



Photo by Alfredo Vasquez

FUNDING INCREASE – El Paso County Sheriff’s Office headquarters, above, is located in the county’s far east region. The preliminary budget for the Sheriff’s Office and constables is nearly \$181 million, a 9 percent increase over the previous year. The additional funds include about \$4 million for pay raises and benefits through collective bargaining agreements and an \$8 million increase for jail operations overtime.

County Commissioners set to approve 2027 budget

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso County Commissioners recently voted to adopt the no-new revenue rate of \$0.451133 for the 2027 fiscal year. The unanimous vote set the new tax rate at a 1.69

percent decrease from last year’s rate of \$0.458. According to the county’s budget process timeline, commissioners are now set to hold a final session to approve the fiscal year 2027 budget. The meeting is slated for 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 14, at the El Paso County Courthouse. If approved, the new budget would go into effect on October 1st. El Paso County’s recommended fiscal year 2027

budget totals about \$696.8 million across all funds, with \$542.4 million allocated to the general fund, and the proposed public safety spending would rise from about \$165.5 million to \$180.9 million. The general fund comprises day-to-day government provisions such as public safety, county jails, See BUDGET, Page 3

EPCC receives \$372,377 grant for STEM programs

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) received a \$372,377 National Science Foundation (NSF) IUSE: Innovation in Two-Year College STEM Education grant for the project titled “Building AI and Cybersecurity Pathways for a Modern Software Engineering Workforce.” The award was made in August. Dr. Christian Servin, EPCC Professor of Computer Science, will serve as the Principal Investigator for this project alongside Nadia Karichev, EPCC Information Technology Systems Instructor, who will serve as Co-Principal Investigator. They will collaborate with workforce and industry partners to advance this important initiative. “At EPCC, our faculty are the drivers of innovation to support student success,” Vice President of Instruction

and Workforce Education Dr. Carlos Amaya said. “The awarding of this highly competitive NSF grant reflects the expertise, commitment, and forward-thinking work of Dr. Christian Servin, Nadia Karichev, and the entire team supporting this initiative. Their efforts will expand access to cutting-edge learning opportunities in artificial intelligence and cybersecurity and ensure our students are equipped with the credentials, knowledge, and skills needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving workforce. This achievement highlights EPCC’s commitment to academic excellence and our mission to serve the educational and economic needs of our community.” This project aligns with the College’s vision of developing credentials of value that respond to emerging technologies, strengthening the regional workforce, and advancing workforce-aligned educational

See GRANT, Page 5



– Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

WELL FUNDED – Nadia Karichev, assistant professor of Computer Science, left, and Dr. Christian Servin will oversee \$372,377 in new grant money awarded to El Paso Community College for STEM programs.

1973

53

Years

2026

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A questionable conflict with Canada

President Trump’s tariffs aren’t popular, but he’s found a way to make them even less so – a trade war with America’s most inoffensive ally.

When one thinks of countries that deserve to be subjected to a steady stream of insults (it’s Lake America now, not Lake Ontario) and a punishing regime of tariffs, Canada is far down the list.

Ottawa has been a loyal, if occasionally annoying, friend of the United States for nearly 100 years. The presence of a well-meaning country with similar values along the 5,000-mile border to our north is a gigantic geostrategic blessing, although one that is apparently lost on President Trump.

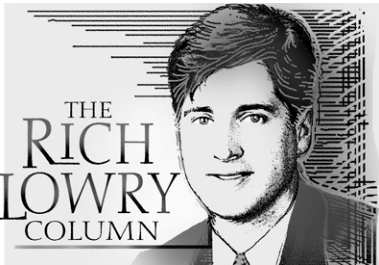
Both sides deserve blame for the breakdown in negotiations, but news reports suggest it was the U.S. that made additional demands at the 11th hour. Now both sides are imposing new duties on the other, and Trump is threatening 50% tariffs on all Canadian cars, trucks and parts beginning in the new year.

It is certainly true that we can impose more pain on the Canadians than they can on us and grind them down economically. We can also land the 101st Airborne in Nova Scotia. But why would we want to do it?

The contention with Canada is characteristic of Trump’s economically senseless, legally dubious and politically harmful push to tariff everything and everyone he can.

Trump’s imposition of all these duties – often relying on strained interpretations of U.S. statutes – has run directly counter to his promise in the 2024 campaign to reduce prices, a pledge central to his victory. Although the administration maintains that the cost of tariffs isn’t passed on to U.S. consumers – instead borne by foreign countries and producers – its actions implicitly concede the opposite.

