



NEWSBRIEFS

Fabens fire

A fire in Fabens on Sunday, June 27, resulted in more than \$27,000 in damages as it completely engulfed the home, damaged two vehicles near the site, and sent six people to the hospital. The fire, at 116 Metalico in Fabens, resulted in the hospitalization of Juanita Gallegos, Martha Barrios, Isela Barrios, Rafael Marin, Miguel Vasquez and Cristobol Gallegos. All were later released, with the exception of Cristobol Gallegos, who was transferred to Las Palmas, and Martha Barrios, who was released, then re-admitted later that evening. The family is being assisted by the American Red Cross, according to the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. Officers said there was no indication of arson associated with the fire. A preliminary report from the Fire Marshall was still pending at presstime.

Gas increase

Texas Gas Service Company will upgrade their rate schedule for some 178,000 residential, 11,302 commercial, 68 industrial, 772 public authority, 17 municipal water pumping stations and 42 standard transportation customers within the incorporated areas of El Paso, Anthony, Clint, Horizon City, Socorro and Vinton effective on and after July 27. The proposed change in rates does not constitute a "major" change as defined by Section 104.101 of the Texas Utilities Code, according to a statement from TGS. The change will result in increased revenue to the company of .69 percent, or about \$684,705, and will increase the average monthly residential gas bill by 21 cents; an average monthly commercial bill by \$1; a public authority bill by about \$3.32; an industrial bill by \$9.60; the average monthly municipal water pumping bill by about \$33.87; and the average standard transportation bill by about \$96.01. A complete copy of the Statement of Intent is available for inspection at 4600 Pollard St., El Paso, Texas 79930.

In other news

■ Taking a baseball bat to a mailbox, spray painting gang signs on it, hitting it with a brick or setting off a firecracker or pipe bomb inside one is not only stupid behavior but it's a federal crime. Mailboxes are considered federal property and perpetrators of this kind of behavior are subject to fines and/or imprisonment for each act. The interruption in mail service, as well as the cost of property which must be replaced, are not only damaging but can be seriously injurious as it may interrupt monthly checks and other financial support, or damage photos or letters from sons and daughters serving in the military overseas. Further damage is done to the community in the lowering of property values

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A patriot is a man working for his country's future instead of boasting of its past.

— Quips & Quotes

Chamizal National Memorial site of July 4 fireworks Superintendent urges people: Leave pets and glass home

EL PASO COUNTY — Chamizal National Memorial, El Paso's National Park, will again be the site for a 4th of July concert and fireworks display this year.

The on-the-grounds-concert is held in the outdoor amphitheater and begins at 6:30 p.m. with the 62nd Army Band. The El Paso Wind Symphony begins its traditional evening of performance at 8 p.m and is followed by fireworks at approximately 9 p.m.

Visitors to the park are reminded that parking is severely limited and they are urged to find creative and safe methods to share transportation, according to Isabel Montes, Superintendent.

"Although every effort is made to reserve

handicap parking," she added, "the reality is that those 60 spaces are filled by mid-afternoon."

Alternative parking is available at Bowie High School. School officials have requested that the property be respected and that cars park only in designated spaces.

To further the quality of the experience for everyone, Montes also suggests that pets be left at home. "The noise associated with fireworks and large crowds is frightening to many animals," she explained.

Montes also asked that park visitors refrain from bringing glass containers to the park. She had banned them at the end of April this year.

"Our visitors have the right to enjoy their

National Park in the safest way possible. This safety precaution will move us to be more consistent in our role to serve as a leader in environmental stewardship," she said.

Montes said there had been a steady increase in the use of glass containers, which had resulted in broken glass creating a safety hazard. She said, "Glass is heavy and more difficult to dispose of — glass is not recycled in El Paso." Recycling containers for cans are available throughout the grounds during major events.

The memorial is located at 800 South San Marcial between Bowie High School and the Bridge of the Americas. Admission is free.

For more information, call (915) 532-7273.

Canutillo's Agronomics Center project in progress

By Kim Guzman
Special to the Courier

CANUTILLO — Canutillo Independent School District's Agricultural Sciences and Research Center, officially named the Agronomics Center on the Rio Grande, will "provide students in El Paso County an opportunity to study agricultural science, agronomics, agribusiness and participate in active research" according to its mission statement.

Charles Hart, superintendent of Canutillo ISD said, "This is the most futuristic project of this kind in the country as far as I'm concerned."

The first phase of the \$4 million project will be the construction of an arena located on the 75 acres of farmland near Childress Elementary School in the Village of Vinton. The complex will include bleachers, animal pens, offices, classrooms, horse stables, ticket booths, a floral design lab, restroom facilities, and a concession stand.

The district received a \$250,000 grant from the Wolslager Foundation to begin the project. Dr. Monica Reyes, Director of Curriculum and Evaluation for CISD, said the center would be built with outside financial resources and would not be a burden to taxpayers. "It can do only positive things for the students and the community," stated Reyes.

In addition to the \$250,000 grant, the district has received money and in-kind donations for the project from King Buildings, Perspectiva, Tedd and Rosa Richardson, the

University of Georgia, and the U.S Department of Agriculture, and still continues to seek funding for completion of the entire project.

The district has formed an advisory committee, named the STAR (Sustainable Texas Agriculture Research) Advisory Group to oversee the project. Their main function is to get the facility completed along with developing a sustainable economic development plan for the southwest area along the border of Texas and New Mexico.

Gayla Kessinger, the Coordinator for Career and Technology Education at CISD, along with Reyes coordinate the monthly meetings held by the group. Co-chairpersons for the group are Tedd Richardson, land developer, and Laure Searls, local community leader.

Other advisory committee members include Lorenzo Aguilar, Hooky Apodaca, Cera Austin, Larry Baskind, Tony Castro, Dr. Rigoberto Delgado, Dale Denney, Dustin Dix, Orlando Flores, Julie Foret, Pete Grijalva, Dr. Robert Gunter, Paco Jordan, Eric Ludwig, Jeremy, Jon, and Mae Nelson, Juvenicia Ontiveros, Esmail Panahi, Brent and Lourdes Pearson, Janis Robertson-Paul, Ruben Saldana, Ferrell Searls, Lisa Tate, Jimmie Wolslager, along with district representatives.

"We don't believe there's a better, more hands-on, more visionary agriculture program anywhere," said Kessinger.

The building of the arena should be complete before the district's new high school is completed in December 2005. "The facility is planned to be the star of the Southwest," Kessinger added.



CONTRIBUTION HONORED — Steve Wolslager was honored recently due to his support of the Canutillo ISD Agronomics Center on the Rio Grande. Shown from left is Monica Reyes, Canutillo ISD Director of Curriculum and Evaluation; Ron Gil, Agriculture teacher at CHS; Steve Wolslager, contributor and member of the STAR group; and Charles Hart, Canutillo Superintendent.

