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# SENIOR NEWS & LIVING

Monthly

## ONE YEAR TO LIVE

One Man's Story of Surviving the Storm

Story on page 2

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# ONE YEAR TO LIVE

Story and photos by Ann Brock, staff writer

## *How one man's enduring Hope and Faith has carried him and his family through a major life storm*

**Editor's Note:** This story contains excerpts from an article Robert Boese wrote about his experiences for the Christian Leader Magazine in March, 2020.

The morning sun has just beamed over the horizon, spreading its vibrant rays of light over the rich, fertile farmland in Corn, Oklahoma. The fields of ripening wheat are softly swaying in the wind as it graces the landscape that will soon turn to gold for the coming harvest. The livestock dots the pastures from afar, stirring in anticipation of the dawn of a new day. The baby calves run and leap—a sign of new life and hope. The birds are singing, and the doves are mourning as their songs ascend to their Maker in adoration and perfect praise.

Life can be so unpredictable at times. It's amazing how quickly things can change, sadly without any warning. One day you wake up and all is well. The next day, however, can be quite a different story. Robert and his family have personally experienced the unexpected in their lives. Like a curve ball, they never saw it coming. The good news is Robert never struck out..... he is still in the game..... and running bases! Consequently, it has forever changed them and the way they look at life.

*"I can't believe I'll probably be dead in less than a year," I kept saying to myself as I mowed the lawn that late summer afternoon.*

*On the evening of August 14, 2017, I was sitting at my computer. My elbows were propped up on my desk and my hands were supporting my chin, when I felt a strange lump on the side of my neck with my thumb. I found it concerning enough to tell my wife, Julie, who thought I should have it seen by our family doctor. Just a few days previously, our family had spent a day at the lake. I had been wakeboarding and tubing and had some pretty wicked wipeouts. I thought this lump could be attributed to overdoing it a bit.*

*I decided to see our family physician, who advised me to watch it for two weeks. After waiting one week, the lump seemed to be getting larger, so I had an ultrasound and a needle biopsy. Two days later, my fears were realized, I had some type of malignancy in my lymph node and needed surgery to remove it. The morning of the surgery, August 29, 2017, my pastor texted me a verse, Deuteronomy 31:8; "The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged." This verse became my comfort in the storm, and I kept repeating it in my mind.*

*While I was still under anesthesia, the*



Julie and Robert Boese

*surgeon informed Julie that the lymph node was completely black, indicating melanoma. He said melanoma is a skin cancer and for it to have gotten into the lymph nodes, it had to have metastasized (spread) from the skin to other areas of the body. A chest x-ray revealed additional tumors in my lungs. It was now considered to be Stage 4 Metastatic Melanoma. An oncologist confirmed the diagnosis with a prognosis of six months to one year.*

*We called our children and invited them for supper the following day to tell them the news. Each of them responded differently, but by the end of the evening they were all sharing memories; there was a lot of laughter and crying in the room. Julie read a devotion that a friend had just shared with her. It talked about how God who created and knit us together in the womb, is continuing to stitch together each area of our lives; fulfilling His purpose for our lives. God was comforting us in our hour of need.*

*I wanted to make sure that Julie and our kids knew about the farms and cattle I took care of. Since Julie had own full-time career as a pharmacist, she didn't have firsthand knowledge about my business. One Sunday afternoon our entire family loaded up in our suburban and I drove them around to explain the ins and outs of each farm and the cattle. Julie was voice recording me on her phone and taking notes as the kids asked a lot of questions, tentatively delegating each task to one another. God gave me peace that it would all work out. I asked a missionary friend to speak at my funeral and even talked to a*

*friend about someone who might make a good future husband for Julie.*

*Sunday, September 3, 2017, our Senior Pastor was out of town. We shared my diagnosis with the Youth Pastor that morning and he shared it with our church. After the message, he asked our family to go up front. Our church gathered around and laid hands on me; many prayed out loud. It was very emotional; the moment was spirit-filled and awe-inspiring.*

*I read a quote awhile back that struck me and became quite a truth in my life. It went like this, "When you find out you don't have long to live, your priorities change, and your boldness level goes way up." I began an ongoing personal prayer for opportunities to share my faith. I started then and continue now to make it my mission to look for people who need a touch from Jesus. I don't pass a hitchhiker without stopping. I talk to anyone who will listen. I have a testimony to share! It is amazing how God is leading me and opens my eyes to people in need.*

*I was referred to an oncologist, who after seeing my PET scan results, informed us that I was lit up like a Christmas tree. The cancer was in the lymphatic system throughout my body and had also spread to my lungs, spleen and an adrenal gland. She recommended immunotherapy. Her protocol was to infuse two medications through a central port, which I got that afternoon. One puts a tag on the cancer cells and the other boosts the immune system to attack those tagged tumor cells.*

*My first treatment was September 18, 2017. I felt fine for about a week but then started to feel like I had the flu, with a high fever. Blood work revealed my liver enzymes were super high. I was put on a high dose of steroids and after about a month, my liver enzymes finally went down, which was miraculous. I found out later that I was on the verge of stage 4 liver failure. My oncologist decided to discontinue one of the infusions, concluding that it boosted my immune system so much that it attacked my liver. I continued the other infusion every two weeks after that.*

*Nine weeks after my treatment and recovering from a life-threatening allergic reaction to one of the infused drugs, a PET scan revealed the number of tumors was already cut in half. Every nine weeks my tumors lessened.*

*In January 2018, only one stubborn active tumor remained on a lymph node in my abdomen. When subsequent scans showed activity had increased, my oncologist wanted to try radiation. We moved forward with 30 radiation*



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# ONE YEAR Continued from page 2

*treatments. Unfortunately, January 2019 scan showed there was no change. I am continuing my infusion every two weeks with PET scans every four months.*

It has now been almost eight years since Robert was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. That same year Robert and Julie became empty nesters, entering a new season of life that brought them even closer together. Over the years they’ve grown stronger as a family, cherishing every moment they’ve been given.

They have watched two sons graduate from college and step into careers they are both passionate about. Their daughter and other son each launched their own business. Robert has played an active and invaluable role in each of his children’s lives—offering business advice and support, lending a hand when trucks got stuck in the mud, giving guidance on fatherhood, listening through life’s struggles, helping fix vehicles, build homes, and simply being there.

Most of all, he has been a steady, Godly example of what it means to be a devoted father and grandfather. Two of their children have found the loves of their lives, and Robert had the joy and honor of walking their daughter down the aisle—a moment for which she was especially thankful.

