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TUESDAY

JANUARY 6, 2015



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VOLUME 110, NUMBER 70

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Gas price plunge continues

Special to the Herald

Average retail gasoline prices in Texas have fallen 6.8 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$1.97 per gallon Sunday, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 13,114 gas outlets in Texas.

This compares with the national average that has fallen 7.7 cents per gallon in the last week to \$2.19 a gallon, according to gasoline price website GasBuddy.com.

Including the change in gas prices in Texas during the past week, prices Sunday were \$1.17 per gallon lower than the same day one year ago and are 51.6 cents per gallon lower than a month ago.

The national average has decreased 52.8 cents per gallon during the last month and stands \$1.13 per gallon lower than this day one year ago.

"As we've welcomed in the new year, gas prices have stayed at their bargain basement levels in most states, with just a few seeing minor gas tax increases," said Patrick DeHaan, senior petroleum analyst with GasBuddy.

"2015 will be a far better year at the pump than what we saw in 2014, and motorists will fare substantially better, shelling out \$96 billion less this year at the gas pump with motorists in most states seeing far more \$2 gas than \$3 gas," he added.

"And while gasoline consumers have been celebrating, diesel consumers have been slowly joining the party, with diesel prices declining an average 44 cents a gallon in the last month," DeHaan noted.



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody

Gasoline prices, which have dropped drastically in the last few months, are nearing the \$2 per gallon mark here in Big Spring, as evidenced by this sign at the Pilot Travel Center.

AARP tax aid on tap

BY LYNDEL MOODY

Staff Writer

Although the infamous April 15 Tax Day is more than four months away, volunteers with the local AARP tax assistance program are already preparing for what maybe an interesting season.

This year is the first time the penalty for the Affordable Care Act kicks in. Taxpayers who did not have medical coverage in the past year will have to pay a penalty that may impact their tax refund. How it will is still a question.



Alexander

"It's kind of new to all of us, but we are training in that particular item," said Ray Alexander who coordinates the AARP tax assistance program, a free program to the community to help residents file their taxes.

Alexander said those who have Medicare Part A insurance through a retirement system or through employer should be able to file with the normal paperwork. Those who bought individual insurance will have to provide a

See AARP, Page 3



GOP in charge as Congress convenes

By ERICA WERNER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republicans are assuming full control of Congress for the first time in eight years in a day of pomp, circumstance and raw politics beneath the Capitol Dome.

They planned to move swiftly Tuesday toward a veto showdown with President Barack Obama over the Keystone XL pipeline, summoning unity despite a tea party-backed effort to unseat House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio.

As mandated by the Constitution, Congress was to convene at noon.

In the Senate, with Vice President Joe Biden presiding, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky was to automatically ascend to majority leader following his approval by rank-and-file Republicans last year.



Boehner

"It's either a vote for the status quo or a new direction for the Republican Party. This is the time for a new beginning. It's time for new leadership."

Rep. Ted Yoho
 R-Fla.

McConnell and Boehner both were to deliver remarks on their chamber's floors as they positioned themselves for two years of clashes with Obama.

First, Boehner had to survive his election as speaker — the main event on any opening day's agenda. Tea party-backed Reps. Louie Gohmert of Texas and Ted Yoho of Florida put themselves forward as challengers to Boehner, and at least 10 Republicans announced they would oppose Boehner.

But that was far short of the number needed to place

his election in jeopardy, and many lawmakers dismissed the challenge as a needless distraction at a moment when the party should be celebrating new majorities and showing voters it can lead.

"It's time to put all this silliness behind and move on," said Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn. "We're on probation. If we don't perform ... (voters) can make a pivot in a heartbeat."

Nor did any of the rebels predict they would succeed in toppling the 65-year-old Boehner. Instead, they said the current high command wasn't conservative enough.

For his part, Yoho said the initial goal of the Boehner challenge is to force the leadership contest past one ballot, so there could be a serious discussion about change.

"It's either a vote for the status quo or a new direction for the Republican Party," Yoho told CNN in an interview Tuesday morning. "This is the time for a new beginning. It's time for new leadership."

Yoho said the Boehner leadership team, among other things, hasn't given rank-and-file GOP members sufficient time to consider legislation before calling for a vote.

Virginia Rep. Dave Brat, who defeated former Majority Leader Eric Cantor in a primary last summer, said the Republican leadership has "strayed from its own principles of free market, limited government, constitutional conservatism."

Two years ago, Boehner faced similar criticism, and

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Obituaries

Kevin Brownfield

Kevin Brownfield, 48, of Big Spring, died Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2015 in a local hospital. His services are pending with Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home and Crematory.

Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast

Wed 1/7	Thu 1/8	Fri 1/9	Sat 1/10	Sun 1/11
35/22 Mostly sunny skies with gusty winds. Colder. High around 35F.	47/30 Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 40s and lows in the low 30s.	33/22 Cloudy. Highs in the low 30s and lows in the low 20s.	39/31 Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the upper 30s and lows in the low 30s.	50/30 Clouds giving way to sun. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the low 30s.
Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:56 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:57 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:58 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 5:59 PM	Sunrise: 7:48 AM Sunset: 6:00 PM

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Texas At A Glance



Area Cities

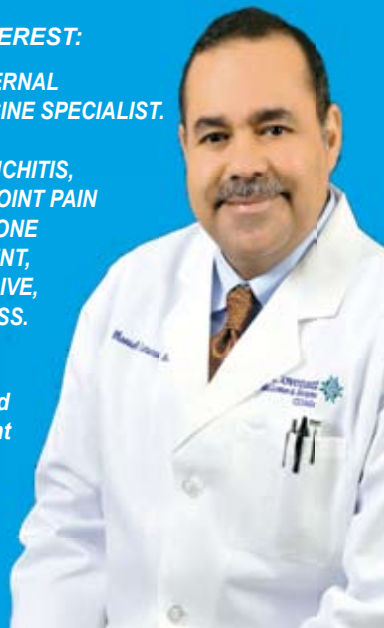
City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	32	18	windy	Kingsville	60	36	rain
Amarillo	20	13	windy	Livingston	49	25	pt sunny
Austin	47	24	pt sunny	Longview	40	20	sunny
Beaumont	50	24	pt sunny	Lubbock	29	19	windy
Brownsville	66	44	cloudy	Lufkin	49	24	pt sunny
Brownwood	36	19	windy	Midland	38	22	windy
Corpus Christi	58	35	rain	Raymondville	64	39	cloudy
Corsicana	38	20	windy	Rosenberg	52	29	pt sunny
Dallas	36	19	windy	San Antonio	50	27	windy
Del Rio	54	28	pt sunny	San Marcos	47	25	windy

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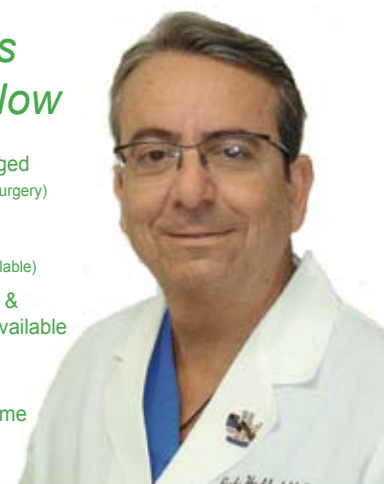
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Fred Hendrickson



Fred Hendrickson, 68, of Big Spring died Friday, Jan. 2, 2015, at Baylor Medical Center in McKinney. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with Jess Colgrove and Joey Bacon, officiating. Burial will be at Trinity Memorial Park.

He was born Aug. 31, 1946, in New York, N.Y. and grew up at Hicksville, Long Island, N.Y. He came to Big Spring in 1963, while stationed at Webb Air Force Base. He served in Thailand during the Vietnam War. He worked at Sid Richardson Carbon

for 28 years, retiring in 2007. They called him Mr. Goodwrench at work. He loved trains and computers, but most of all he loved his family and grandkids. He was a member of Trinity Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Wanda of Big Spring; one daughter, Heather Sanderson and her husband Brian of Austin; one son, Heath Hendrickson and his wife Melissa of McKinney; and three grandchildren, Caden Sanderson, Madeline Sanderson and Sydney Hendrickson.

The family suggests memorials to American Heart Association, P.O. Box 15186, Austin, Texas 78761; American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 2121, Big Spring, Texas 79721; or Trinity Baptist Church, 1701 East FM 700, Big Spring, Texas 79720.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersand-smith.com

Paid obituary

Nancy Huntoon Gonzalez



Nancy Huntoon Gonzalez, 82, of Big Spring, died Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2014 in a local nursing home. Memorial services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2015 at Nalley-Pickle & Welch Rosewood Chapel.

She was born Aug. 7, 1932 in East Andover, N.H. and married William Gonzalez August 31, 1952 in Seguin, Texas.