Dust off the insect repellent: It's mosquito time in Texas

EL PASO COUNTY — With the mosquito-borne West Nile virus once again circulating in the state, according to the Texas Department of Health (TDH), one of the first lines of defense against getting the illness, health officials say, is using repellent containing DEET.

"DEET is an effective repellent that lasts much longer than other repellents," said Joe Garrett, a veterinarian with zoonosis control at TDH. "It's safe for children if used according to directions."

According to TDH, 77 percent of the people who got the more serious forms of West Nile infection in 2003 did not use repellent.

Anyone can become infected with West Nile virus, but people over 50 are at greatest risk.

"Older people, especially those who have medical problems, are more likely to develop the more serious forms of the illness including encephalitis and meningitis," Garrett said. "Many of the fatal cases in Texas occurred in the elderly population."

While not every mosquito carries the virus, avoiding any mosquito bite is key to preventing West Nile illness. Health officials advise wearing long sleeves and long pants and using insect repellent with DEET. Avoid going out from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active, and drain standing water from around your home so mosquitoes cannot hatch.

Symptoms of West Nile illness appear from three to 14 days after a person is bitten by an infected mosquito.

West Nile virus infections usually are mild with flu-like symptoms including fever, headache, sore throat, body aches and fatigue. Symptoms of more severe West Nile infections are headache, high fever, stiff neck, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, coma and paralysis. If you have these symptoms, contact your health care provider right away.

"In 2003, we had a lot more human cases of West Nile illness than we had in 2002," Garrett said. "The increase was probably not due to any change in the disease itself, but because the disease had finally covered the

See MOSQUITO, Page 4



One perspective

By Francis Shrum

What a mass

Do you know where you are on the BMI? tional discomfort to rate media attention. Who knows, there might be something else out there I should be emotionally uncomfortable about.

I didn't, but BMI stands for Body Mass Index. I don't know if this thing originated in Europe or what, but the simplest way to find where you are on this index is using metric measurements. If you are old-fashioned and simple-minded like me and still think in pounds and inches, you have to do a little more math, but I finally got it done.

then I read in the newspaper that some folks are very aware of this, and are suffering emotional disturbance when the BMI says they are carrying a few too many pounds, which could actually shorten their lives by, say, a few minutes.

So I figured I better find out about this, if it was causing enough emo-

If you're using metrics, all you do

is divide your weight, measured in kilograms, by your height measured in meters and square, and you have it. If you're using pounds and inches, divide your weight in pounds by your height in inches, squared. Then take the number you get, which will be pretty small, and multiply it by 704.5.

Abra-cadabra! You now know whether you weigh too much, which you probably do — or too little, which is highly unlikely, because according to this scale, a woman five feet tall who weighs 120 pounds gets an index number of 28.18. And according to the scale, that's overweight.

If your number is below 18.5 you are considered "underweight." If you fall between 18.5 and 24.9 you are "normal." Woe to ye who get a number between 25 and 29.9 because, in

hushed tones, you are considered "overweight." Finally, the number 30 and above designates a condition that cannot be spoken aloud, but is spelled O-B-E-S-E.

Who lays awake nights and thinks up this stuff?

I got this information through the American Obesity Association, and I kept wondering, why on earth would they keep something like this around to make them miserable?

Why not just get on with life?

There are mighty few people I know who are going to hit this measurement unless they are already making money showing off their silhouette.

I think we should have a whole different index. Let's call this one the QLI (Quality of Life Index). If you can move around enough to take care

of yourself, you rate a one on the QLI. If you can take care of yourself and, say, two more people, you get a five. If you can function well enough to run a household, hold down a career, fix supper every night and counsel your next door neighbor through her divorce without getting one yourself, you get a QLI rating of 10.

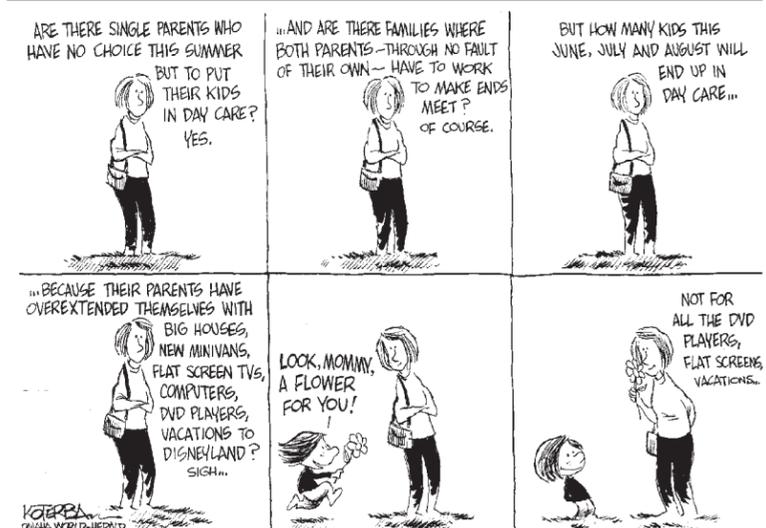
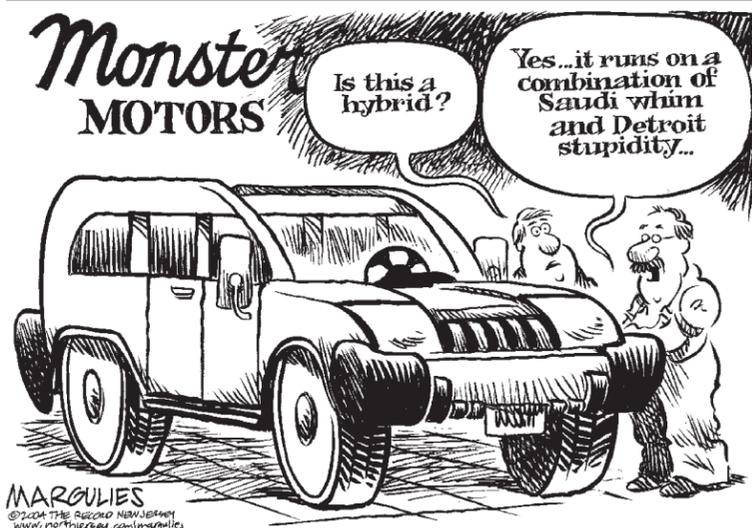
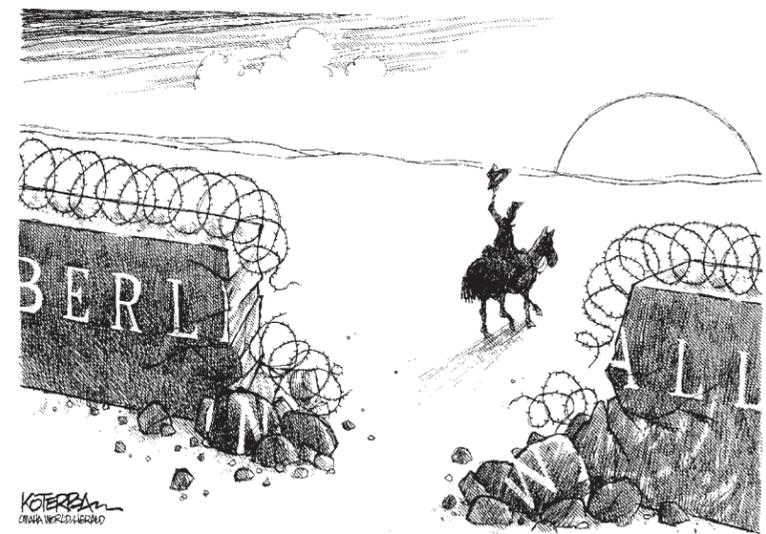
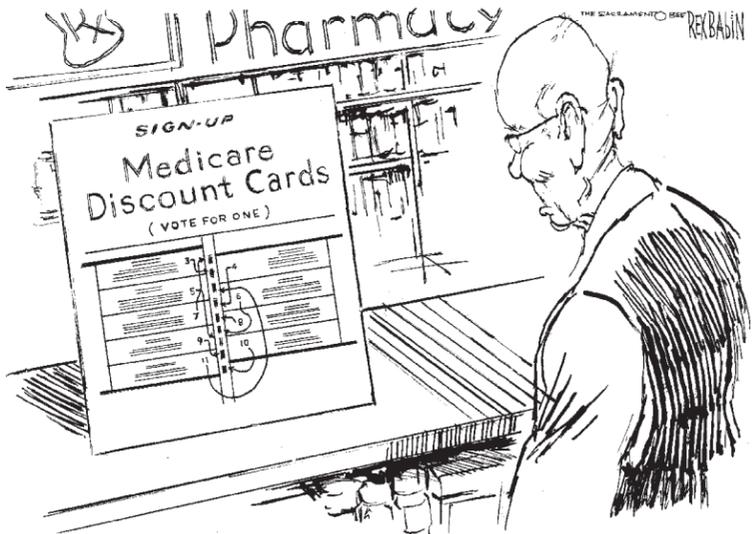
Who cares how much you weigh? What matters is how you feel, and that involves exercise a lot more than weight. I know some people who lose weight without exercise and all they wind up with is a weak body.