The administration excluded an array of consumer electronics from new reciprocal tariffs on China to avoid unpopular price increases, and it lifted tariffs on a long list of foodstuffs late last year. Twice this year, including about a week ago, the administration



See LOWRY, Page 7

King Crossword

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- Average Solve Time**
23 Minutes

ACROSS

1 Doves' home

5 Coach Parseghian

8 Beach crawler

12 Pizza cooker

13 Greyhound vehicle

14 _ Martin (cognac)

15 Bread sellers

17 Sheltered

18 Hogwash

19 Thespians

21 Sheriff's star

24 Hold sway

25 Jealousy

26 Stalks for soups

30 Finale
- 31 Give it a go

32 Man-mouse link

33 Sets of prayer beads

35 Big gulp

36 Eyeglass frames

37 Lake flock

38 Hoi _

41 Enjoy Aspen

42 Mayberry young 'un

43 Officials with seals

48 Ivy in Philly

49 Literary collection

50 Corporate symbol

51 Perimeter

52 Actress Myrna

53 Winter blanket
- 2 Eggs

3 Shatner's " _War"

4 Vigor

5 Slightly

6 Regret

7 Military attacks

8 Moon cavity

9 Move, in Realtor lingo

10 Pt. of U.S.A.

11 Tournament

passes

16 Caviar base

20 "Pinocchio" fish

21 "Cheers" order

22 Part of A.D.

23 Film formats

24 Point _ Peninsula

26 Record holder?

27 "The Music Man"
- setting

28 Ireland

29 Droops

31 Small combo

34 Dahl of films

35 Marble cake patterns

37 Reggae relative

38 Vatican leader

39 Pundit's piece

40 TV journalist Lisa

41 Remain

44 Lennon's partner

45 Charged bit

46 Conceit

47 Plant seeds
- Answer Page 4

CryptoQuip

Answer

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It is the policy of San Elizario Independent School District to prohibit discrimination on the, basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in the admission or access to programs, delivery of services or employment.

The San Elizario Independent School District is fully committed to meeting its responsibilities as specified by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; prohibiting sex discrimination, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Inquiries concerning your rights may be referred to Dr. Jeannie Meza-Chavez, Superintendent, 1050 Chicken Ranch Rd., Mail: PO BOX 920, San Elizario, TX 79849, (915) 872-3900.

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

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

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

WTCC: 09-10-26

Budget

From Page 1

courts, elections and administrative offices, as well as payments to the enterprise funds, capital projects, and debt service. The general fund is supported primarily through property taxes and fees.

According to the County’s Budget Director Carmen Arrieta-Candelaria, the no-new revenue rate is meant to generate the same amount of property tax revenue for the county from properties taxed in both years.

However, the budget director explained that the no-new revenue rate does not mean that taxes will go down for homeowners who saw an increase in their property appraisals. She stated that for homeowners who did not see their homes’ value increase, there would be a savings of about \$17; but if the value of their homes increased, then they would see a slight increase.

The proposed budget expenditures include pay raises for non-uniform

Bond Funds

In November 2024, voters approved three county bond proposals totaling about \$155 million. The funds are earmarked for park improvements, a new medical examiner’s office, and a first-time county animal shelter. So far, the county has issued about \$12 million in general obligation bonds for the three propositions with the largest portion of about \$8 million going toward park improvements. About \$2 million has been issued for the medical examiner’s office, and another \$2 million has been issued for the animal shelter.

county staff, increased spending for the Sheriff’s Office, judicial salaries and programs such as economic development and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Other program including culture and recreation, health and welfare, and public works would see decreases in spending.

During the recent budget hearings, commissioners also approved a series of budget measures to address the fiscal challenges in the Sheriff’s Office, which

is estimated to end the current fiscal year with a spending deficit. County officials reported that the Sheriff’s Office’s projected current fiscal year deficit had grown to \$4 million. They stated that the funding shortfall was mainly due to salaries, overtime, and jail meals and that to compensate for this deficit they would have to transfer monies from the county’s operations budget and from the courthouse security fund.

During a follow up budget meeting, the Commissioners Court approved the Hospital District’s \$2.1 billion FY2027 budget and a \$0.236904 property tax rate, which is about 2 percent less than the 2026 rate. The Hospital District oversees University Medical Center, El Paso Children’s Hospital, El Paso Health, healthcare partner clinics, and various other branches.

The \$2.1 billion budget will cover an increase in costs for uncompensated healthcare due to subsidy cuts by the federal government last year and for investments in new programs, like the ECMO advanced life support, the epilepsy care accreditation, a burn unit, and the expanded cancer care. Additionally, the budget encompasses raising the minimum wage for hourly employees from \$15.50 to \$16 hourly.

Hospital officials noted that although the Hospital District adopted a no-new-revenue tax rate, homeowners might still see up to \$10 more in property taxes for operations because of the increases to property values this year. They added that while property values across the community have risen, the Hospital District has remained committed to being responsible agents of the community’s resources and has tried to reduce and/or keep property taxes flat.

During the budget proceedings, commissioners did not discuss any potential pay raises for elected officials. But a four percent cost of living adjustment may be considered for the county clerk, county attorney, district clerk, county sheriff, and elected officials including commissioners.

El Paso County Water Control and Improvement District No. 4

Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The EL PASO COUNTY WCID NO. 4 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2026 on September 24, 2026 at 6:00 PM at 117 E. Main Fabens, Texas 79838. 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://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:
- Samuel Madrid Jorge Carrasco, Jr
Ana M. Sanchez
- AGAINST** the proposal:
- Martin Madrid
- PRESENT** and not voting:
- NONE
- ABSENT:**
- Juana Gutierrez

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.

