

WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

VOL. 29, No. 1

SERVING ANTHONY, VINTON, CANUTILLO, EAST MONTANA, HORIZON, SOCORRO, CLINT, FABENS, SAN ELIZARIO AND TORNILLO

JANUARY 3, 2002

NEWSBRIEFS

Old ghost

Some legends, like Elvis, refuse to leave the building. One recent such sighting is an ongoing effort to obtain a pardon for New Mexico gunman Billy the Kid. There are several organizations dedicated to the memory of the young killer, including the Billy the Kid Outlaw Gang, and the Billy the Kid Museum in Canton, Texas. One such enthusiast, Dr. Jannay Valdez of Canton, is a partaker of the numerous rumors that the young man, otherwise known as William Bonney, was not killed by lawman Pat Garrett, but escaped into Mexico, and lived another 69 years as a "decent citizen." Dr. Valdez supports his theory with the testimony of two people in El Paso who claim Bonney visited them in April of 1950 shortly before they contend he died under the alias of "Brushy Bill" Hico. Either way, everyone admits that Bonney has been dead for years, but Dr. Valdez writes that "I hereby beseech the Honorable Benjamin B. Rios to request that the New Mexico Legislature pass a bill to pardon Billy the Kid...who, in old age, seeking to make amends with himself and his Maker was denied a pardon by Gov. Mabry in 1950." Billy the Kid may have broken out of jail numerous times, but he still hasn't left the building.

Beaches in winter

The sixth annual "Treasures of the Texas Coast 2002" Children's Art Contest is open to students in grades K-6 and focuses on encouraging young artists to learn about the natural resources found along the Texas coast and to spread the message, "Don't mess with Texas beaches." Two winners will be selected from each of the 24 regional councils of governments in Texas. From the 48 finalists, one grand prize winner will receive two round-trip coach-class tickets from Continental Airlines to any Continental destination in the United States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii, and a class party at Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort in New Braunfels. All 48 winners will receive prizes. The grand prize winner's teacher will also receive two round-trip coach-class tickets from Continental Airlines. Each entry must be postmarked by Friday, Feb. 1, 2002. For more information call the General Land Office at 1-800-998-4GLO or log on to www.glo.state.tx.us/adopt-a-beach.

In other news

■ Marine Corps Pfc. Benigno Borjon III, son of Armida Borjon of Fabens and Benigno Borjon Jr., recently completed basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego. Borjon successfully completed 12 weeks of training designed to challenge new Marine Recruits both physically and mentally. He is a 2001 graduate of Fabens High School.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Juan C. Aragon, son of Maria and Avelardo Aragon of Tornillo, recently received a Certificate of Commendation while assigned with the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16, Marine Corps Air Station in Miramar, California. He was recognized for his superior performance of duty. Aragon is a 1999 graduate of Tornillo High School.

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

— Quips and Quotes

Some still confused over status of Socorro Fire Department

By Francis D. Shrum
Courier Staff Writer

SOCORRO — The City of Socorro has recently come under fire for lack of support for the Socorro Fire Department, despite significant effort by the City Council last year to improve the overall status of the department.

The Socorro Volunteer Fire Department is funded under the Emergency Service Districts of El Paso County, which is comprised of volunteer fire departments throughout the County.

A portion of the property taxes assessed annually by the County are designated to fund the various ESDs — Socorro falls under the jurisdiction of EPCESD #2.

In November of 2000, at the urging of Mayor Amado Padilla, Socorro Council appointed a committee to research the possible withdrawal of the SFD from the ESCESD #2, to place it totally under the funding umbrella of the City of Socorro.

After more than four months of research and public discussion, the Socorro Council came to the evident decision that the financial burden of maintaining an independent fire department would place a prohibitive burden on the average taxpayer — to the tune of about \$500 a year on a \$50,000 home — and that would not cover the costs of vehicles and equipment. Pumpers cost about \$300,000 each and equipment for one firefighter runs about \$2,000, county sources said.

In addition, Socorro would have to assume the financial responsibilities for debts already incurred by the EPCESD #2 to equip Socorro fire department.

In an interview with *Courier* Publisher Rick Shrum in March of 2001, EPCESD #2 President Robert Ostrenga said that Socorro had to "get in or get out all the way" of the County's funding structure for the SFD.

Instead, the City and the EPCESD #2 made an interlocal agreement, in which the City leased the Vineyard Fire Station to the

EPCESD #2 for \$1 per year. The EPCESD #2 otherwise assumed responsibility and maintenance for the SFD.

Since that time, some in Socorro have declared that the SFD has been abandoned by the City, especially by Padilla who made it a part of his campaign promise to attempt to establish an independent fire department.

However, the record bears that previous Councils, as well as the one headed by Padilla, have made significant contributions to their fire department, above and beyond that required by law.

In addition to Padilla's considerable efforts to follow through on his promise, City records show that the Socorro Fire Department has been the beneficiary of numerous purchases by the City.

One example is recorded in a January 25, 2001 article in the *Courier* by Arleen Beard:

"Socorro Council also approved the purchase of 24 pass devices and 15 helmets for the Socorro Fire Department. City Rep. Joe Martinez expressed his concern as to why the County of El Paso was not purchasing this equipment for the Fire Department. Members of the Fire Department who were present explained that the budget from the County had been exhausted on other purchases of equipment. After recognition of the dire need for this equipment, Council unanimously approved the purchase of these items."



Mayor Amado Padilla

Texas taking applications from communities for veterans cemeteries

AUSTIN - Texas Land Commissioner David Dewhurst today announced, as Chairman of the Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB), that Texas communities will soon have the opportunity to apply to become a host community of a Texas State Veterans Cemetery.

In addition, incoming Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) Chairman James Duncan today announced the appointment of two new members to the committee that oversees the Veterans Cemetery program.

Dewhurst said "Requests For Proposals" will be sent in January to all county judges, major cities, veterans organizations and other parties interested in obtaining a state veterans cemetery. He said the deadline for returning proposals will likely be late spring 2002.

"We want every community to have a fair shot at this," Dewhurst said. "I suspect we'll receive many fine proposals from deserving communities across Texas."

Dewhurst said the Committee was created by the 2001 Texas Legislature to set guidelines on the location and size of the cemeteries, and eligibility for burial in them. The Committee also is responsible for deciding where the new

cemeteries will be located, and will meet in January to begin the site selection process.

The Committee is composed of the three members of the VLB, the chairman of the TVC, and two persons appointed by the TVC chairman to represent the state's veterans.

The VLB is composed of Dewhurst, who serves as its chairman, Col. Ladd Pattillo, USAR (Ret.) and Mike Ussery.

Duncan, as the TVC chairman-elect, has appointed retired U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Turner, and Glen M. Gardner Jr. Turner is the outgoing chair of the TVC, and Gardner is Chairman of the Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations, as well as Department Adjutant of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Texas.

Dewhurst said after the deadline for receiving proposals from communities has passed, the Committee will choose up to seven locations for state veterans cemeteries across Texas. He said the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) can't award more than 20 percent of its available state veterans cemetery funding to any single state, limiting Texas to a maximum of two new cemeteries per year.

City to phase in changes in government

Socorro's Charter goes on file with State of Texas

By Arleen Beard
Special to the Courier

SOCORRO — The conclusion of Socorro's long road to home rule was announced by Mayor Amado Padilla at the regularly scheduled Socorro City Council meeting on Dec. 20, 2001.

Padilla said he received a letter from the Texas Secretary of State informing him the recently approved City Charter has been filed with the office of the Secretary of State as of Dec. 7, 2001.