Nancy served in the United States Air Force. She moved to Big Spring in 1965 from New Hampshire and had worked as a clerk at the U. S. Postal Service from 1967 until retiring in 1992. She was a member of the American Legion Post No. 22 in Lebanon, N.H.

Survivors include her husband, William Gonzalez; one son, Carlos Gonzalez; one daughter, Diana

Gonzalez and husband, William Bohanon Jr.; two grandchildren, Melissa Sayers and Tori Bohanon; and three great-granddaughters, Lalia Hoover, Katie Kirkham and Aubrey Kirkham, all of Big Spring.

She was preceded in death by a son, William Gonzalez Jr.; and two granddaughters, Amanda Brown and Shannon Brown.

The family suggests memorials to the Alzheimer's Association, Greater West Texas Chapter, 4400 N. Big Spring Street, Suite C-32, Midland, Texas 79705.

The family would like to take this time to say thank you to Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez Texas State Veterans Home for the special care for Nancy during this time.

Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences may be made at: www.npwelch.com

Paid obituary

Eddie Chavez



Eddie Chavez, 73, of Big Spring, died Friday, Jan. 2, 2015 in a local nursing home. Private services will be held at a later date.

Eddie was born Jan. 12, 1941, in Big Spring, Texas where he worked at Webb Air Force Base and later became a barber at the Hilltop Barber Shop. He was a self-taught musician that loved playing Latino music.

Eddie is survived by two brothers, Mario Moncada and wife Jerri, and Julian Moncada, all of Eastland; three sisters, Helen Painter of Carrollton, Ga., Linda Roberts of Odessa and Sylvia Paris of Eastland; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, Pedro Chavez; his mother, Eustolia Moncada; and two brothers, Frankie Moncada and Ismael Chavez.

Arrangements under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Big Spring. Online condolences may be made at: www.npwelch.com

Police/Sheriff

The Big Spring Police Department reported the following activity from 8 a.m. Monday until 8 a.m. today:

- RICKY WAYNE WASHBURN, 56, of 1100 Richie Road was arrested on charges of possession of dangerous drug; possession of a controlled substance, less than 1 gram; and public intoxication.
- SMYTHIA MAE HILARIO, 47, of 5203 Sterling Road was arrested on charges of theft, less

than \$50 with previous conviction — shoplifting.

- DEMETRIUS LYNN PRUITT, 48, of 510 Benton St. was arrested on a warrant for possession of drug paraphernalia.
- KASSAUNDRY DYHAN MUNOZ, 24, 1007 Sycamore was arrested on warrants for failure to appear, possession of drug paraphernalia and a warrant from another agency.
- GERALD RAY GRIEGO, 42, of 1806 Mittel

220 was arrested on a warrant from another agency.

- MORGAN LANE PIERCE, 48, of 8607 Gail Highway was arrested on a charge of possession of marijuana, less than or equal to 2 ounces.

- JOSHUA LANCE DEAN, 17, of 10209 CR 24 was arrested on a charge of possession of marijuana, less than or equal to 2 ounces.

- HIT AND RUN was reported in the area of Fourth and Gregg streets.

- BURGLARY OF A BUILDING was reported in the 1400 block of E. 15th St.

- THEFT was reported in the 200 block of W. FM 700 and in the 1600 block of S. Gregg St.

- BURGLARY OF A HABITATION was reported in the 5600 block of S. Service Road and in the 1200 block of N. FM 700.

- SHOTS FIRED was reported in the 2200

block of Monticello St.

- DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE was reported in the 1800 block of Mittel Avenue.

The Howard County Sheriff's Office reported the following activity:

Note — Officials with the Howard County Jail reported having 65 inmates at the time of this report.

- DEMETRIUS LYNN PRUITT, 48, was booked on warrants for sentence/delivery of a controlled substance; and possession of drug paraphernalia.

- SMYTHIA MAE HILARIO, 47, was booked by the BSPD on a charge of theft of property, less than \$50 with previous conviction.

- KASSAUNDRY DYHAN MUNOZ, 24, was booked on warrants for MTRP/driving while intoxicated with child less than 15 years old; failure to appear; and possession of drug paraphernalia.

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News in brief

Counties across Florida issue marriage licenses, hold weddings for gay couples

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida's ban on same-sex marriage ended statewide at the stroke of midnight Monday, and court clerks in some Florida counties wasted no time, issuing marriage licenses and performing weddings for same-sex couples overnight.

But they were beaten to the punch by a Miami judge who found no need to wait until the statewide ban expired. Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Sarah Zabel presided over Florida's first legally recognized same-sex marriages Monday afternoon.

Still, most counties held off on official ceremonies until after midnight early Tuesday, when U.S. District Judge Robert L. Hinkle's ruling that Florida's same-sex marriage ban is unconstitutional took effect in all 67 counties. Florida's attorney general, Pam Bondi, is still pursuing state and federal appeals seeking to uphold the ban voters approved in 2008, but her effort to block these weddings until the courts finally rule was denied by the U.S. Supreme Court.

And now that same-sex marriage is a reality in Florida, Bondi's spokeswoman told The Associated Press "the judge has ruled, and we wish these couples the best."

The addition of Florida's 19.9 million people means 70 percent of Americans now live in the 36 states where gay marriage is legal.

SpaceX aims for pre-dawn launch to space station, unprecedented rocket landing on ocean barge

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A SpaceX rocket stands poised at Cape Canaveral, Florida, for a pre-dawn flight to the International Space Station. The unmanned Dragon capsule contains more

than 5,000 pounds of supplies and experiments ordered up by NASA. That's the primary objective for SpaceX. But the California-based company will attempt an even more extraordinary feat once the Dragon is on its way: flying the booster rocket to a platform in the Atlantic. No one has ever pulled off such a touchdown.

SpaceX's billionaire founder Elon Musk figures there's a 50-50 chance, at best, that the first-stage booster will land on the platform that's stationed a couple hundred miles off the northeastern Florida coast. He says recovering and reusing rockets could speed up launches and drive down costs.

Launch is set for 6:20 a.m.

Obama hosts Mexican President Pena Nieto looking for help on immigration and Cuba

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama is hosting Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto at the White House Tuesday, looking to his southern neighbor for help implementing the president's changing policies on immigration and Cuba.

Obama wants Pena Nieto to join him in pressuring Cuba to make democratic reforms now that the White House is moving to re-establish diplomatic and commercial ties. The U.S.-Cuba estrangement had been a point of friction with Latin American countries, including Mexico, that had normal ties with the communist island nation.

Pena Nieto's government also could help spread the word of qualifications for Obama's plan to defer some 4 million deportations for immigrants in the U.S. illegally. Two-thirds of those who are eligible are from Mexico.

Both actions from Obama in recent weeks drew praise from Pena Nieto, who may be hoping his visit to the White House can help give him a boost after a 2014 marked by scandal, violence and corruption. That includes soldiers killing 22 civilians

in a questionable "shootout" and revelations that Pena Nieto and his treasury secretary live in luxury homes built and financed by a favorite government contractor.

Perhaps most notably, tens of thousands of protesters have taken to the streets to protest the Sept. 26 abduction and presumed murder of 43 college students, allegedly at the hands of local officials and police in league with a drug cartel. Pena Nieto told the country it was time to "move beyond" the case just weeks after their abduction, and he took a month to meet with their families.

Hundreds come face to face with Tsarnaev, jury selection to take weeks in marathon trial

BOSTON (AP) — As some prospective jurors got their first look at Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the young man accused of bombing the renowned Boston Marathon, it became clear that choosing a jury in the closely watched terror case would not be a quick or simple process.

U.S. District Judge George O'Toole Jr. told the first 400 people called for jury duty Monday that choosing a panel of 12 jurors and six alternates for the highly anticipated trial was expected to take at least three weeks.

He told the potential jurors not to think of the trial as "an annoying burden," but as a needed service and an "important duty of citizenship."

Tsarnaev is accused of planning and carrying out the twin bombings that killed three people and wounded more than 260 others near the marathon's finish line on April 15, 2013. Prosecutors say Tsarnaev and his brother, now dead, also killed an MIT police officer several days after the bombings as they tried to flee.

Federal prosecutors and Tsarnaev's lawyers are beginning the process of trying to find jurors who can be fair and impartial.

CONGRESS

Continued from Page 1

sweated out his election to a second term.

His hand is considerably stronger this year after the Republicans' sweeping electoral triumph. The party will hold 246 House seats in the new Congress, to 188 for the Democrats, the biggest GOP majority in nearly 70 years.

Coupled with the commanding majority was word of the first retirement — New York Republican Chris Gibson announced he would step down at the end of his term, but signaled he was not finished with

politics in his home state.

The intra-party leadership struggle underscored the political peril facing Republicans as they looked ahead to two-house control of Congress. Yet the evident ability to pass the Keystone pipeline legislation showed their potential to advance an agenda.

