

NEWSBRIEFS

Guillen honored

The Texas State Veterans Home in El Paso will be named after U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Ambrosio Guillen, a Medal of Honor recipient who lived there. Staff Sgt. Guillen enlisted in El Paso on Jan. 13, 1948. He was sent to Korea, where he served as a platoon sergeant in Company F, Second Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced). Near Songushon, Korea, Staff Sgt. Guillen led the defense of a Marine outpost against a vicious night attack by two Chinese communist battalions. Mortally wounded, he refused medical aid and continued to direct his men until the enemy was defeated and thrown into disorderly retreat. A few hours later, he died of his wound — two days before the cease-fire. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. Sgt. Guillen was chosen from nominations resulting from 130 letters of solicitation to El Paso-area veterans organizations, veterans leaders, local elected officials, state representatives and senators, local members of Congress and both U.S. senators from Texas. For additional information on Texas State Veterans Homes and state home, land and home improvement loans for Texas veterans, call 1-800-252-VETS (1-800-252-8387), or visit the VLB Web site at www.texasveterans.com.

Chemical spill

The road of Westway in Vinton was closed for several hours, beginning at about 12:45 p.m. last Thursday when the El Paso County Sheriff's Office dispatch received a call of possible chemical spill behind the Petro Lube. The West Valley Volunteer Fire Dept. responded first, followed by Sheriff's deputies and the El Paso Fire Dept. A six-foot by 10-foot contamination zone from an unknown liquid substance was emitting smoke from the ground. A 500-foot hot-zone was designated and seven businesses and 40 people were evacuated from the area. A light wind was blowing the smoke into the uninhabited desert area. Headed by EPFD Chief John Barnes, the Recon Team determined the substance had a high acidity level and it was neutralized. The actual type of the substance is not known, however, the scene was reopened, as well as Westway Road, about 3:30 p.m. Petro made arrangements to have the material cleaned up. "This was great example of the cooperation of agencies in the El Paso area," said Rick Glancey, El Paso County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer.

High-steppin' recital

Socorro High School's award-winning Missionettes dance troupe is planning a recital for 7 p.m. April 2 in the school's Performing Arts Theater, 10150 Alameda Avenue. The group, fresh from competition

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We have statistics to prove that locomotives aren't the least bit afraid of automobiles.
— Quips & Quotes



OUCH They say lightning doesn't strike in the same place twice but nothing about misfortune. The owners of Pepperoni's Pizza and Deli, Lee and John Mullen, found their sign for High Desert Plaza blown down on March 21. Lee quipped, "It took them 100 days to put it up when we paid for it. It will probably take 200 to get it fixed." Just January 4 of this year, a young lady lost control of her car and "parked" in the men's room of Pepperoni's.

Tornillo reading scores highest ever

By Rudy Barreda
Special to the Courier

TORNILLO — "It was easy!" That's what 3rd grade students at Tornillo Elementary told their teachers when asked how they felt after taking the Reading TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skill) on March 3. Although pleased, some teachers worried their students were a little too confident. Fortunately, their fears were laid to rest when the preliminary results were released last week. Ninety percent of the students passed the English version of the 3rd grade reading TAKS. On the Spanish version, 86 percent of the students passed the exam. These scores reflect a gain of over 30 points compared to last year's results.

"I almost didn't believe it," said Principal Severo Alcoset after hearing the scores. "I knew we'd do better (than last year), but this is tremendous!" Indeed, faculty, students and parents are pleased that everyone's hard work,

dedication and teamwork has begun to pay off. The community has reason to be proud of its schools, and the accomplishments of their kids.

"Don't let anyone ever tell you your child attends low-performing schools," said Superintendent Paul Vranish at a parent training session held last Wednesday evening. Responding to what he calls rumors and misinformation in the community, Vranish stressed, "The children of Tornillo are just



Bilingual teacher Ernesto Rivera's 3rd grade students cheer happily for their success on the TAKS test.

as worthy as any other child. And, by working with us as a team, you can help us help your child succeed."

Teachers and administrators from the other Tornillo campuses are not only pleased with the student's achievements, but are energized and eager to make similar gains. "My students are ready to do just as well," said Leroy Joffre, an 8th grade math teacher at Tornillo Junior High. Joffre said no doubt the teamwork and high expectations encountered throughout the district will have students at all Tornillo schools saying: "It was easy!"

Anthony ISD looking for new superintendent

By Don Woodyard
Courier Staff Writer

ANTHONY — The Anthony ISD board of trustees took the first steps in the quest for a new superintendent at its March 18 meeting.

Interim superintendent Vern Butler will take the first steps. He will compile a profile of qualifications around which the upcoming search for a new superintendent will be geared. The profile will be derived from input from the community, faculty and staff as well as high school students.

He will also provide the board with a proposed calendar and timetable for the conduct of a search. Butler emphasized that this will be information from which the board, not the administration, would be making the final decision.

Once provided with the profile, Butler said there were three possible courses of action for the actual search that he hopes can be accomplished by July. He and board President Rick Villarreal feel it is important that the new superintendent should be involved in the budget process for the 2004-05 school year.

Villarreal would like to have a minimum of three candidates from which to make the final selection.

The three courses of action Butler suggests are for the board itself to conduct the search; to enlist the help of Region 19 Education Service Center in the job search; or to hire a professional search service.

Butler said this is an "opportune time" to conduct the search since, at the present time, there are 67 superintendent vacancies throughout the state.

Concerned about the possibility of a lengthy search process, the board asked Butler how long he would stay on. "I will be here as long as you want me," he reassured the trustees. Butler previously has served 11 months as interim superintendent of the Ysleta Independent School District.

Board members underscored the need for a broad base of information on which to develop a profile.

Past board president Sally Flores pressed for community input.

Board member Raul Rueda wanted to be sure and get input from the board.

The only other major item on the agenda was presentation and approval of the district's Technology Plan presented by James Covey, the district's technology coordinator.

He explained that the plan spells out how Anthony ISD will use the nearly \$300,000 in federal E-Rate funds it is receiving to enhance the educational process. The plan encompasses meeting the requirements of the mandated "No Child Left Behind" program.

The money will be used to provide Internet access, phone service, network cabling, servers and wireless communication. It is leveraged, requiring the district to pay only 10 percent of the actual cost of the technology equipment or support service. Covey says the district has received about \$1.5 million in E-rate funds.

"E-rate has made an incredible difference in the district since I've been around," he points out. Covey, who began working with the district three years ago, says Anthony ISD has gone from a "non-functional" to a "very stable" state of the art system.



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

Let me help you

We're all pretty much aware of the contradictions in the old phrase "I'm from the government and I'm here to help you..." Maybe we're not so well acquainted with the "help" we are offered from other sources.

Now, I don't claim to be any financial genius but even if I was born at night, it wasn't last night. Some of the deals we get offered, especially around this time of year, would require exactly that kind of I-want-it-now naiveté to swallow.

Or equal amounts of desperation. That's what the loan sharks are counting on.

The offer sounds really good, of course. Let us do your taxes, the sign reads, and we'll give you your refund instantly! It's called a refund anticipation loan or RAL. What the sign does not tell you is how big a chunk they plan to whack off that refund before they hand you the leftovers.

The rates are astounding — a recent study by the National Consumer Law Center and the Consumer Federation of America found that the combination of loan fees, administrative fees, and charges for "instant" cash can amount to an effective annual interest rate of as much as 240 percent.

That puts the RAL on par with the notoriously bad deal of a "payday" loan which siphons off what little cream is left on top of a working

person's paycheck by "tiding them over" until their next paycheck. Let's call it the PDL.

Major customers for this kind of loan are what is loosely termed the "working poor," folks who live from one paycheck to the next, never quite making ends meet. Unfortunately they find that the PDL didn't really help them any — instead, when their paycheck comes in, they hand over a far greater amount to their friendly loan shark than he gave them when they took out the loan.

Many times these loans are sought because of the grim necessities of life — repairs on the family automobile, medical care or other emergency needs. Understandable.

But what about those who are will-

ing to give up big chunks of our tax refund just so we can have it now? What is it that makes a few weeks of time worth paying so much for?