The Charter was passed through a public election on Nov. 6, 2001 by a large majority of a low turn-out by Socorro voters.

There are about 27,000 people in Socorro, 13,000 of whom are registered to vote. Of those, 384 voted in favor of the Charter, 82 voted against. Several prior attempts to pass a Charter for the City of Socorro had not been successful.

The sweeping changes the document contains are expected to take some time to bring about, particularly the hiring of a city manager. The Charter specifies that the form of government for the City will now be a "Council-Manager" format, in which Council selects, hires and fires a city manager, who in turn has oversight of department heads, prepares and presents a budget to Council, and otherwise carries out administration of the City government with the advice and consent of the elected Council members.

He is to perform these duties with compensation "as may be fixed by the City Council" according to the Charter. Councilman Sam Brewster said last week that the current budget, finalized in August of 2001, did not cover the cost of a city manager's position, as it did not exist until November.

Brewster indicated that Socorro's Council is making every effort to fulfill the Charter requirements as quickly as is reasonably possible.

Monetary compensation for Council members as specified by the Charter is \$15,000 per year for the mayor, and \$10,000 per year for each councilman. Elected officials will serve two year terms, for no more than three consecutive times.

As of the May 2002 elections, the mayor and one councilman only will be elected at-large. The four remaining council seats will be filled by single-member representatives from Pct. 108, Pct. 109, Pct. 110 and Pct. 155 — these council members must be a resident of the district which they have been elected to represent.

The elected position of City Marshall was not included in the Charter and will naturally expire in May of 2002. The Charter specifies the creation of a police department and the appointment of a chief of police to administer it under supervision of both the Council and the city manager.

Further details of the Charter are available at Socorro City Hall.

Two public hearings were held during the December meeting, the first on an ordinance granting an exemption for certain local charitable organizations and the second on an ordinance requiring the continued taxation of motor vehicles by the City of Socorro which

See SOCORRO, Page 4



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

Polite company

We don't get many chances to enjoy polite company these days.

Notice I said polite. Not snooty.

There's a major difference between polite and snooty. Polite takes the time to pay attention to someone else, even if they aren't all that interesting.

America's young people are served a steady diet of smash-and-grab, in-your-face, get-it-now, entertain-me-or-I'll-scream mentality.

Polite company puts a stop to all that.

Growing up we watched TV as a family, but the minute company arrived, it was shut off, no matter what. The courtesy paid to a living person took precedence over our personal interests — whether that "company" was a traveler with a flat tire needing an assist on our country road, or a neighbor dropping by for a cup of coffee.

Raising little ones in El Paso decades later is a bit different.

Thank goodness we found Mrs. S.

That's not her real name, but I'll call her that out of respect for her privacy.

Mrs. S. is a master of polite company in a society that denies it has any importance. She teaches it by word and example, with compassion and class.

I don't know how old Mrs. S. is. It doesn't matter. She's old enough to have grown daughters and grandchildren, old enough to have found out that RV's are more trouble than they're worth and that a Maltese puppy is worth all the trouble.

She's the kind of lady that could drive a truck or run the farm but chooses to teach children to play the piano in her beautiful home.

She's the soul of polite company.

Children love her even after years of lessons, even into their teens. They'll practice to please her when

they won't for any other reason. She's their friend as well as their teacher, though they know she'll brook a fool or a slacker not at all.

She commands their love as well as their respect.

It all came home to me the other day when a room full of people — all ages, shape and size — gathered to hear a bunch of kids plink the keys on a piano that has seen its better days during one of those endangered events called a recital.

Most of the people there didn't know each other except for the common thread that somehow, by word or miracle, their kid wound up as a student of Mrs. S.

I'd become so accustomed to the sheer rudeness and inattention of the audiences at children's performances in public school that the first time we attended her recital I was amazed.

Everyone sat there and listened, even when it wasn't their kid playing, for almost two hours. I don't mean to put down the performances, but we weren't listening to concert quality, either.

Nobody got up and left when their kid was through.

There were accomplished performances by teens and pieces picked out by beginners who could only manage a few bars — even a lady of some years who grimaced when she made a mistake but played on with heart, confident in the goodwill of her teacher, her audience.

One young man, who looked like he'd be more comfortable on a skateboard than a piano bench, performed "Phantom of the Opera" with surprising gusto. Another, now in his late teens, tall and dignified in his suit, played "Proud to be an American."

They have both been her students for several years.

She closed out her event this year



with the style and grace to which we've become accustomed, playing "God Bless America," inviting us all to stand and sing along.

If there were members of high society at the recital, I couldn't tell it. I know our entourage of grandparents and friends wouldn't qualify as such.

But it was such polite company, friendly and caring.

The kind we don't get to enjoy much these days.

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Letter must not be more than 250 words in length. They should be dated, must be signed and have an address and daytime phone number. Only the name and city will be printed with the letter. The Courier reserves the right not to print letters to the editor or other submitted materials it considers inappropriate.

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Eye on D.C. By U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla

A New Year's Resolution

The new year is upon us and once again I find myself wondering where time has gone. It seems just days ago I sat on my couch, watching football and regretting my second-helping of pecan pie

on Thanksgiving. The holiday season seems to pass so quickly. It's already time to consider New Year's resolutions. As I think of resolutions of the past, they don't seem to have the same impact this year. So much has changed. Instead, I find myself contemplating what New Year's really means.

Unlike many of our traditional holidays, the meaning of New Year's is unclear. Although it is the world's most celebrated holiday, it lacks a single central theme. It is a collection of good intentions. Perhaps, New Year's is simply a yearly detour on the road to self-improvement, enlightenment and finding happiness. A new beginning we are allowed each year.

This year, New Year's finds us at our absolute greatest.

Americans have bound together to show their pride and patriotism for our amazing country. We are a new America in a new year. Let's ring in this New Year's with an unconquerable will. Let's continue to support our servicemen and women; let's boast our unwavering patriotism; and let's continue to proclaim confidence in our President.

Here are a few suggestions to keep your New Year's resolution on track:

• Don't try everything at once. Odds are in your favor if you begin small. Consider sending an encouraging message to troops deployed away from home. Or perhaps scheduling more frequent phone calls to friends and family.

• Be flexible. Allow your resolution to grow with you throughout the year. Don't make a specific resolution, that does not allow for change. Less specific wording such as "this year I will express my patriotism," provides room to challenge yourself to be creative with your resolution throughout the year.

• Make a plan. Search for ways you can volunteer. Help by filling-in roles left behind by those deployed away from home. Devote a specific amount of time to any causes you choose. And ask friends and family to join in the act.

There's no reason why we should continue to make the traditional resolutions to lose weight and get organized. But it is my hope that we will also focus our resolutions on developing the true spirit of America. Recent terror attacks have taught us the importance of embracing every single day. Remember to smile and laugh every chance you get. The soul needs to be balanced, as well as the scale. Don't pass up an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life. And most importantly, don't leave anything unsaid.

Let's ring in 2002 as a nation united and rebuilding together.


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KIRK



View from the porch By Linda Mussehl

The Morning After the Day We Did It

E.B White once wrote a short story called, "The Morning of the Day We Did It," about the nuclear destruction of the world.

That title has a ring to it; it echoes in my head around this time of year, especially when we do any entertaining. It's kind of a domestic countdown, similar to military planning: D minus Two, D minus One, leading to the Day.

The Day usually has two kinds of meat, eight side dishes, a gallon or so of gravy, a half dozen pies — you know the drill.