Votes in a Senate committee and on the House floor were scheduled for later this week on the pipeline, which passed the House but died in a Democratic-led filibuster in the Senate late last year. Now, Republicans appear to have more than enough votes to clear it through the Senate as well, given the Republican

pickup of nine seats in the elections.

While Obama has not said if he will reject the measure, White House spokesman Josh Earnest outlined a series of concerns with the pipeline before adding, "I'm not prepared at this point to issue a veto threat related to that specific piece of legislation."

But Republicans stand ready to cast the measure as a bipartisan jobs bill of the type that should be signed into law.

"There's a lot we can get done together if the president puts his famous pen to use signing bills rather than vetoing legislation his liberal

allies don't like," McConnell said late last year.

Earnest was less ambiguous about another issue.

Referring to an assertion by a Louisiana reporter, he said Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana, the third-ranking House GOP leader, had once described himself as "David Duke without the baggage." Earnest also said Scalise's presence in the leadership of House Republicans "says a lot about who they are."

Scalise spoke more than a dozen years ago to a white supremacist organization founded by Duke. The lawmaker said recently the appearance was a mistake, and

said he condemns the group's views.

AARP

Continued from Page 1

secondary form, he said.

As for those who opt to take the penalty, Alexander said at this point, they do not know what impact it will have on their tax refund or payment.

AARP tax assistance program begins Monday, Feb. 2, at the Senior Citizen's Center, 1901 Simler Ave., and will continue every Monday

from 8 a.m. until noon through April 6 with one exception. The group will take off President's Day, Feb 16, but will offer assistance the next day on Feb. 17.

Alexander warns the first few sessions will have long lines as many people will want to get their taxes done as soon as possible. To help with the process, residents must bring their Social Security Card, identification, all their W2s and 1099s forms and if they purchased individual insurance, a form that

shows that they have insurance.

"You need to start looking in the mail and if you see it's a tax form don't stick it in the corner. Stick it in a tax pile right now," Alexander said.

There are no qualifications to receive the program although the volunteers cannot help people with more intense taxes filing questions such as those who own rental property or

businesses.

Last year, the local AARP assistance tax program helped file 204 taxes which is equivalent to a \$40,000 savings for Howard County, Alexander said.

"This service is something we are doing for the people of Big Spring," he said. "It's really rewarding and it's really satisfying to the volunteers because a lot of people can't afford to seek help with their

taxes. There are a lot of elderly people have a lower social security income. They don't have a lot to live on."

For more information about the program, call Alexander at 432-212-3533. This year's deadline to file federal income tax is Wednesday, April 15.

Contact Lyndel Moody at 263-7331, ext. 234, or by citydesk@bigspring-herald.com

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Carmen Morin, 63, died Wednesday. The family will receive friends Tuesday from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Vigil Service and Memorial Service will be at 7 p.m. following visitation at Myers & Smith Chapel.

Fred Hendrickson, 68, died Friday. The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. Tuesday at Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Trinity Memorial Park.

Richard Cantwell, 73, died Saturday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Daniel A. "Danny" Ferrell, 58, died Sunday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Juan M. Martinez, 71, died Monday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

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<p>Big Spring Travel Show Thursday, January 8 10:00 AM Dora Roberts Com. Center Comanche Trail Park 100 Whipkey Drive Big Spring, Texas</p>	<p>Permian Basin Travel Show Thursday, January 8 2:00 PM Holiday Inn Express Hotel 5309 West Loop 250 North Midland, Texas</p>

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ANSWER: AN OUTLET

Home Office Word Find

Find the hidden words in the puzzle.

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BUSINESS	ENVIRONMENT	OFFICE
COMPUTER	HOME	TABLET
CONFERENCE	KEYBOARD	WORK

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 S N P K N L T C W P O E
 N C E I E U B D F L H C
 I J T M P Y P A P O J N
 T O Y M N Y B K T Y F E
 R B O S S O R O R E B R
 E C I F F O R J A E Z E
 W I F P W M E I V R Q F
 B U S I N E S S V B D N
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THIS DAY IN...



HISTORY

- 1927: THE FIRST TRANSATLANTIC TELEPHONE SERVICE BEGINS BETWEEN NEW YORK AND LONDON.
- 1894: A PATENT FOR MOTION PICTURE FILM IS GRANTED TO WILLIAM KENNEDY DICKSON.
- 1955: MARIAN ANDERSON MAKES HER METROPOLITAN OPERA DEBUT.

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

MOEH FECOFI

Answer: Home office



TELECOMMUTE

work from home

How they SAY that in...

- ENGLISH:** Office
- SPANISH:** Oficina
- ITALIAN:** Ufficio
- FRENCH:** Bureau
- GERMAN:** Büro

Did You Know?

ACCORDING TO TELEWORK RESEARCH NETWORK, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WILL WORK FROM HOME AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK MAY RISE TO 63% OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.



GET THE PICTURE?



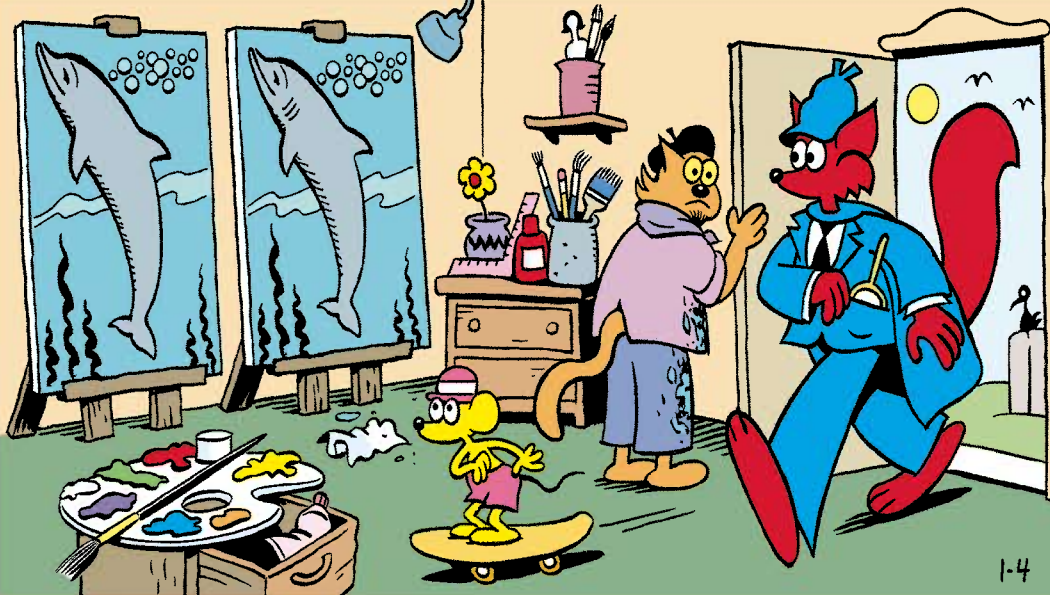
Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: KEYBOARD

SLYLOCK FOX and COMICS FOR KIDS

BY BOB WEBER JR.

A dolphin painting by a world-renowned nature artist was stolen from the Forest Museum. The missing masterpiece is now in Kopy Kat's studio. The feline forger has already painted a copy of the artwork. Which one does Slylock Fox believe is the forged painting?

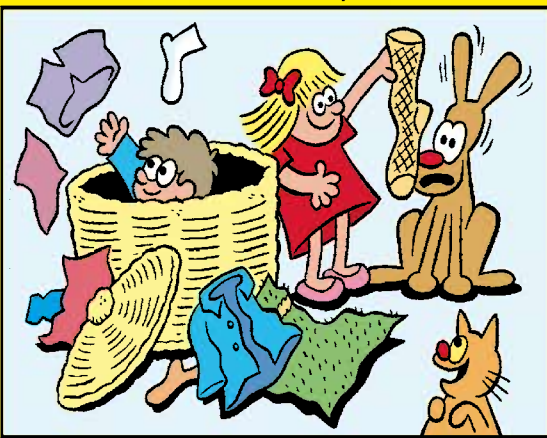


Answer -- The dolphin is a marine mammal, not a fish. Kopy Kat wrongly painted gills on the forged dolphin painting.

Spot six differences between these panels.

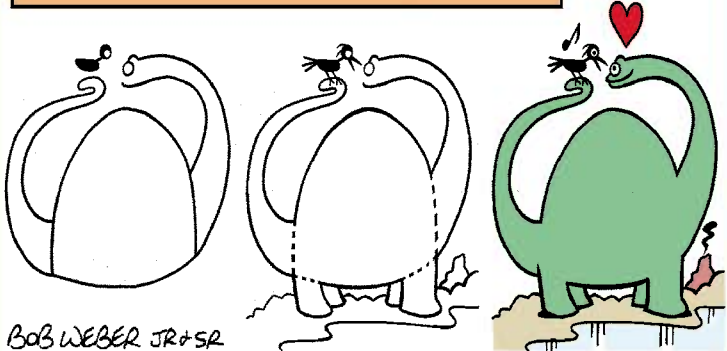


www.facebook.com/SlylockFox



Answer -- Ball, sock, towel, tail, dress collar and button.