I found out the hard way a long time ago that if I don't keep moving, I'm in trouble. I can sit down for half an hour and all the bones freeze together like a rusty old car abandoned on the beach. If I can keep 'er moving I'm a pretty good work horse.

It's a fact that the majority of our population weighs more than we should — the "experts" say about 60 percent of Americans are overweight. And, especially in the case of women, we tend to weigh more at different times in our lives. When I was a teenager, and later in my 20's, I could eat everything in sight and never gain a pound. Birthing two more kids in my 30's and the natural changes in my metabolic rate has made me a lot more cautious about what I consume. But when people tell me I've lost weight, I can't help but grin. That's like saying the weather is nice. Wait a few minutes and it's likely to change. I've got a lot more serious things to worry about than the few pounds I may weigh over some number on an artificial weight meter that exists only as a figment of somebody's imagination.

After all, we've only got one life to live and it's way too short to spend it figuring metrics, squared. Who wants to try and make our poor, old bodies last forever? I'd rather live a shorter, more productive life than a long, miserable one.

Besides, the worry and stress we put ourselves through over whether or not we meet our perfect body weight on some index is probably more damaging to our health than the weight itself.



WEST TEXAS COUNTY COURIER

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Learning efficiency techniques not always comfortable for educators

By James R. Kelch
Assistant Superintendent

EAST EL PASO COUNTY — Many of the administrators and secretaries of the Clint Independent School District were privileged to attend *The Breakthrough Coach*, a program designed to increase efficiency in the workplace and reduce the crushing number of hours needed to do the job of educational administration.

The workshop, entitled "How to Work Less, Play More, and Still Get the Job Done in a Normal School Week: Assuming Your Proper Role as 'Executive' in Today's Educational Environment" was presented by Malachi Pancoast, president, and partially funded by Region 19 Education Service Center through Fred Liner.

Pancoast has studied educational trends since 1982. Through his research, he noted that schools or districts generally improve on a scale of approximately five percent. This he terms "drift." For a dramatic increase in quality, something else has to cause a "breakthrough." Breakthrough is defined as a "significant

increase in results in a relatively short period of time that does not drift backwards over time".

In simple terms, Pancoast defines educational personnel in two categories: Technicians, whose expertise runs narrow and are basically "doers"; and managers, people who get things done through other people. Examples of the technician would be secretaries, teachers, librarians, and assistant principals. Examples of managers are superintendents, assistant superintendents and principals. Managers get paid, he said, "to talk, not to do anything."

The audience was instructed in the initial meeting that during the discussion, one of the ground rules was to be open-minded and "breathe" whenever they might fight the comprehension of what he was saying — and the audience complied.

The first "Fundamental Practice" Pancoast described is "Clean the Office." The office of a manager should reflect more of a conference room atmosphere than a homey one. The second Fundamental Practice is "Your secretary handles all mail and paperwork. You have a daily meet-

ing where the two of you work together on the mail and paperwork for at least 20 minutes." And everything that walks in with the secretary walks out with the secretary.

The aim of the workshop is to allow administrators to spend at least two days in classrooms observing and helping teachers teach. Pancoast said 80 percent of the discipline problems in a school come from 20 percent of the classrooms. As some districts have utilized this procedure, he noted, they increased their standardized test scores tremendously with only this change in their principal's daily routine.

The drawback, if there is one, is that drop-ins do not always get immediate attention. However, communication is not diminished, but enhanced, through scheduling appointments where clients get full attention.

Another beneficial effect, according to Pancoast, is an enhancement of the perception of the role of the administrator. The national shortage of administrators may be stemmed if more people enter the administrative sector through an improved perception of the "job" of the principal.

Tick, tock, you can't ignore the fertility clock

By Albert M. Balesh, M.D.

These days young women are quite caught up in their careers. And why not? Advances in fertility treatment have given them a great deal of hope. They can now balance both job and family-planning in a calmer manner. There is no rush.

But is this false hope? After all, women's biology has not changed one bit. Statistics show that the rate of first births for women in their 30s and 40s has surged in this country — quadrupling since 1970. At the same time, rates for women in their early 20s have dropped by a third.

So, the tendency to have “cake” now and children later has become pervasive in a capitalistic and technologically advanced society like our own. One thing couples fail to realize, however, is the bottom line: advancing age still decreases a woman's ability to have children. “Mine is bigger than yours” has no validity or substance whatsoever, when the tick-tock of the biological clock is tossed into the mix.