Then there's D plus One, the Day after the Day We Did It.

On the Day After, I stumble when I first get out of bed. The pins-and-needles feeling is my personal fatigue-o-meter, telling me I've been on my feet way more than usual.

That's all forgotten by the time I've reached the kitchen and survey the shambles that used to be my kitchen. It's a scary place.

While the coffee brews, I try to figure out where the after-dinner train went off the tracks.

First, you have to know that our kitchen is not set up for entertaining. Think apartment-size. Heck, think of putting out a meal for twelve from a walk-in closet. The open, available floor space in the kitchen is four feet wide and nine feet long.

Now picture five female guests, all doing their helpful best to clean up after a big meal, elbowing for work room within those 36 square feet of available space.

I try to control the after-dinner chaos by asking everybody to stay at the table, linger over their cof-

fee and relax while I get the kitchen squared away to make room for all the dirty dishes. I scurry around, stacking pans to uncover any available countertop space.

Logic says that dealing with the leftovers comes next. If I can just use the newly cleared counters to put the remaining food in storage containers and sort out the dishes that go back home with their rightful owners, if I can just have time to divvy up the scraps into piles for the appropriate quadrupeds, if

If I just had a whip, chair and gun, like the lion tamer in the circus: "Back!" "Down!"

Their mommas did too good a job, trained them all too well. My fetching the first serving dish from the dining room is the signal for everybody to jump to their feet, grab a couple of dishes and head for the kitchen. Within 30 seconds, I can't get past the kitchen door. There are just too many bodies jostling for working space, dishrags and towels.

Eventually, I give up and take my coffee out onto the porch. It does feel good to sit down.

As dawn breaks on the Morning After, I inspect the contents of the refrigerator and try to figure out what's what. Those five one-cup containers, all neatly filled and stacked, all contain gravy. Okay, maybe they couldn't find a larger dish. But then why is there a 12"x16" casserole dish taking up half one shelf, neatly covered with foil to protect exactly two spoonfuls of macaroni and cheese?

All right! There's the leftover pie. Now it's time for me to get down to the serious business of unpacking the leftovers from the refrigerator and start packing the calories onto my hips.

Write stuff

proposed City Charter.

The Socorro Volunteer Fire Department does an outstanding job and I commend them and thank them for the great job that they do. Without their sacrifice, we in Socorro would be hurting.

I am willing to meet with them to discuss any problems that they may have. I hope this letter will shed some light.

Sam Brewster
Councilman
City of Socorro

Dear Editor:

As Americans decide how much of their civil liberties and rights to privacy they are willing to give up for protection from terrorism, I am forced to consider if the government can even provide such protection.

The way I see it, terrorists act in order to get attention for their cause and gain power over others. Terrorism is nothing new in the U.S. — just look at the Boston Tea Party, the organized crime families and the eco-terrorists that burn SUVs because they use too much gas. Do you really think that our government has the power to stop them? Will allowing the police to use my email in court, or track where I travel to, really stop someone from planting a bomb or shooting up a school?

I would also like to respond to the question as to why the City of Socorro did not budget for a city manager. The budget for the City was finalized in August of 2001 and the proposed City Charter was not voted on until Nov. 6 of 2001.

Council knew funding would be required for the position of City Manager if the Charter passed.

We could not budget for a position that did not yet exist. The previous Charters had failed and there was no way to foresee that this one would pass. Also with the existing projected expenses and the positions in place, we still had to cut back \$160,000 to balance to the revenues coming in.

For the editor of *Del Pueblo* to criticize the City Council for grandstanding in support of the passage of the Charter is very irresponsible. I feel the editor is the one grandstanding and going out of his way to create problems for the City of Socorro.

Mr. Reyes Mata, *Del Pueblo* editor, did not feel the Socorro City Council was irresponsible when he was awarded the contract to print the

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TRUE TEXAS FACTS

by Roger Moore January 2, 1856, Camp Cooper established in Throckmorton County to protect the reservation Indians living there.



Journey begins at Welch Middle School with writing

HORIZON—A journey is defined as traveling from one exciting place to another. At Carroll T. Welch Middle School in the Clint Independent School District, a magnificent journey is unfolding for 10 very lucky students. They are members of Journey's.

Journey's is a club where students meet weekly to write their own personal reflections in their journals about various topics that affect their lives and the lives of others.

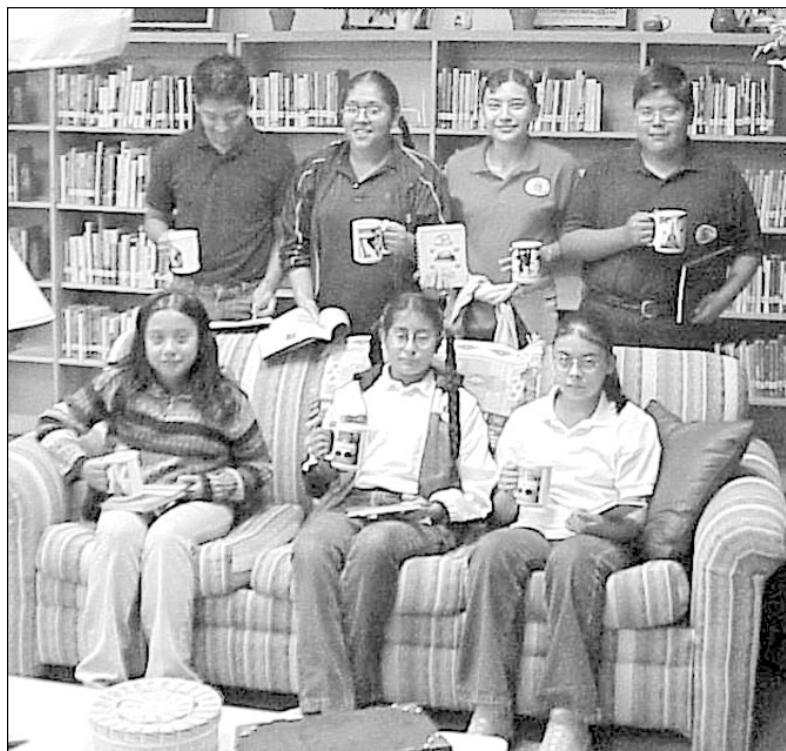
For instance, when the Sept. 11 tragedy occurred, the students had experienced emotions, feelings, and questions that they wanted to write about. At the Sept. 19 meeting, the students openly discussed how the tragedy had affected them. Eighth grade student Erica Alejo wrote about her uncle, a student at Columbia University, who had a job interview on Sept. 11 in a building directly across from the World Trade Center. However, her uncle had a bad feel-

ing about the interview, so he cancelled it.

Mrs. Sylvia Apodaca, school librarian, sponsors the club and the club meets every Wednesday morning at 7:15 in the library. Each week, a different member is given the opportunity to discuss a topic of their choice. For instance, at the second meeting, Eddie Torres, asked the members to write about their feelings and opinions on America going to

war against terrorism. They each had differing opinions and after they wrote for about 10 minutes, the members discussed and read aloud what they wrote.

Another member, Priscilla Rubio, said that writing in a journal gives her something special that she can have to look back on years to come. Mrs. Carroll, library assistant, said, "writing in my journal is a great way to start the day."



Unidentified members of the Journey's club take a quick break for a photo. Carroll T. Welch librarian, Mrs. Sylvia Apodaca, sponsors the club which meets every Wednesday morning at 7:15 in the school library.