They have welcomed four amazing grandchildren and have had the privilege of being closely involved in their lives. Robert, their beloved grandfather, babysits two to three days a week, and they absolutely adore him.

In the past year he and Julie downsized and built the home of their dreams. Last summer, they celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary surrounded by the beauty and adventure of the Hawaiian Islands.



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# Name Change Leads to Expanded Services

by Van Mitchell, staff writer

Formerly known as Brown Auction House, Gnome Home LLC, a real estate service company, has grown significantly and now offers a broader range of services to assist with estate liquidations.

“Our new name reflects this expansion and our ongoing commitment to getting the most value for your items,” Katy Jo Brown, Licensed Realtor ERA Courtyard said. “Whether you’re downsizing, relocating, or handling an estate, Gnome Home provides comprehensive solutions to ensure you maximize your returns.”

Brown said Gnome Home LLC specializes in helping homeowners prepare their properties for sale during major life transitions.

“We provide expert estate sale and auction services, with a particular focus on valuing antiques and vintage items to ensure clients maximize their returns,” she said. “By combining industry knowledge with a passion for preserving unique treasures, Gnome Home offers a seamless, stress-free experience for sellers looking to clear their homes while honoring their history.”

Brown said as her company evolved, she has as well.

“I got my real estate license in 2024, and we rebranded,” she said. “We wanted to have more of a brand that was more one full service and that was more client centric. Sometimes when you have an auction, sometimes it’s like the last option. We didn’t like feeling that way and we wanted to be able to have more of an angle. We help people prepare their real estate for sale or lease, and we do that by conducting professional auctions and professional estate sales.”

Brown said they also provide other services.

“We have everything removed that’s left over, and then we have the house cleaned so that basically the real estate agent can come in and take the photos.”

Brown said as their business expands, so does their expertise in valuing household items.

“We’ve got some experience with knowing certain brands from just our dealing with various items,” she said. “We find that our clients teach us so much. We are growing our network, what we call our Gnome Network, of people that buy random things. We utilize Google Lens that will basically look at whatever item it is and show us any other items that are on the internet that are similar and that are either for sale or have sold. So that gives us a price reference point for us to shoot for.”

Brown said they determine their costs by the estimated number of hours and labor for each sale.

“That helps us recoup our investment cost of what we put in to getting the sale ready. Then we have a commission split that we go anywhere from 35 to 45% on the additional sales above that mark,” she said.

Brown said leftover sale items is donated to the Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled.

Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled is a nonprofit social services organization established in 1960 that provides high quality and activity-oriented adult day health services for adults with specialized developmental needs in central Oklahoma.

“We work with an organization, the Oklahoman Foundation for the Disabled, and they have a resale store,” she said. “They will come and just pick up everything. It’s a great service, and it allows us not to have to pay to remove the items. They win in that they get to use the items in their resale store, and we win because we don’t have to have the client pay to have anything removed.”


Steve Ross, Executive Director of Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled said their partnership with Gnome Home helps the organization in two ways.

“The work program gives the participants a day job earning income.

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*Katy Jo Brown*



The pickups give in the job training for participants, and they partner with a resale shop where they make funds that go towards their programs,” Ross said.

Ross said he is excited about the partnership with Gnome Home and the partnership helps fill gaps in funding their programs.

Brown said her business is growing due to the number of referrals. “We are in the process of starting to hire people because we’re about to hit our max capacity with what we can do,” she said. “Right now, we are a family band. It is me, my fiancé, Kevin Stokes, and our son, Austin Stokes. We get everything done, set up in the evenings and on the weekends.”

Joanne Smith recently utilized Gnome Home in setting up an estate sale.

Brown said Smith had a medical emergency and could not live at home anymore and needed help selling her home and its contents. “She was excited she got the house sold,” Brown said. “We were not the real estate agent, but we helped with the estate sale. She (Smith) said we made the process easy, and she didn’t have to do anything.”

Brown said Gnome Home is a service company, in that they are preparing the house for sale.

“We can facilitate any part of that sale as well,” she said. “So, by either being the listing agent or we can also be more like the buyer’s agent. We can collect interest in the home if people are interested in buying the house, which often they are during an estate sale, even in auctions. We can facilitate the buy of the sale before it may even hit the market.”



Pictured middle, Katy Jo Brown, Licensed Realtor ERA Courtyard, left, her son Austin Stokes, and right, her fiancé Kevin Stokes.

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by Eddie Roach,  
VillagesOKC

# 50 years after jet ejection, veteran marks survival with

Larry Hillman, 79, was a pilot in the U.S. Air Force from 1968 to 1989, retiring with the rank of Major. During his career, he flew C-130 aircraft around the world from Thailand to Turkey in a wide variety of missions.

In Southeast Asia, he flew an Airborne Communications, Command, and Control mission over Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Upon returning stateside, he was an Acceptance Test Pilot for aircraft coming out of depot maintenance.

That's where this story begins. That fateful day when a test flight failed and he was ejected, landing roughly but safely.

Hillman wanted to commemorate his safe landing after being ejected during the test flight 50 years ago. He decided the best way was to jump from an airplane that was not crashing: to do a tandem skydive.

Skydiving was already on his wife's bucket list, so he and wife Nancy headed to Oklahoma Skydiving Center in Cushing to take the plunge. Both members of VillagesOKC, they are very active; this was just one of many adventures they have undertaken.

## Larry's account of the crash:

*It's been 50 years since I was thrown from an EB-57B Canberra over Alabama. I wasn't even supposed to be a regular on that aircraft. My main ride was the C-130, but I'd been assigned as an Acceptance Pilot in Birmingham, and we only had one qualified B-57 pilot, Captain Charlie Wiegrefe. So, I flew in the back seat, the one with no controls, to help with the test flights after heavy maintenance.*

*The jet had a new nickel-cadmium battery. We learned later, much like today's lithium-ion batteries, it had a nasty habit of overheating. Towards the end of what seemed like a successful one-hour test flight, I'd just told the factory we had "a winner" when Charlie yelled that circuit breakers were popping like firecrackers. Before I could offer any help, thick, brown smoke boiled up from behind my seat.*

*In a tandem-seat jet, the rear pilot has to eject first to avoid being incinerated by the front seat's rocket motor. The force of the exit was brutal. The microphone in*

*my mask was driven through my lower lip. The wind tore my arms from the seat, ripping my gloves off and shoving my hands into the rocket motor's flames.*