That is not to say that enormous advances have not been made in

treating both male and female infertility. Egg and sperm can be mixed in a petri dish, embryos can be genetically tested for certain abnormalities, and then weeded out before implantation. Sluggish sperm can be “pepped up,” by injecting them directly into an egg. Surrogates can carry babies for those who can't. Even 63-year-old grandmothers can lend a womb, a prayer, and some luck to this game we call “motherhood,” with a reasonable chance of success.

Our “brave new world” has become even braver, as scientists now search for new ways to attack the most frustrating problem in infertility today: the older woman's eggs. Freezing slices of ovarian tissue, which contain thousands of eggs in an immature state, and “nuclear transfer,” in which the nucleus is sucked out of an older woman's egg, and then transferred into the cytoplasm of a younger egg, are two new experimental ways in which the hands of the biological clock are being turned back.

Does everything, so far, sound too good to be true? Are you considering a postponement of the “pitter-

patter of little feet?” Well, before you make a decision, be forewarned that there is a downside, too.

Science can't always beat the biological clock. Studies have shown that while women have an excellent understanding of birth control, they tend to overestimate the age at which fertility declines. And doctors, for their part, afraid to offend or intrude, usually don't raise the question of fertility unless asked.

And why should they? The fertility business continues to boom, regardless. Perhaps down the road, determination of individual reproductive age and an understanding of the molecular processes contributing to the aging of eggs will raise the curtain on uncertainty and slow the intrepid march of time. Until then, however, “mine is bigger than yours” will remain the battle cry of those who continue to disregard the laws of nature and the timetable of a human body, which hasn't changed in thousands of years.

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Write stuff

Dear Editor:

On May 27, our Congressman Silvestre Reyes reported about ownership. He stated, “Not only is home ownership a source of pride... (an) affordable home is a key of evolution of our community.” However, building houses on our community can be a burden for the entire community. Furthermore, I also have my own way of thinking:

Anger and dust swirl around me as I scrutinize my small town.

How dare developers and builders intrude in San Eli.

They are like a bunch of “white worms” sucking our roots and depriving our historical town.

Who gave permission to these money-makers to built a bunch of houses in here.

And who can stop them from stealing the meager farming land. The most unpleasant thing.

They are building tooth-pick houses and plastering them with chicken wire.

They are so inconsiderate crowding them like a beehive.

How absurd to corral them with “stone-wall.”

The annoying thing is that they are going to build more houses in Glorietta Rd.

The so-called “camino real.”

After-time we will have to tolerate the noise, the traffic and the politicians humiliating us for being a stinky town.

The dust got worst and anger turns into helpless tears.

Beatrice Cantu
San Elizario

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

Celebrate freedom

This July fourth we will commemorate the birthday of our great nation. The Fourth of July is a day of celebration. It is a red-white-and-blue day of barbecues and fireworks. It is also a day of family reunions and loving tributes to the men and women who have created and defended our liberties.

On this July Fourth, as we stand on Main Street USA and watch the parades pass by, reflect on the hard earned freedom we cherish. Celebrate the Fourth of July not only as a family holiday but a community holiday. This day commemorates the American family and our bonding as a free nation.

In towns dotted all over Texas people know what it means to be free.

We celebrate the fact that we live in strong and united communities. We recognize how blessed we are to enjoy unparalleled freedom — freedom that has been earned and protected at a high price.

Let us not forget to give thanks on this day. On July 4, 1776, our founding fathers set up the greatest nation on the face of the planet. They knew that a truly free nation would not be defined in terms of its borders, but in its philosophy. For 223 years courageous Americans have risked their lives to adopt and maintain the true meaning of the Declaration of Independence: “... that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable

rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness...”

As you celebrate this day, draw close to your neighbors and like one grateful family remember the sacrifices of the men and women throughout history who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy and celebrate.

Pass the brisket, slice a watermelon and draw your hand close to your heart when you see the banner of red, white and blue. I hope you and your family truly enjoy the birthday of our nation. Have a safe weekend and to all of my fellow Americans, Happy Fourth of July!



Reyes Reports By U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes

Small business produces big results and deserves government help

Across El Paso and the country, small businesses are the driving force of our economy. Small businesses represent 95 percent of all employers, create half of our gross domestic product, and create three out of four new jobs nationwide. As our economy recovers, the country is relying on small businesses to grow the economy.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) Reauthorization bill is an important step in helping our small businesses create jobs. This bipartisan bill, which is awaiting consideration in the House of Representatives, evaluates current SBA programs and proposes how to improve them over the next four years. This Reauthorization will be the most comprehensive overhaul of the SBA in almost two decades. Passage of this bill will provide small businesses greater access to capital, improve technical assistance

programs, and help small businesses gain access to the \$235 billion federal marketplace.

Specifically, the SBA Reauthorization will:

- Give small businesses in low-income communities access to federal contracts by ensuring that the contracts intended for those areas are not diverted to other sources.

- Open contracting opportunities for minority businesses by modernizing the 8(a) program, removing many of the outdated barriers preventing participation, and blocking the ability of large firms to obtain valuable business development assistance.

- Spur employment opportunities through the 504 loan program, which focuses on business expansion and job creation.

- Help entrepreneurs across the country gain the knowledge to grow their companies through improvements to the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) program.

- Ensure that low-income and minority women are able to benefit from Women's Business Centers (WBCs).

- Assist start-ups by improving the Microloan program, providing more technical assistance and giving small business additional repayment options.

Here in El Paso, our nearly 1,000 small businesses are the engine of our economy and have created and developed scores of quality jobs for our community. Passage of the SBA Reauthorization will modernize the SBA, opening the door to opportunity for more El Paso entrepreneurs and helping existing El Paso small businesses succeed and grow.

Entrepreneurs deserve the necessary resources to launch successful companies and expand those companies — and deserve all the assistance the federal government can offer. The SBA Reauthorization is an important step towards providing those resources and I will fight for its successful passage.

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Mosquito

From Page 1

entire state. There were more people exposed to the virus and therefore, more people infected with it.”

So far this year, West Nile virus has been detected in three horses in Fort Bend, La Salle and Montgomery counties and in five birds in Harris County.

In 2003 TDH recorded 434 human cases of West Nile in 86 Texas counties, including 36 deaths. In comparison in 2002, the state listed less than

half that many cases, 202, in 37 counties with 13 deaths.

Three of the 36 deaths last year were in El Paso county.

Human cases of West Nile illness have now been reported in all states except Oregon and Washington. Crows, jays, sparrows and cardinals are among the birds most likely to carry the West Nile virus. The disease is transmitted when a mosquito bites a bird that is carrying the virus and later bites a human, horse or other animal.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit the TDH Web site at www.tdh.state.tx.us.