Phamiliar phrases

"cut to the chase"

The last scenes of action movies usually involve a climactic chase of some sort, and the end of the chase resolves the story line. To "cut to the chase" is to skip ahead to the end result.

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Lower Valley WATER DISTRICT

Lower Valley Water District Contact Information General Number: (915) 791-4480..... Extensions

General Manager	
Arturo "Tury" Duran 104
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Ruben Esparza 852-0072
Water Superintendent	
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Lower Valley Water District welcomes Mrs. Alicia L. Fresquez and Mr. Joe L. Rubio as new members of the Board of Directors

Mrs. Fresquez is a lifelong resident of the City of Socorro and is a former employee of the district. She will provide leadership that will lead to better customer service and to obtain water at an affordable rate.

Mr. Rubio has been a resident of Socorro for over 31 years and firmly believes in community service and giving back to the residents of Socorro.

The Lower Valley Water District is pleased to have them as members of the Board of Directors because of their strong commitment for the improvement

The Lower Valley Water District Wishes You and Your Family a Prosperous New Year.

Suspects sought

Police are seeking community assistance to find two men who took \$50,000 in currency from the Big 8 Food store at 9616 Montana during a violent assault in the early morning hours of Nov. 22, 2001. One of the subjects is described as a Hispanic male, 20-25 years of age, wearing a black baseball cap and dark ski jacket. The second is a Hispanic male of about the same age, wearing a red baseball cap, dark ski jacket, black pants and white Nike gym shoes. Information on this aggravated robbery that leads to an arrest is worth up to \$1,000, and callers can remain anonymous by calling Crime Stoppers at 566-TIPS (8477).



Socorro

From Page 1

are leased for personal use. There was no public input on the hearings, therefore, Mayor Padilla closed the hearings and Council approved both ordinances unanimously.

In other business, Council approved the recommendation from the Grant Committee regarding request for proposals from non-profit organizations for the purpose of submitting grant applications to Foundations for various City projects. Council also approved informal bids on a computer for Planning and Capacity Grant from Dell for \$6284.24.

Council also approved the reconsideration of action taken to donate two mini pumbers to the Socorro Fire Department.

Peters-Baker nuptials held in Las Vegas

HORIZON CITY — Dorothy Peters and Bill Baker were wed in a ceremony at the Candle Light Chapel in Las Vegas, Nevada on Sept. 4, 2001. The bride was given away by her sons Norman and Craig Peters, and was attended by a bridal party of Kari Ann Dunn and Elise, Lindsay, Cassie, Natalie and Madeline Peters. The bride is an employee of the Clint School District. She is the mother of seven children: Norman, Allen, Mark and Craig Peters, Kari Dunn, Cheri Pearson and Amber Peters. The groom is retired, and has three children, Mary Murray and two sons, Bill and Bob Baker. The couple reside in Horizon City.

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LEGALS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING REGIONAL WATER PLANNING

The Far West Texas Water Planning Group (Region E) will receive suggestions and recommendations from the public on the issues that should be addressed or provisions that should be included in the Amended Regional Water Plan during Round 2 regional water planning at two public meetings of the Planning Group. Region E includes the counties of Brewster,

Culberson, El Paso, Jeff Davis, Hudspeth, Presidio and Terrell.

Public meetings will be held in the Casner Room at Marfa City Hall, 113 N. Highland Street, Marfa, Texas on Thursday, Jan. 10, 2002 at 1 p.m. (CST) and at the Texas A&M University, El Paso Research Center, at 1380 A&M Circle, El Paso, Texas on Thursday, Feb. 7, 2002, at 1 p.m. (MST). Written and oral comments will be accepted at these meetings. For additional information, please contact: Barbara Kauffman, Rio Grande Council of Governments,

1100 N. Stanton Street, Ste. 610, El Paso, Texas 79902. Phone: (915) 533-0998, ext. 121; e-mail: b.kauffman@riocog.org WTCC-1/3/02

GARAGE SALE

FOUR FAMILY YARD SALE: Saturday, Jan. 5, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Rustic Lane, off Gillett Road in Canutillo. Furniture, appliances, clothes and more.

HELP WANTED

Hair Slingers in Horizon

City is seeking experienced cosmetologist. Apply in person after 2 p.m. at 13899 Horizon Blvd., Ste. 4, Horizon City. TFN

OFFICE SPACE

Office for lease in Horizon City. Corner of Darrington and Horizon Blvd. \$350/month. Call Horizon Properties, 852-3331.

SELF-HELP OPPORTUNITIES

Alcoholics Anonymous Group Paso Del Norte

meets at 8501 Kingsway in Westway, Monday-Saturday, 8 p.m. Call 886-4948 for information.

Alcohólicos Anónimos Grupo Paso Del Norte sesiones lunes a sábado a 8 de la tarde, 8501 Kingsway, Westway. 886-4948 para información.

Tiene problemas con el alcohol? Hay una solución. Visitemos. Alcohólicos Anónimos, Grupo 8 de Enero, 15360

Horizon Blvd., Horizon City, sesiones lunes a sábado a 8 de la tarde. Información: 859-0484.

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San Elizario and Canutillo school districts honor employees

By Don Woodyard
Courier Staff Writer

EL PASO COUNTY — In December board meetings in the San Elizario and Canutillo school districts, trustees took action to augment the ranks of teachers.

The two boards approved a plan, required by House Bill 1130, which encourages the hiring of educational aides/paraprofessionals who show an interest in becoming certified teachers. The resolution supporting the House measure describes area school districts from Anthony to Sierra Blanca forming a partnership to push for passage of the measure.

El Paso Community College and UT El Paso, in a collaborative effort, have developed a program which offers an outline of coursework leading to teacher certification.

San Elizario ISD

In SEISD on Dec. 12, recognitions highlighted the board meeting in the new Borrego Elementary School.

Long-time employees were honored. At 25 years, Yolanda Urias had the longest period of service of any employee in the district. Juana Garcia and JoAnne Widus were named with 20 years each.

Honored for 15 years service were Marian Blaylock, Cruz Chavez, Alicia Cortez, Evangelina Dearo, Cynthia Martinez, Mario Gasca, Eloy Anaya, Irma Rodriguez, Lorenzo Cedillo and Benita Duran.

Recognition of 10-years service were given to 36 additional staff.

Senior Jessica Garcia was named the

winner of the district's annual Christmas card contest. Her design was used on cards sent out by the district.

Dan Gonzalez, construction manager with Urban Associates, reported that the new administration building is 30 percent complete. It is scheduled for completion next April.

Julian Encina outlined career and technology programs. There are 690 high school students enrolled in various career programs such as automotive, health and cosmetology.

The board also approved continuation of an interlocal agreement between the district and El Paso County for operating a juvenile delinquency prevention program in the middle school through a Project Real grant from the state; and replacement of damaged tile at Borrego Elementary.

Canutillo ISD

In Canutillo ISD on Dec. 11, recognitions were also a part of the school board meeting, which was the first in the new administration building.

The Superintendent's Exemplary Employee Award went to Leila Gale, a PEIMS specialist.

Recognition plaques were also given to Tedd and Rosa Richardson and Jesus and Marty Reyes for their donations to Childress Elementary's campus beautification project.

Assistant superintendent Dr. John Kessinger, Gayle Kessinger, public information officer Alfredo Vasquez and Martha Veale, technology and career education director, were praised by Superintendent Charles Hart for their work in coordinating events for the recent open house for the administration building.

Looking back at some weird moments in 2001 sports

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Well, it's finally here, 2002!

I hope your holiday and New Year's celebrations were the best, I know mine were.