HOW TO DRAW a friendly dinosaur



YOUR DRAWING



The scrambled words are things found on a pizza. How many can you unscramble?

- 1) UESAC
- 2) TSRCU
- 3) EHECES
- 4) OEPEPIRPN

Answer -- 1) Sauce 2) Crust 3) Cheese 4) Pepperoni

McCarthy says Green Bay QB is improving

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP) — Stoic defensive lineman Mike Daniels has trained his focus squarely on Dallas.

The bye week is over for the Green Bay Packers. It's time to get ready for a marquee matchup in the next round of the playoffs against the Cowboys.

"It was fun to sit back and actually watch some games knowing that I'm still playing," Daniels said Monday at Lambeau Field. "All that is over with. None of that matters at this point."

Coach Mike McCarthy had his team back on a normal game-week schedule after a three-day break last week to celebrate the new year. It was a time for rest especially for quarterback Aaron Rodgers, who is recovering from a lin-

gering left calf injury.

McCarthy said Rodgers was progressing. The franchise quarterback sat out two light practices last week, and McCarthy indicated then that Rodgers may not return to the practice field until Thursday at the earliest, which might be the team's most important day for on-field work.

On Monday, McCarthy said Rodgers would be re-evaluated Wednesday to determine the plan for the rest of the week.

It doesn't appear the Packers are too worried about him. After getting carted to the locker room in the second quarter, a limping Rodgers returned to the field in the third quarter to lead Green Bay to a 30-20 victory over Detroit to win the NFC North.

The way he's been playing

this season, Rodgers at less than 100 percent is still better than most quarterbacks in the league. While mobility could be an issue, Rodgers is a stickler for preparation on and off the field.

Offensive coordinator Tom Clements noted that Rodgers didn't practice for about a month in 2008 because of a shoulder injury but still performed well.

"I don't know if we're going to have to worry about that," backup quarterback Matt Flynn said when asked if he would be ready if Rodgers can't go. "But, yeah, I'm a confident guy. I'm going to prepare this week just like I always do."

Flynn can draw from the confidence of leading the Packers from a 23-point halftime deficit to a 37-36 win last year at Dal-

las while playing for Rodgers, who had a collarbone injury. DeMarco Murray dented the Packers for 134 yards on 18 carries in that game.

This is that game. Better, leading the NFL with 1,845 yards running behind one of the top offensive lines in the league.

Sunday could turn into a shootout, even if Rodgers isn't at full speed. Handing off to Murray could help Dallas keep the ball out of Rodgers' hands.

"The Dallas Cowboys' run game is excellent. Murray is a big-time back. He's definitely a difference maker," McCarthy said.

But the Packers appear to have found some difference makers themselves against the run. The defense is allowing 3.60 yards a carry in the sec-

ond half of the season, down from 4.78 in the first half.

Pass rusher Clay Matthews and Sam Barrington have seen more snaps at inside linebacker and added athleticism. Defensive tackle Letroy Guion has played better as the season wore on while Morgan Burnett is having one of his best seasons at safety in rush support. Rookie safety Ha Ha Clinton-Dix is also playing well.

Coordinator Dom Capers called the Cowboys' offense the best test the Packers have had this year. Daniels welcomes the challenge.

"Make sure we prepare the right way this week, it sounds really rhetorical, but just get after it," Daniels said. "It's just plain and simple."

Jayhawks set aim on 11th straight Big 12 title

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — There is a floor-to-ceiling graphic pasted onto the wall outside the Kansas locker room, just beyond the tunnel leading to the hallowed floor of Allen Fieldhouse.

The court itself forms the background of it. But stretching across the top are images of 10 rings, each encrusted with make Marilyn Monroe blush. Together, they represent the string of Big 12 perfection that the Jayhawks have compiled over the past decade.

Ten years. Ten championships.

On Wednesday night, the No. 12 Jayhawks head to No. 21 Baylor to begin pursuit of their 11th straight. That would tie Gonzaga for the second-most in major college basketball, and move within two of matching the 13 straight Pac-10 championships that UCLA won in the 1960s and '70s.

But listening to Bill Self, this may be the most difficult yet. Given a chance on Monday afternoon, the Kansas coach rattled off four other teams that

he thinks have shots at the Big 12 championship. Texas, he said, could win the national title. And given their unsteady non-conference performance, the Jayhawks — for once — may not be the favorites.

"There's multiple teams," he said, "but the great thing about it is, from my standpoint, if you're good enough to be considered in winning our league, you're probably good enough to be considered a contender to make a great run in the NCAA tournament, too."

Not every year has been an outright title. Kansas (11-2) has shared the crown in five of those seasons. But not since Iowa State won the second of its back-to-back championships in 2001 has one of those glitzy title rings not been delivered to each member of the Jayhawks.

To put that into perspective, four teams that were in the Big 12 back then are in different conferences, and two that were in different conferences are now in the Big 12.

There are signs that the

Jayhawks' supremacy will continue, too.

They are vastly improved from an early season shellacking at the hands of top-ranked Kentucky, beating Michigan State, Florida, Georgetown and Utah in succession. If not for a dud at Temple just before Christmas, that loss in the Champions Classic would be their only one.

"I don't ever go through and say, 'We should win this one,' or, 'This is a coin-flip game,'" Self said. "But we weren't ready to play with Kentucky and we've improved a lot since then."

That doesn't mean Self is content. Consistency has been an issue. Outside shooting has been spotty and interior offense hard to establish. Defensive intensity tends to wane.

All of those things can cause problems in the pressure-cooker of the Big 12.

"It's real different," Selden said, "the intensity, the fans, the away crowds, the home crowds, everything about it is different."



Tony Claxton photos (www.claxtonphotography.com)

Back in play ...

Dee Parker and the Big Spring Steers will return from the holiday break today when they travel to Andrews. The varsity team will tip off play beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Gibbs hired as new DC

LUBBOCK — Texas Tech head football coach Kliff Kingsbury announced the hiring of David Gibbs as defensive coordinator Monday.

Mike Smith, who had served as interim defensive coordinator following the resignation of Matt Wallerstedt, will return to his role as co-defensive coordinator.

Along with the appointment of Gibbs, Kingsbury announced that Zac Spavital will join the staff as a defensive assistant coach while current running backs coach Mike Jinks has been elevated to associate head coach.

Gibbs comes to Texas Tech after spending the last two seasons as defensive coordinator at the University of Houston. He also served as interim head coach of the Cougars in Friday's 35-34 win over Pittsburgh in the Armed Forces Bowl. Trailing 24-6 at the end of the third, Houston scored 29 points in the fourth to set the NCAA record for the largest fourth quarter comeback in a bowl game.

Scoreboard

FOOTBALL				NFL PLAYOFF GLANCE				Divisional Playoffs				Saturday, Jan. 10																																																														
Baltimore	at New England	4:35 p.m. (NBC)		Carolina	at Seattle	8:15 p.m. (FOX)		Dallas	at Green Bay	1:05 p.m. (FOX)		Indianapolis	at Denver	4:40 p.m. (CBS)																																																												
Conference Championships				Sunday, Jan. 18				AFC, 3:05 p.m. (FOX)				NFC, 6:40 p.m. (CBS)																																																														
Super Bowl				Sunday, Feb. 1				At Glendale, Ariz.				AFC champion vs. NFC champion, 6:30 p.m. (NBC)																																																														
COLLEGE FOOTBALL				2014-15 Conference Bowl Records				Through Jan. 4																																																																		
Conference USA	4	1	.800	Pac-12	6	2	.750	Independents	2	1	.667	Southeastern	7	5	.583																																																											
Big Ten	5	5	.500	Mountain West	3	4	.429	American Athletic	2	3	.400	Mid-American	2	3	.400																																																											
Atlantic Coast	4	7	.364	Sun Belt	1	2	.333	Big 12	2	5	.286																																																															
BASKETBALL				National Basketball Association				Eastern Conference				Atlantic Division																																																														
Toronto	24	10	.706	—	Brooklyn	16	18	.471	8	Boston	11	21	.344	12	Philadelphia	5	28	.152	18½	New York	5	32	.135	20½																																																		
Southeast Division				W L Pct GB				Atlanta				26	8	.765	—	Washington	23	11	.676	3	Miami	15	20	.429	11½	Oriando	13	24	.351	14½	Charlotte	12	24	.333	15																																							
Central Division				W L Pct GB				Pittsburgh				24	10	.55	118	94																																																										
TRANSACTIONS				BASEBALL				American League				ANSAS CITY ROYALS — Announced the retirement of vice president of baseball operations/assistant general manager Dean Taylor, who will continue as a consultant to baseball operations. Promoted J.J. Picollo to vice president/assistant general manager of player personnel; Rene Francisco to vice president/assistant general manager of major league; international operations and Scott Sharp to assistant general manager/baseball operations; Jin Wong to assistant gen-																																																														
				National Hockey League				Atlantic Division				W L OT Pts GF GA				Montreal				26	11	2	54	108	89	Tampa Bay	25	12	4	54	134	108	Detroit	20	10	9	49	109	99	Toronto	21	16	3	45	130	122	Boston	19	15	6	44	104	108	Florida	17	11	9	43	87	97	Ottawa	16	15	7	39	102	105	Buffalo	14	23	3	31	77	136
				Metropolitan Division				W L OT Pts GF GA																																																																		