Ask the tax-prep man. According to some tax preparation firms, they can literally bank on societal cravings that want it right now. No matter what it is. Instant gratification is the order of the day, even if waiting a few days would net us a far greater yield.

Fortunately there are ways around using these kinds of financial sources that are "here to help you." Or perhaps unfortunately for the masses who do not take the time nor make the effort to find out alternatives before paying through the nose to have their lives simplified. Sometimes simplification can help you right out the front door and into the street.

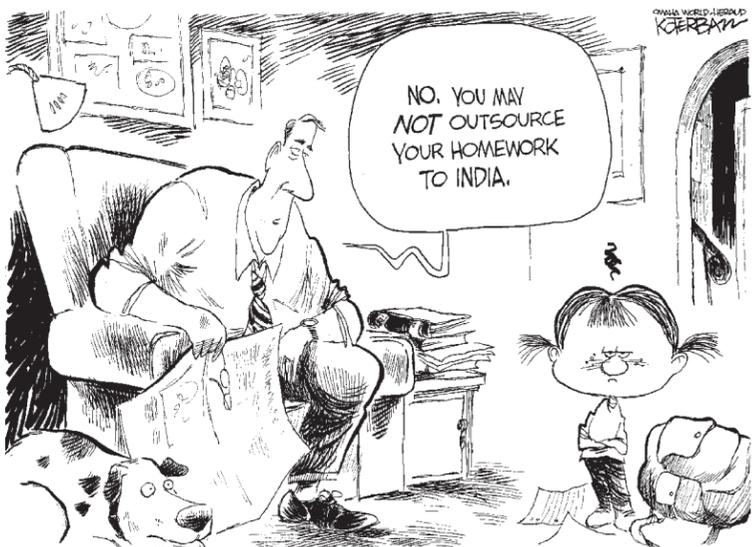
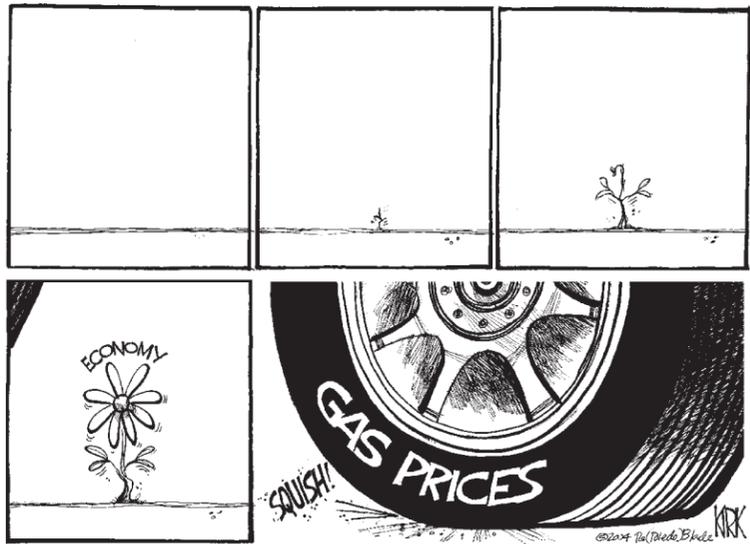
For those who must partake of PDLs, they may find that arranging to pay emergency expenses directly to the source — mechanic, doctor or hospital — would save them a bundle. Arrangements are usually available to pay medical charges in reasonable installments. And getting their entire check on payday will go much further toward settling the untimely debt.

And forego that lotto ticket — no matter how big the pot is — you aren't going to win it.

For those who want that instant tax refund, get over it. File your taxes carefully and appropriately yourself or with a trusted tax prep agent and be willing to wait — or have your deposit made electronically directly to your account if you're in a really big hurry. Keep in mind that the vacation package, the new car, the new outfit or jewelry sale is not "one of a kind." They will still be there when your money does come in — but don't expect your instant refund lender to tell you that.

Besides all that, if you are expecting a really big refund, maybe you should find out what kind of withholding error is letting Uncle Sam use your money interest-free all year before refunding to you what was rightfully yours in the first place.

But Uncle Sam would never take advantage like that, would he? After all, he is from the government and here to help you...



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Write stuff

Dear Editor:

Canutillo ISD voters are getting ready to elect new board members, Two positions are up for election which are currently held by Margarito (Mago) Arellano and Gonzalo (Chalo) Garcia. School board members serve three-year terms. One of these seats was left by Carl Frieze who did not fulfill his obligation as a board member because he resigned his seat for personal gain. Why should we elect a person to the board whose only interest is for personal gain? Members that are elected to the board should be accountable for their actions — they represent the voters of the community. We need to look at all the candidates, very closely, and see what they have done for our school and community.

Also, the voters of the Village of Vinton are getting ready to elect a new mayor. They should look very closely at who is running for mayor. One of the candidates that is running has cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars in legal fees due to her constant allegations against council members and officials or employees of the Village. She has filed three complaints with the Sheriff's Department. I feel very strongly that if Juvencia Rios Ontiveros was to be elected as mayor, and things do not go her way, she will be filling criminal complaints over and over, and will cost taxpayers more money and time. Last year she filed three different complaints. Two were filed on May 27, 2003 and the third one was on June 3, 2003. Vinton needs a mayor that is going to help the Village of Vinton go forward and make it a better community to live in and prosper. Use your vote wisely — your tax dollars are riding on this election.

Johnny Gauna
Village of Vinton

HFC loan commitments pass \$20 million, funds still available

EL PASO COUNTY — The El Paso Housing Finance Corporation (the HFC) has announced that loan commitments in the 2003 Home Buyer Assistance Program have topped the \$20,000,000 mark. This compares to \$3,900,000 for all of 2002. Over 300 El Paso families have taken advantage of the current program to become first time homeowners. This means that there is still \$5,000,000 left in the current bond issue to assist first time buyers with their down payment.

The Home Buyer Assistance Program provides from 4 percent to 8 percent down payment assistance for homes in El Paso to qualifying buyers. Lenders that are authorized to represent the Homebuyer Assistance Program include Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., Fort Bliss Federal Credit Union, Government Employees Credit Union of El Paso, McAfee Mortgage, Patriot Mortgage, and Rocky Mountain Mortgage Company.

Interested homebuyers should contact one of the lenders to get pre-approved for a loan or call 545-0330 anytime to request a brochure on the Homebuyer Assistance Program, or visit the HFC's web site www.elpasohfc.org for more information.

The El Paso Housing Finance Corporation is a non-profit organization chartered under State law that is focused on making home ownership possible for El Paso citizens. To this end, the HFC issues tax-free bonds and makes the money available to local families through cooperating lenders, along with assistance toward down payment and closing costs for first-time home purchase.



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

Housing privatization benefits El Paso families, economy

A bout 2,500 military families at Fort Bliss will soon live in new or improved homes, thanks to a military housing privatization plan scheduled to start this year.

This plan is the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI), the Army's arm of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI). The aim of MHPI is to eliminate inadequate housing on Army bases by 2007 through the construction of new homes, the improvement of current structures and the incorporation of community features such as recreation centers into a military post. It is an extremely cost-effective measure because contractors pay the up-front costs and recover their investment through rental payment. MHPI also stimulates local economies by providing job opportunities in the construction and maintenance of homes and facilities.

However, Fort Bliss' participation in MHPI this year is threatened by the recently-passed Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Budget Resolution, a bill I did not support.

MHPI is operating under a funding cap, which it will reach in November 2004. It is difficult to raise

this cap because the Congressional Budget Office (Congress' economic analysts) changed how they determine MHPI costs and now estimate its cost as much more expensive than it actually is. The Office of Management and Budget (the Administration's economic analysts) estimates MHPI's costs under the original, accurate guidelines.

During consideration of the FY2005 budget, I introduced an amendment ensuring that the FY2005 budget reflects the Administration's MHPI cost estimate. However, Republican leadership blocked the amendment from being considered by the full House. Therefore, the House-passed budget resolution does not address MHPI funding, threatening the future of the program by making it appear much more expensive than other housing options and jeopardizing secondary benefits local economies would enjoy. The Democratic substitute to the FY2005 budget resolution corrected this problem; however, it did not pass when considered by the House.