One thing that goes hand-in-hand with every new year is the obligatory look back at the old year. You know, reminiscing about what you did or didn't accomplish during the year that just ended. And we always do the same in the world of sports.

But anyone can do a 2001 "sports year in review" highlighting the best sports moments of the past year. Whether it was Barry Bonds' 73 home runs or Arizona's exciting World Series win over the Yankees, or Lance Armstrong's victory in the Tour de France or one of a hundred other things.

What I want to focus on are the top 20 most unusual sports stories of the year — the stories that have you scratching to top of your head instead of sitting on the edge of your seat.

Believe it or not, there were dozens of wacky sports stories out there to make 2001 a memo-

rable one but I think I've narrowed it down to the Top 20 Weirdest of the Weird.

20. Shaquille O'Neal apologizes after admitting he was just joking on a radio show when he stated he had slept with Venus Williams, Cindy Crawford and singer Aaliyah.

19. NBA referees eject singer Jimmy Buffett from a Knicks-Heat game for using profanity.

18. Knicks' guard and devout Christian, Charlie Ward, apologized to his team and fans after anti-Semitic remarks he made.

17. Marlins' outfielder Cliff Floyd feuds with Mets' manager Bobby Valentine after he leaves Floyd off N.L. All Star team.

16. Rae Carruth is cleared of first degree murder charges to escape the death penalty but is convicted of three other charges related to his pregnant girlfriend's murder.

15. Nine of the 22 umpires fired by MLB are reinstated and are ordered to receive all their back pay.

14. Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban runs onto the court during a shoving match between his team and the Cleveland Cavaliers. Seems the Cavs accused the Mavs of running up the score so that fans could win a Taco Bell

promotion.

13. New heavyweight boxing champ Hasim Rahman brawls with Lennox Lewis during the taping of an ESPN show.

12. Atlanta Gold Club owner Steve Kaplan pleads guilty to racketeering charges in a case which several pro athletes testify about sexual favors they received at the strip bar.

11. A thief uses Tiger Woods' identity to steal \$17,000 in goods. He is found guilty and sentenced to prison.

10. 76ers owner Pat Croce announces that the team's conditioning coach John Croce, his brother, was fired after a video camera caught him stealing money out of Allen Iverson's pants in the locker room.

9. In what could have been touted as Ali-Frazier IV, daughter Laila Ali defeated daughter Jacqui Frazier-Lyle in an eight-round decision.

8. Knicks center Marcus Camby heads to South Windsor, Conn. where his mother and two sisters are held hostage by a knife-wielding man. No family members were hurt.

7. Golfer Casey Martin wins his right to ride a golf cart during PGA tour events by a 7-2 Supreme Court vote.

6. Former Yankee Darryl Strawberry gets into trouble yet again, violating his probation. After turning up missing for a few days, he was finally found after bizarre rumors surfaced that he had been kidnapped.

5. Venus Williams pulls out of a semifinal match against her sister Serena at Indian Wells claiming knee trouble, denying rumors that she was told to do so by her father so that her sis could gain the title.

4. Tied for the lead in the final round, Ian Woosnam is penalized for having too many clubs in his bag, thanks to his caddie, who Woosnam fired after the incident.

3. Danny Almonte, with the help of his coach and father, lied about his age to illegally compete for New York in the Little League World Series.

2. The second coming of football follies, the wacky XFL was born and died during 2001.

1. UTEP football falls on its face after skipping out on its commitment to play NMSU so they can play Texas Tech. The Miners don't get to play the much-anticipated home game against Texas Tech and lose their last seven of the season to finish 2-9.

View from here by Michael Quinn Sullivan

Difference in TAAS and national test scores calls for explanation

"Science education in Texas is a big success."

"Science education in Texas is a failure."

The first statement is a reasonable conclusion drawn from the Texas Education Agency reports of student scores from the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills test. According to the Texas Education Agency, 91 percent of our 8th grade students passed the science section of the TAAS in Spring 2001. This is up from an 88 percent passage rate in 2000.

These numbers are incredibly encouraging. They imply that our public schools are churning out students with the academic potential to be automotive mechanics, electricians, computer programmers, doctors and engineers — just what our economy needs.

With a near-universal passage rate

on the state-required TAAS test, who can question the instruction of science in our schools?

Those meddlers at the US Department of Education, it seems. They recently released data from the 2000 National Assessment of Educational Progress science test. According to the results, Texas students don't fare so well compared to kids across the country.

In fact, almost 50 percent "lacked basic science knowledge." Conversely, only 23 percent qualified as either "proficient" or "advanced." For sake of clarification, to get a "basic" rating on the NAEP test students must "demonstrate some knowledge and reasoning required for understanding of the earth, physical and life sciences... (be able to) obtain information from graphs, diagrams, and tables... have a beginning under-

standing of cause-and-effect relationships."

This means more than half of our students cannot understand, for example, the cause-and-effect relationship between shoddy tests and accurate results.

The "end of course" high school biology TAAS test offers one such example. Students are asked to look at a cartoon drawing and determine how the girl pictured might more accurately measure the liquid in a graduated cylinder that she is holding at an obviously contorted angle.

Another TAAS question, this one for 8th graders, also features a cartoon. In it, a bird is sitting on a nest beside several eggs, with branches of the tree visible. A second cartoon shows the same bird and eggs, but one branch has large berries hanging from it. Students are asked what has grown between the times of the two pictures.

Any questions why 90 percent of the students pass the state science test?

Such inanities litter the TAAS landscape. They might be excusable were it not for the fact that parents,

teachers, schools, the legislature and others rely on the test results to judge student performance and hold our schools accountable.

Disparities in test scores, such as those between the NAEP and the TAAS, beg the question: "Who holds the state test accountable?" Teachers have long complained about the negative effects of the TAAS in the classroom. Maybe we should start listening.

No one asks tough questions when kids pass the state tests with flying colors; everyone praises the leaders and congratulates Maria and Jared. But when those same kids suddenly fail a test, Texans should ask very tough questions.

Why does the TAAS show stellar science skills, while a national test has our students lagging? More broadly, why is it that scores on the state test show increasing improvement, while achievement remains flat for Texas kids on college entrance exams?

If Texas held students to the same passing standards as national tests such as the Stanford 9 or Iowa Test of Basic Skills, half of the kids would

be held back, according to research by the University of Houston.

Higher failure rates from a more rigorous test might cause heartburn across Texas, but not nearly so much as a student feels when he realizes his academic ability is not really in the top ten percent after he or she flunks out of college or fails a pre-employment exam.

The TEA is right now crafting a new assessment test (the TAKS). Will it feature more inane questions, producing more meaningless scores? Or, will it provide a true measure of academic acumen?

Elected officials and policymakers owe the taxpayers a solid measure with which we can judge how well our education money is being spent.