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



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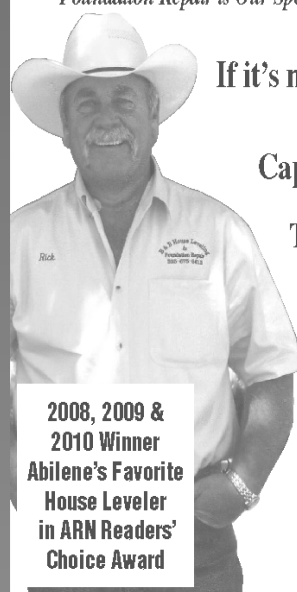
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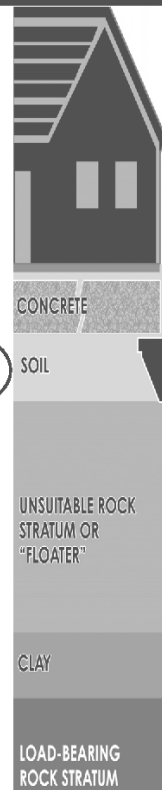
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Tomorrow's Horoscope

Story Moon

The Leo moon is a storyteller. She doesn't stick to the facts; she favors whichever version of the story is the most interesting. Exaggeration is to be expected, so don't be too literal -- it will only spoil the fun. Look for life's metaphors, because there is great value in them.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Take creative risks, but not financial ones. Don't believe what you hear from a salesperson: "Be like the 1 percent." Check the terms and conditions before you sign.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Keep going -- you're headed for a milestone. Someone is watching you and learning from your methods. Tonight, negotiate the fine line between rushing and doing things quickly.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll act in accordance with your clothes. Use this power to your advantage today, and dress the way you want yourself to behave. There's a large chunk of work to be done and a small amount of time in which to do it.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Counterintuitive methods could be very effective. It's one of those times when you may have to lose to win or drop out in order to gain ground. A certain someone is proving to be a friend, dear and true.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Practice positive thinking. A sunny attitude will reduce your overall stress level and

help you stay focused on your top priorities. The afternoon will bring a nifty professional development.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Dive in and do the hard work. As you focus on your career, things will automatically get better in your relationships, too. Tonight, you'll gain the upper hand in a situation that felt out of control.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You don't have to settle. If you dare to hold out for something grand -- something resembling the books you have read and the fantasy life of your daydreams -- you won't be disappointed

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Though you have a wealth of experience in the world, there are ways in which you are still innocent. It will be apparent to you how much you have to learn, and the day will bring a good teacher, too.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The holidays were great for your spirits, but not for your bank balance. It's an excellent time to do some financial planning for the year ahead. You will make your goals quietly and let your actions speak to them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Make a game out of the more tedious aspects of work. Because you are so good at creating fun, people want to be around you. There will be someone you need to forgive tonight.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Someone who has taken a ride on the roller coaster of love will be able to appreciate your impressive emotional evenness as you overlook minor grievances in favor of the big picture.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March

20). You'll put in more work than the others on your team. It's not fair, but it's what's necessary for the group win. Note: Gossip will be harmful. Stay away from it if you can. You won't be able to trust what you hear.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 6). Your life is alive with possibility. It's as though fate has agreed to step back and let you write your own story. Because you embrace imperfection this month, people feel they can open up and get close to you. A tired habit will just fall away effortlessly in March. April brings stylish updates. Cancer and Scorpio people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 3, 22, 24 and 11.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTIONS: "I have fallen out of favor with

my husband's family. I didn't cheat on my husband, borrow money or make some thoughtless social mistake. Here's what I did: I gained weight. In his family, you can commit a lot of sins. You can be a thief, a drug addict or even an adulterer, as long as you don't do something as unthinkable as getting fat. Did I say they are vain and shallow? I can't stand the fact that they are burning up the phone lines talking about how despicably huge I've become. What advice do you have for a Sagittarius who wants to lose weight?"

How dreadful! But forget about them, and do this for you. Chances are, the reason you gained weight in the first place is because you are more focused on caring for those around you than

you are on caring for yourself. Furthermore, Sagittarius, the sign of expansion, doesn't like making cutbacks. Your best bet is to think in terms of what you're adding to your life by getting healthy. Add exercise that's fun and that you can look forward to. Add healthy new recipes and a commitment to making yourself happy in ways that don't involve food.

CELEBRITY PROFILES: His beloved characters Mr. Bean and Johnny English and others have made him an international superstar and among the highest paid actors in Britain.

Rowan Atkinson was born when the sun and Mercury were in Capricorn, the sign of ambition, social standing and business savvy. His natal Jupiter and Uranus in Cancer indicates that Atkinson's comedy was developed in defense of a sensitive soul.

If you would like to write to Holiday Mathis, please go to www.creators.com and click on "Write the Author" on the Holiday Mathis page, or you may send her a postcard in the mail. To find out more about Holiday Mathis and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Sudoku Answer On Page 6

sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box.

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

All's Fair in Love and War

North dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH		EAST	
♠ K 4 3		♠ A 10 9 5 2	
♥ K Q 6 2		♥ —	
♦ K 6 2		♦ A 9 7 4	
♣ J 9 6		♣ 10 7 5 4	
WEST		SOUTH	
♠ Q J 8 7 6		♠ —	
♥ J 8 7		♥ A 10 9 5 4 3	
♦ 10		♦ Q J 8 5 3	
♣ A K Q 3		♣ 8 2	

The bidding:
North 1 NT 2♣ 2 NT 4♣
East Pass 5♥ Dbld
South Pass 5♥ Dbld
West Pass 5♥ Dbld
Opening lead — king of clubs.

There are players who indulge regularly in deceptive bidding. There is nothing wrong with this style if the practitioner can point to more successes than failures over the long haul.

The danger inherent in making such bids is that all too often the deceptive bidder misleads his partner instead of the opponents. Nevertheless, there are occasions when a well-calculated deceptive move can pay big dividends while running very lit-

tle risk of luring partner into a critical mistake.

Consider the present deal, where Edith Freilich (formerly Kemp) held the South hand. Her partner opened one notrump, indicating 12 to 14 points in the partnership methods, and East overcalled with two spades.

Mrs. Freilich felt that East-West were very likely to make at least a game in spades, so she did not see much point in making a routine bid of three hearts. Instead she decided to bid two notrump, ostensibly showing some spade strength, in the hope of discouraging her opponents from persisting in spades.

As it happened, West had much too good a hand to bid less than four spades, but when this came around to Mrs. Freilich, she bid five hearts. West then elected to take the safe course by doubling, and that ended the bidding. West led the K-Q-A of clubs, and five hearts doubled eventually went down one — 100 points.

Even if West had led or shifted to his singleton diamond and gotten a ruff, Mrs. Freilich would still have gone down only two — 300 points. This would also have been an excellent result, considering that East-West could have scored 480 or 980 points by bidding a game or slam in spades.

Tomorrow: Case of the telltale deuce.

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Annie's Mailbox

Dear Annie: My lifelong friend "Georgia" has a 7-year-old son who frequently plays with my 6-year-old. Georgia and her husband are divorced and share custody. The problem is, I fear her son is being exposed to things that are not appropriate for his age. He plays adult video games, and both parents allow him to watch frightening, sexually suggestive adult TV shows. The boy has made several inappropriate comments and gestures to me. The father doesn't seem to notice.

I do not want my son exposed to any of this. But I also want to help Georgia's son, as I feel this could have damaging long-term effects. My son adores this boy and gets upset when I try to discourage interaction between them. Georgia lives nearby, and when her son is at her house, it is difficult to keep them apart. Any advice? -- Growing Up Way Too Fast

Dear Growing: Some single parents are so overwhelmed with parenting responsibilities and guilt about the separation that they set no boundaries for their children. They think this makes the child happy, but in reality, it undermines the child's level of security -- if Mommy and Daddy don't care what he does, does that mean they don't love him?

Please talk to Georgia. Tell her that these things are inappropriate for her son and it makes it difficult for you to allow

him to play with your child. But ultimately, you cannot control what Georgia does. You can only explain to your son that these things will not be tolerated by you. Do not let him go to Georgia's home without your supervision. When the children are with you, make sure they are not playing R-rated video games or watching adult programming. And limit contact when you can.