Broad bi-partisan support exists throughout Congress and the Administration for MHPI. Colleagues of mine on both sides of the aisle, including House Armed Services Com-

mittee (HASC) Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-CA), many members of the current Administration, and I are fighting to fund this important measure.

I have been working with my colleagues, informing them of this change and educating them about its potential consequences. I have contacted the Republican Chairman of the House Budget Committee, urging him to re-consider his decision regarding MHPI funding. I have also contacted my colleagues on both sides of the aisle whose districts will be adversely impacted by this decision. Members of the Administration, including the Assistant Secretaries of Defense for Installations and Environment for the Army, Air Force and Navy have all testified before the HASC, voicing their support for housing privatization initiatives. We will all continue to fight this year to save MHPI.

Many families here at Fort Bliss and across the country live in substandard housing. MHPI funding will improve our soldiers' and military families' quality of life and is the most efficient use of our money. Military families sacrifice so much by their participation in the defense of the nation. A decent place to call home is the very least they deserve.

The touch of agriculture

I had a meeting the other day with some folks from the Texas Farm Bureau. They're a great group of people and I always look forward to talking with them. In our meetings, we discuss everything from the price of livestock to the latest cotton regulations to foot and mouth disease. An interesting point was brought up in our last discussion. Does the American public realize how often agriculture touches their daily lives?

It's not something we think about every day. You probably don't get up in the morning, put on your clothes, and consider who raised the sheep for your wool pants or who grew the cotton for your shirt. When we get to the breakfast table, we often forget about the corn that was harvested for our morning bowl of cereal or the cows milked for our tall glass of calcium. When our children arrive at school, we seldom think about the school lunch program they are provided each day. Nor do we think about the vaccinations that keep them safe from disease. And when we stop at the grocery store on our way home, how often do we take for granted the high quality of the products we purchase. The produce and meat are fresh, and the aisles packed with availability and variety. Not many countries have this type of luxury.

I make this point because it's important we understand how fortunate we are to have a safe and successful agriculture industry. Agriculture affects so many aspects of our lives. Beyond food and clothing, the agriculture industry accounts for one in every six U.S. jobs. Farmers and ranchers are not the only people working for this huge industry. Agriculture supports your

neighbor who works at the clothing production plant, your friend who manages the local grocery store and even your family pharmacist.

No doubt about it — agriculture fuels our economy. The agriculture industry accounts for two percent of

our nation's gross domestic product. It also accounts for \$50 billion in exports each year. Let's not forget that farmers pay incredible sums of money to cover their business expenses.

In recent years, farmers paid as much as \$73 billion in purchases and over \$25 billion in employee wages.

When you add up the products, the jobs and the economic advantages you can come to just one conclusion: the agriculture industry is literally the backbone of our country. This was true when the founding fathers met in Philadelphia, it was true during the industrial revolution of the 1800s, and it is still true today.

So the next time you're in the grocery store picking out apples or at a department store selecting a new shirt, think about the time and energy invested in every product you see. We may take these things for granted, but for thousands of people nation-wide these items are truly a necessity of life. Let's be thankful for our agriculture industry and for the men and women who work hard every day to keep it strong.

Congressman Henry Bonilla is chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee and oversees all of the nation's agriculture funding, the nation's food supply, emergency disaster relief, and farm and ranch programs. He is in his fifth term as a Congressman from Texas' 23rd district.



Eye on D.C.

By U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla



Por la Gente By State Rep. Chente Quintanilla

Split Roll Option and survey results

Hola mi gente — If you recall in my last article, I keep encouraging your input regarding public education school finance — I want to thank all those people who reached me with their ideas and/or concerns; your comments are taken to heart. The last article talked about a uniform state income tax that attached several options concerning a sales tax increase. This week I write to you with another set of ideas regarding public education funding that are currently tossed around in Austin.

According to a plan floating around in Austin, the idea of a Split Roll Option has surfaced as a probable solution to fund public school education. The Split Roll Option will address are the following items:

- Incentives for growth and high achievement;
- Update school finance formulas;
- Split property tax rolls;
- State property tax of \$1.40 per \$100 on nonresidential property, with rate capped in constitution.

Local property tax on residential property of \$1.25 per \$100 with guaranteed yield but without recapture (Robin Hood), with up to \$0.15 for local enrichment with voter approval. For example: In Highland Park Independent School District \$0.01 of

local and enrichment monies will raise up to \$1 million vs. San Elizario Independent School District \$0.01 of local and enrichment monies can only raise \$15-\$20 thousand. As you can see there is a wide gap and disparity between how much funding school districts can raise. In my opinion, the above idea of a \$0.15 cap for local enrichment with voter approval is violating the Edgewood vs. Kirby, Supreme Court decision which considers anything more than \$0.10 of local enrichment monies that school districts can raise a crucial funding inequity amongst wealthy and poor school districts.

Other revenues sources:

- Cigarette tax increase to \$1 (\$1.5 billion revenue for biennium);
 - Video lottery at race tracks ((\$2.5 billion revenue for biennium);
 - Close franchise tax loopholes (\$0.7 billion revenue for biennium).
- Total costs estimated at \$4.7 billion for biennium, including \$3.1 billion in property tax relief, \$1.0 billion incentive fund, \$0.83 billion hold harmless for school districts.

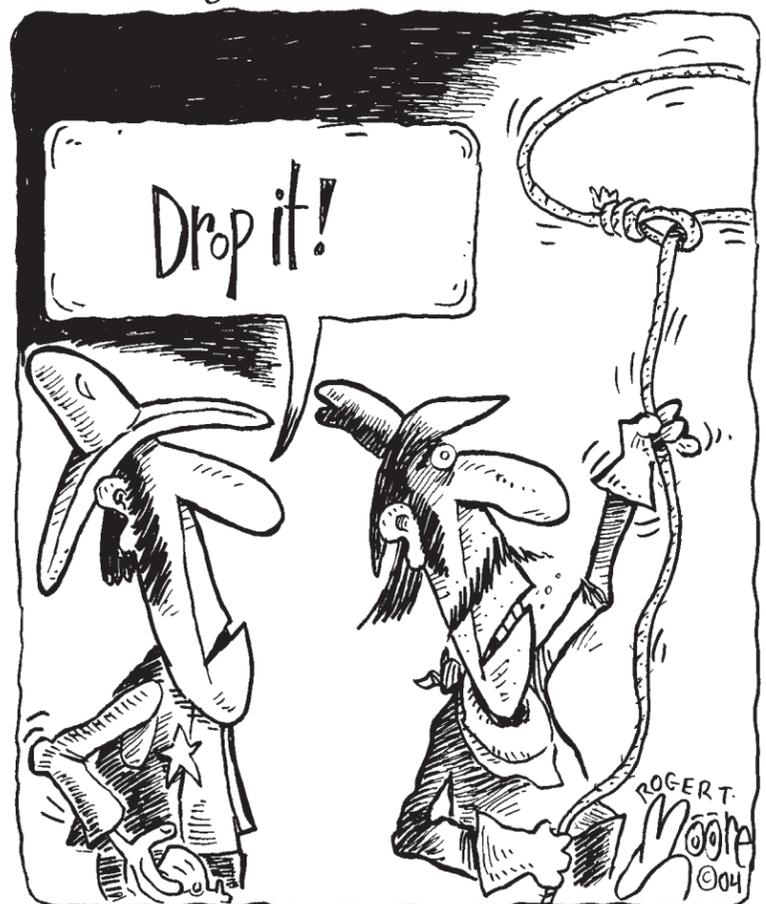
Proposed Constitutional amendment to lower property tax for non-residential and residential property to \$0.75 per \$100 over time by dedicating state revenue increases as follows; after adjustments for Medicaid and CHIP:

- 1/3 for property tax relief;
- 1/3 for public education;
- 1/3 for other state priorities.