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HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY

from Congressman Henry Bonilla

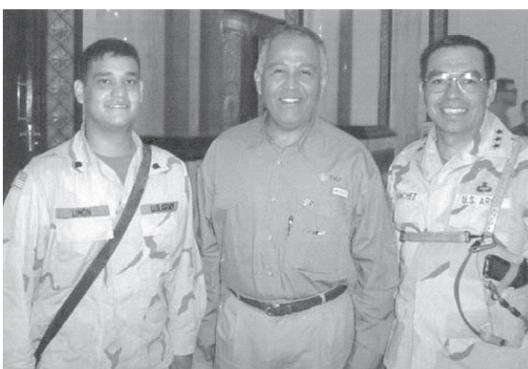
The Fourth of July is a day of celebration. It is also a day of family reunions and loving tributes to the men and women who have created and defended our liberties.

On this July Fourth, as we stand on Main Street USA and watch the parades pass by, reflect on the hard-earned freedom we cherish. Celebrate the Fourth of July not only as a family holiday but a community holiday. This day commemorates our freedom and our bonding as a nation.

Pass the brisket, slice a watermelon and draw your hand close to your heart when you see the banner of red, white and blue. I hope you and your family truly enjoy the birthday of our nation.

Have a safe weekend and a Happy Fourth of July!

Congressman Henry Bonilla



Briefs

From Page 1

and the sense of insecurity created by such vandalism. If you have information on mailbox vandalism or mail theft in your area, contact the local Post Office or Postal Inspection Service at 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777).

■ At the board of directors' meeting for the Horizon Regional Municipal Utility District (formerly El Paso County Water Authority) held on June 22, 2004, Director Bruce Truesdale, Sr. submitted his resignation. The board is asking any citizen interested in serving the community as a director for the Horizon area water district to submit a resume to the HRMUD office, 1539 Pawling Drive, Horizon City, Texas. The board will review and consider all applicants and the position will be filled by appointment.

■ Socorro ISD Community Services is offering free ESL and GED daytime classes for adults. Registration is July 21-23 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Community Learning Center, 313 S. Rio Vista Rd. For more information, call 937-1700. ESL classes will be from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Spanish and English GED Classes will be from 12:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. Classes will begin July 26. Limited space is available. Students should bring identification, preferably social security or Texas driver's license. No childcare is available.

■ The VFW Post #10354 will have a full slate of events at the Veteran's Center in Horizon City, including the sale of bratwurst and fireworks. The community is invited to attend. Information: 852-6038 or 591-3517.

■ The Clint First Baptist Church will host Vacation Bible School on July 19-23, for children ages kindergarten through sixth grade. Theme for the event is "Let's Race to the Son — Konichiwa! Classes are scheduled for 9 a.m. to noon and more information is available at 851-1599 or 592-9081.

■ El Paso's flood control and water reclamation needs were included in the fiscal year 2005 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which recently passed the House of Representatives. Congressman Reyes said the following are included in the bill:

- \$1,232,000 for the Army Corps of Engineers for construction of the El Paso Flood Control Project;
- \$380,000 to expand the Haskell Street Wastewater Treatment Plant water recycle program to provide reclaimed water to Fort Bliss;
- \$305,000 for the Army Corps of Engineers for the Northwest El Paso Flood Control Project — a flood damage prevention study; and

• \$256,000 for the Army Corps of Engineers to continue the Sparks Arroyo Flood Control Project. "Droughts and flooding are two big problems in the El Paso region," said Reyes. "This funding will lessen damage caused by floods and reduce our dependence on scarce groundwater. El Paso is taking many different steps to address the water concerns in our community and this funding is essential to their success," said Reyes.

■ The Small Business Administration El Paso District Director Phillip C. Silva said the number of loans to small businesses is being limited because many people who are seeking loans but are not obtaining them have credit issues. Therefore, the SBA will hold a seminar on July 14, 2004 for credit-challenged applicants. It is requesting that all participants bring a current copy of their credit report for review and advice on

how to improve their credit rating. A credit report can be purchased for under \$10. Those clients who have a good credit rating can begin the process of the business loan application at the SBA Business Loan seminar. Those individuals whose credit rating may not meet the expectations of the lenders will be provided help and advice on how to improve their credit rating. A representative from the Experian will provide training on how to analyze a credit report and improve its rating. Participants will have opportunity to meet one-on-one with the SBA, SBA technical assistant providers and local lenders at the seminar which is scheduled for 8 a.m. to noon at the Center for Workforce Preparedness building at 1359 Lomaland. The cost of the conference is \$5 and includes continental breakfast and materials. For more information and reservations call Anna Rivera at (915) 633-7001.

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A Trade Deal

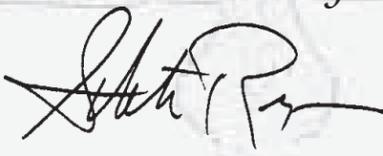
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— *Congressman*
Silvestre Reyes





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Tampa Bay Devil Rays heat up after cold start

By Steve Escajeda
Special to the Courier

Aren't you loving the Major League Baseball season so far? Most of the big teams are at the top of their divisions and that's how it should be.

The big boys are tearing up the league. You know, teams like the New York Yankees, the Boston Red Sox, the San Francisco Giants, the Florida Marlins, the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, the Oakland... wait a sec, back up a bit... the Tampa Bay Devil Rays?

Let me double check my numbers, that can't be right. Yeah, that's correct. Tampa Bay, which finished with the second-worst record in baseball last year at 63-99, is the hottest team in the league right now.

Amazingly, Tampa went on a 12-game winning streak in June and has won 15 of their last 16 games.

And that's not all. The D-Rays have won a record 13-straight inter-league games which ties a record.

The most unbelievable fact is that the D-Rays are now above .500 after a miserable begin-

ning of the season. Tampa went 3-19 at one point this year on the way to a 10-28 start. Season over — right? Hardly.

Tampa Bay is still in third place, nine games behind the Yankees, but they're just four games behind the Red Sox and their beginning to talk playoffs.

And what's the reason for the sudden success? All I can think of is they have the best manager in baseball — Lou Piniella. Piniella guided the Cincinnati Reds to a World Series title in 1990 and coached the 2001 Seattle Mariners to one of the best regular seasons in baseball history with a 116-46 record.

I thought Piniella was crazy when he left the Mariners two years ago for perennial loser Tampa Bay. But that shows you why I'm here sitting at a computer and he is getting paid millions for going to baseball games.

Last year people were talking about another Florida team that turned things around in mid season, the Florida Marlins, and you remember what they did. If you don't remember, just ask any New York not-the-world-champion-Yankees fan.

My Astros are doing their annual fade thing a little early this season so I'm going to start

routing for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. I love a great underdog story.

Hey, maybe they'll give Florida fans another team to cheer toward a title. I hear Floridians are better at picking baseball teams than picking presidents.

To catch a thief

I seem to remember the Florida State Seminoles winning two national football championships in the 1990s. If I recall correctly they won it in 1993 and again in 1999, but I'm not positively sure. I mean, I couldn't prove it or anything.