Dear Annie: I am always being compared to my older sister. I am 14, and whenever I get bad grades, they always say, "Be more like your sister."

I hate it and am sick and tired of it. No one understands. I try my best, but I still get compared to her. What do I do? -- Desperate for Answers

Dear Desperate: Many parents like to compare their children, although we have yet to see any positive results come from that. The kids are more likely to resent each other, as well as their parents. Is there a school counselor or favorite teacher you can talk to about this? What about an adult relative or neighbor? It would help for you to discuss this with someone who can be understanding and who also might be willing to talk to your parents about it.

Dear Annie: I would like to add to your response to "Actively Confused," whose wife had cancer and now resents her husband's activities.

In my 45 years as a

hospital chaplain, I have known many people who accept and adjust to life-threatening illness, often in quite surprising and courageous fashion. Others view themselves as victims or seek "secondary gain" through their illness. This is not a judgment on them. They, like "Actively Confused's" wife, are dealing with their situation the best way they know.

Your suggestion that they speak to her oncologist is a good start. But she and her husband also need education, counseling and support. Some oncologists have social workers and counselors on their staffs. Some make referrals to chaplains or to peer support groups. This couple could benefit from guidance that will help them become active fighters, advocates for themselves and teammates in the treatment process.

Keep up your good work, Annie. You are a godsend for those who reach out to you. -- Chaplain Jack

Dear Chaplain Jack: Thank you for the kind words and the excellent addition to our advice.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please email your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 737 3rd Street, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254. To find out more about Annie's Mailbox and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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- Aunt Sue found a dining room table...

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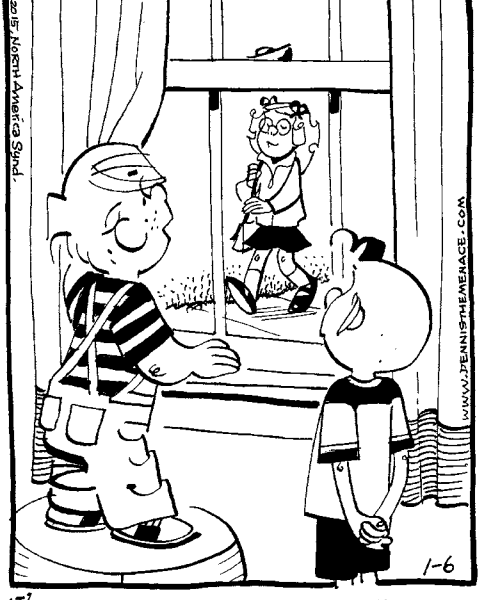
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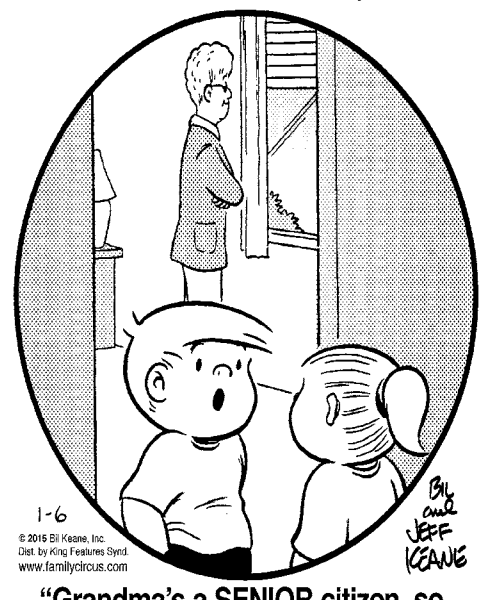
	KMID (3) Midland	UNI (4) Spanish	KPEJ (5) Odessa	KOSA (7) Odessa	KTLE (8) Telemundo	KWES (9) Midland	WTBS (11) Atlanta	KMLM (12) Odessa	KPBT (13) Odessa	KWWT (14) Odessa	DISC (20) Discovery	AMC (21) Classics	SPIKE (22) Spike TV	TNT (23) Atlanta	BET (26) Black Ent.	DISN (27) Disney	ESPN2 (28) Sports	ESPN (29) Sports
5:PM :30	News ABC	P. Luche	Two Men	News CBS	Tele	News	Seinfeld	Justice	Focus	CHIps	Moonshiners	Cartier, Hood Brown	Ink Master	Castle (DVS)	Husbands	Girl	Around	SportsCenter
6:PM :30	Jeopardy!	Notic. La Gata (SS)	Big Bang	News	Noticiero	News	Seinfeld	Called	Business	Moonshiners	Moonshiners	Ink Master	Castle (DVS)	Madea's Big Happy Family	Good Luck Jes.	College Basketball	College Basketball: Arkansas at Georgia.	
7:PM :30	Agent Carter	Mi Corazón Es Tuyo	MasterChef	NCIS (DVS)	Los Miserales (SS)	Parks/Recreat	Big Bang	Upd	Klondike Gold	Griffith Griffith	Moonshiners: Outlaw	Movie: Jurassic Park, Jeff Goldblum	Ink Master	Movie: The Dark Knight Rises, Tom Hardy (DVS)	Jessie	College Basketball	College Basketball	
8:PM :30	Agent Carter	Hasta el Fin	New Girl	NCIS: New Orleans	Tierra de Reyes (SS)	Marry Me	Big Bang	Light of the Southwest	Ripley: Believe	Cheers	Frontline	Taxi	Framework		Husbands	I Didn't		
9:PM :30	Forever	La Malquerida (SS)	Mod Fam	Person of Interest	Señora Acero (SS)	Chicago Fire	Ground	Cougar	Conan	With Scholars	Charlie Rose	C. Burnett	Moonshiners	Movie: Van Helsing, Richard Roxburgh	Framework	Husbands	Rebels	Basket
10:PM :30	News	Impacto	Cleveland	News	Tele	News	Conan	Conan	With Scholars	Charlie Rose	C. Burnett	Moonshiners	Movie: The Dark Knight, Aaron Eckhart (DVS)	Framework	Husbands	ANT Farm	NBA	SportsCenter
11:PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	La Que No	How I Met	Letterman	Titulares	Tonight Show	Ground	Ministerios	T. Smiley	T. Smiley	McCloud	Moonshiners	Framework	Wendy Williams	Good	NFL Live	SportsCenter	
12:AM :30	Extra	Amorito Corazón	TMZ	The Late Late Show	Señora Acero (SS)	News	Cougar	Chevalme	Upd	Clash of the Ozarks	Clash of the Ozarks	Clash of the Ozarks	Framework	The Real	Deck	SportsNation	SportsCenter	
1:AM :30	Paid	Alma	Law & Order: SVU	Ent	Paid	De'siões	Movie: Shrek 2	Light of the Southwest	Gallery	Clash of the Ozarks	Clash of the Ozarks	Movie: Friday Night	Bar Rescue	Husbands	Wizards	College Football:	SportsCenter	

DENNIS THE MENACE



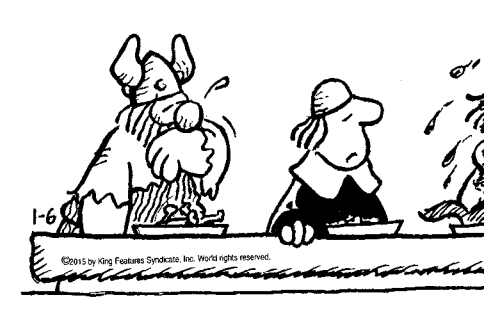
"I'll bet when the stork brought Margaret, he was glad to get rid of her."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

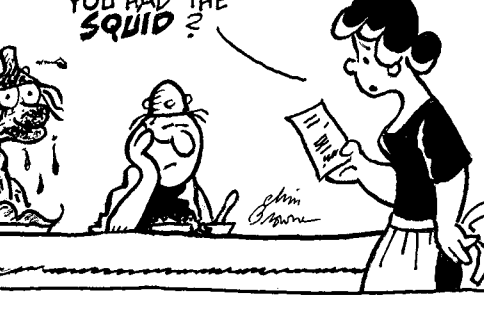


"Grandma's a SENIOR citizen, so that makes us JUNIOR citizens."

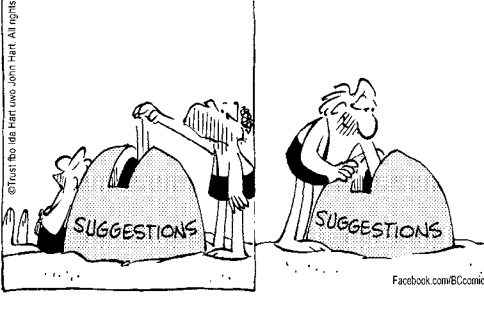
HAGAR



WHICH OF YOU HAD THE SQUID?