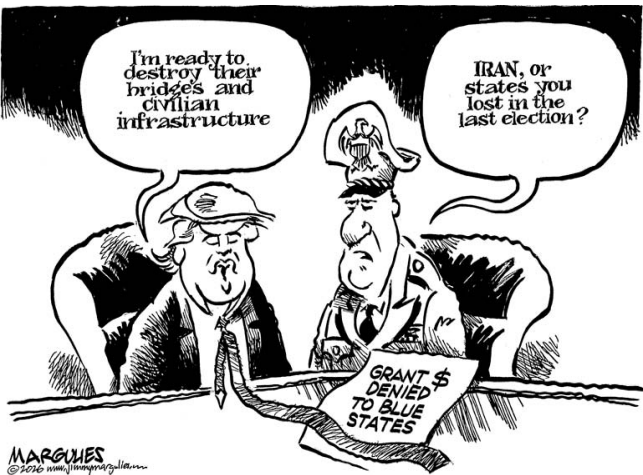
	Last Year	This Year
	Adopted	Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 value)	\$0.315268/\$100	\$0.323845/\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		+ \$0.008577
Percentage increase / decrease in rates (+/–)		+ 2.72%
Average residence homestead appraised value	\$ 127,792	\$ 137,079
General exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person’s exemptions)	\$ 0	\$ 0
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$ 127,792	\$ 137,079
Tax on average residence homestead	\$ 402.89	\$ 443.92
Annual increase / decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/–)		+ \$ 41.03
and percentage of increase (+/–)		+ 10.18%

If the proposed combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate requires or authorizes an election to approve or reduce the tax rate the governing body of EL PASO COUNTY WCID NO. 4 proposes to use the tax increase for the purpose of funding capital improvement projects.

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. An election is not required if the adopted tax 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.





• On Sept. 7, 1776, the American submersible craft Turtle attempted to attach a time bomb to the hull of British Admiral Richard Howe's flagship, Eagle, in New York Harbor, marking the first use of a submarine in warfare.

• On Sept. 8, 1664, Dutch Governor Peter Stuyvesant surrendered New Amsterdam, the capital of New Netherland, to an English naval squadron under Colonel Richard

Nicolls. Stuyvesant hoped to resist the English but wasn't a popular ruler, and his subjects refused their support. New Amsterdam's name was changed to New York in honor of the Duke of York, who organized its capture.

• On Sept. 9, 1939, moviegoers at the Fox Theater in Riverside, California, were treated to an unexpected screening of Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind," shown by the theater manager as a second feature while producer David O. Selznick observed their reactions from the back of the theater. The movie was released a few months later.

• On Sept. 10, 1960, Hurricane Donna struck the Florida Keys as a Category 4 storm. The devastating hurricane ultimately killed more than 350 people along its full path, including more than 150 in Puerto Rico and the mainland United States, and the name "Donna" was later retired.

• On Sept. 11, 1971, teen idol Donny Osmond earned his first solo No. 1 hit with "Go Away Little Girl." For years afterward, the singer admitted he would "apologize for my career, for all of the cheesy music I was a part of," but eventually came to terms with it and said to himself that the music "was great for what it was, people loved it, it was incredibly successful –

why should I feel bad?"

• On Sept. 12, 1952, residents of Flatwoods, West Virginia, while investigating a possible UFO crash, encountered a creature they described as 10 feet tall with glowing eyes and claw-like hands. Skeptics, however, dismissed their "monster" as likely an owl.

• On Sept. 13, 2007, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which defined the rights of Indigenous peoples to their respective ways of life and prohibited discrimination against them.

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By Lucie Winborne

• Women lie more than men in their online dating profiles.

• Many quilts made by military soldiers were known as "convalescent quilts," since they made them while recuperating from wounds received in the line of duty.

• Nuclear rain from the Chernobyl disaster fell as far west as Ireland.

• Egyptian butchers wore high heels to keep their feet free of blood and debris on the floor.

• Early in her career, model Gisele Bundchen was told she'd never achieve success without cosmetic surgery to decrease her nose size. She refused and later had the last laugh by becoming one of the most highly paid models in history.

• It is thought that 80% of the world's gold is still in the ground.

• While screening around 2 million airline passengers per day, TSA officers are accustomed to confiscating items such as full water bottles and too-large toiletries, but their more astonishing finds include grenades, cannonballs and even a samurai sword.

• The fear of vegetables is called "lathanophobia."

• Actor Daniel Craig, as a reward for playing James Bond, can choose any Aston Martin from the factory for the rest of his life.

• All organ donations will inevitably fail, since transplanted organs "scar" over time, which eventually renders them unusable.

• In 2019, Forbes named Kylie Jenner the world's youngest self-made billionaire at age 21. Forbes retracted the title in May of 2020 citing inflated financial figures from the family.

Thought for the Day: "Don't find fault, find a remedy."
– Henry Ford

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— Photo courtesy El Paso Community College

STOCKING UP – EPCC student Perla Tovar, left, received food items from Iran Silva at the EPCC El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Mobile Pantry at Mission Del Paso campus.

