

Power of a touch

I read a story recently (author unknown) that was great and I thought you'd enjoy it, too. Some stories are just too good to pass up. It seems a little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he saw an elderly man who was sitting in the park just feeding some pigeons. The boy sat

down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the man looked hungry, so he offered him a Twinkie. The man gratefully accepted it and smiled at boy. His smile was so pleasant that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, the man smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the man and gave him a hug. The

man gave him his biggest smile ever. When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? God's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!" The elderly man also returned to his home. His son was stunned by the radiant joy and look of peace on his face and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." However,

Parent's Corner

before his son responded, he radiant with joy, added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected." Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, whether for a season, or a lifetime. We should learn to appreciate them and embrace them all equally.

Darrell Ryan is director of federal programs for the Big Spring Independent School District.



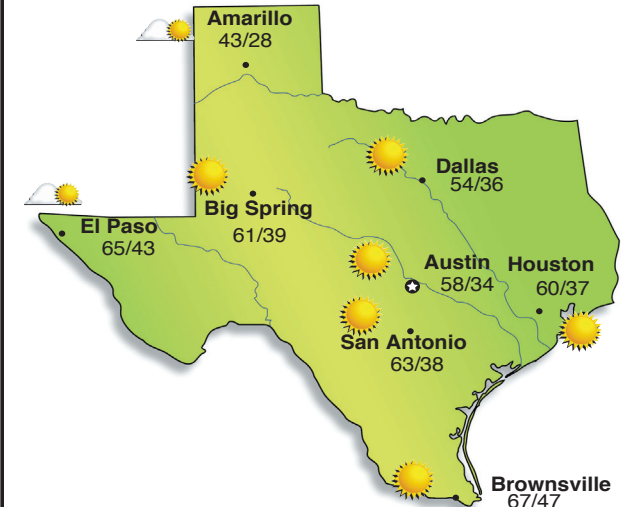
DARRELL RYAN

Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast

Sat 12/18	Sun 12/19	Mon 12/20	Tue 12/21	Wed 12/22
61/39 Mainly sunny. High 61F. Winds S at 5 to 10 mph.	76/46 Mainly sunny. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the mid 40s.	83/47 Mainly sunny. Highs in the low 80s and lows in the upper 40s.	69/37 Sunshine. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the upper 30s.	70/38 Mainly sunny. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the upper 30s.
Sunrise: 7:41 AM Sunset: 5:44 PM	Sunrise: 7:42 AM Sunset: 5:44 PM	Sunrise: 7:43 AM Sunset: 5:45 PM	Sunrise: 7:43 AM Sunset: 5:45 PM	Sunrise: 7:44 AM Sunset: 5:46 PM

Texas At A Glance



Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Abilene	54	40	mst sunny	Kingsville	67	42	sunny
Amarillo	43	28	pt sunny	Livingston	57	31	sunny
Austin	58	34	sunny	Longview	54	33	sunny
Beaumont	58	35	pt sunny	Lubbock	52	35	mst sunny
Brownsville	67	47	sunny	Lufkin	57	32	sunny
Brownwood	57	36	sunny	Midland	61	42	mst sunny
Corpus Christi	63	43	sunny	Raymondville	68	45	sunny
Corsicana	54	35	sunny	Rosenberg	60	35	sunny
Dallas	54	36	sunny	San Antonio	63	38	sunny
Del Rio	63	39	mst sunny	San Marcos	59	34	sunny
El Paso	65	43	pt sunny	Sulphur Springs	53	35	sunny
Fort Stockton	66	45	mst sunny	Sweetwater	56	40	mst sunny
Gainesville	51	32	sunny	Tyler	53	33	sunny
Greenville	52	32	sunny	Weatherford	52	33	sunny
Houston	60	37	sunny	Wichita Falls	50	33	mst sunny

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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.

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

www.sudoku-puzzles.net

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Test Your Play

1. You, West, are in Six Spades, and North leads the king of clubs. How would you play the hand?

West East
 ♠ A Q J 10 9 8 ♠ 5 2
 ♥ A Q J ♥ K 10 8
 ♦ A Q J ♦ 9 7 4
 ♣ 6 ♣ A J 8 4 3

2. You, West, are declarer at Six Hearts, and North leads the queen of spades. How would you play the hand? (Assume that the trumps are divided 3-2.)

West East
 ♠ A K ♠ 7
 ♥ K Q J 5 ♥ A 10 9 3
 ♦ A 9 8 6 2 ♦ K J 10 4
 ♣ A Q ♣ 9 6 5 3

1. You have only two entries to dummy, so you will be able to take only two finesses. The question, therefore, is whether it is better, after taking the ace of clubs, to finesse in trumps or diamonds. It is true that South might have either king, and to that extent either finesse has a 50-50 chance of winning. But insofar as making the contract is concerned, you are much better off trying the diamond finesse.

If the diamond finesse wins, your

worries are over, because your next move will be to play the ace and another trump, planning to repeat the diamond finesse later. If the diamond finesse loses at trick two, you can still get home safely if South started with the singleton or doubleton king of spades.

The decisive factor is that a trump finesse at trick two does not necessarily make the slam even if it succeeds, because South might have four or five trumps to the king, while the diamond finesse virtually guarantees the slam if South has the king.

2. Draw three rounds of trumps and cash the ace of spades, discarding a club from dummy. Then play a diamond to the king, and if both opponents follow suit, the contract is assured. Continue with the jack and, if South follows low, finesse.

If the jack wins, you make at least 12 tricks, while if it loses, the slam is still certain, since North must next either return a club into your A-Q or hand you a ruff-and-discard.

If South shows out on the jack of diamonds, you are still in good shape. Simply win the jack with the ace and concede a diamond to North, forcing him to make the same losing return.

Tomorrow: An ounce of prevention.

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