BC



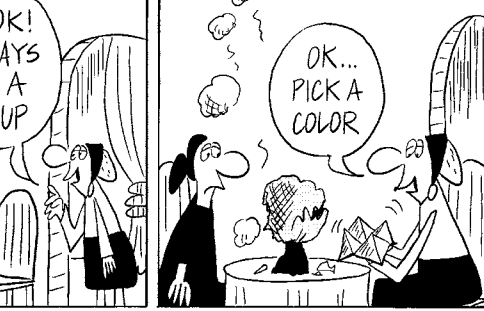
WIZARD OF ID



AGNES



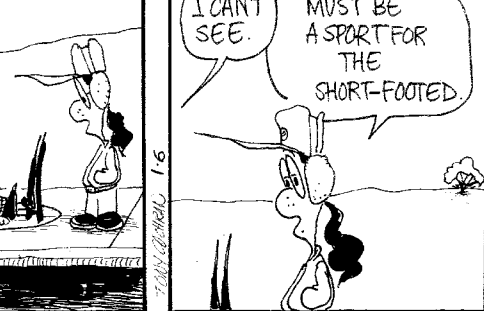
HI AND LOIS



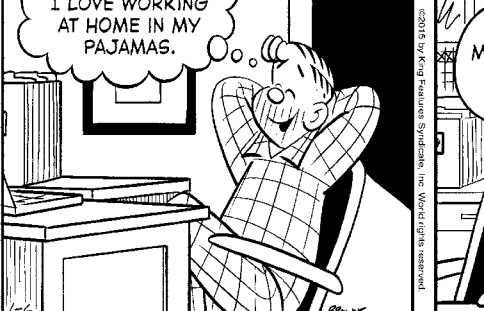
THE OTHER COAST



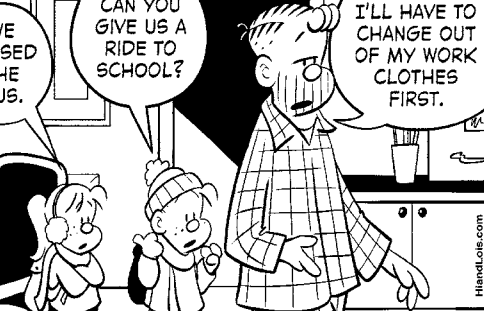
SNUFFY SMITH



BETLE BAILEY



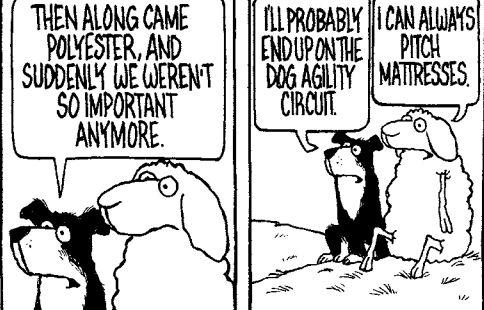
BEETLE BAILEY



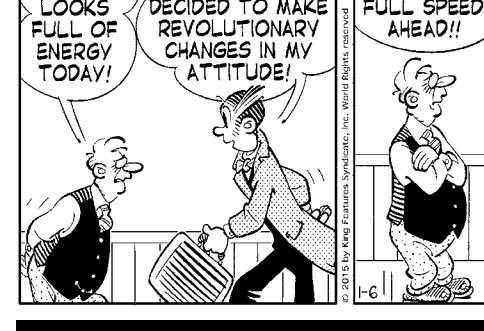
HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS, ROCKY?



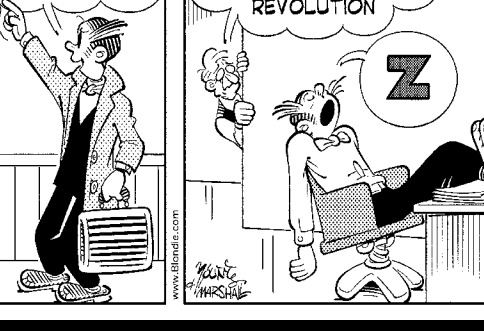
WHAT DID YOU DO THEN?



BLONDIE



IT'S GONNA BE A QUIET REVOLUTION



This Date In History

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 6, the sixth day of 2015. There are 359 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 6, 1540, England's King Henry VIII married his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves. (The marriage lasted about six months.) On this date: In 1759, George Washington and Martha Dandridge Custis were married in New Kent County, Virginia. In 1838, Samuel Morse and Alfred Vail gave the first successful public demonstration of their telegraph in Morristown, New Jersey. In 1912, New Mexico became the 47th state. In 1919, the 26th president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, died in Oyster Bay, New York, at age 60. In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his State of the Union address, outlined a goal of "Four Freedoms": Freedom of speech and expression; the freedom of people to worship God in their own way; freedom from want; freedom from fear. In 1945, George Herbert Walker Bush married Barbara Pierce at the First Presbyterian Church in Rye, New York. In 1950, Britain recognized the Communist government of China. In 1963, "Oliver!," Lionel Bart's musical adaptation of the Charles Dickens novel "Oliver Twist," opened on Broadway. "Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom" premiered on NBC-TV.

Answer to previous puzzle

AGED	HAMS	PANAM
CARE	ATOP	EMITS
EVIL	ROPE	DIGIT
SEEL	MANEW	LIGHT
USED EGO		
ALIENS	JAR	FAA
LOLL	THESE	EBB
LOOK	THE	OTHERWAY
ESS	RUNGS	BETS
YET	END	SPIRES
TNC NAPE		
WATCH	LIKE	EAHAWK
MARSH	ACRE	IRON
CRIME	SHOD	TILE
CEDES	HENS	SAFE

Newsday Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Stock up on
 - 6 Admiral or corporal
 - 10 Rolling stone's lack
 - 14 Big brawl
 - 15 Skin-cream ingredient
 - 16 Lake bordering Buffalo
 - 17 Water vapor
 - 18 Evening, in ads
 - 19 Give up, as rights
 - 20 Very low-temperature
 - 23 Additionally
 - 26 Top-rated
 - 27 Make less difficult
 - 28 Take back, as a statement
 - 30 ___ and crafts
 - 32 All possible
 - 33 Boot bottom
 - 35 Three-stripe soldier: Abbr.
 - 38 It makes winter temperatures seem colder
 - 42 Superlative suffix
 - 43 Whirlpool
 - 44 Crescent moon, for instance
 - 45 Sheet of glass
 - 47 Steak selections
 - 48 Lasting mark
 - 50 Wild hog
 - 53 Poems of praise
 - 54 Slight winter precipitation
 - 57 Trash containers
 - 58 Soprano's solo
 - 59 Show the ropes to
 - 63 Region
 - 64 Snooty person
- DOWN**
- 1 Mornings: Abbr.
 - 2 Was introduced to
 - 3 Pub beverage
 - 4 Coastal region
 - 5 "Half" prefix for final
 - 6 Moved quickly toward
 - 7 Extraterrestrial
 - 8 "Just kidding"
 - 9 On an even ___ (steady)
 - 10 Major tourist draws
 - 11 Black-and-white cookies
 - 12 Move laterally
 - 13 Bird-feeder food
 - 21 Body art, for short
 - 22 Up to now
 - 23 "___ there yet?"
 - 24 Big name in blue jeans
 - 25 Aroma
 - 29 The Big Apple: Abbr.
 - 31 Touchdown caller, for short
 - 33 Whiskers near the ears
 - 34 Ancient
 - 35 Leave one's chair
 - 36 Pay a visit to
 - 37 Lock of hair
 - 39 Barnyard bird
 - 40 Police alert: Abbr.
 - 41 Eager volunteer's shout
 - 45 Plays with, like a kitten
 - 46 Barking sound
 - 47 Prefix for angle or cycle
 - 48 Catch in a trap
 - 49 Ice-cream holders
 - 51 Hunter constellation
 - 52 Typical Kuwaitis
 - 54 Read electronically
 - 55 Young lady abbr.
 - 56 List-shortening abbr.
 - 60 24-hr. bank device
 - 61 Pigeon sound
 - 62 Sweetie

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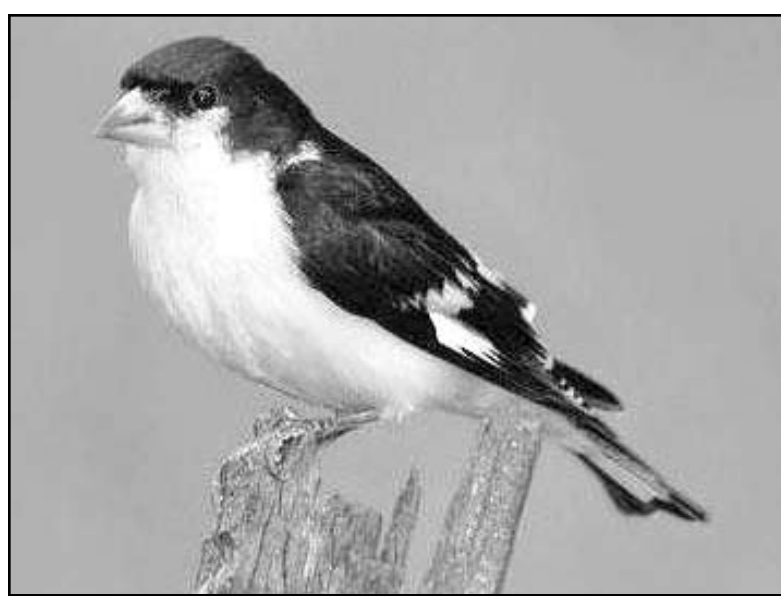
Bird Poop:

A memory lighter than a whisper

In our first year as newcomers to the neighborhood, we discovered trees and yards were rife with birds. Not only were seasonal changes colorful in the leaves provided by red oaks, mulberries, and pecans. Avian travelers sought them as a winter haven.