EPCC rolls out food for fall

By Beau Bagley
Special to the Courier

EL PASO COUNTY – El Paso Community College (EPCC) is once again teaming up with El Pasoans Fighting Hunger to provide Mobile Food Pantries at EPCC campuses around the city of El Paso. September is National Hunger Action Month, which is a nationwide campaign to raise awareness and inspire action against food insecurity in America, and EPCC will provide a Tejano Mercado and community resources at each campus location during the Mobile Pantries. EPCC will also open up a permanent Tejano Mercado at the Mission del Paso campus, for students, faculty and staff, and will hold special hours at the Valle Verde and Rio Grande campus through the month of September.

Community resources will be available during every Mobile Pantry in September, and will include representatives from: El Paso Center for Children, Kelly Center, Mustard Seed Café, Rescue Mission of El Paso, El Paso Coalition for the Homeless, YWCA, The Salvation Army, Borderland Health Services, United Way of El Paso, Workforce Solutions Borderplex, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

The Mobile Pantry, previously known as the Grocery Pickup, will be on every Tuesday from 10:00

Northwest campus Parking Lot A
Oct. 13, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon Nov. 17, 2026, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Mission del Paso campus Horseshoe
Sept. 15, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon Oct. 20, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Valle Verde campus Parking Lot L (Drive Thru)
Sept. 22, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon Oct. 27, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Transmountain campus Parking Lot B (Drive Thru)
Sept. 29, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon Nov. 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Rio Grande campus Parking Lot C
Oct. 6, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon Nov. 10, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Noon

a.m. – Noon, unless there is an alternative time noted on the flyer, at the campuses and dates above through November. EPCC Student Government Association (SGA) and Campus Life please ask that Texas residents bring their own bag and/or wagon. Supplies are only available while they last. Visit tejanomercado@epcc.edu or call (915) 831-2077 for information.

Grant

From Page 1

pathways that lead to meaningful credentials, transfer opportunities, and employment outcomes for students.

“This award represents an important step forward in preparing EPCC students for emerging opportunities in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and the modern software engineering workforce,” Servin said.

The project will support the development and implementation of EPCC’s new Certificate of Completion in Artificial Intelligence, which

includes an embedded Occupational Skills Award (OSA). Through this grant, EPCC will expand its capacity for AI education and create pathways that prepare students for transfer and employment opportunities in high-demand technology fields.

“The NSF program is highly competitive, and this achievement reflects the commitment and collaboration of many individuals across the College,” Servin added.

This latest award brings the total grant funding secured for El Paso Community College’s computing education initiatives to more than \$1 million.

El Paso County Tornillo Water Improvement District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The EL PASO COUNTY TORNILLO WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2026 on Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., at 19225 Highland St., Tornillo, TX 79853. 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:	Eusebio Villa, Jr.	Hector Luna
	Loretta Aguilar	Alejandro Rodriguez
	Ariel Lujan	
AGAINST the proposal:	NONE	
PRESENT and not voting:	NONE	
ABSENT:	Jorge Aguirre	

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)	\$0.080217/\$100	\$0.077830/\$100
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		– \$ 0.002387
Percentage increase / decrease in rates (+/–)		– 2.98%
Average appraised value	\$ 132,366	\$ 141,205
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person’s exemptions)	\$ 0	\$ 0
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$ 132,366	\$ 141,205
Tax on average residence homestead	\$ 106.18	\$ 109.90
Annual increase / decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/–)		+ \$ 3.72
and percentage of increase (+/–)		+ 3.50%

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. An election is not required if the adopted tax 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.

Things around the Dallas Cowboys feel a little different

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

By the time Super Bowl LXI (61 for you non-Latin readers) comes around on February 14 at Inglewood’s SoFi Stadium, it will have been 31 years since the Dallas Cowboys last played in the championship game.

Back then, the 27-17 victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers was their third NFL title in four years.

Everything hinted that the ’Boys had at least three of four more championships in them.

Not only did they not win another title, they haven’t returned to the Super Bowl since. Heck, they haven’t even come close to advancing to the NFC Championship game in the last 30 years.

Three decades ago, with eight Super Bowl appearances and five titles, the Cowboys were the most feared of the NFL franchises. Now, they’re the most laughed at.

The Cowboys are still known as America’s Team, but if that’s true, this country has lowered its standards considerably over the last 30 seasons.

And while team owner Jerry Jones does have three championships to his name, his reputation as a smart football guy has suffered since the mid-1990s.

Don’t get me wrong, the Cowboys have had some good teams since then. In fact, some Cowboys’ teams were considered real Super Bowl contenders heading into the playoffs, but they always seemed to find a way to mess things up.

A big fumble here, a dropped pass there, a pitiful effort everywhere.

And just when you think you’ve finally learned not to be fooled again, there’s talk about the Cowboys being a legitimate Super Bowl team this February.

That’s right, many of the sports experts around the country are taking

another big gulp of silver and blue Kool-Aid, fully believing that this will be the year the Dallas Cowboys return to the top of the NFL mountain.

Well, let’s take a closer look at this team and this season.

First of all, Dallas has to win the NFC to advance to the big game. That means getting past the Rams, the Eagles, the 49ers, the Bears, the Seahawks and the Lions.

All who were considered to be better than the Cowboys a few months ago.