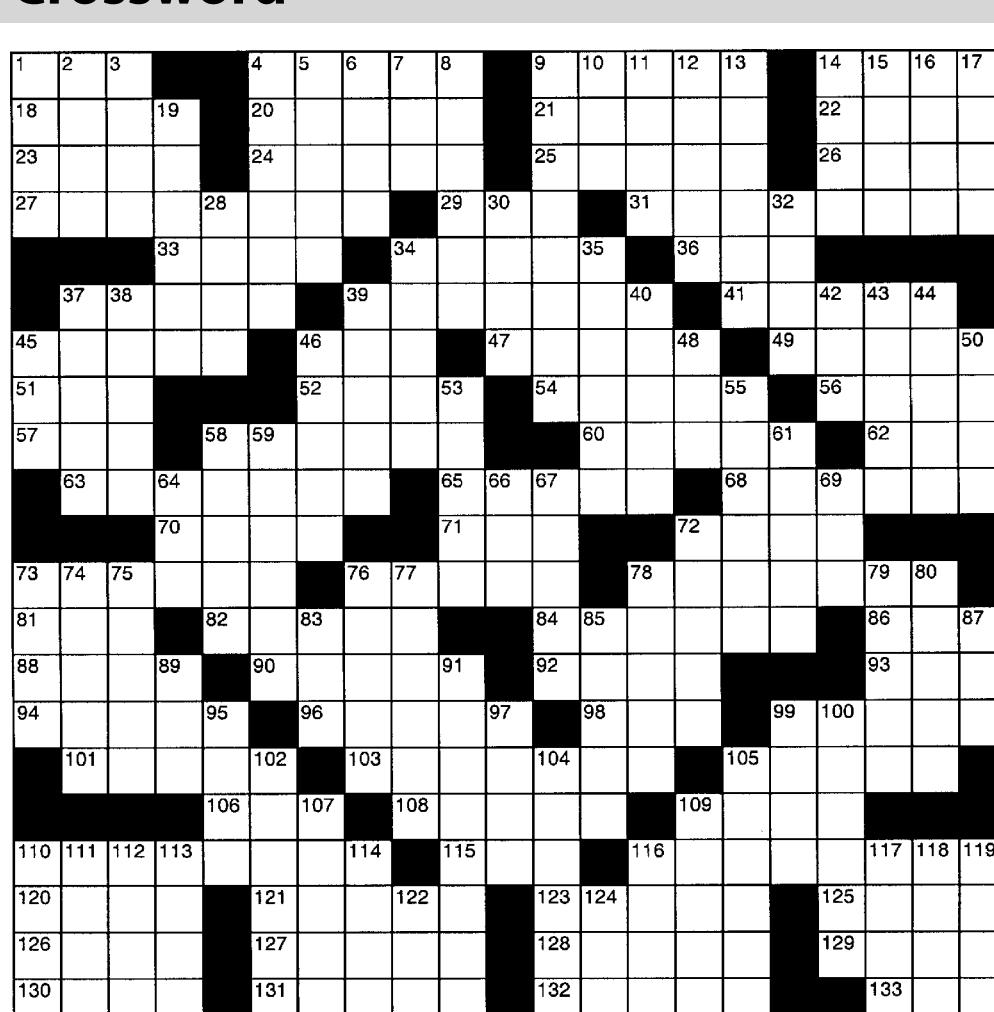
More importantly, we owe it to our children's future to demand an academically rigorous test that allows us to better provide for their educational needs.

(Michael Quinn Sullivan is director of media and government relations for the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a non-profit, non-partisan think tank based in San Antonio.)

King Super Crossword

A PUZZLE ACROSS	
1 Brimless hat	57 Mao -tung
4 Entertain or Erato?	58 Land or beacon?
9 Trophy or city dis-trict?	60 Mead's milieu
14 Be an accomplice or wager?	62 Canonized Mlle.
18 Sills solo	63 Eulogy
20 Chemical element	65 At _ for words
21 Less adorned	68 Result
22 O'Hara homestead	70 It really smells
23 Minus	71 Spoil
24 Dolt	72 Rent- _
25 Marsh bird	73 Morsel for Dumbo
26 Ken of "thirtysomething"	76 Error
27 Waterfalls	78 Obsolete title
29 Furrow	81 Lend an _ (listen)
31 Emotionally arduous	82 Schipa or Bergonzi
33 Spouses no more	84 Quantity or steed?
34 _ cotta	86 Cry of discovery
36 Peculiar	88 Particle
37 De Mille or Moorehead	90 Automaton
39 Be in a pageant	92 French couturier
41 George of "Just Shoot Me"	93 Soho snack
45 Thicks	94 Varnish ingredient
46 _ is me!"	96 Fall decoration
47 Fish for a dish	98 Creepy Christopher
49 Shady spot	99 Jeweler's weight
51 Goal	101 Link
52 Simple shelters	103 Looked like Hook?
54 "Got You Into My Life" (66 song)	105 Planned a burglary
56 Figure of interest?	106 Uh-uh

DOWNS	
1 Soft mineral	38 Private Pyle ('90 film)
2 Locality	39 Moulin _
3 TV's "Our _ Brooks"	40 Forum fashions
4 Dwells	42 Growl sound
5 Ways	43 Embarrass or big party?
6 "Topaz" author	44 Government game
7 _ Canals	45 Purrfect pet?
8 Main course	46 Singer Barry
9 Like some art	48 Rep. rival
10 Pale	50 _ "Petite" ('57 song)
11 Like 102 Down	53 Put one's foot down
12 Printer's proof	55 Big-billed bird
13 Expects the worst	58 Concerning or match?
14 Like _ of bricks	61 Separately or role?
15 Part of Indonesia	64 Hostelry
16 _ go bragh!"	66 _ Cruces, NM
17 Sharp taste	67 Mountain nymph
19 Upward movement or aroma?	69 _ Lanka
28 Fires	72 Blue hue
30 Poetic pots	73 Compte component
32 Concept	74 Consumed
34 Choppers	75 Stood up or flower?
35 Opposite or hybrid?	76 Rock's Los _
37 Tilted or roster?	77 Approximately or boxing division?
38 Fires	78 Acted like a dove
39 Dame	79 - Dame
40 In front of or leader?	80 Egg yolk
42 Bran	83 Egg yolk
43 Cowboy Tom	85 Jazzman Davis
44 Essay's big brother	87 - bran
45 "On the Run"	89 Cowgirl Tom
46 " - on the Run"	91 Essay's big brother
47 " - on the Run"	95 " - on the Run"



Answer Page 7

American monkeys key to coffee shortage

By Don Flood

Among the more important skills of a professional journalist is the ability to use bizarre synonyms for everyday things.

That's why, in news reports, "snow" is never referred to twice. On second reference it's always "the white stuff," as in, "Hey everybody, it's white stuffing outside!"

Coffee is another one. In the second reference — and sometimes the first — coffee is always referred to as "hot java" or "cup of joe" or anything besides coffee, because if we just came out and said "coffee," too many readers might actually understand what we're talking about.

But hot java is an appropriate way to describe what is now the most expensive and sought after coffee in the world — Kopi Luwak.

Kopi Luwak — this is absolutely true — is made from coffee beans that have passed through the digestive system of the Palm Todd Cat monkey in Indonesia, which includes the island of Java.

Kopi Luwak is so rare and so popular that it sells, in limited areas, at five bucks a cup.

To collect the beans, workers must hunt through piles of Toddy Cat monkey dung.

As you can imagine, monkey dung coffee bean searcher is among the most prestigious and highly prized job titles in all of Indonesia.

Ambitious young people who aspire to be elite bean searchers must complete a rigorous four-year program at the country's Monkey Dung Coffee Bean Searchers University.

For the first three years, students focus almost exclusively on "hands-on" experience with "beanless" monkey dung.

Finally, in their final year, after an emotional, tear-filled ceremony, seniors are called to begin working on the real thing.

But in order to be accepted as Certified Monkey Dung Coffee Bean Searchers, they first must pass, so to speak, their final exam, a tension-filled three-hour test of their monkey dung coffee bean searching capabilities.

Appearing before a select panel, seniors must find every bean in a 50-pound pile of dung. One missed coffee bean brings immediate expulsion from the program.