*The opening shock of the parachute was a sudden, violent stop. My gloves were gone, my hands were burned, and a few parachute lines had snapped. I drifted toward a field, narrowly avoiding a 10,000-volt power line, and landed hard in a pine tree. Fifty years on, the memory is as clear as the Alabama sky was that evening.*

*Looking down, I saw the smoke from the crash site. Then I saw Charlie. His chute was a disaster, a massive hole in the canopy. He was falling like a stone. There was nothing I could do but watch and hope.*

*Fortunately, neither of us were seriously injured and both continued our Air Force careers.*

## The exhilaration of free fall

*Back in '75, the parachute opened automatically the second I was out of the seat; I never experienced freefall. This was my chance.*

*Shuffling to the open door of the turboprop with my tandem instructor, Mac, strapped to my back, was surreal. My feet snagged on the way out, but then we just rolled into the sky. Mac deployed a small drogue chute to keep us stable, and then he tapped my shoulders, the signal to spread my arms.*

*Falling at 120 miles per hour is a wild sensation. The wind noise is immense, and it pushes the skin on your face back, but it was exhilarating. I saw the videographer, Eric, floating nearby, and we gave each other a thumbs-up.*

*The chute opening was firm, but nothing like the violent jolt from 400 knots 50 years ago. Hanging under the canopy was peaceful. I even*

*got a turn at the controls. Unlike my first landing in a pine tree, this one ended on my knees in a grassy field. It was a great experience, a perfect way to reclaim that day.*

## On Nancy's bucket list

This skydiving adventure was on my bucket list for years, but sharing the experience with Larry on the 50th anniversary of his ejection made it truly unforgettable. I absolutely loved every second!

After I watched Larry and his instructor, Mac, tumble out of







the plane, my tandem master, Andy, told me it was our turn. He had me scoot to the open door, hang my feet out, and then with a simple, “Here we go,” we rolled out into the sky.

For a moment, we were completely upside down. It was the most surreal feeling to look “up” and see the ground and look “down” at the endless sky. I instinctively closed my eyes for a second! The freefall was a powerful rush of cold wind on my face. The video later showed me constantly licking my lips, something I have absolutely no memory of doing.

Once Andy pulled the chute, the chaos of the fall turned into a peaceful, warm glide. We made a perfect stand-up landing, and I was immediately ready to go again.

Now that I know what to expect, I’m sure a second jump would be even more amazing. Maybe we’ll get to 14,000 feet next time!

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# OPINION



## How to Find a Great Handyman

Dear Savvy Senior

*What's the best way to find a good handyman or tradesman that can help with small jobs around the house?*

**Almost 75**

Dear Almost,

It's a great question. Finding a good home repair/handyman can be a bit of a crapshoot. How do you find someone who will return your calls or texts, show up on time, do the job right and finish it, all at a fair price? Here are a few tips and resources that can help you search.

### What Kind of Help

While it may seem obvious, whom you call on for help will depend on what you need done. If, for example, you have an odd job or small home repair project that doesn't require a lot of technical expertise, a handyperson may be all you need. But if you have a job that involves electricity, plumbing, or heating or cooling systems, you're better off going with a licensed tradesman. Bigger jobs like home renovations or remodeling may require a general contractor.

### Where to Find a Pro

Whatever type of work you need, the best way to find it is through referrals from people you trust. If your friends or family don't have any recommendations turn to professionals in the field like local hardware or home improvement stores, or even real estate agents.

If you don't have any luck here, there are a number of online resources you can turn to that can quickly connect you to a wide variety of skilled workers in your area.

If you need someone for a home chore or small job, a popular option is Taskrabbit ([taskrabbit.com](http://taskrabbit.com)), which lists thousands of freelance workers (called Taskers) that have undergone background checks. Here you can get help with things like furniture assembly; lifting or moving heavy items; mounting or hanging TVs, shelves or pictures; minor home repairs; cleaning services; yard work and more. Taskers set their own hourly rates, which are displayed on their website before you book.

Some other good options for locating handypeople are fix-it franchises like Ace Handyman ([acehandymanservices.com](http://acehandymanservices.com)) and Mr. Handyman ([mrhandyman.com](http://mrhandyman.com)). These companies vet and insure their staff, but they may be more expensive than Taskrabbit. Or, if you use social networking sites, you could also post a request for a handyperson in your Facebook group or on Nextdoor ([nextdoor.com](http://nextdoor.com)).

If, however, you're in the market for specialist like a plumber, electrician, painter, roofer or carpenter as well as a handyperson,

try Angi ([angi.com](http://angi.com)). They too, vet their independent contractors, and will let you request quotes from several candidates.

Thumbtack ([thumbtack.com](http://thumbtack.com)) is another good resource that's similar to Angi, but they offer more details like average response time, specifics about the work they do, and photos of past projects.

### Things to Know

Once you've located a few candidates, here are some steps you can take to protect your money and ensure you're satisfied with the results. First, get a handwritten estimate or digital contract that list the tasks and the hourly rate or project fee.

Also, ask to see their proof of insurance, which covers any damages they may cause while working on your home, and ask for several references from past jobs.

You should also pay after the work is done, not before. But it's not unusual to be asked for a small deposit for material costs upfront.

And if possible, you should pay with a credit card, because you can dispute the payment if something goes wrong with the job. Checks and electronic payments like PayPal, Venmo and Zelle don't offer the same level of protection.

**Send your questions or comments to [questions@savvysenior.org](mailto:questions@savvysenior.org), or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.**

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### So You're Considering Cremation...

The reasons for choosing cremation vary from individual to individual. But as with all funeral arrangements, there are many options available regarding the cremation itself, services, price ranges, and what to do with the ashes. Please send for this informative brochure to help answer any questions you may have. It's free & you'll learn about the endless choices available to you.



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# Kayaking & Canoeing Safety

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

Oklahoma's senior paddle sport enthusiasts, guided by the expertise of veteran boaters, have navigated through the wettest year in recent memory. These seasoned boaters now caution that our rivers may not be safe. In a rare year when mid-summer does not see any drought conditions in Oklahoma, the extreme rainfall has turned many of our large rivers into dangerous places to kayak and canoe.

"We have seen so much rain, we have no idea what is under the surface, even on our favorite rivers," said Rob Walker, retired Hurricane Kayaks representative. "People need to remember our local lakes are a much safer bet for having fun on the water."