Personally, I don't think this is much of a plan if it spawns inequity that affects directly our property-poor school districts and creates a wide crucial funding gap amongst our Texas school districts. In addition, the above plan will affect our business community because the plan is shifting the burden to them. This is not a fair way to fund education by taxing businesses at a higher rate than our residential property. This may have an adverse effect on our business economy.

Again, what is our best choice to fund public education and secure that the education of our children is not affected? Our state leadership continues to spin their wheels trying to absolve Robin Hood and cater to wealthy residential property owners in East Texas — excluding what detrimental consequences this may cast upon the future of public education. I firmly believe that we need to come up with a strong state formula that will fund public education and will reduce the burden on local tax payers. Therefore, in support for an equitable public education, I will continue to keep a close eye on this issue and voice my ideas/concerns regarding any floating plan that address public education school funding. I encourage you to contact me and discuss your views regarding this plan. Until then, I remain your friend and public servant, Chente for La Gente.

TRUE TEXAS FACTS by Roger T. Moore, March 28, 1905, the State legislature passed a very "un-Texan" measure ... all roping contests were against the law.



Miss an issue?
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Briefs

From Page 1

in New Orleans at the national Marching Auxiliary Dance Drill Contest, was awarded the sweepstakes prize in modern dance, Best Choreography in Jazz and Kick, Best Ensemble in Novelty Dance, and Superior Ensemble in Street dance competition. Miguel Mendoza was rated as a top solo dancer in competition with 150 other soloists. Ana Moncada is dance instructor for the group. The Missionettes are also sponsoring auditions for next year's troupe. The auditions are scheduled for April 19-23 in the SHS gym. Applications are due April 16, and can be obtained at the April 7 recital and during the following week in the dance studio. For more information, contact Moncada, 937-2246, or e-mail to amoncada@sisd.net.

In other news

■ On Wednesday, March 24, U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents made two significant seizures of narcotics. Agents in the Fabens area saw a 1986 Ford truck driving across the Rio Grande and approached for an immigration check, at which point the driver attempted to elude the agents first in the truck, which he overturned into an irrigation canal and then in a brief foot chase, after which he was arrested. He was identified as 23-

year-old Gariel Rubalcaba-Melendez, who was wanted on other drug charges and for escape from the La Tuna Federal Correctional Institution in Anthony. The truck was found to contain 1,092 pounds of marijuana with an estimated value of \$873,840. Later that day, agents east of Ft. Hancock seized 537 pounds of marijuana, valued at about \$430,384 in a Dodge minivan that was abandoned by the driver when agents approached. He fled into Mexico on foot.

■ The Tornillo Water Improvement District has announced restrictions on outdoor lawn watering beginning April 1 through Aug. 31. No such watering is permissible between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Even-numbered addresses may water during hours between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, odd-numbered addresses may water on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. No watering is permissible on Mondays. A TWID spokesman said a violation of these watering rules may carry a civil penalty up to \$5,000 and violators are subject to disconnection from the water system. Residents are requested to reduce water usage overall due to drought conditions. For more information call 764-2966.

■ The first service of the Sanctuary Christian Fellowship in their new location will be held 10 a.m. Sunday, April 4, at the Downtown Plaza Shopping Center, 14476 Horizon Blvd., Ste. J. Pastor Dean

Pinney said the congregation will be offering visitors free tickets to see *The Passion of Christ*. Call 852-4333 or 203-3084 for information.

■ Six Middle School and 11 High School students from Clint Independent School District have qualified for the Exxon Mobil Texas State Science and Engineering Fair April 1-3, 2004 in Lubbock, Texas to be held at the United Spirit Arena. The students will advance to the state competition after already having presented their findings and placing first, second or third at the campus, district and regional level. The Sun Country Regional Science fair was held in February at UTEP. The students from Clint competed against students from El Paso County area districts, private schools, and parochial schools in 14 different categories. The following students will present their findings and be judged on April 2 in their respective categories: Christina Pevey, Alejandro Vega, Marisa Godoy, Josue Herrera, Rachel Patti, Tressa Cook, Vanessa Flores, James Pendell, Catherine Lettunich, Israel Del Toro, Robert Payne, Annai Escobedo, Joel Isais, Brandi Gutierrez, Ymaliz Hernandez, Nikki Gonzales and Lauren Eveler. The group will leave for Lubbock on April 1 along with their sponsors.

■ The Mission Trail Small Business Conference will be held on Friday, April 2, 2004 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Mission Valley Ballroom at 10600 North Loop, for the communities of Clint, Fabens, Horizon City, Montana Vista, San Elizario, Socorro Tigua Indian Reservation and Tornillo sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Time Warner and the Mission Valley Ballroom. The conference is to be held at no cost and for reservations call the City

of Socorro at (915) 858-2915.

■ The need for neighborhoods to look out for elderly members has prompted the Area Agency on Aging to promote the SALSA Project to provide education and support to neighborhoods who want to assist in this way; to focus on risk factors, warning signs, who to call for help, and social service information; and organizing volunteer groups.

■ During the regular school board meeting on March 8 the Clint ISD board of trustees approved a new salary schedule for the 2004-05 school year which includes a four percent across-the-board increase, tenure stipends of up to \$1500 for teachers with five or more years with Clint ISD, and those who teach in a shortage area will receive a \$2000 stipend. Also, the employee premium for health insurance was reduced to \$5.33 per month. Superintendent Donna Smith said these enhancements were made while continuing to maintain financial stability in the district budget. "We will continue to work hard to make Clint ISD the employer of choice," she said.

■ Career Day at Escontrias Early Childhood Center on April 1 gave the children a glimpse of the future. Visiting employers included the U.S. Border Patrol, Jobe Concrete, and the Socorro and El Paso Police Departments.

■ An Easter Egg Hunt will be held in the Horizon City Park, next to the Oz Glaze Center, on Saturday, April 10, at 10 a.m. for children ages 8 and under. Free hotdogs and drinks will be provided for everyone and the community is invited to come out for the event, sponsored by St. Brendan's Episcopal Church.

■ The Col. John O. Ensor Middle

School orchestra is planning an enchilada/flauta dinner in Horizon City on March 31, 6-8 p.m. to raise money for a trip to Disneyland. Call 937-6000 for information.

■ The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission is seeking applications from community members interested in participating in the Rio Grande Citizens' Forum, established in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information between the Commission and members of the public who reside between the Percha Dam in New Mexico and Ft. Quitman in Texas. Responsibilities for Forum members are to review and comment on technical documents and activities associated with the area. There are currently 11 active members and the two-year terms of the entire board are expiring. Incumbent members who wish to continue are eligible for re-appointment. The Commission holds public meetings quarterly in El Paso or Las Cruces. Applications are available by contacting Sally Spener at (915) 832-4175, e-mailing to sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov, or logging on at <http://www.ibwc.state.gov> under IBW News. Deadline is April 23.

■ The 18th Citizens Academy for area residents interested in the inner workings of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection will begin April 29, with two-hour sessions held once per week, 6 p.m., for six consecutive weeks at 3711 Mattox, covering historical perspective, criminal and statutory law, training requirements, the agency's role in terrorism prevention, and a look at firearms training. Sessions are free to any interested person over 18 years of age. Deadline for registration is April 27, call 834-8901 or 834-8312 to sign up.

PUBLIC NOTICE CITY OF SOCORRO, TEXAS PROCLAMATION OF APRIL AS FAIR HOUSING MONTH

WHEREAS Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended, prohibits discrimination in housing and declares it a national policy to provide, within constitutional limits, for fair housing in the United States; and

WHEREAS The principle of Fair Housing is not only national law and national policy, but a fundamental human concept and entitlement for all Americans; and

WHEREAS The thirty-sixth (36th) anniversary of this National Fair Housing Law, during the month of April, provides an opportunity for all Americans to recognize that complete success in the goal of equal housing opportunity can only be accomplished with the help and cooperation of all Americans.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Socorro, do proclaim April as Fair Housing Month in the City of Socorro and do hereby urge all the citizens of this locality to become aware of and support the Fair Housing law.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF we have affixed our signatures and seal on this the 1st day of April 2004.