After all, Dallas’ defense gave up 511 points last season. That comes out to over 30 points a game.

The teams with defenses almost as bad as Dallas (New York Jets 503, Arizona Cardinals 488, and the Tennessee Titans 478) all lost 14 games. Even the Cincinnati Bengals (492) lost 11 games.

What does that tell you?

The Cowboys’ offense was so good that even with the worst defense in the league, they still finished 7-9-1.

It’s all very simple, keep the offense

the way it is and improve the defense. And that’s exactly what the Cowboys have done.

Dak Prescott, CeeDee Lamb, George Pickens, Javonte Williams, KaVontae Turpin, Jake Ferguson, Malik Davis and Brandon Aubrey are ready to put more points on the board.

But it’s the defensive additions of Quinnen Williams, Jaishawn Barham, Rashan Gary, Malachi Lawrence, Dee Winters, Cobie Durant, P.J. Locke, Jalen Thompson, Von Miller and top draft choice Caleb Downs, that has people believing.

The belief is that if the Cowboys can go from the 32nd and worst-ranked defense in the league, to somewhere around 15th, they can win 11 to 13 games and set themselves up nicely for the playoffs.

Another thing that stands out for the Cowboys is the lack of drama this offseason. No contract disputes, no criminal arrests, no ridiculous statements from Jerry.

The biggest disagreement came

over a jersey number – 40. In the end, Von Miller got number 40. Hunter Luepke changed to number 30 and got a piece of Miller’s Greener Pastures Chicken business. Plus, the Cowboys get two new jerseys to market just from this deal.

Everything was settled quickly in house – all good, all around.

I believe all this harmony comes from one source, head coach Brian Schottenheimer.

He’s come in and taken over the feel of the team, the locker room, the calmness and the culture.

For the first time in many years, Dallas looks like a mature organization that isn’t concerning itself with petty off-the-field issues.

And from what the players did with Navajo-native Shiyazh Pete, it appears as if they really care for each other.

All those things are different, all those things are better, all those things are why the Dallas Cowboys’ 31-year nightmare may finally come to an end this February.

Senior moment By Matilda Charles

Prepare your home for winter now

We might be having heat waves now, but before we know it, the weather will turn and winter will be on its way. There are several steps we can take to get ahead and be ready before cold weather arrives.

Take care of draft control. Not only will we be more comfortable without cold air creeping into our homes, but our heating bills will also be lower if the furnace isn’t working so hard. Windows can have caulking or window stripping applied, or you can buy those insulation film kits. Buy your supplies now before everyone else has the same idea, and schedule someone to help you. Right after Labor Day is a good time to get the windows sealed.

Consider how many times you lost power last year and be ready for that. Bring in a supply of batteries for flashlights. Put them in your lights now so you’re ready the minute the power goes out the first time. Have someone help you put new batteries in your smoke detector, if it

hasn’t been done in a while.

Make your list of three to four days’ worth of food for emergencies such as storms when it’s just not safe to go out, and start shopping for those items now. Put a jug of ice melt or cat litter on your list if your area is likely to get snow and ice.

Does your furnace need an annual inspection? Does your vehicle need antifreeze and new windshield wipers?

But we can’t forget the fun stuff for those cold days! A stack of books for cold afternoons, a few small craft kits, ideas for a story to be written during the annual November novel writing month (nanowrimo2.com), several exercise videos for seniors on YouTube, recipes to try, new songs to learn on the piano or guitar... the list is only limited by your imagination!

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SHORT MONTHS

ACROSS

1 Gentle

5 Not active

9 Hockey great

Gordie

13 Certain utility

meter reader

19 "Pronto!"

20 Back end

21 Notion

22 Hun leader

23 "Klute" actress

25 Line of air

fresheners requiring an

outlet

27 Element #10

28 See 38-Down

29 Texting format, for

short

30 Land in eau

32 Strong-arms

36 Lobbying org.

37 Singer Ross

39 "Let's Get It On"

singer

41 Certain fruit stone

43 " _ fair in love and

war"

44 Stood to lose

46 Idyllic places

47 City official on

"Family Guy"

50 Part of UCLA

52 Make tidy

56 Noted Deco

master

57 Notion

60 Go in haste

61 Fogged up, as a

sauna

65 School for

associate's degrees

68 Caribbean resort

69 "Let it stand"

71 Goes after in court

72 Intended (to)

73 Bartending tool

with holes

76 1841-45 first family

77 Primo pitcher

78 Cape Cod resort

village

79 Dried up

81 Heptathlete Jackie

Joyner- _

84 Railroad depot:

Abbr.

85 Portend a good

outcome

90 Dog's reward

93 Scored a major

victory

95 Mine, in France

96 Brownish-toned

picture

100 Stuff squirted by a

cephalopod

103 Slow to react

104 NFL notable

Manning

105 Some private

planes

106 "Is that so!"