Often, magazine and television ads portray ocean, river, and whitewater kayaking as the most common uses, but the most common use among our senior community is actually in lakes. Flatwater kayaking (also known as recreational kayaking), which involves lightweight plastic touring boats, canoeing, rowing, paddleboarding, sailing, and other recreational activities, dominates in Oklahoma.

Walker is cautioning a new generation of senior boaters to consider inexpensive, flatwater kayaks with dynamic control and lightweight construction as the safest way to go. However, he is currently recommending the lakes around Oklahoma City as the best option until the situation on the Oklahoma rivers stabilizes.

All boats, kayaks, canoes, and paddleboats on Oklahoma City waters are required to have a city boating permit and follow boating regulations for each body of water. Oklahoma boat registration is also required, except for kayaks, canoes and paddleboats. Boating permits can be purchased at Accela Citizen Access. You can buy your Parks Fishing, Boating, and other permits online. Using this system, you can purchase and print your permits from the convenience of your home or office 24 hours a day with your Visa, Mastercard, or Discover card.

All OKC Lake hours are 5 a.m. to 11 p.m., except for permitted activities, such as motorboating and fishing. Permits allow use of the lakes any time or day.

**Lake Hefner Ramps:** Boat ramps are at the City Boat Harbor and the Lake Patrol Station on the southwest side of the lake.

**Lake Overholser Ramps:** Boat ramps are located on the east side of the lake, behind the boat house, and on the south end of the lake, near the dam.

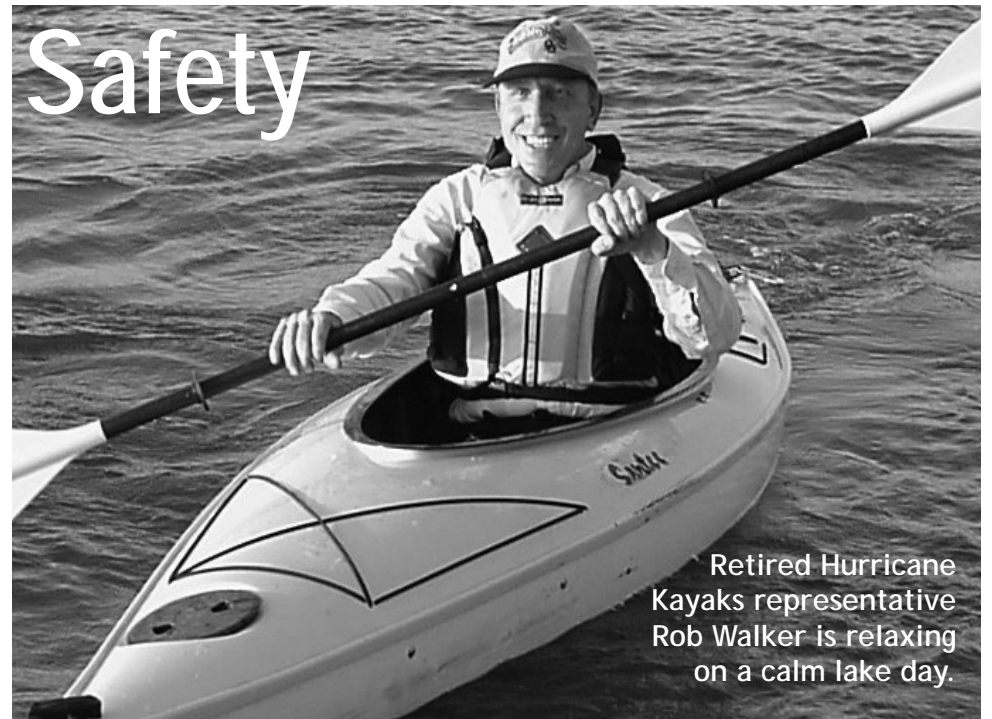
**Lake Stanley Draper Ramps:** Boat ramps are at the Lake Draper Marina near SE 104th and Lake Stanley Draper Drive.

**RIVERSPORTS OKC.** Oklahoma River between Interstate 35 and Portland Avenue, south of Interstate 40 in downtown Oklahoma City. Ramps: Boat ramps are near the Lincoln Avenue Bridge, on the Exchange Avenue Bridge and at SW 15 and Portland.

**Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge** is at NW 51 and N Stinchcomb Avenue and offers no direct ramps inside the gated area. Water access to the refuge is only available from Lake Overholser.

Crystal Lake, located at 6625 SW 15th St., does not provide ramps.

"With extreme rain and intense storms leading to flash flooding earlier in the year, Oklahoma boaters need to know about where to seek info about their sport," Walker said. "Intense rain can sweep even mature



Retired Hurricane Kayaks representative Rob Walker is relaxing on a calm lake day.

trees into the river or lake, and depending on the current, it can turn just below the surface, to suddenly have a large branch come to the surface to interfere with safe boating."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service data is a crucial resource, presented and interpreted on numerous websites, providing paddlers with ample information to plan a safe trip. The National Water Prediction Service - NOAA provides information on Oklahoma rivers, lakes, and rainfall. Paddlers can often set their social networking and social media tools and services to access this information. The weather service provides these links to help promote its weather awareness activities.

If seniors are venturing into rivers, an excellent resource for kayaking conditions is the Illinois River - GRDA website. It features a link to a map of the Upper Illinois River, which graphically predicts the flow rate and its impact on recreation for the next 48 hours, based on data from the National Weather Service. Forecasts are updated daily, except during periods of flooding, when updates occur at least three times daily.

The growth of paddle sports in Oklahoma means seniors with high-end fiberglass or Kevlar kayaks, as well as wooden and skin-on-frame home-builts, can occasionally be seen on our rivers. However, locals usually opt for rotational-molded plastic boats on our lakes.

With the control and balance provided by these smaller, wider boats, many novice senior boaters have been enticed to try the sport. These newcomers enjoy the stability and ease of boarding these recreational boats.

It is this sense of control and balance that attracts many seniors to the sport, where they can relax more in a kayak than in a canoe, allowing them to drift lazily along in a lake. This is the scenario most recommended for the rest of the summer in Oklahoma.

In the new water, SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT. It's crucial to keep this in mind as we navigate these potentially hazardous conditions.

Boaters need to remember it was raging water that carved the rivers into the landscape. Even in higher-than-normal levels in lakes, they need to take extra precautions.