*Irma S. Sanchez
Mayor*

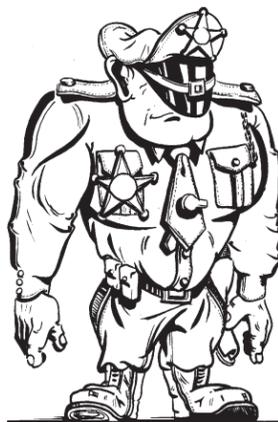
*Witness:
Tere Rodriguez
Interim City Clerk*

WTCC: 04/01/04

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Students at Americas High receive honors

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Vanessa Salinas, a sophomore, wrote a paper titled "Protein Crystal Growth" and was honored by



Vanessa Salinas

the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with a week at Cape Canaveral, Florida. "I got into the engineering program called 'TexPrep' at the University of Texas at El Paso. I helped NASA scientists produce crystals for growth," she says, explaining that her project was due to be delivered to the International Space Station. The Columbia shuttle explosion postponed the delivery of the future engineer's project, which

may be aboard a future shuttle mission.



Cory Mulgrave

Junior Cory Mulgrave has been accepted as a delegate to the Texas Boys' State Convention in June at the University of Texas at Austin. It's a leadership program. "You have to be a well-rounded student. I'm in wrestling and football, and honors classes. I feel that having a healthy, competitive spirit helps you get farther in life." And wherever

Mulgrave goes after high school, he wants to study physics.



Amanda Vallejo

Another sophomore, Amanda Vallejo has been accepted as a delegate to the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Conference scheduled for El Paso Community College May 7-9, and could be selected as a national delegate from there. "They teach you to be a leader and how to help other people," she says. "I had known about this for several years, and I went last year just to help out."

Breaking a leg, SEHS actors find fun in fast-pace play

By Phillip Cortez
Special to the Courier

SAN ELIZARIO — Try not to blink too much because if you do, chances are pretty good that you just might miss something funny as San Elizario High drama students bring *The History of Tom Jones* to life.

Good thing judges paid attention. They chose *Tom Jones* as one of the top two performances along with Fabens High's *The Girl in the Mirror* during the UIL 2-4A One-Act Play Zone Meet, March 25-27 at the Socorro High School auditorium. The two schools will compete against 1-4A schools Burges and Canutillo in the Area Meet, April 7 at the Chamizal Memorial Theater. The top two teams from that competition will advance to the Regional competition

in San Angelo, Texas.

"This was the toughest competition I have ever seen," said Marian Blalack, San Elizario High School drama instructor.

The tough level of competition is something Blalack is thrilled about because it means that all the programs in the zone are doing well.

Set in 18th century England, the play is a farce that focuses on the trials and tribulations of Tom Jones, brought to life by Pablo Jimenez, who goes to great lengths and inches from a hangman's noose to be with his love, Sophia.

"The challenge is to get the audience to feel what Tom Jones feels in society," Jimenez said of Jones, who is shunned by society for being born out of wedlock.

In an effort to keep the ensemble loose, Jimenez constructed lapel pins

for the cast and crew constructed of toothpicks and marshmallows made to look like crutches in a playful effort to get everyone to "break a leg." With the exception of during a performance, anyone would be hard pressed to see a San Elizario cast or crew member without their pins on.

"I'd like to have the actors enjoy the play, to get into it and be energetic so that we can make it a play to remember," Jimenez said.

According to Blalack, the play is a perfect fit for her talented cast because they can handle the challenge of putting on a fast-paced performance.

"In reality they're an ensemble, they're all good," she said. "If I had a play with a leading man and a leading woman, anyone one of the cast could handle those lead roles."

For the Zone Meet, District 2-4A

was divided into two zones. In order to advance, San Elizario and Fabens needed to get through Zone 1, which included Ysleta, Riverside, and Parkland High Schools. From there, they faced the top two schools from Zone 2, Clint and Del Valle.

For his efforts during the Zone 1 competition, Jimenez was named to the All Star Cast while fellow cast members Liza Bernal, Raul Muela, Jorge Rangel and Alex Velez were honorable mentions.

During the Saturday full Zone competition, Jeannette Morales was named to the All Star cast for her double role as Tom's mother Jenny and Mrs. Waters. Alex Velez was also named to the All Star cast for his roles as Henry Fielding and Squire Allworthy. Pablo Jimenez and Jorge Rangel were named honorable mentions.

'Just for the Kids High-Performing Schools' adds Jose H. Damian ES

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Jose H. Damian Elementary School recently received an Award for Academic Excellence for 2001-2003 in elementary writing, reading, and math from the National Center for Educational Accountability (NCEA). Damian Elementary School was named to the "Just for the Kids High-Performing Schools" list because of the sustained high academic performance of its' students in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

High-performing elementary schools are selected based on how well their students performed on Texas state assessments over three years of performance data. The TAKS test was used in 2003 and the TAAS test was used for 2002 and 2001.

Just for the Kids motivates educators and the public to take action to improve schools by giving them a clear picture of a school's academic condition and identifying the effective practices found in high-performing schools.

Jean Rutherford, Director of Educational Initiatives at NCEA, congratulated Damian ES on their academic success and recognized their efforts to make a difference in public education in Texas.

Clint ISD names top teachers

By Laura Cade
Special to the Courier

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — The eleven campuses of the Clint Independent School District have selected their Teachers of the Year for the 2003-2004 school year. The following winners will be honored at a banquet in April: Luis Ramirez, Clint High; Tom Dean, Mountain View High; Belinda Pendell, Clint Junior High; Lorenza Marquez, East Montana Middle; Amanda Sanchez, Horizon High; Eva Quezada, C.T. Welch; Michelle Payne, W.D. Surratt Elementary;

Ernesto Esparza, Montana Vista Elementary; Esther Castor, Desert Hills Elementary; Yolanda Reed, Red Sands Elementary; Lorena Alvarado, Frank Macias Elementary.

These individuals were nominated and chosen by their colleagues at each campus based on their ability to inspire students, work cooperatively, improve instruction, be effective among different groups, stay informed, be innovative, and their willingness to make a meaningful contribution to education.

A district committee composed of past Teachers of the Year will select the District Secondary and Elementary Teachers of the Year to be announced late April.

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The 'Doc' is in for the Miners, Webber is out in Michigan

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

When I was a kid and my stomach would hurt or I had a cold, my mom would go out of her way to make things better. But on those rare occasions when she couldn't she would take me to see the doc and he would fix things right up.

Well, the UTEP basketball program has got the sniffles and they, too, are counting on the "Doc."

Doc Sadler was hired to take over the reigns of the UTEP basketball team last week. At first glance, one might think he's got a pretty cushy job considering what they accomplished this year and what they're expected to do next year.

But hold on to your stethoscope. There are some originally undiagnosed problems with the patient. The good prognosis is that Sadler is a fine coach and has proven himself as an assistant and a head coach. The problem is that the Miners' prize recruits have allegiances with Billy Gillispie and Sergio Rouco.

Another problem is that those two guys aren't here anymore. So Alex Galindo and Ivan

Almonte have said thanks, but no thanks, to UTEP and they want to play elsewhere.

What's a doc to prescribe? I don't think they make band-aids that big.

Doc Sadler has a problem that only he can fix. He's got to talk Galindo and Almonte into buying into the idea of what heights can be reached next year and well into the future.

This is still El Paso. This is still a Hispanic town that the two Latino players will be comfortable in. This is still the UTEP Miners, the team that scared the pants off of Maryland in the NCAA Tournament.

Doc will have to settle things down.

Initially, there is a knee-jerk reaction to any change. Then, after a while, people calm down and begin to accept the change — and eventually embrace it.

Sadler has promised to keep Gillispie's run-and-gun offense in tact. But if you thought the 2003-04 Miners played some tough defense, just wait for the Sadler version.

Doc coaches the same kind of defense and rebounding that El Pasoans have come to expect over the years. He, like former coach Don Haskins, is a disciple of the legendary Henry Iba.

Defense will be the key to Doc Sadler teams.

And I've yet to hear 12,000 fans anywhere yell, "offense, offense."