To us this may sound like a brutal system, but people should remember that this is why the most highly

skilled monkey dung coffee bean searchers all come from Indonesia.

It does, however, bring up an intolerable situation: U.S. coffee drinkers are at the mercy of a small cartel of Indonesian monkeys.

As the only remaining superpower, we cannot allow one country to control the world's supply of monkey digestive tract coffee.

First, while we may not have the services of the Palm Todd Cat monkey in this country, we do have significant simian digestive capacity.

Just look at the big apes in the zoos. I bet they could pass some coffee beans.

And what about those silly monkeys, scampering about as if they haven't a care in the world?

It's obvious that this country's monkey-power is vastly underutilized. We need to put them to work.

If all Americans — humans and monkeys — work together, we can produce the finest simian digestive tract coffee in the world.

And I already have a slogan — "American Kopi Luwak: Good to the Last Dropping."

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Social Security: Q & A by Ray Vigil

Q: I've been reading and hearing about "Saving Social Security" and how demographic shifts are driving the need for changes in Social Security. Can you explain this to me?

work. If I do, will I immediately lose my benefits?

A: Absolutely not! In fact, with a new package of work incentives, it is easier than ever for disabled beneficiaries to go back to work. Of course, your work will have an effect on your benefits, depending on what sort of benefits you receive and the amount you earn. It is Social Security's goal to do everything we can to help disabled people in their attempts to return to work.

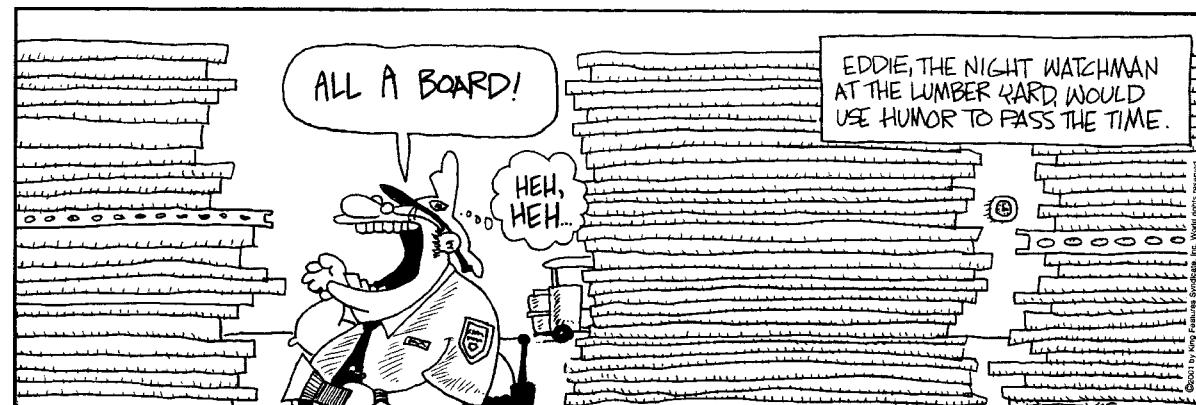
Q: I retired in 2000 from the life insurance business. Last month, I received sales commissions totaling \$8,000 for life insurance policies that I sold before I retired. Will these commissions count as earnings for this year and reduce my Social Security benefits?

A: The \$8,000 in commissions will not count toward the earnings limit because you did the work to earn that amount before you retired.

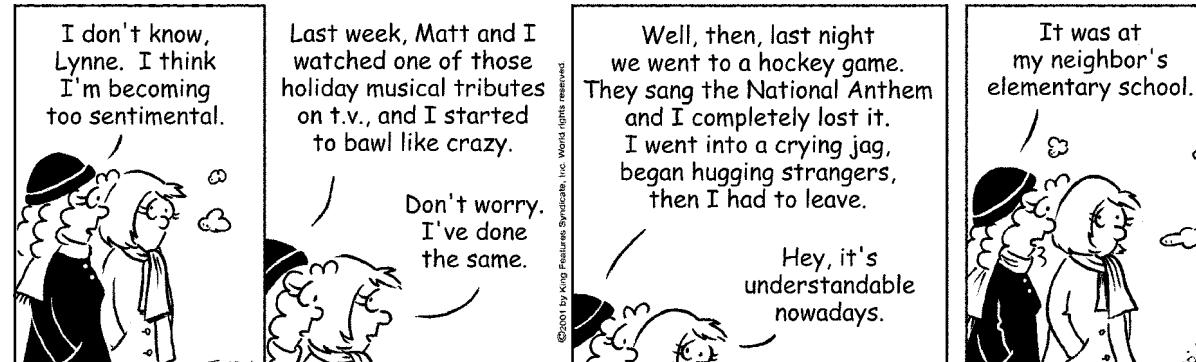
For more information visit your local Security office, see <http://www.ssa.gov>, or call us at 1-800-772-1213. If you have any questions that you would like to have answered, please mail them to the Social Security Office, 11111 Gateway West, Attn: Ray Vigil, El Paso, Texas 79935.

Comix

OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



GOT A LIFE By Terri Davis



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



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City of Horizon City PUBLIC NOTICE

A PUBLIC HEARING will be held at **6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8, 2002** during the **Regular City Council Meeting** at City Hall, 14999 Darrington Road, Horizon City, Texas. Purpose of the public hearing is to allow any interested persons to appear and testify regarding the following proposed ordinances:

- Proposed Amendment No. 0028 to Zoning Ordinance No. 0006, to require separate permits for plumbing, electrical and mechanical construction for the Town of Horizon City, Texas.

Those who are unable to attend may submit their views in writing to the City Clerk of Horizon City. Ordinances are too extensive to print. Ordinances are always available for viewing or copying upon request from the City Clerk at the above address.

Sandra Sierra
City Clerk

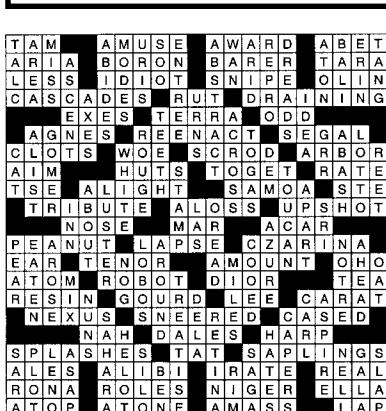
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Ear tags mandated for some sheep and goats

AUSTIN — Beginning November 2001, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires that certain classes of sheep and goats have premise identification ear tags applied before they are moved from their farm to be sold in interstate commerce or commingled with sheep and goats from any other farms. Compliance action in Texas will not be taken until April 1, 2002.

Identification requirements extend to:

- All sheep 18 months of age or older.
- All breeding sheep regardless of

age.

- Sexually intact show or exhibition sheep and goats.
- All goats 18 months of age or older that are or have been commingled with sheep.
- All breeding goats that are or have been commingled with sheep.

Tattoos may be used to identify registered or meat and dairy show goats, as long as the animals are accompanied by their registration papers. A premise identification number should be obtained and the ear tags should be applied to animals being culled or animals no

longer accompanied by registration papers.

Commercial goats and wethers that have not had contact with sheep are exempt from identification requirements.

Identified sheep and goats may carry several ear tags, depending on how many premises or flocks from which they have been moved or sold. Tags are to accurately reflect the premises on which the animals have been commingled with other sheep or goats.

Aside from the time it takes to attach the ear tag prior to loading sheep

and goats for shipment, there is no cost, if you use the white metal or white plastic tags provided through the state-federal program. In meetings with industry representatives, a preference for a premise identification system was expressed. Therefore, owners will be assigned a unique, permanent premise identification number. Supplies of ear tags will carry this number, and a sequential number on the reverse side, which owners may use in maintaining individual animal records.