Boaters should always have a tether on their paddle, ensuring they can easily retrieve it if it gets lodged in something at an unfamiliar takeout or put-in point. Equally important is having a spare paddle on board for added preparedness. (See KAYAK on page 15)





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(KAYAK con't. from page 13)

This is normal whitewater kayaking. So, it should be normal for today's high water flat-water kayaking. Wear a robust, properly fitted USCG-approved PFD with multiple attachment points for D-rings. A boater can then tether their boat with a long rope on the forward or aft points.

Even on a lake they are familiar with, it may not look like the take-out point they've been used to because of high water. This is why maintaining a high level of caution, even in familiar settings, is crucial. Extra caution is the name of the game, even on lakes.



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# Educational Medicare Meetings


## DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS

<b>Medicare vs. Medicare Advantage Plans</b> Tuesday, August 12, 2025 11:30 am - 1:00 pm  YMCA Healthy Living Center 13660 S. Western Ave Oklahoma City, OK 73170 Speakers: Donn Favel/Vickey Johnson	<b>Medicare Basics 101</b> Monday, August 4, 2025 6:00 - 7:00 pm  Eagle Group Agency 8204 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Suite A Oklahoma City, OK 73159 Speaker: Vickey Johnson
<b>Medicare Basics 101</b> Thursday, August 28, 2025 5:30 - 7:00 pm Norman Regional Hospital (Moore) Conference Room Lions/Jaguar/Sabercat 700 S. Telephone Road Moore, OK 73160 Speaker: Donn Favel	<b>Medicare Basics 101</b> Monday, August 4, 2025 11:00 am - 1:00 pm  McAlester Library 520 E. Smith Avenue McAlester, OK 74501

For more details on any of these meetings, call Eagle Group Agency  
at (405) 602-1554 or check online at [eaglegroupagency.com](http://eaglegroupagency.com)

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OG&E is proud to host the 48th Annual OG&E Senior Day, a special event dedicated to celebrating and empowering seniors aged 55 and older.

Gate admission is FREE for seniors aged 55 and older. This year's theme, "Senior Day: Your Passport to Adventure," promises a fun-filled day of exploration, excitement, and enrichment.

Date: September 17, 2025

Location: Oklahoma State Fair, Modern Living Building

Time: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

This FREE event offers a variety of engaging activities, including:  
Gate Admission – FREE admission for ages 55 and older, must show ID.

**Health Screenings** – Stay on top of your well-being with complimentary health checks.

**Interactive Activities** – Participate in games and entertainment.

**Video Contest** – Showcase your creativity and dance moves.

**Live Entertainment** – Enjoy music and dancing.

**Prizes & Giveaways** – Take home exciting prizes and souvenirs.

OG&E Senior Day is a cherished tradition that brings our senior community together for a day of fun, wellness, and connection. This year's adventure-themed celebration will inspire seniors to embrace new experiences and enjoy the journey ahead.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect, learn, and have fun! For more information, visit: [okstatefair.com/activities/special-events/](http://okstatefair.com/activities/special-events/)

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

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ROBERT A. FUNK

2025

Robert A. Funk, co-founder and executive chairman of Express Employment International, passed away at the age of 85 at his home, Express Ranches, in Yukon, Oklahoma.

A trailblazing entrepreneur and devoted leader, Bob was admired for his steadfast faith, commitment to helping others, and belief in the transformative power of work. Throughout his lifetime, he helped grow Express Employment Professionals into one of the world’s leading staffing firms, creating opportunities for individuals and businesses across North America and beyond.

“My father was a trailblazing entrepreneur who loved the American West and lived true to its values of honesty, respect, ruggedness, self-reliance, loyalty and hard work,” said

Bob Funk, Jr., CEO, President and Chairman of Express Employment International. “He played a pivotal role in shaping the vision and growth of Express Employment Professionals, the company he co-founded in 1983. For more than four decades, he remained committed to putting people to work and offering hope through employment. His job-creating mission continues to resonate across our global enterprise and helped build the top staffing franchise in America.”

Bob Funk Sr. served as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City from 2006 to 2007. In 2007, he also held the role of Chairman of the Conference of Chairmen for the Federal Reserve Bank System.

His contributions to the staffing industry were widely recognized, including his induction into the

American Staffing Association Hall of Fame in 2023, the Staffing 100 Hall of Fame by Staffing Industry Review in 2017, and the International Franchise Association Hall of Fame in 2010.

Beyond his entrepreneurial ventures, he was a successful cattleman, renowned globally for the Angus cattle operations. Teamed with his dear friend, Jarold Callahan, who passed away late last year, Express Ranches became the world’s largest producer of registered Angus cattle. His love for the land, respect for the animals and commitment to his colleagues were all part of his multifaceted character.

Bob Funk Sr.’s legacy extends beyond his corporate and cattle operations. His dedication to Western culture, community service and entrepreneurship



has left an indelible mark on Oklahoma and beyond. He served as Chairman of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum and the Oklahoma Youth Expo.

Recognizing his impactful leadership and invaluable service to Oklahoma and the great American West, he was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 2017 and into the Hall of Great Westerners in 2023 by the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.