I know most El Pasoans liked the idea of Sergio Rouco taking over the program but this was really a no-brainer. Doc Sadler has tons more Div. 1 coaching experience than Rouco and has had a habit of recruiting players that not only make good collegians but good NBA players as well.

With a good nucleus returning for next season, UTEP basketball should be in contention for another WAC title. If the two Rouco recruits decide that El Paso is not their cup of tea, there is still time for Sadler to sign recruits during the late signing period next month.

As far as the upcoming basketball season Miner fans, if I were you, I wouldn't worry about a thing — because the "Doc" is in.

C-Web has no clue

From the "I don't have a clue how to function in society" department: Sacramento Kings forward Chris Webber is hurt.

The poor soul is hurting and it's up to the evil fans of that city of sin, Sacramento, to make it up to him.

Seems the fans of the Kings have taken it upon themselves to harass this model citizen

by booing him at home games. Can you imagine that, a city full of moral people who feel that a person who constantly breaks the rules for his own personal gain, should be held accountable.

What's gotten into these people?

Webber, who lied about Michigan booster Ed Martin giving him \$280,000, was indicted along with his father and his aunt on charges of obstruction of justice and lying to a grand jury.

His actions forced Michigan to impose self-sanctions in the wake of the scandal, including a postseason ban from 2002-03, forfeiting 113 victories from the 1990s and repaying the NCAA more than \$450,000 for money earned during Final Four games.

Webber eventually admitted he lied to a grand jury and was sentenced to community service after pleading guilty.

And now even Michigan high school officials are haggling about the legitimacy of the three state basketball titles Webber helped his high school win. Webber's name was erased last Sunday from the Michigan High School Athletic Association record books.

Is that all? I can certainly see why Webber is hurt by the fans booing him. It's not like he didn't bet on baseball or anything.

Socorro High School's NJROTC ranks highest in Texas for sharpshooting, eighth in nation

SOCORRO — The Socorro High School NJROTC Rifle Team returned this week from national competition with the ranking of the best precision rifle team in Texas and eighth in the entire nation. The sharpshooters competed with teams from around the country at Ft. Benning, Georgia. Team members included Kris Hemme, Luis Silva, Jeannette Ponce and Edgar Sosa, led by Sgt. Major Robert Way. SHS instructor is Lt. Cmdr. Gerald Mangrum.



SHOOTERS — Edgar Sosa, Luis Silva, Jeannette Ponce and team captain Chris Hemme.



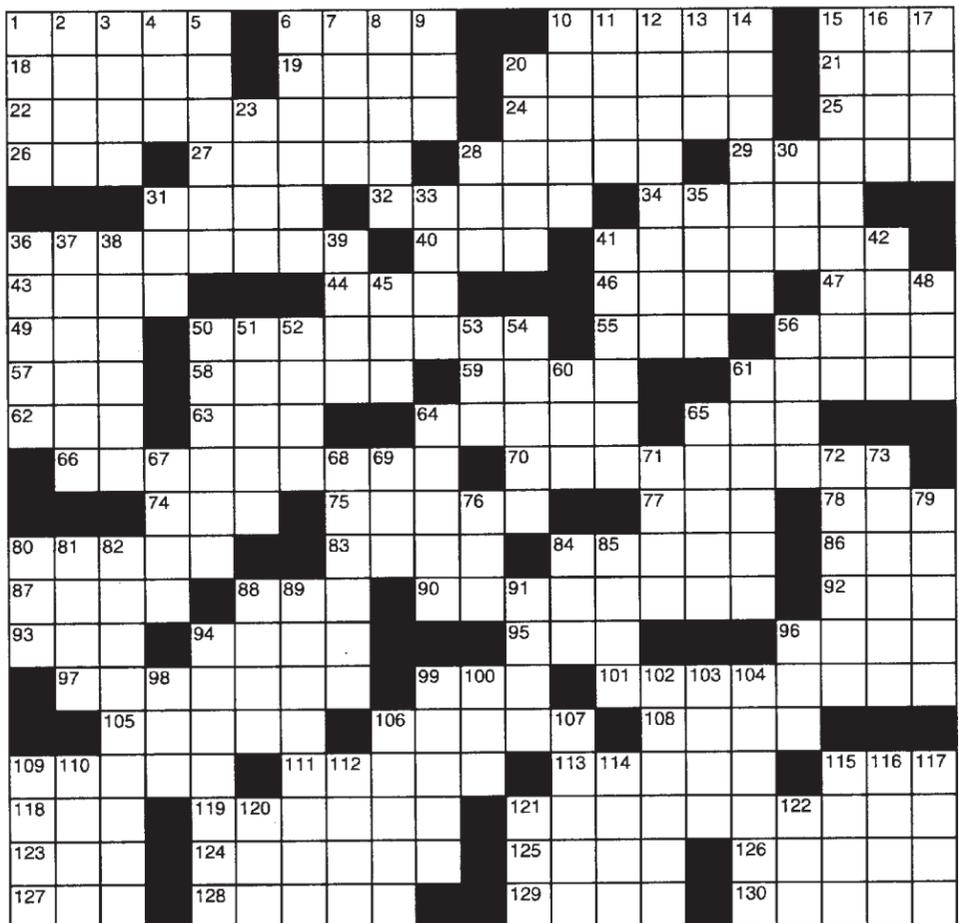
Cadet Tom Gray

Montwood's Gray shoots straight

Montwood High School's Cadet Tom Gray ranked 23rd out of 150 competitors in a sharpshooting match at held in Fort Benning.

King Super Crossword

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| APPLY NAMED | 63 Solidify | 124 Glorifies | India | 98 _-la-la |
| ACROSS | 64 _ a customer | 125 Memo words | 38 Llama kin | 99 Living-room accessories |
| 1 Ohio city | 65 Beer barrel | 126 Rigg or Ross | 39 86 Across or 9 Down | 100 "Too Late" ('71 hit) |
| 6 "Serpico" author | 66 Avid hiker? | 127 Tiny colonist | 41 "Swanee" singer | 102 Fiddle (with) |
| 10 Long Island resort | 70 Good-looking girl? | 128 Hold up | 42 Corral feature | 103 Roman structure |
| 15 Arafat's grp. | 74 Sneeze and wheeze | 129 Pilsner | 45 Assent at sea | 104 Saudi city |
| 18 Perfect | 75 Declaim | 130 Seraglio | 48 "O Sole _" | 106 Sullen |
| 19 Perry's creator | 77 "Le _ Soleil" (Louis XIV) | DOWN | 50 VIP | 107 Absurd |
| 20 Ancient Greek region | 78 Loser to DDE | 1 _ dream | 51 Hoopster Shaquille | 109 Tibetan monk |
| 21 CSA soldier | 80 Trolley sound | 2 Mideastern gulf | 52 Zodiac animal | 110 Dash |
| 22 Pungent person? | 83 Great _ | 3 Devour Dickens | 53 Hostelry | 112 Tulsa's st. |
| 24 Hit man? | 84 Toy toter | 4 Cal. page | 54 Sib's kid | 114 Farm measure |
| 25 Compass pt. | 86 Geog. term | 5 Entice | 56 Bear or Berra | 115 Actor Epps |
| 26 Goal | 87 Sty cry | 6 Servile | 60 School grp. | 116 Magritte or Descartes |
| 27 Horrid Heep | 88 Part of B.S. | 7 "La Rondine" rendition | 61 Phone button | 117 Spooky Stoker |
| 28 Swedish port | 90 Billiards player? | 8 Maui greeting | 64 Shy primate | 120 Bunyan's whacker |
| 29 Fresh | 92 Actress Gardner | 9 DC figure | 65 Former Japanese capital | 121 Triangular sail |
| 31 Length X Width | 93 LAX letters | 10 Pasta peninsula | 67 Pull sharply | 122 Actress Farrow |
| 32 Sheik site | 94 New York stadium | 11 Eye problem | 68 Alaskan bear | |
| 34 Coin-toss call | 95 Veneration | 12 Tourniquet, e.g. | 69 Epoch | |
| 36 Actress Rossellini | 96 Pres. protectors | 13 Hosp. area | 71 Bond foe | |
| 40 Sly _ fox | 97 Industrious fellow? | 14 Garden flowers | 72 Deli meat | |
| 41 Annoying woman? | 99 Fleur-de-_- | 15 Egged on | 73 TV's "Highway to _" | |
| 43 Hole punchers | 101 Ravenous | 16 Beam bender | 76 Golfer's gadget | |
| 44 Impact sound | 105 Pack peppers | 17 Toe the line | 79 Comedian Arnold | |
| 46 Smeltery stuff | 106 Austin or Smith | 20 Oranjestad's locale | 80 Runner Sebastian | |
| 47 Merino male | 108 Rainbow goddess | 23 Baseball's Hershiser | 81 Ford or Grey | |
| 49 Cartographer's creation | 109 "Paganini" composer | 28 "Viva _ Vegas" ('64 film) | 82 Revolutionary | |
| 50 Sharp guy? | 111 Flourishes | 30 Clerical garb | 84 Create a caftan | |
| 55 Author Wallace | 113 Sluggo's sweetie | 31 Pecs' partners | 85 Imitates | |
| 56 He's abominable | 115 Scepter's sidekick | 33 Inclined plane | 88 Worn-out | |
| 57 Bikini part | 118 Clay, today | 35 Once again | 89 Cognitive | |
| 58 Harden | 119 Happy guy? | 36 Poetic feet | 91 Publisher Conde | |
| 59 Puppy bites | 121 Tool man? | 37 Self-government, in | 94 Behaved like bees | |
| 61 Horse show | 123 Bell and Barker | | 96 Watching machines? | |
| 62 Cul-de-_- | | | | |