107 Univ. senior's test

108 Weapons depot

110 Tiger's sound, to

tots

112 Halifax native

115 Poolside seat

120 Large moon of

Uranus

121 "I'm buying"

122 Region

123 Rebuke from

Caesar

124 Lie comfily close

125 Belgian river

126 Frat guys

127 Span represented

by the first three letters

of 12 answers in this

puzzle

DOWN

1 _ Mahal

2 "Hugo" title role

player Butterfield

3 Polite

4 Sword variety

5 Patch variety

6 Animal lair

7 Young fellow

8 Time of note

9 Old LP players

10 Polish river

11 Program running

in a browser

12 Topic of an

otologist's instructions

13 Intent stare

14 Munched on

15 Fuel additive

brand

16 Country singer

Ronnie

17 School reunion-

goers

18 Pesters

24 Central points

26 "Champion" of

Spain

28 Overly docile

30 Muslim prayer

leader

31 See 70-Down

33 Heron variety

34 Elevate

35 Sac in anatomy

37 "Finished!"

38 With 28-Across,

church meeting cry

40 Abbr. on a brandy

bottle

41 Dreamy guys

42 Italian for

"hundred"

45 SpaceX head

Musk

48 Chart anew

49 Ironc, as wit

51 Rub to clean

53 Main topic

54 "The _ Sanction"

(1975 film)

55 Must have

57 Halve with an ax,

say

58 Prior to, to a bard

59 Mac rivals

61 "Wheel of Fortune"

host Pat

62 Halting of

hostilities

63 Leonhard of pure

mathematics

64 Prez Lincoln

65 Denim pants

66 Cake tier

67 " _ Abner"

69 Hog's pen

70 With 31-Down,

lilting song syllables

74 Ovine animal

75 El _ (ocean

current)

76 _TV ("Tacoma FD"

channel)

79 Armani offerings

80 Incite

82 Incite

83 Part of QED

85 Basic lessons

86 Once lived

87 Move to a new

country

88 Individual

89 Similar to

91 "Bilby, Don't Be _"

92 "Anna Karenina"

novelist

94 Yule tune

96 Join the team

97 Get dressed

98 Irritates

99 Promotional

connections

101 Ski jackets

102 Quadrennial

games org.

105 Seat weaver

108 Clearasil target

109 Moniker

111 Curds and _

113 Craft

114 Pine- _

115 Small dollop

116 Make a gaffe

117 Co. top dog

118 Give _ shot

119 Classic Karel

Capek play

Super Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12		13	14	15	16	17	18
19					20					21					22					
23				24						25				26						
			27							28								29		
30	31			32		33	34	35				36				37	38			
39			40								41				42					
43						44				45			46							
47				48	49					50		51			52			53	54	55
				56					57				58	59				60		
61	62	63	64					65								66	67			
68						69	70				71					72				
73						74				75					76					
77						78							79	80						
81				82	83				84			85					86	87	88	89
				90			91	92		93		94					95			
96	97	98							99			100				101	102			
103							104				105							106		
107						108				109						110		111		
112				113	114								115	116	117				118	119
120								121					122					123		
124								125					126					127		