Because, now, even they have no proof.

Seems some idiot — masquerading as a human — broke into the athletic offices at Florida State and stole both of the school's national championship trophies.

The two Waterford crystal pieces were taken from a locked case located right in front of coach Bobby Bowden's office. Bowden was out of town when the incident occurred.

But I do like the fact that FSU assistant athletic director, Rob Wilson, could show compassion toward the thief. "Woe be unto that guy if the wrong people get hold of him."

The college is offering \$2,500 to anyone who turns in the culprit. And that's a bargain compared to how much Florida State usually pays its college athletes to play football.

Somebody's lying

Let's take a close look at this. Here are three stories.

One story comes from San Francisco Giants slugger Barry Bonds who says he's never taken steroids.

Another story comes from world-class sprinter Tim Montgomery, who says BALCO founder Victor Conte told him he had supplied Bonds with steroids. And yet a third story comes from Conte himself, who says he's never even spoken to Bonds about steroids.

It's hard to know who to believe, after all, all three of these guys are so trustworthy, *haha*. All three guys can't be telling the truth in their conflicting accounts so somebody is lying.

The steroid scandal has exploded throughout the sports world and seeing how Bonds' head is about as big as his whole body used to be, I'd say it has hit Major League Baseball pretty hard.

So who is lying? We'll find out soon — honest.

Canutillo High soccer players named to All-Region Team

By Alfredo Vasquez
Special to the Courier

UPPER VALLEY — Canutillo High School seniors Miguel Rivera, Mario Chavez, and Lorenzo Garcia were among the 24 players named to the Region 1-4A Boys Soccer All-Region Team by the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches (TASC) recently.

The three seniors led Canutillo High School's boys' soccer team to 20 wins-2 losses and 6 ties during the season and the 2-4A bi-district championship. The Eagles finished the regular district play in third place behind Del Valle and Riverside high schools.

District coaches named Rivera with the title of Most Valuable Player in 1-4A District this season. He was also selected to the El Paso Times' All-City Team. He scored 34 goals and had 19 assists.

"Miguel scored in every game we

played this year. He was our team leader, and he led by example," said Juan Ulloa, CHS Boys Soccer coach.

Chavez was named to the 1-4A All District first team as a midfielder. He also earned CHS Eagles' MVP award for two consecutive years. "Mario played every position including goalie for

us this season. He was probably our best all-around athlete, and he was always assigned to mark the opponent teams' best players," said Ulloa.

Garcia was also named to the 1-4A All District first team as a sweeper. He led the district in steals



WHAT A KICK — Canutillo High School soccer players were recognized, from left, Coach Juan Ulloa, Lorenzo Garcia, Miguel Rivera, and Mario Chavez.

with 124 this season. "Lorenzo was a big reason we posted 13 shutouts this season. He helped the goalie out tremendously," said the coach.

The three soccer standouts played

See SOCCER, Page 7

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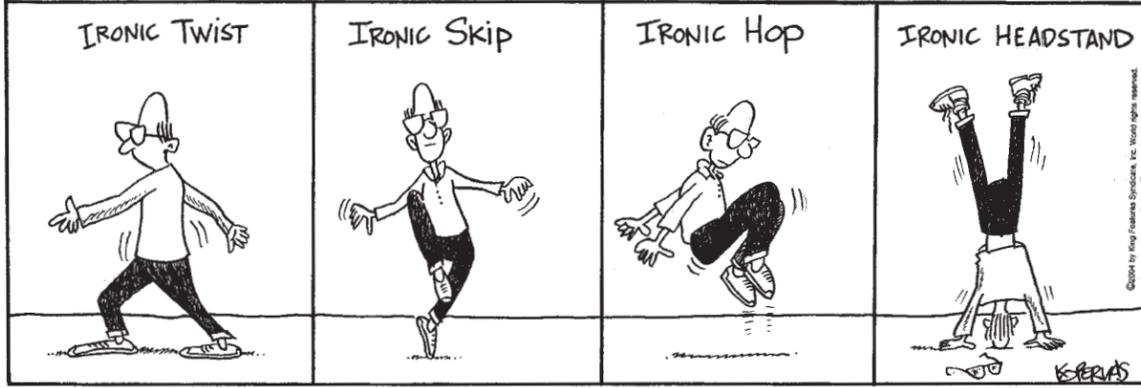
King Super Crossword

- FOR THE BIRDS**
- ACROSS**
- 1 Sagan or Sandburg
- 5 Swarm sound
- 9 Montana city
- 14 Monterrey Mrs.
- 17 '58 Pulitzer winner
- 18 Piece of fencing?
- 19 He was "The Thing"
- 21 Pipe part
- 22 WREN
- 25 Brodingnagian
- 26 For _ (cheaply)
- 27 Comic Costello
- 28 _ Na Na
- 29 Mascagni opera
- 30 Poet Wilcox
- 33 Lohengrin's bird
- 37 African antelopes
- 39 LARK
- 44 "The Optimist's Daughter" author
- 45 Bonanza material
- 46 Coveleski or Musial
- 47 Vichyssoise veggie
- 49 Tip one's topper
- 51 Long-tailed parrot
- 54 Sanford of "The Jeffersons"
- 56 Scandinavian city
- 59 Griffon greeting
- 61 Fool
- 63 Missouri airport abbr.
- 64 Valuable instrument
- 66 Stowe sight
- 67 Screenwriter Nora
- 70 Elf
- 72 Dash
- 73 Sarah _ Jewett
- 74 Inland sea
- 75 QUAIL
- 78 Depravity
- 79 Easy stride
- 80 Bit of gossip
- 81 Parenthesis shape
- 82 Physicist Fermi
- 84 Corset part
- 85 Alfredo ingredient
- 87 British big shot
- 89 Monsarrat's "The Cruel _"
- 90 Tulsa commodity
- 91 Cheat at hide-and-peek
- 92 Preposterous
- 95 Sweetheart
- 99 Turn over
- 101 Darjeeling dress
- 103 Invasion
- 105 Frankfurter's field
- 106 Rent
- 109 CRANE
- 113 Church official
- 114 Oriental staple
- 115 Big rig
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- 134 Kindle
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- 138 German port
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- 2 FBI workers
- 3 _ Man" ('84 film)
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- 5 Neighbor of Ger.
- 6 Prosperous times
- 7 Non-nonchalance?
- 8 Nil
- 9 Crank's comment
- 10 Swiss canton
- 11 Explosive initials
- 12 Golfer's gadgets
- 13 Avoid
- 14 DUCK
- 15 Toomey or Philbin
- 16 Iowa city
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- 21 Japanese religion
- 23 Hard on the eyes
- 24 Astrology term
- 31 Brown or Baxter
- 32 Vino center
- 34 Corduroy ridge
- 35 Writer Rogers St. Johns
- 36 Formerly known as
- 38 Moro of Italy
- 39 One who no's best?
- 40 Distinctive period
- 41 _ room
- 42 Singer Elliot
- 43 Bete noire
- 48 Adorable Australian
- 50 Tenor Corelli
- 52 One of the Judds
- 53 Tolstoy title start
- 55 Coalition
- 57 Play ground?
- 58 Bedding
- 60 At large
- 62 Word with dog or state
- 65 "Never on Sunday" star
- 66 Good-humored
- 67 Amatory
- 68 CARDINAL
- 69 _ Dame
- 71 Anaconda, for one
- 74 As well
- 76 Pursues
- 77 Coffee pots
- 83 Ring counter
- 86 Andretti or Cuomo
- 88 Fiber source
- 91 Swamp stuff
- 93 "Death of a Salesman" son
- 94 Pad
- 96 Ryan's "Love Story" co-star
- 97 Bud
- 98 Fluffy female
- 100 Crime writer Colin
- 102 PC key
- 104 SHAEF commander
- 107 "The March King"
- 108 Whole
- 110 Stamping ground
- 111 TV award
- 112 Strauss city
- 113 Debonair
- 116 _ coffee
- 118 Energy source
- 120 One of a pair
- 121 South Seas novel
- 123 New Mexico resort
- 124 John of "Roots"
- 125 Expected back
- 128 Bossy's chew
- 129 Sugary suffix
- 130 Guys
- 131 College growth
- 132 Empower