A free pair of tag pliers will be provided with the first shipment of tags.

To get your premise identification number and order free tags, call the toll-free designated toll-free "tag line" at 1-866-873-2824.

Tags are shipped by UPS, so be prepared to provide a physical shipping address.

Approved vendors offer other styles of official premise identification tags that may be purchased after you get your premise number. A list of approved vendors can be obtained by calling the toll-free "tag line," or checking the web site: www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/scrapie.htm

WEATHER

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO

WEDNESDAY	WED. NIGHT	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Times of clouds and sunshine; still cool. ▲ 46°	Clear to partly cloudy and cold. ▼ 28°	A mix of clouds and sun with a milder afternoon. ▲ 56° ▼ 34°	Partly sunny and seasonable. ▲ 60° ▼ 34°	A good deal of sunshine; pleasant. ▲ 58° ▼ 34°	Mostly sunny. ▲ 54° ▼ 32°	A good deal of sunshine, but colder. ▲ 46° ▼ 18°	Sunshine. ▲ 56° ▼ 24°

UV INDEX Statistics for noon.

The higher the UV Index, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

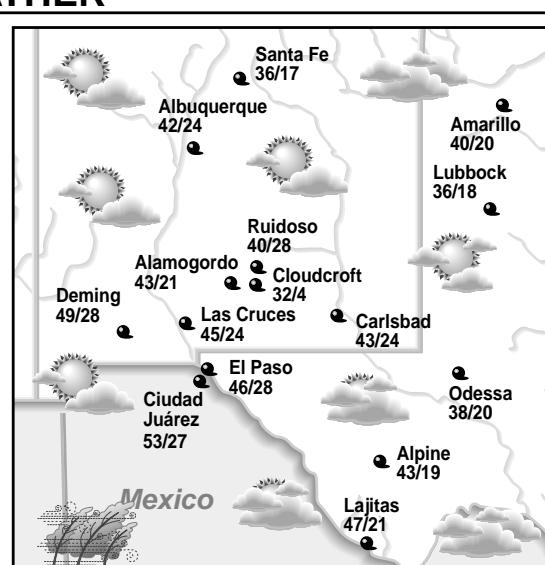
Wednesday	2	Minimal
Thursday	2	Minimal
Friday	3	Low
Saturday	3	Low
Sunday	2	Minimal
Monday	2	Minimal
Tuesday	2	Minimal

REAL FEEL TEMP™

A composite of the effects of temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine intensity, cloudiness, precipitation, and elevation on the human body.

Wednesday	35°
Thursday	58°
Friday	55°
Saturday	59°
Sunday	43°
Monday	49°
Tuesday	40°

TEXAS WEATHER



AGRICULTURE

Wednesday through the weekend will be dry across the area. Temperatures will be below normal Wednesday, but return to seasonal levels Thursday. No rainfall is expected over the next 7 days.

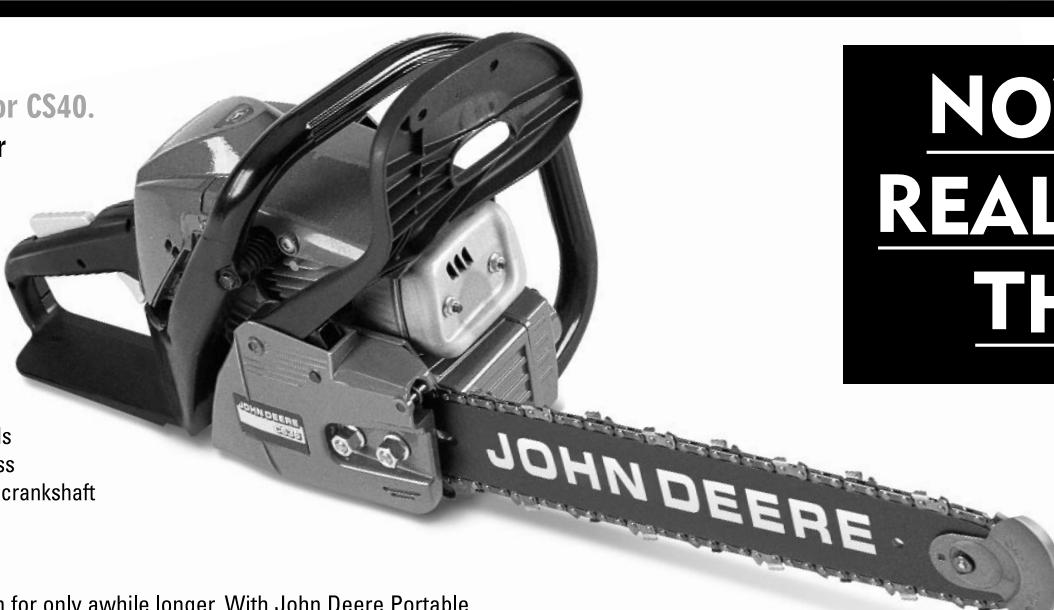
All maps, forecasts and data provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2002

TRAVELERS CITIES

City	Wed. Hi/Lo/W	Thur. Hi/Lo/W	Fri. Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	Sun. Hi/Lo/W
Albuquerque	42/24/pc	48/26/sh	44/24/pc	42/20/s	46/24/s
Atlanta	34/24/c	38/24/c	42/30/pc	46/34/c	50/23/c
Atlantic City	35/24/s	37/26/pc	33/16/s	33/23/s	41/27/c
Austin/San Antonio	42/26/c	50/32/s	52/42/c	60/38/pc	58/30/pc
Baltimore	36/22/s	38/24/pc	34/18/s	36/24/pc	39/25/c
Boston	38/25/s	38/23/s	26/16/s	30/20/c	34/29/c
Chicago	24/12/pc	30/18/s	32/24/pc	32/24/sf	32/22/c
Dallas/Ft. Worth	40/24/c	50/32/s	52/36/c	54/34/c	52/26/pc
Denver	36/20/s	46/22/pc	38/16/c	40/18/pc	44/22/pc
Flagstaff	44/19/pc	45/21/c	41/16/c	40/18/pc	43/6/pc
Houston	42/26/c	54/34/s	64/48/pc	64/42/c	58/30/pc
Kansas City	20/9/pc	38/18/s	38/23/pc	36/21/sn	36/13/c
Las Vegas	56/36/c	52/39/c	56/36/pc	56/36/s	59/24/s
Miami	78/64/r	68/50/r	68/54/pc	74/58/pc	75/60/c
Minneapolis	18/6/pc	22/8/sf	26/12/pc	24/8/sf	26/12/pc
New Orleans	46/30/r	50/36/s	56/44/s	62/46/sh	56/36/c
New York City	38/26/s	38/22/s	28/16/pc	34/26/c	38/32/c
Philadelphia	36/24/s	38/24/pc	32/20/s	36/24/s	40/28/c
Phoenix	68/48/pc	66/46/pc	66/42/s	66/44/s	68/44/s
Portland	49/40/r	49/38/c	47/38/sh	49/38/c	46/39/pc
San Francisco	58/47/sh	58/45/c	58/49/pc	60/47/pc	58/40/pc
Seattle	50/40/r	48/38/sh	46/38/c	48/38/c	48/42/c
Tucson	66/42/pc	66/40/pc	62/36/s	64/36/s	66/40/s
Washington, DC	36/26/pc	40/26/c	36/22/pc	38/26/pc	38/27/c

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

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