Comix

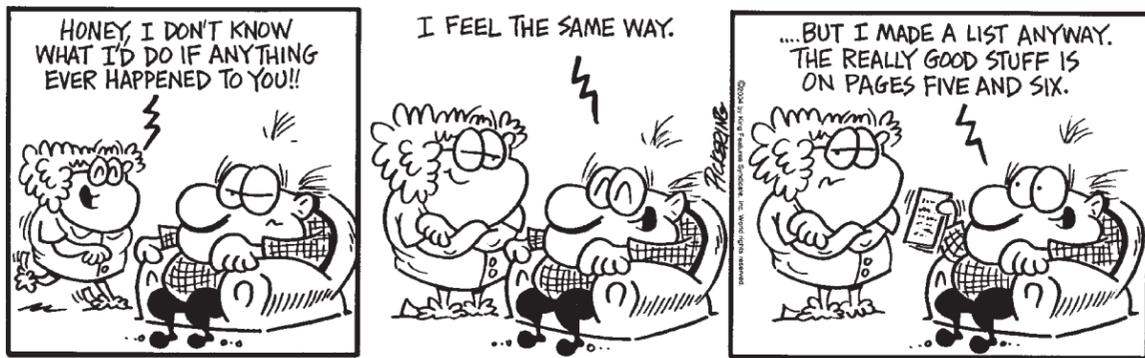
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Disco can rise again

By Don Flood

"Don't you watch 'That '70s Show'?" someone in the office asked.

Ah yes, when your youthful days become television sit-com fodder, you know it's only a short time before the AARP membership arrives in the mail.

"No, I lived the '70s," I said, sounding a little like someone who had survived the Great War.

Not that we didn't face some real battles, though in our case the enemies were bellbottoms and disco.

People hated disco, especially guys, though it would be years before the scourge of disco was finally vanquished.

(As students of history, of course, we must realize that disco can rise again, just as Germany did after losing the Civil War to the Union.)

I suspect some of the guys' loathing of disco had to do with the fact that you were expected to know how to dance — as in actual steps.

You see, mankind — at least guykind — had taken a great step forward in the '60s, when people dispensed with actual dance steps altogether and began flailing about like psychotic water bugs on Nyquil.

Not only did you not have to know dance steps, you didn't have to know who your partner was — though for a slow dance it helped to have someone in the same area code.

Disco threatened to bring back the horrors of dance steps with a vengeance.

TV shows regularly broadcast disco propaganda that showed dancers performing moves that were clearly impossible — many dances even called for moving in

time to the music and staying off your partner's toes!

(One of the ugly little secrets of the Disco Era is that for the "Saturday Night Fever" dance sequences, John Travolta's head was pasted onto a cartoon body. If you look closely you'll notice his head is larger than his torso. In one particularly embarrassing scene that was later removed from video/DVD versions, you can clearly see Travolta's head spliced onto the body of a disco-dancing elephant.)

But the skills required for disco dancing were way beyond most guys, whose manifestations of musical talent began and ended with air guitar solos — an activity that required only an ability to writhe spastically while appearing to be in great pain, similar to what you might see after you zap a wasp with Raid, only not so graceful.

It wasn't the same with girls. They practiced — with each other. Guys never did this.

Actually, this may not be completely accurate. A friend of mine attended an all-boys school, where the girls schools would visit on the weekend.

The guys, in turn, would travel to the girls schools, where they would take part in customary social activities such as throwing up on the dorm's living-room carpet.

Somehow — and I'm not speculating how — these guys learned how to dance.

They weren't necessarily good dancers — they still look like psychotic water bugs on Nyquil — but I had to admit they looked like debonair water bugs that knew their way around a dance floor.

Fortunately, I had brought along my air guitar.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

As per Article V, Sec. 5.05(a), all owners and lienholders have ten (10) days from this date to reclaim their vehicles at Southwest Wrecker, 1401 Darrington Rd., 855-1900, 851-2091-fax, or it will be sold at public auction for charges: VIN - IFTEFI4N6GPA80924, 1986 Ford F-150, red, Texas license 5CXG47 WTXCC-04/01/04

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Rio Grande Council of

Governments (RGCOG), 1100 N. Stanton, Ste. 610, El Paso, TX 79902, acting on behalf of the Far West Texas Water Planning Group, will submit an application for financial assistance to the Texas Water Development Board for Supplemental Funding for Round 2 regional water planning. The application will be submitted on or before April 1, 2004. Jake Brisbin, Jr., RGCOG Executive Director, is the official representative of the Far West Texas Water Planning Group, which includes the following counties: Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Jeff Davis, Hudspeth, Presidio, and Terrell.

Copies of the application may be obtained from the RGCOG when it is available at the address above. Comments on the application must be filed by May 11, 2004. All comments must be filed with the applicant and with Kevin Ward, Executive Administrator, Texas Water Development Board, P.O. Box 13231, Austin, TX 78711-3231. WTCC: 04/01/04

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Quiz on alcohol may tell you how much you don't know

Do you think you know all the facts about alcohol's effect on health and safety? Are you sure you understand the health benefits of moderate drinking? Try giving yourself this true or false quiz:

- Alcohol can interfere with your metabolism and bone structure, increasing the risk of diseases like osteoporosis. (true/false?)
- Drinking during your first trimester of pregnancy will not harm your unborn child. (true/false?)
- Moderate drinking can decrease the risk of heart disease for some people. (true/false?)
- Alcohol can impair your reproductive functions. (true/false?)
- Drinking coffee and eating food while drinking alcohol will keep you from getting drunk. (true/false?)
- It is always safe to drive if you wait an hour after drinking. (true/false?)
- The answers are true, false, true, true, false and false.
- If you stumbled while trying to answer any of these questions, you can learn more on Thursday, April 8 at a free National Alcohol Screening Day site in your area. To find a local screening site, call 1-877-311-627. "National Alcohol Screening Day serves to educate all Americans who drink, regardless of amount, that alcohol has risks and benefits beyond what most of us know.

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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: Can I get my Supplemental Security Income (SSI) check if I move in with my sister?

A: The SSI payment levels vary depending on your living arrangements. You might be able to continue to receive SSI benefit payments. But you will have to discuss this with your local Social Security representatives.

Q: My husband gets Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. He recently got in trouble and ended up

in jail. Can his SSI checks be sent to me until he gets out of prison?

A: No. The law requires that SSI benefits be suspended for anyone who is in prison. They could start up again once he is released, assuming he is still eligible.