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Comix

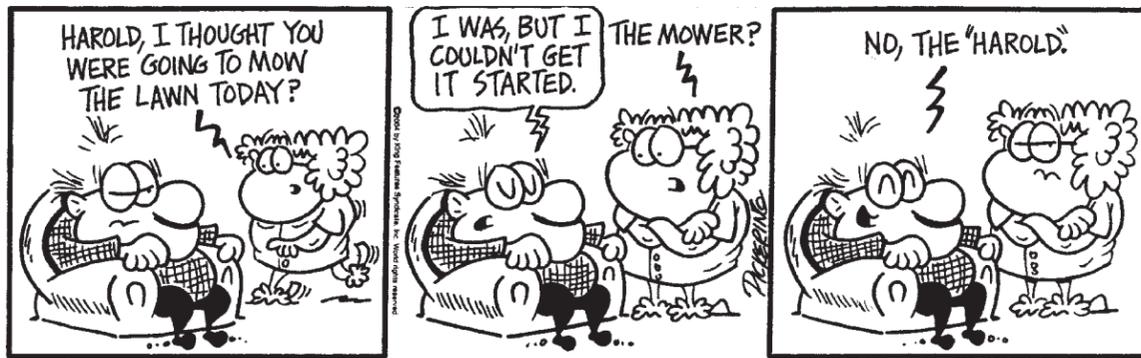
OUT ON A LIMB By Gary Kopervas



AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



THE SPATS By Jeff Pickering



R.F.D. By Mike Marland



Leave 'em laughing

By Don Flood

A recent story told of an American businessman who, speaking before a Japanese audience, prefaced his speech with a joke, as is the American custom.

Well, he absolutely slayed 'em. They were practically rolling in the aisles.

Buoyed by the success of his joke, he asked his interpreter afterward why it had gone over so well.

The joke, the interpreter politely replied, was inappropriate, so instead of translating he had simply turned to the audience and said, "The gentleman has told a joke. Please laugh."

Not only do I greatly admire the Japanese approach, I think it's time we brought that humor know-how to this country.

One of the major crises facing our nation today is After Dinner Speaker Laugh Deficit (ADSLD).

Every evening in this country, some 25,000 after-dinner speakers begin their talk with an awful joke. According to humor scientists, no more than 30 to 40 jokes actually elicit genuine laughter; the rest receive polite titters, embarrassed chuckles, or, worst, dead silences.

Wouldn't it be more efficient and less painful for all involved if the speakers were to start out saying, "Please insert your favorite joke here and laugh"?

People would understand they were supposed to break into hysterical sit-com laughter for 15 seconds and then we could all go on with our lives — secure in the knowledge that the critical moment had passed.

ADSLD did not begin in modern America.

A series of cave paintings dating back to 22,000 B.C. graphically depicts what happened to what is believed be the world's first

after-dinner speaker.

The first panel shows a middle-aged man in a poorly fitting bear hide speaking before the local Mastodons Lodge (later the Elks Lodge after Mastodons became extinct).

Following what paleontologists have theorized was a particularly lame opening joke, the audience is shown: 1) attacking the speaker and 2) roasting him over an open fire, thus beginning the tradition of the spectacularly unfunny "celebrity roasts," which are still inflicted on television audiences.

Fortunately, today's after-dinner speakers needn't worry about being cooked on a spit; instead they are able to enjoy the slow, agonizing death of one who tells a joke for which there is no response.

And it can happen to you.

For some bizarre and mysterious reason — perhaps the group has exhausted the phone book for the 19th time — you may be asked to be an after-dinner speaker.

Suffering under the delusion that people are interested in hearing you speak — and not merely requiring an excuse to get out of the house and down a few drinks with pals — you agree.

And then it hits you. Not only must you prepare a talk designed to ease digestion and not cause undue wakefulness, you must START OFF WITH A JOKE.

Only you don't know any jokes, and you certainly can't tell one. ADSLD is staring you in the face.

Luckily, I don't have that problem, because I happen to have the perfect after-dinner joke.

Alas, I can't tell it because it's inappropriate, so I would appreciate it if everyone could do me a favor.

Please laugh.
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NOTICE TO CUSTOMER

Texas Gas Service Company, a division of ONEOK, Inc. ("Company"), hereby gives notice of its intent to implement a new schedule of rates for approximately 178,170 residential, 11,302 commercial, 68 industrial, 772 public authority, 17 municipal water pumping and 42 standard transportation customers within the incorporated areas of El Paso, Anthony, Clint, Horizon City, Socorro and Vinton, Texas, in accordance with the Company's Statement of Intent filed with the City of El

Paso, Town of Anthony, Town of Clint, Town of Horizon City, City of Socorro and Village of Vinton, Texas, on May 14, 2004. The proposed effective date is for meters read on and after July 27, 2004.

It is anticipated that the effect of the change in rates will be to increase the revenues of the Company within the El Paso Service Area by approximately \$684,705 or 0.69 percent. The proposed change does not constitute a "major" change as that term is defined by Section 104.101 of the Texas Utilities Code.