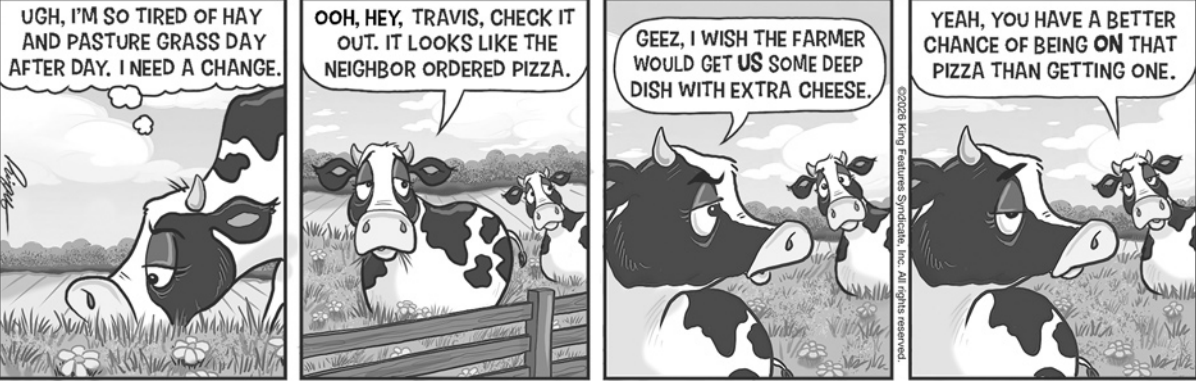
Answer Page 2

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



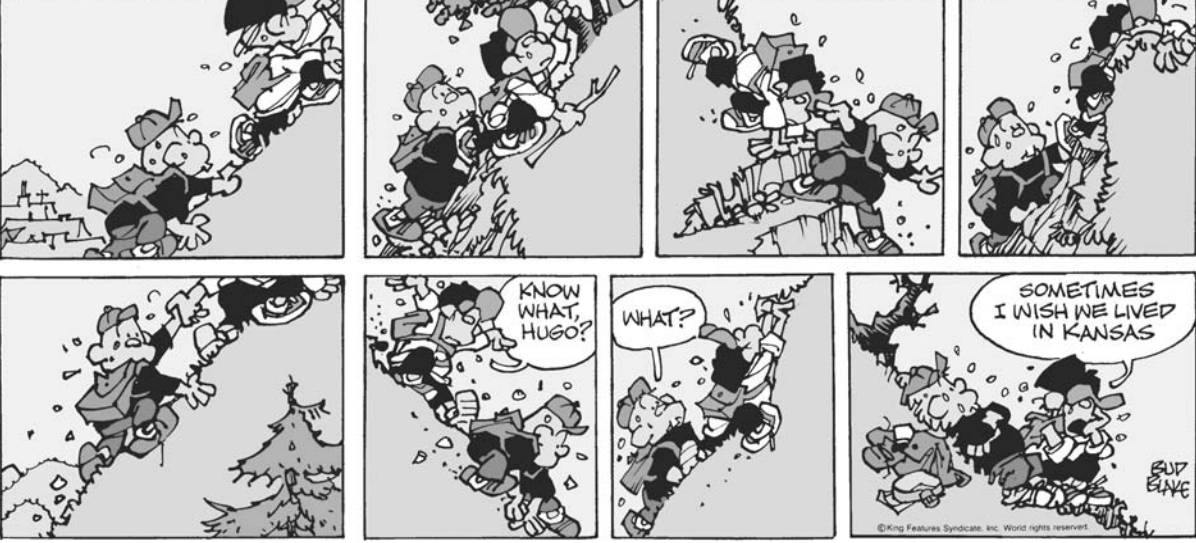
AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



TIGER By Bud Blake



Lowry

From Page 2

widened exceptions for beef imports. If tariffs were genuinely cost-free, none of this would have been deemed necessary by the most protectionist administration since that of Herbert Hoover.

A chief argument for tariffs is that they will revive American manufacturing. Even if this is true, it’s a long-term play, whereas the disruption from tariffs is experienced immediately. It’s also a questionable proposition; increasing the price of imported goods used in manufacturing, which is the effect of the scattershot tariffs, doesn’t do U.S. producers any favors. It is telling that the National Association of Manufacturers opposes the sweeping tariffs.

Polling consistently finds that the duties are unpopular. Majorities oppose Trump’s handling of the issue, and the public believes that the tariffs have increased prices and should be lowered. The trade war with Canada in particular fares poorly. A YouGov survey found that 62% of people oppose the imposition of

50% tariffs on many Canadian imports.

At the end of the day, Trump has chosen a long-standing ideological goal and his legacy over his short-term political standing. He has advocated for major tariffs for decades and has finally gotten them. They are likely to endure, even if they hurt now. His most probable Republican successor, J.D. Vance, presumably wouldn’t roll them back, and the Democratic candidate in 2028 might be equally protectionist. Regardless, it’s going to be difficult for future presidents to give up the revenue generated by the duties.

And so a president who campaigned on lowering prices has embraced a policy that, at the margins, increases them. Unless things are smoothed over with our Friendly Neighbor to the North, there will be more where that came from—in a dispute with a country that no one considers an economic threat to the United States.

If the midterms end up sending a broad message of discontent, the tariffs will surely be a reason why.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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Z- and T-scores combine to give accurate data

DEAR DR. ROACH: I’m a woman of 54 with somewhat limited mobility due to back pain. Perhaps for this reason, my primary care physician ordered a DEXA scan in 2023 and again in 2026. I was alarmed when the recent scan showed osteopenia in five of the six areas that were tested. I thought the 2023 scan was normal, but when I revisited it, I saw that I had osteopenia then as well. But in the 2023 report, they had only looked for a Z-score of less than -2 as an indicator of a problem, whereas in 2026 they used the T-score. Had I realized that I had osteopenia three years ago, I’d have started taking calcium (I get plenty in my diet and struggle with large pills) and weighed the risks of more vigorous exercise differently. (Perhaps I should be more willing to risk short-term flare-ups in the pursuit of long-term bone health.) I’m not sure if this reporting method is standard, but perhaps physicians and patients should look at the T-score for an indication of osteopenia if the radiologist doesn’t do so. – J.F.



There are three numbers I look for when reviewing a patient’s bone density scans. (DEXA, or dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry, is the standard screening and diagnostic test for bone loss.)

The first is the T-score, which compares my patient to a person of the same sex at peak bone mass. A T-score of zero means the person who’s being scanned has the peak bone mass of a healthy young adult. (It’s very unusual to see a positive T-score.) If a person has peak bone density, their T-score will be zero. A T-score of -1.0 is one standard deviation below peak bone mass; -1.1 to -2.4 is considered low bone mass or osteopenia; and -2.5 or less is considered osteoporosis.

The Z-score compares a person to the average score within their age group and sex. An older person might have a T-score in the osteopenia or even osteoporotic range, yet have a normal Z-score. The Z-score is most useful for alerting the clinician if a patient’s bone density is lower than expected for their age.

A very low Z-score suggests a secondary reason for osteoporosis. This can include medications such as prednisone or anti-epilepsy drugs; celiac or other malabsorptive diseases; or hormonal conditions like excess thyroid hormone, hyperparathyroidism, or low sex hormones.