BEBE McCASLAND



With a conical bill, a lesser goldfinch loves sunflowers, burr thistles, ragweed, and grasses for the seeds they offer. Only four inches long, it weighs less than an ounce.

From a man only blocks away came a phone call in early January. On the way to pick up his morning paper, he had noticed a yellow and black bird standing in his driveway. After saying it wouldn't fly, he asked if he could bring it to us. As it rested in my

hand, I marveled at the delicate layering of its feathers. Reminding me of sculpted porcelain, the male lesser goldfinch was the epitome of nature's artistic bent. Above, from head to tail, he was a glossy black. With his vibrant yellow chest and belly,

and white patches accenting his black wings and tail, he was a striking adult.

My questioning the presence of any windows near the bird led to the man's telling me his Suburban had been parked in the driveway. In its undulating flight,

the goldfinch may have hit the reflection of trees presented by the man's vehicle. It was unlikely, however, that we would ever know exactly what had happened.

Recovery would depend upon the health of the bird and a quiet environment. Undisturbed, it would be offered moistened cat chow, Niger seeds, mealworms, and water. Equipped with perches of varying heights, its long enclosure would allow exercise once it regained its senses.

After several hours, we found the goldfinch on the food dish. Upon spotting us, he flew

to the highest perch. Obviously, he totally resented our assistance. Checking weather reports, we were assured temperatures would remain stable. Released in our backyard the next day, our active guest readily took flight.

During the rest of winter, the little finch could daily access feeders, or hunt undeveloped lots in our neighborhood for seeds discarded by dry grasses and weeds. With the onset of spring-like weather, it might take small, emerging caterpillars, flies, beetles, wasps and bees. With the bud-out of awakening trees, the goldfinch would not be able to resist their tempting petals.

In many old bird books, the lesser goldfinch was referred to as a "Mexican canary." However, no longer do

some members of this specie migrate to Mexico, Central, or South America. It is now considered to be a resident in some parts of Texas.

Twenty-six years later, we occasionally see or hear a lesser goldfinch in our neighborhood. Vacant lots have disappeared with new housing. While the specie's numbers have diminished locally, reports from the eastern part of the county are encouraging.

Memories of the little bird had been a lesson in the intricacies of nature. Through our sense of touch we had confirmed the lesser goldfinch didn't seem to weigh as much as a whisper.

Bebe McCasland is author of The Scoop from Bird Poop. She is federally and state licensed to rehabilitate wild birds.

What reindeer do the rest of the year

Christmas time is now over but during the season we are constantly reminded about the animals that pull Santa's sleigh. But other than their sled-pulling capabilities, and those with red noses, what do you really know about the special and interesting animals we call reindeer?



DARRELL RYAN

Are you aware that reindeer and caribou are the same animal?

At one time the European or Asian reindeer and American Caribou were considered to be different species, but now they are considered one and the same.

They have been divided

into two major groups, the tundra and the woodland reindeer.

They are further divided into subspecies, with some scientists articulating as many as 13 different varieties.

The Arctic Reindeer is now an extinct subspecies.

Reindeer comes from an Old Norse word "hreinin," which means "horned animal." Caribou is based on the French word for "snow shoveler," which refers to the animal's habit of digging through the snow for food.

Reindeer are ideally designed for life in hostile, cold environments, and even though life in the tundra is hard, reindeer have been given enhancements that have prepared them for this life; their noses are specially adapted to warm the air they breathe before it enters their lungs and to condense water

in the air, which they then use to keep their mucous membranes moist.

Their fur traps air, which not only helps provide them with excellent insulation, but also keeps them buoyant in water, which is critical because they often travel across massive rivers and lakes while migrating. Also their hooves have been created differently. When the ground is wet in the summer time, their foot pads are softened, providing them with extra traction, but in the winter the pads tighten and provide traction in the slippery snow and ice.

Not all reindeer migrate, but many of those who do will travel further than any other migrating terrestrial mammal. A few populations of North American reindeer travel more than 3,100 miles per year, covering around 23 miles per day.

At their top speed, these reindeer can run 50 miles per hour and swim at 6.2 miles per hour. During spring, the migration herds range from 50,000 to 500,000 individuals, but during the winter the groups are much smaller as the reindeer have entered mating season and competition between the bucks begins to split up the crowds.

Like many herd animals, the calves quickly learn to walk, and within 90 minutes of being born, a baby reindeer can already run.

It is also interesting that all reindeer grow antlers, male and female, but they lose their antlers at different times of the year; the males lose their antlers in winter or spring, and females shed theirs in the summer. There are some species of female reindeer that do not grow antlers, but the majority of them do.

And, as in most animal species, the male is much larger than the female. It has recently been discovered that reindeer are the only mammals that can see ultraviolet light. Human vision cuts off at wavelengths around 400 nm, but reindeers can see up to 320 nm. This range only covers the part of the spectrum we can see with the help of a black light, but it is still enough to help reindeer see things in the glowing white of the Arctic that they would otherwise miss.

Something such as white fur which may be impossible for humans to see in the snow show up in high contrast for reindeer vision. So therefore, it may not be imperative for Santa to use Rudolph after all.

Darrell Ryan is director of school safety for Big Spring Independent School District.

Odds and ends

Woman sues over use of her school photo on novelty flask

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — A New Mexico woman is suing a novelty products maker over a flask that includes her likeness and the phrase, "I'm going to be the most popular girl in rehab."

The Santa Fe New Mexican reports Veronica Vigil alleges in her federal court that Anne Taintor Inc. obtained and used her high school graduation picture from 1970 without her permission.

The lawsuit says the Brooklyn, New York-based company then defamed Vigil by linking her image

to a product that makes light of substance abuse.

Court documents say the Chimayo, New Mexico, resident is an active church member and doesn't consume alcohol or drugs.

The lawsuit seeks an unspecified amount of compensatory and punitive damages.

Discarded Christmas trees a vitamin-filled treat for goats

WESTBROOK, Maine (AP) — Christmas trees can be enjoyed long after they are discarded by a family. They're a great source of vitamin C — for

goats.

A Maine farm is extending an invitation to residents who don't know what to do with their discarded trees.

Hillary Knight, the barnyard manager at Smiling Hill Farm in Westbrook, Maine, says the farm's goats are more than happy to eat the trees.

She says it's a win-win. Humans can recycle their trees and the goats get a treat.

She tells WCSH-TV it's like humans eating oranges dipped in chocolate — a treat with health benefits.

So far, 200 trees have been donated.

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We are seeking teams (of 4 people any age) ready to take part and lose weight in January, February, March and April competing to claim **“The Best Loser” Spring Title and A Grand Prize Worth \$500 - \$1,000*!**

If you are ready to start losing weight, sign up for **The Best Loser Spring Challenge!**

We are seeking teams (of 4 people any age) ready to take part in this fitness/lifestyle change, and compete for Grand Prize! Team fee \$60 (Only \$15.00 per person).

• Team photos and updates will be published. Here you'll be able to follow along with the progress of each team, and see how your team measures up. These specials will be published January 28, March 15, April 29th.

• We will only provide your team's **total percentage** of weight loss, not individuals.

• At the end of the 3-month program, the winning team will be determined by the highest percentage of weight lost, and receive the “Grand Prize”.

• Contest prizes determined on number of teams.

• To join the **Best Loser Spring Challenge**, fill out the form below and return to us with your \$60 entry fee, Cash Only, No later than **January 16, 2015**.



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JANUARY 16, 2015**

(TEAM PHOTO MUST BE TAKEN, ENTRY FEE MUST BE TURNED IN AND YOU MUST WEIGH IN BY THIS DATE TO QUALIFY FOR CHALLENGE)

Sign us up for the Best Loser Challenge!

Team Name (Be Creative) _____
email: _____

Team Captain 1: _____ phone: _____

Team Member 2: _____ phone: _____

Team Member 3: _____ phone: _____

Team Member 4: _____ phone: _____

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