The proposed tariffs include increases in gas

sales and transportation rates for all residential, commercial, industrial, public authority, and municipal water pumping customers. The Company has also proposed changes in the cost of gas tariff, changes to the transportation tariffs to include balancing provisions and filed initial tariffs for an Economic Development Rate and Interim Cost Recovery and Rate Adjustment Clause in the incorporated areas of the El Paso Service Area. The effect of the change in rates, when allowed, will be to increase the revenues of the Company by approximately 0.69 percent. Based on the proposed rate

design, the average monthly residential bill of 45 Ccf will increase by approximately \$0.21, or 0.7 percent, the average monthly commercial bill of 279 Ccf will increase approximately \$1.00, or 0.6 percent, the average monthly public authority bill of 975 Ccf will increase approximately \$3.32 or 0.6 percent, the average monthly industrial bill of 2,926 Ccf will increase approximately \$9.60, or 0.6 percent, the average monthly municipal water pumping bill of 11,698 Ccf will increase approximately \$33.87 or 0.5 percent, and the average standard transportation bill of 34,406 Ccf will increase ap-

proximately \$96.01 or 3.1%.

A complete copy of the Statement of Intent is available for inspection in the municipalities' offices and in the Company's business office located at 4600 Pollard St., El Paso, Texas 79930.

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Persons who have a problem with alcohol are offered a free source of help locally. Alcoholics Anonymous - call 562-4081 for information.

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Soccer

From Page 6

at the varsity level all four years of their high school careers at CHS, and they plan to continue playing now that they have graduated. Rivera said that he wants to attend school in San Antonio, where St. Mary's and Texas Lutheran universities have expressed interest in him. Chavez and Garcia plan to tryout for UTEP's soccer club with hopes of developing their skills and attracting a major college program's attention.



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Social Security Q&A By Ray Vigil

Q: I am 55 years old and my wife is 62. She has only 36 Social Security credits. Can she get Social Security retirement benefits on my earnings record? If she cannot, how can she get her own Social Security?

A: She can get Social Security retirement benefits as a spouse on your earnings record, but not until you are receiving benefits. The earliest that could happen would be when you turn age 62 — or seven years from now. However, she can qualify for

her own Social Security benefits if she has 40 Social Security credits. In 2004, a worker receives one credit for each \$900 in earnings, so if she makes \$3,600 sometime this year, she will have the four credits she needs to qualify for her own Social Security retirement benefits. Your wife should also know that if she continues to work and earns the 40 credits to be eligible to receive a Social Security benefit on her own record, that benefit would be lower if she starts to receive it before reaching her full

retirement age. In your wife's case her full retirement age would be age 65 and 10 months. If she takes early retirement, her benefits will be permanently reduced based on the number of months she will receive payments before reaching her full retirement age.

Q: I get both Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. When I die, will SSI pay my burial expenses?

A: There is no death or burial benefit associated with the SSI program. There is a special one-time payment of \$255 payable under the Social

Security program. But we can only pay that benefit to a spouse who is living with you when you die, or to any minor or disabled children you might have.

Q: My wife plans to apply for her own Social Security retirement benefits at age 62. I expect to work until my full retirement age before I apply for Social Security, and my benefits will be higher than my wife's. If I die, will her widow's benefits be reduced because she took early retirement?

A: The amount of widow's benefits we can pay your wife will depend on how

old she is when she begins receiving a widow's benefit. If she is over "full retirement age" when that happens, she will be due a widow's benefit equal to 100 percent of your Social Security rate, even though she took reduced Social Security retirement benefits based on her own earnings record.

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 with an afternoon thunderstorm. ▲ 95°	Chance for a thunderstorm early; partly cloudy. ▼ 69°	Sunny to partly cloudy; breezy in the afternoon. ▲ 96° ▼ 71°	Clouds and sun, chance for a p.m. thunderstorm. ▲ 95° ▼ 72°	Partly sunny, chance for a p.m. thunderstorm. ▲ 97° ▼ 73°	Partly sunny. ▲ 96° ▼ 75°	Partly sunny and hot. ▲ 100° ▼ 76°	Sunshine with patchy clouds. ▲ 101° ▼ 74°

UV INDEX Statistics for noon.

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

Thursday	10	Very High
Friday	10	Very High
Saturday	8	High
Sunday	10	Very High
Monday	10	Very High
Tuesday	10	Very High
Wednesday	10	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	98°
Friday	89°
Saturday	88°
Sunday	90°
Monday	92°
Tuesday	94°
Wednesday	94°

TEXAS WEATHER

Anthony	94	71
Canutillo	94	71
Clint	94	71
E. Montana	94	70
Fabens	94	71
Horizon	94	73
San Elizario	90	70
Socorro	93	70
Tornillo	94	71
Vinton	94	71

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	91/63/t	90/64/pc	91/65/pc	91/66/pc	94/70/s
Atlanta	82/70/t	82/70/t	82/70/t	84/70/t	86/70/t
Atlantic City	82/66/pc	83/67/pc	84/67/t	83/67/t	85/65/pc
Austin/San Antonio	92/71/t	93/72/pc	94/71/pc	94/70/pc	94/72/pc
Baltimore	88/68/pc	88/70/pc	86/70/t	86/68/t	85/66/pc
Boston	82/65/pc	80/62/t	80/65/t	78/62/t	80/64/pc
Chicago	84/62/t	82/64/t	80/60/t	84/64/pc	78/63/pc
Dallas/Ft. Worth	92/73/t	93/74/t	93/74/pc	94/73/pc	95/73/pc
Denver	83/58/s	88/58/s	84/58/t	86/58/t	87/61/c
Flagstaff	80/44/s	82/44/s	83/44/s	84/48/s	81/49/s
Houston	90/74/t	92/74/t	92/74/t	92/74/t	92/73/t
Kansas City	82/66/t	84/65/t	86/65/t	84/65/t	86/65/t
Las Vegas	99/72/s	100/76/s	101/76/s	101/78/s	103/78/s
Miami	89/77/t	89/79/t	89/79/t	89/79/t	89/77/sh
Minneapolis	82/65/t	82/65/t	82/59/t	79/61/c	81/62/pc
New Orleans	91/76/t	91/77/t	92/76/t	90/76/t	90/74/t
New York City	84/70/pc	86/70/t	84/70/t	83/70/t	84/69/pc
Philadelphia	88/70/pc	88/70/t	86/70/t	86/70/t	85/68/pc
Portland	83/59/pc	81/59/pc	82/59/pc	79/58/s	78/53/c
San Francisco	70/56/pc	70/56/pc	70/56/pc	70/55/pc	70/57/s
Seattle	78/56/pc	76/56/pc	76/56/pc	72/55/s	71/49/r
Tucson	100/70/s	100/70/s	102/70/s	103/72/s	102/72/s
Washington, DC	88/70/pc	88/72/t	88/72/t	86/70/t	85/69/pc

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

AGRICULTURE

A moist air mass will gradually dry out over the weekend across the area. A shower or thunderstorm will occur in parts of the area Thursday. As the air mass dries out beginning on Friday, sunshine will become more abundant. This, combined with higher temperatures, will result in excellent drying conditions Friday through Monday.

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