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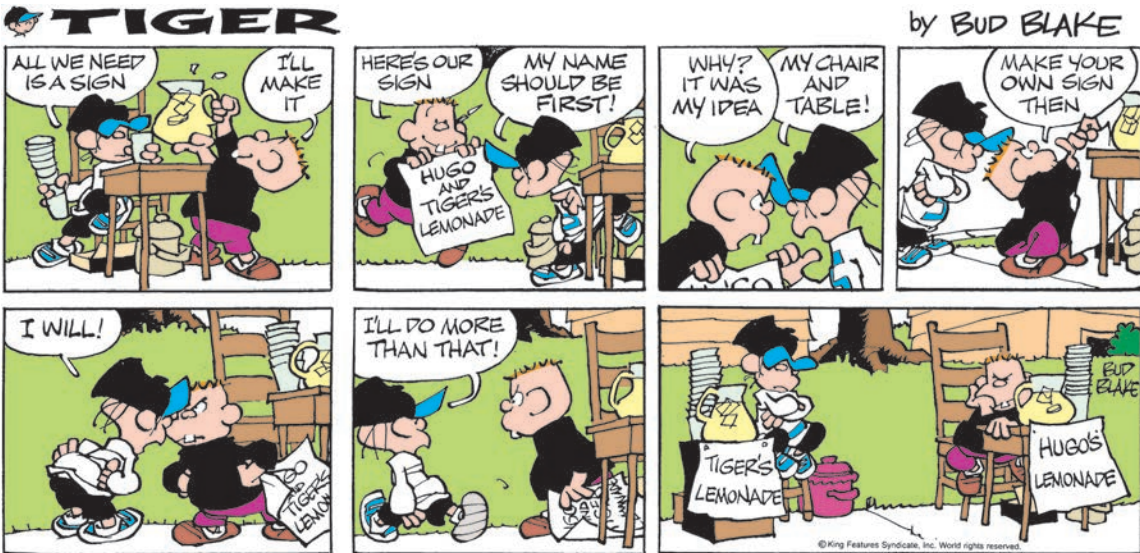
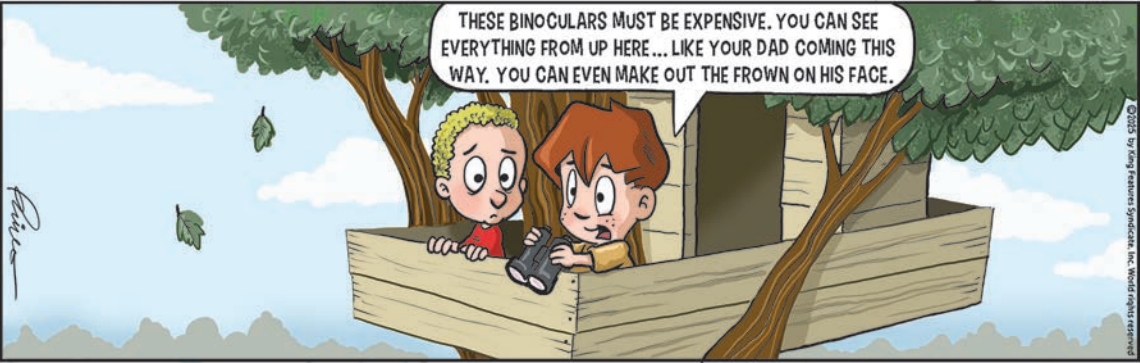
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Find the **bolded/underlined** words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

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**HOCUS-FOCUS** BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Collar is larger. 2. Hat is tilted back. 3. Arm is longer. 4. Nose is different. 5. Thumb is moved. 6. Boy's hair is different.

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King Crossword

**ACROSS**

1 Two-way  
5 Existed  
8 Carton sealer  
12 Lewd  
14 Throat clearer  
15 Baking dish  
16 Male red deer  
17 Sailor  
18 Excuses  
20 Leek's kin  
23 Revue segment  
24 Benefit  
25 Goulash spice  
28 Used a chair  
29 Eyelashes  
30 "The Voice" network  
32 Cane-cutting knife  
34 Roman emperor  
35 "CSI" settings  
36 Classic Sinatra song  
37 Actress Fanning  
40 As well  
41 Flair  
42 Tart dessert  
47 First-rate  
48 Pulling along  
49 Reply to "Shall we?"  
50 — Juan  
51 "Simpsons" bus driver

**DOWN**

1 Chips go-with  
2 Half of bi-  
3 Citric beverage  
4 Physics particle  
5 Sport  
6 Busy insect  
7 Hearty pub entree  
8 Papeete's island  
9 Melville captain  
10 Prefix with "scope"

11 911 responders  
13 Family  
19 Turkish currency  
20 Delivery docs  
21 Linguist  
22 Tiny bit  
23 Mariners  
25 Patchy horses  
26 Recognized  
27 "East of Eden" girl  
29 Converse  
31 Coquettish

33 Genetic copies  
34 "Us" actress Lupita  
36 Synthesizer pioneer  
37 Transaction  
38 Medicinal plant  
39 Philosopher Immanuel  
40 IRS agent  
43 Historic time  
44 Trench  
45 Bank acct. entry  
46 Conceit

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**Answers**  
**BIBLE WORD SEARCH**

**Solution time: 22 mins.**

**Answers**

**King Crossword**

**Trivia test** by Fifi Rodriguez

1. MOVIES: Who is Luke and Leia's mother in the "Star Wars" movies?  
2. GEOGRAPHY: The country of Suriname is on which continent?  
3. HISTORY: Which 5th-century conqueror was known as "the Scourge of God"?  
4. TELEVISION: Who is the creator of the quirky sitcom "Community"?  
5. ANATOMY: What kind of blood vessels carry blood away from the heart?  
6. MYTHOLOGY: In Greek mythology, who turned everything he touched into gold?  
7. U.S. STATES: Which state was the 50th and last to join the union?  
8. LITERATURE: Who wrote the novel "A Clockwork Orange"?  
9. FOOD & DRINK: Which vegetable is used to make baba ganoush?  
10. CHEMISTRY: What is the common name for acetic acid?

8. Anthony Burgess. 9. Eggplant. 10. Vinegar.
4. Dan Harmon. 5. Arteries. 6. King Midas. 7. Hawaii.
1. Padme Amidala. 2. South America. 3. Attila the Hun.
- Trivia Test Answers



## SNL TINSEL TOWN TALKS

# Take a Hike! To Great Sand Dunes National Park, Colorado

By Nick Thomas

If towering mounds of sand have never sparked your curiosity, perhaps a visit to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve might change that. Located a 2-hour drive from Pueblo, Colorado, this stunning landscape was sculpted over the ages by wind and water carrying and depositing sand from nearby mountains. Spanning some 30 square miles, the dunes soar to 750 feet creating the tallest “sand castles” in North America.

Approaching the park along Highway 150 in late spring, we first glimpsed the towering 14,000-foot peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains that dominate the horizon. About 10 miles out, a lighter area at the base of the range began to emerge, gradually taking shape beneath the shadow of the still snow-capped peaks. As we continued along the road, the 1.2 cubic miles of sand became distinct and we couldn’t wait to sink our bare toes into the curious golden grains of earth that seemed so out of place sandwiched between the mountain’s base and valley to the west. Unfortunately, I had foolishly forgotten a well-known interaction between sand and sun!

After a brief stop at the Visitor Center, we had the option of either driving a short distance and parking a few hundred feet from the dunes or trekking across an arid trail behind the Visitor Center – we chose the latter and encountered only one other like-minded couple. Though bathed in sunshine, the temperature hovered around a mild 80 degrees and the sandy track was a fairly easy 0.5 mile walk to the parking area. Considered a connecting path with no formal trail name, there was a feeling of hiking through a barren wasteland with desert shrubs, dry grasses, and clusters of cactuses stretching off into the distance. With no shade, I expect the heat would be rather intense mid-summer.

