathroom: Spread regular shaving cream over the window and wipe clean with a cloth. Buff off any streaks with newspaper. This will last a good while!” – P.P. in South Carolina

• Now is the time to tighten your cane-bottomed chairs. Flip the chair over, then soak the cane with hot water and allow it to dry fully in the sun.

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.

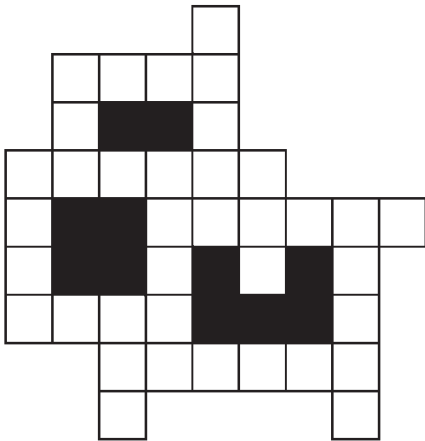
Answer Page 2

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	+		-		= 2			
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	+		-		= 8			
-		÷		÷				
	-		+		= 11			
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1		13		1				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



ETD
NADILI
HANSE
PTAO
YOMENT
LYP
♥PSUO
HETIG
OSH
♥SEAPLE
RYNIO
AHPT



Answer Page 2

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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C	O	M		A	H	A		L	A	M	E	S
I	M	O		L	A	D		U	H	A	U	L
G	E	D		F	I	D		C	I	A	R	Y
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R	A	M	A		E	E	L		T	B	A	R
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T	S	A	R		E	D	U		S	E	E	M
				E	T	U	D	E		L	V	I
J	U	D	I	C	I	A	R	Y		V	E	X
A	F	I	S	H		D	E	E		E	R	E
G	O	P	R	O		S	Y	D		S	T	S