Q: I was planning to retire at age 60 and know I cannot get Social Security retirement benefits until 62. Is it true that having a couple of years of "zero" earnings just before I apply

for Social Security will mess up my "high-three" earnings years' calculation?

A: Social Security retirement benefits are not based on a "high-three calculation." Instead, we will base your benefit on your average income, using your highest 35 years of earnings. Because your retirement benefit is based on 35 years, having a few years with no earnings near the end of your career usually will not have a substantial impact on your Social Security benefit.

Q: We have a child who was born

about six months ago with Down Syndrome. Is there any kind of Social Security disability benefit she might qualify for? I work and my wife is a stay-at-home mom.

A: Your daughter cannot qualify for her own Social Security benefits because she obviously has not worked and paid Social Security taxes. She could eventually qualify for disability benefits based on your Social Security earnings record. But that would happen only when you collect your own Social Security retirement or disability benefits, or if you should pass

away. However, if you have not done so already, please check with your local Social Security office about possible Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits for your daughter. SSI eligibility is based on your income and assets, not on work history.

For more information visit your local Social Security office, see 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, 1111 Gateway West, Attn: Ray Vigil, El Paso, Texas 79935.

WEATHER

AccuWeather.com

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR EL PASO

THURSDAY	THUR. NIGHT	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly sunny, warm.	Partly to mostly cloudy.	Clouds and sun and breezy at times.	Variably cloudy, windy, cool; shower possible.	Mostly cloudy, cool; chance showers.	Partly sunny.	A good deal of sunshine.	Mostly sunny.
▲ 80°	▼ 51°	▲ 71° ▼ 45°	▲ 66° ▼ 45°	▲ 68° ▼ 47°	▲ 70° ▼ 43°	▲ 75° ▼ 43°	▲ 74° ▼ 41°

UV INDEX Statistics for noon.

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

Thursday	9	Very High
Friday	7	High
Saturday	7	High
Sunday	6	Moderate
Monday	9	Very High
Tuesday	9	Very High
Wednesday	9	Very High

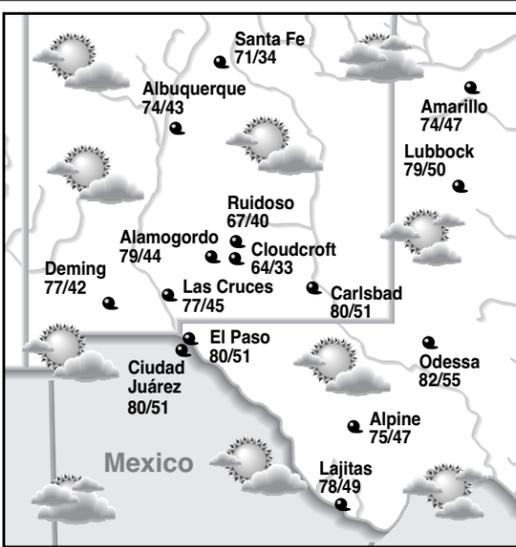
REAL FEEL TEMP™

The exclusive AccuWeather composite of the effects of temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine, precipitation, and elevation on the human body.

Thursday	81°
Friday	66°
Saturday	59°
Sunday	61°
Monday	78°
Tuesday	77°
Wednesday	77°

TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	80	49
Canutillo	80	50
Clint	80	51
E. Montana	80	51
Fabens	80	51
Horizon	81	52
San Elizario	77	49
Socorro	79	50
Tornillo	80	51
Vinton	80	50



Shown is Thursday's weather. Temperatures are Thursday's highs and Thursday night's lows.

TRAVELERS CITIES

City	Thur. Hi/Lo/W	Fri. Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	Sun. Hi/Lo/W	Mon. Hi/Lo/W
Albuquerque	74/43/sh	61/39/pc	59/39/sh	62/39/r	64/34/c
Atlanta	60/44/pc	62/46/pc	66/50/s	70/52/s	72/50/s
Atlantic City	45/40/r	46/40/r	56/42/sh	63/39/pc	56/37/s
Austin/San Antonio	77/60/pc	75/58/t	71/57/t	70/54/r	74/51/r
Baltimore	48/44/r	54/40/r	58/40/sh	62/42/sh	55/41/pc
Boston	44/40/r	46/38/r	48/38/sh	52/40/sh	55/38/s
Chicago	46/34/c	48/36/pc	54/36/pc	52/34/pc	59/39/pc
Dallas/Ft. Worth	68/51/pc	66/50/t	61/49/t	65/52/sh	69/48/r
Denver	71/38/pc	64/36/pc	44/34/c	54/30/c	55/27/c
Flagstaff	61/31/pc	51/29/t	51/29/t	48/25/r	54/26/pc
Houston	77/62/pc	79/62/t	79/60/t	76/60/t	73/52/pc
Kansas City	57/36/pc	58/38/pc	60/42/pc	62/42/c	63/39/sh
Las Vegas	82/54/pc	76/52/pc	70/46/pc	72/50/pc	76/54/s
Miami	83/68/s	83/69/pc	85/67/pc	83/67/pc	81/64/s
Minneapolis	53/29/pc	56/35/pc	53/34/pc	56/37/c	55/37/r
New Orleans	70/61/pc	75/61/pc	74/59/t	75/59/pc	75/56/pc
New York City	47/38/r	46/42/r	55/45/sh	58/41/sh	55/42/s
Philadelphia	49/44/r	52/42/r	58/42/sh	60/44/sh	57/42/s
Phoenix	84/54/pc	67/52/pc	74/55/sh	77/57/pc	79/56/pc
Portland	59/40/pc	62/40/s	64/43/s	61/43/c	61/41/pc
San Francisco	76/50/s	78/52/s	74/50/s	65/51/s	64/50/pc
Seattle	56/40/pc	58/42/s	60/42/s	58/42/pc	57/41/c
Tucson	81/50/pc	70/46/t	70/46/t	72/48/pc	76/47/pc
Washington, DC	49/44/r	54/42/sh	58/42/sh	62/44/sh	55/45/pc

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

AGRICULTURE

Cooler air will arrive Friday into the weekend across West Texas. A shower cannot be ruled out later Friday. There may be a few showers around Saturday and Sunday with rainfall averaging 0.10 to 0.20 of an inch. It should turn warmer next week. There still might be a shower in some areas Monday, but Tuesday and Wednesday should be dry.

All forecasts and maps provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2004

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*Deferred Interest until April 2005—Deferred Interest with Payments—Must request promotion at purchase. Offer is subject to credit approval by GE Capital Consumer Card Co. and applies to purchases of \$799 or more made between December 3, 2003, and May 31, 2004, on your Power Credit Card. No finance charge will be assessed on your promotional purchase balance if you pay the promotional purchase balance in full by the end of the promotional period. If you do not, periodic finance charges will be assessed on the promotional purchase balance from the date of purchase. Minimum monthly payments will be required on your promotional purchase balance during and after the promotional period. If minimum monthly payments are not paid when due, all special promotional terms may be terminated. Standard account terms apply to non-promotional purchases and, after the promotion ends, to your promotional purchases. Annual Percentage Rate for purchases is 18.99% (18.99% minimum) as of December 1, 2003, and may vary after that date. Minimum Finance Charge \$1. Variable APR of 22.99% as of 12/1/03 will apply if you fail to pay your minimum payment by your due date for two consecutive months. Financing promotion for residential customers only.

**Product price—Actual retail prices are set by dealer and may vary. Taxes, freight, setup and handling charges may be additional and may vary. Models subject to limited availability.

***Cub Cadet will provide an extended limited warranty for a period of 5 years or 500 hours, whichever occurs first, for the frame and pivoting cast-iron front axle on all new Cub Cadet Series 1000 tractors retailed after December 1, 2003. Cub Cadet will provide an extended limited warranty for a period of 5 years or 500 hours, whichever occurs first, for the frame, pivoting cast-iron front axle and drive shaft on all new Cub Cadet Series 2000, 2500, and 3000 tractors purchased after July 31, 1998. This additional limited warranty is available only to residential users and not commercial users. For complete details on 2-year and 5-year limited warranties see your Cub Cadet retailer. C11135-04-55080-1