As we approached the car park with the sand dunes looming, we were surprised to encounter a water barrier. Medano Creek separated the car park from the dunes and although wide, was quite shallow – just a few inches deep in some spots. Dozens of kids splashed in the broad stream, clearly more captivated by the running water than the surrounding dunes.

After removing our shoes and placing them on the dry sand, we waded across the water. Reaching the other side, I enthusiastically began sprinting up the dunes – well, at least what passes for sprinting at my age. But after about 15 steps I realized something was wrong – the soles and heels of my feet were on fire!



Entrance to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve.

I made a rapid 180, yelping my way back to the cooling water. Although the sun didn’t feel particularly intense, I soon remembered that sand has a low specific heat capacity, meaning it doesn’t take much energy to raise its temperature (unlike other exposed surfaces such as water or grass). It was a lesson not soon forgotten.

Crossing the water once more to collect our shoes, we returned to the dunes and began to ascend the sand mound, this time with shoes securely affixed, but had no aspirations to reach the summit. Trudging through deep, soft sand is exhausting on flat ground – on a steep slope, it’s downright grueling. So after watching in awe those who tackled the punishing peaks attempting to conquer the sandy heights, we hiked back to the Visitor Center and our car.

For several days, my feet felt as though they were afflicted with a mild case of sunburn, but it was a small price to pay to witness this most unusual example of nature’s handiwork.

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery in Alabama and has written features, columns, and interviews for many newspapers and magazines. His hiking column describes short trails, hikes, and walks from around the country that seniors might enjoy while traveling. See [www.ItsAWonderfulHike.com](http://www.ItsAWonderfulHike.com).

*Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery in Alabama and has written features, columns, and interviews for many newspapers and magazines. His book, “Raised by the Stars: Interviews with 29 Children of Hollywood Actors,” featured a lengthy interview with June Lockhart talking about her father. See [www.getnickt.org](http://www.getnickt.org).*



A couple takes the half-mile sandy trail behind the Visitor Center.



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# SENIOR NEWS & LIVING



# Vintage Pieces — Instant Art

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

For two days in July, a unique and innovative event unfolded at 3 Strands Vintage Antique Mall. Ten artists, in a competition like no other, created art using items available in the mall. This event not only showcased the artists' skills but also introduced many to the thousands of pieces of Americana available for purchase at the 35,000-square-foot complex south of Lake Hefner on Northwest Expressway in Oklahoma City.

Brittany Tinker, artist and private art class teacher in Mustang, won the top prize of \$300 by creating a piece of functional art on July 11. She fashioned a decorative bird cage into a lamp device that enclosed a glass bunny and a crystal bird. The light brought the art to life above a giant vintage Italian glass jar in her award-winning entry. This artistic assemblage, which she named 'Light Unexpected', is available for sale at the mall.

The second-place winner, Rodrick Malone, won \$200 by creating a stunning collage applied to a vintage suitcase. Kayla Kohout was voted third place for her artwork, earning \$100.

"I spent hours weaving through the brightly lit and well-organized booths filled with treasures of the past," Tinker said about selecting her art assemblage. "With each item having lived a life or two or three before being lovingly placed on these shelves, on display for a new adoption -- what a wonderful way to be preparing for the adventure of the upcoming competition! A towering green glass demijohn—an extra-large vintage wine vessel—anchored my artistic vision early on, and I kept its form in mind, letting it attach itself to everything I saw in the maze of relics, with over 100 booths to explore. I found a brass birdcage and floral arrangements, which also spoke to me. Slowly, these pieces revealed something ornate and cohesive -- a sculptural light piece that now feels like it always existed, waiting to be discovered."

While covering the two-day event, this writer was captivated by the unique shopping experience. The wide variety of vendors offered antiques, collectibles, and vintage items, ranging from furniture and jewelry to decorative pieces, all located at the mall.

Ten artists had the rare privilege of competing as they created new artworks using items selected from a vast array of unique and timeless treasures thoughtfully displayed across the vendors' booths in the well-curated complex.

"Here at 3 Strands Vintage (Antique Mall), we were thrilled to host

this event," said Cindy Gardner, mall owner. "All of our vendors spend so much time curating their inventory, and we were all proud to see it come to life in the imaginative uses these artists made."

The mall is one of the largest of its kind in Oklahoma.

Its massive size has drawn vintage enthusiasts and collectors alike. Due to the vast selection, there were numerous objects that the artists could interpret into their art pieces, all within the price range outlined in the contest sponsorships.

"It is novel and new that Oklahoma artists and sponsors are invited to apply to participate in a new form of art competition event," event organizer Bob Palmer said. "The artist's mission was to reinterpret classic items of existing craftsmanship and artistry into new works of art. Mixed-media, seen with new eyes as a novel assemblage, created stunning pieces."

This was also an opportunity to increase their visibility in the art world. Tinker teaches several sessions of an art camp in Mustang in the summer, so she handed out flyers about her camp throughout the two-day contest.

You can find info about her art classes at [goodmorninghomestead.com](http://goodmorninghomestead.com)

Visitors also took advantage of a fully featured Lemonade stand and food trucks in the parking lot. Live music was offered throughout each day in the mall, creating a vibrant atmosphere that ensured everyone felt engaged and part of the artistic process.

More than just a showcase of art, this event was an interactive experience. It encouraged everyone, from art enthusiasts to casual observers, to participate and engage with the artists and their work, fostering a sense of community and shared creativity.



PHOTOS:

Center: Former University of Central Oklahoma art professor Bob Palmer displays his door creation titled "My Door of Endless Possibilities!"

Bottom Right: Rodrick Malone won \$200 by creating a collage featuring a spacewalk overlaid with classical art paintings applied to a vintage suitcase.



## VINTAGE ART Continued from page 29

Each artist solicited sponsorship from an individual or team of their choice. Those sponsors had the first right of refusal to purchase the artist's creations, but the artist set the price of each item.

If the artist determined their creation was of more value than the sponsorship and the sponsor declined the first right of purchase, it was made available for sale to the public.

This was a unique opportunity for sponsors to support local artists and receive a one-of-a-kind piece of art in return.

"This new type of competition is aimed at celebrating not just the artists' talents but also the vibrant arts culture within Oklahoma, encouraging everyone to partake in the joy of creativity and innovation," Palmer said.

Local YouTube videographer Lawrence Ross captured a YouTube treatment of the artistic process as the days progressed.