Finally, most DEXA scans now include the FRAX score, which is critical in communicating a person’s risk of fracture and deciding whether to start them on medication to prevent a fracture.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Your column on hemicrania continua sounds a lot like cluster headaches, which are often described as the most excruciating headache. Are they the same? – W.M.

There are definite similarities between hemicrania continua and cluster headaches. Both affect one side of the face and are associated with eye tearing and nasal congestion. However, cluster headaches happen in clusters – brief but intense pain that occurs multiple times, then disappears entirely for weeks, months or years. I’ve seen people literally bang their head into the wall during an episode. Breathing 100% oxygen will often make the pain go away and is a useful diagnostic test.

Hemicrania continua is continuous. The pain is constant, although not usually as intense as with cluster headaches. The pain can wax and wane during the day but is never gone. Most people respond to indomethacin, but some people can’t tolerate it. One reader wrote in that with a relatively new medication called galcanezumab-gnlm (Emgality), they truly got their life back.

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.



Moore Texas by Roger Moore
Opossums are highly resistant to the poison of Texas snakes.

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: W equals L

UXHMIMNVWB CXBW OXIOBT UH
U KHUHV MQ MQ UQ MCCVLVUW
WVQB NBHJBBQ HJM LMXQH SVBK:
NMSTBS OBHSMW.

Answer Page 2

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Veterans on the road again



by Freddy Groves

The government is calling on veterans to consider careers in commercial trucking with the creation of the Freedom Haulers initiative, a new effort to help veterans move into civilian driving jobs.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), with its military driver program, is making it easy for experienced veteran drivers to get a commercial driver’s license (CDL). In many cases you can get a waiver on both the skills and knowledge tests.

A few facts: Every state is part of the veteran skills-test waiver program and all have specific requirements. Seven additional states just joined the Even Exchange program, which allows qualified veterans with certain military driving experience to waive the knowledge test.

Eligibility: If you had a military driver’s license

for at least two years, with no suspensions or disqualifications, you can qualify if you apply within two years of leaving that position. (It used to be 12 months, but with the Freedom Haulers initiative, that’s been extended.)

Benefits: Depending on the employer, jobs may offer travel, flexible hours, good pay, health and life insurance, and more.

For more information, see www.fmcsa.dot.gov/militarydriverprograms.

Check out the Even Exchange program at www.fmcsa.dot.gov/even-exchange-program. There you’ll find a MOS list with the qualifying military occupations that can waive the knowledge test.

What if you didn’t have a driving job during your active duty period and your MOS doesn’t cover you for an automatic CDL? The GI Bill may cover up to 100% of commercial driver’s license tuition at approved schools, depending on your eligibility and the program. In some cases that might include a housing allowance.

If you’re starting from

scratch (no military driving training) and want to go the GI Bill route, pick your school carefully. Federal regulators have recently removed or taken action against hundreds of CDL training providers that failed to meet requirements. Before enrolling, verify that the program is approved for your VA education benefits. Call the VA Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 (888-GIBILL-1) to verify a school’s eligibility.

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• Need to transport a bow while you are transporting a present? Place it inside a zip-top sandwich bag, close partway, fill with air and seal. The bow will make it to your destination uncrushed, and you can stick it on at the last minute.

• Having trouble starting that backyard charcoal grill? Maybe you just need to head for the snack table. Potato chips and nacho tortilla chips (like Doritos) will burn bright and hot enough to cook your dinner, and certainly well enough to give your charcoal a great start.

• Make a floating noodle cooler for your pool with this easy trick: You’ll need a plastic container, a bungee cord or length of rope that will wrap around the container and a pool noodle cut into four pieces, no longer than the sides of the container. Run the cord or rope through the noodle pieces, line noodle pieces along sides of container, and secure rope or cord tightly an inch or so lower than the container’s lip. Toss in pool, fill with drinks and ice, and enjoy.

• “Small lids from plastic margarine containers can be used as a burger-patty size guide. And if you have more than a few around, you can use them to separate patties for the freezer. They make it easy to grab one or two patties for the grill right from the freezer. Otherwise, I find that I must defrost several that are stuck together.” – P.W. in Indiana

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.

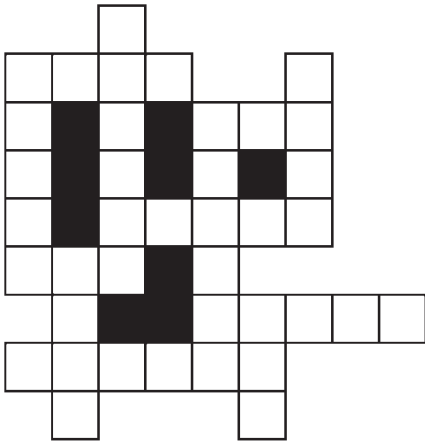
Answer Page 2

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	-		÷		= 3			
+		+		+				
	+		+		= 15			
÷		-		+				
	+		÷		= 3			
=		=		=				
2		2		14				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



- GEG
- UGFARL
- OLAFO
- ♥ETNR
- ♥GWOLBE
- ♥ELE
- ♥REOG
- AGDEL
- OEF
- DACLER
- ♥RECTU
- ♥LBGO



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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Weekly SUDOKU

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Answer Page 2

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