Oklahoma's most-viewed artist, legendary muralist, and former University of Central Oklahoma art professor, Palmer, 74, created his work in the parking lot. "One of the things I like about creating art from vintage stuff is that it can be ever-changing. It's never finished," Palmer said. "I'm always adding items or taking things off. It can also change with the seasons. I can make it Christmasy, Fallish, or Spring-like. My items that I create can usually be used inside or outside. The door I made is titled "My Door of Endless Possibilities!"

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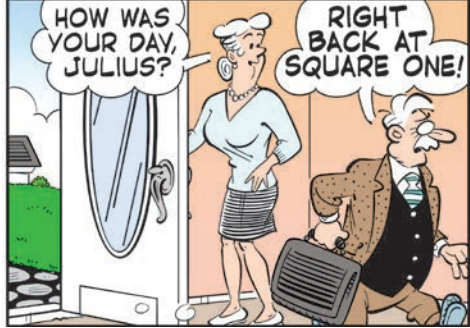
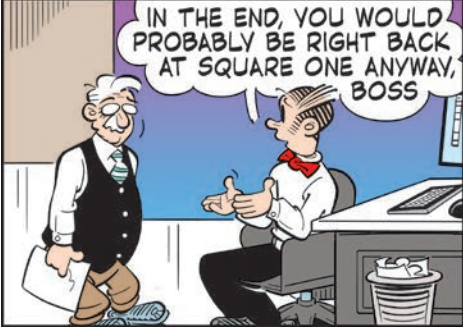
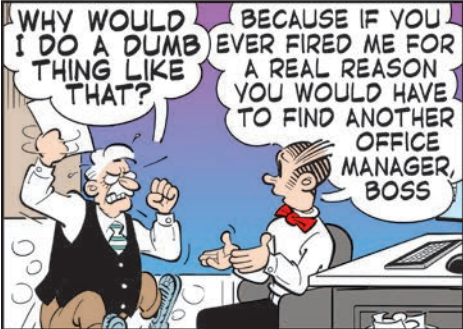
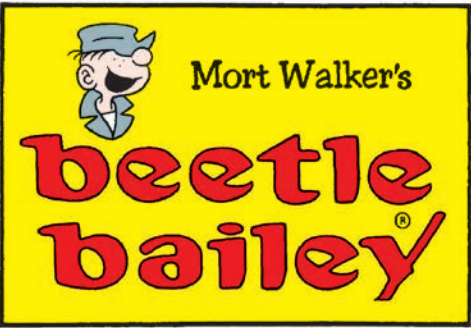
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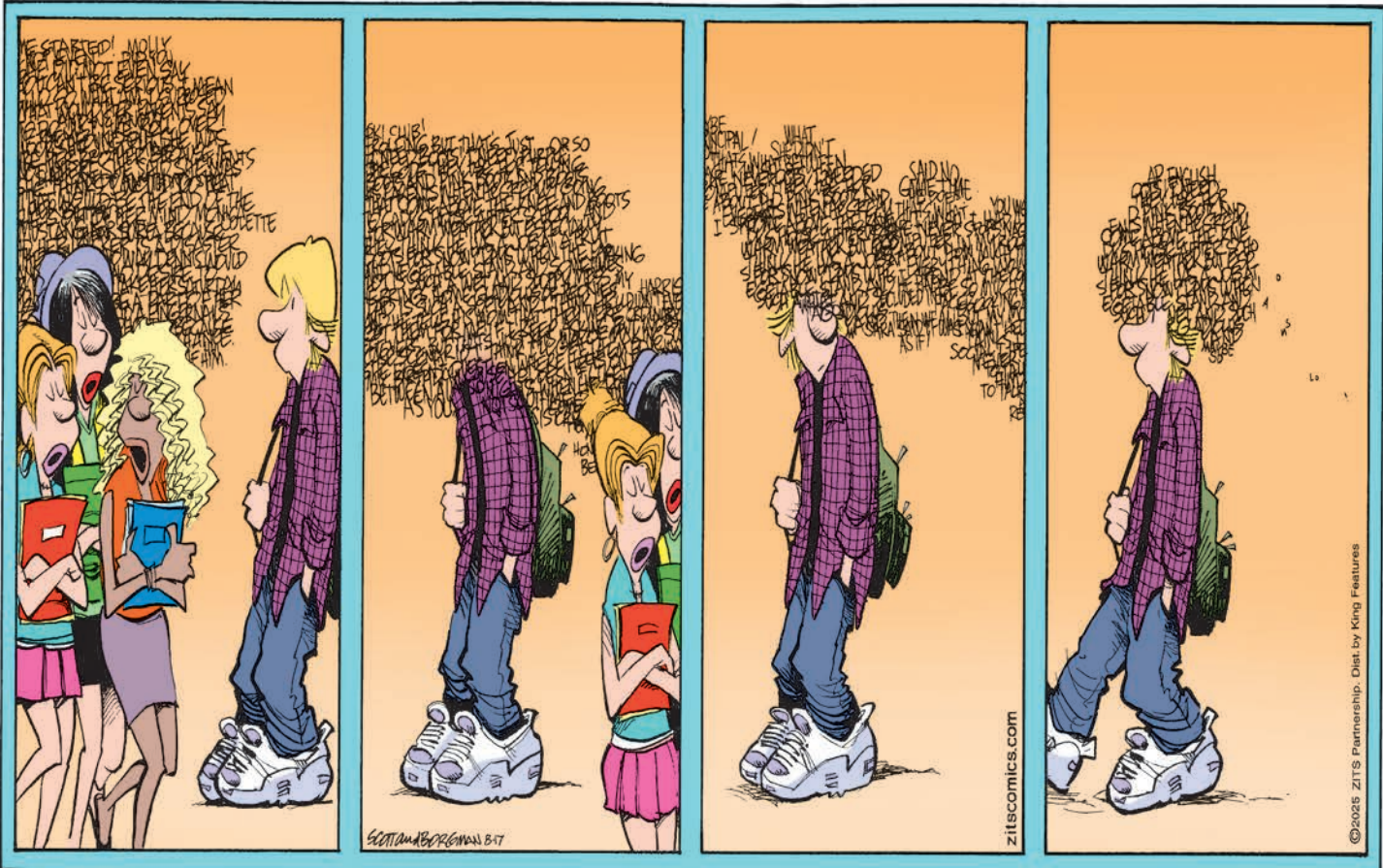






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